

# Essentials of Assessing, Preventing and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

By: David Kilpatrick

## Facilitator's Guide to Book Study

The ideal way to study the book is one chapter at a time in a PLC type setting. Give each participant the book, a journal or composition notebook and the study guide for one chapter at a time. Each participant should read the chapter assigned and take notes in his or her journal that go with the big ideas and questions from the study guide. The goal is to dig deeply into the content and to discover ways that this content should change what is happening in our classrooms and schools. The facilitator also needs to read the text and take notes, but this guide will help you know our thoughts when creating the questions. Rich discussion should follow each reading looking especially for how each chapter changes what we do in school.

## Chapter 1 - Introduction

Purpose of the Chapter	To introduce the problems associated with the gap between reading research and classroom practice.
Big Ideas to Look For	<p>What are the goals of this book? <b>To examine the empirical research into reading acquisition and reading disabilities in order to capitalize on the most useful findings for assessing and creating highly effective interventions.</b></p> <p>Describe the gap between reading research and classroom practice and discuss why such a gap exists. <b>Neuroscience and linguistics know how we learn to read. The results of their scientific findings have been in their journals for more than 30 years, but those are not journals that educators regularly read.</b></p> <p><b>The fields of early childhood education, literacy and special education do not communicate between the fields of neuroscience and linguistics.</b></p> <p><b>Teacher training programs are not training future teachers in best practices based on the science of how students learn to read.</b></p> <p>What works to prevent reading risk? <b>Direct and explicit phonological awareness training, ample letter-sound instruction and teaching the connections between the two.</b></p> <p>What works in early intervention? <b>Intensive phonemic awareness training, systematic instruction in phonics, and the opportunity to read connected texts.</b></p> <p>What works in intervention with older students? <b>Intensive instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics and the opportunity to read connected texts.</b></p>
Terms defined	Orthographic mapping - the process students use to turn unfamiliar written words into instantly accessible "sight words".

	<p>Sight Word - any word that is instantly recognized regardless of whether it is phonically regular or irregular.</p> <p>Sight Vocabulary - a student's pool of words that are instantly and effortlessly recognized.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>For how long has it been well established that phonological awareness is critical for reading?  <b>Since 1980 or earlier</b></p> <p>What is one likely reason that there is a gap between reading research and classroom instruction?  <b>Teachers' unwillingness to change the way they teach</b></p> <p>What appears to be the most important scientific discovery that educators have not heard about?  <b>The research findings about how readers build a sight vocabulary</b></p>
<p>Implications for the Classroom</p>	<p>If research exists that shows what works for prevention of risk and intervention when a student falls behind, why aren't we reading that research and putting those practices into place in our classrooms?</p>

Chapter 2 - How We Teach Reading and Why It Does Not Work With Struggling Readers

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>Many continue to teach reading based on tradition and intuition rather than using the methods that a large body of research identifies as the most effective. This chapter explores why the classic methods don't work with struggling readers.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>What is the difference between word identification and word recognition?  <b>Recognition requires memory. Identification does not.</b></p> <p>What are three classic reading approaches?  <b>Whole word, phonics, whole language</b></p> <p>What is the visual memory hypothesis of word reading?  <b>We get visual input, we activate an associated verbal memory and we name the item (example: naming a familiar object or person when we see them)</b></p> <p>What research shows that words are not stored based on their visual properties?  <b>When students were given words in mixed case, they were able to read them at the same speed as they read normally printed words.</b></p> <p><b>There is little or no correlation between visual memory skills and word-level reading, but phonological awareness correlates quite strongly with word-level reading.</b></p> <p><b>The areas of the brain that activate during visual memory tasks are not the same as those that activate during word-reading tasks.</b></p> <p><b>Most deaf students graduate reading at a third or fourth grade level of reading. If reading were based on visual memory, we would expect that individuals who are deaf would not have such difficulties learning to read.</b></p> <p>Why does the whole-word approach not help weak readers?  <b>The whole word approach does not provide any concrete mechanism for storing words so that they become familiar, instantly accessible sight words. The whole word approach is based on the visual memory hypothesis.</b></p> <p>What are the most critical difficulties with the three cueing systems model?  <b>Skilled word recognition does not require context; guessing words from context is not as efficient as phonic decoding; poor readers, not skilled readers, rely heavily on context; contextual guessing does not promote sight-word learning in poor readers; semantic errors are not a sign of better reading development than phonetic errors; one of the three cues in the three cueing model is not related to word reading.</b></p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Auditory - all of the sound input we perceive.</p> <p>Phonological - a subcategory of auditory; The sounds of spoken language (words, syllables, or phonemes).</p> <p>Phonemic - a subcategory of phonological that deals with individual sounds</p>

	Phoneme - the smallest unit of spoken language
Review Questions to Discuss	<p>What does this chapter say about the term <i>research based</i>?  It is an unprotected term so any company can call a program research based even if it is not.</p> <p>Reading researchers have rejected the idea that we remember words based upon some sort of visual memory process. What research supports this change in thinking?  Mixed case studies, students with poor memory for words often have average visual memory skills, correlation between word reading and phonological awareness is strong, while the correlation between visual memory and word-reading is weak to non-existent, the areas of the brain involved in visual memory are different from the areas of the brain involved in instant recognition of written words, studies on the deaf population.</p> <p>From the perspective of the scientific investigation of reading, what is a major concern about the three cueing systems approach to reading?  It proposes that context plays a major role in word reading, when it is poor readers who rely on context; syntactic cues does not even correlate with word-level reading; guessing is not as efficient as phonic decoding</p>
Implications for the Classroom	<p>Many teacher education programs over the last 30 years have been out of touch on the latest research about how the brain learns to read. As a result, much of our teaching force is not familiar with what works best for prevention of risk and with intervention.</p>

Chapter 3 - A Practical Framework For Understanding and Assessing Reading Skills

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>The simple view of reading can be a powerful organizing framework for understanding and assessing reading, as well as for preventing and correcting reading difficulties.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>What is the simple view of reading?  A theoretical model that says if a student can quickly and effortlessly read the words in a given passage, and if that student can understand that same passage when it is read to her, it follows that the student should be able to comprehend that passage when she reads it herself.</p> <p>When a teacher says a student struggles with reading comprehension, what is the first question to ask?  What if you read the passage to him; would he understand it?</p> <p>What would the follow up question be?  What is the student's oral reading like?</p> <p>What are the four types of reading problems discussed in the text and briefly describe each one?  Dyslexia - a difficulty in developing word-level reading skills despite adequate instructional opportunities.</p> <p>Hyperlexia - can read words at a level above what they can understand. They typically have language-related deficits that keep them from comprehending what they read.</p> <p>Mixed type-display weaknesses both in language comprehension and word-level reading.</p> <p>Compensator type- typically have strong language skills with reading comprehension skills substantially below their language skills but still average. Their word-reading skills are lower than their reading comprehension but are average or low average.</p> <p>What are the two components of word-level reading in the Simple View?  Cipher knowledge and word-specific knowledge</p> <p>What are the factors related to cipher knowledge?  Letter-sound knowledge  orthographic knowledge  phonological awareness  phonological blending  working memory  morphological knowledge/ awareness  vocabulary/phonological long-term memory  rapid automatized naming  visual/phonological paired-associate learning</p> <p>Define the list of components that influence comprehension.  Vocabulary-semantic knowledge- knowing what the words you have read mean</p>

	<p>Syntactic-grammatical knowledge- the order of words in sentences and knowing the linguistic concepts such as parts of speech and verb tense</p> <p>Background knowledge- What a reader brings to the task based on what he already knows from experience or things he has read or heard.</p> <p>Working memory- being able to temporarily capture and maintain the specific words and grammatical constructions in any sentence or group of sentences to comprehend that information.</p> <p>Attention- being able to maintain focus on what is being read by a student or read to a student.</p> <p>Inferencing- Application of the background knowledge a student brings to a text to determine the meaning of the parts of a text that are not explicitly stated in the text.</p> <p>Comprehension monitoring- The ability to notice when they did not understand something that they read.</p> <p>Nonverbal visual-spatial skills- the ability to create a visual image from what they have read or what has been read to them.</p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Word -level reading- an individual's ability to accurately pronounce written words, with no presumption about prior familiarity.</p> <p>Word recognition- instant and effortless recall of familiar words. (This is a sub-category of word-level reading)</p> <p>Phonic decoding- the process of sounding out a word using letter-sound knowledge and blending those sounds together to pronounce the word.</p> <p>Cipher Knowledge - the ability to use the code of written English to pronounce words.</p> <p>Word-specific knowledge - familiarity with a given word or word part, based on past experience with that word.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>What is the simple view of reading?  <b>A model that says that reading comprehension is the product of decoding and linguistic comprehension.</b></p> <p>What appears to be the benefit of using the simple view of reading framework to guide reading assessments?  <b>It will allow evaluators to assess skills that underlie reading that may be contributing to the reading difficulty.</b></p> <p>What appears to be the benefit of using the simple view of reading framework to guide reading instruction and intervention?</p>

	It will allow teachers to address the skills that are the likely source of a student's reading difficulty.
Implications for the Classroom	The more we know about how word-level reading works, the more efficient and effective we can be with assessment, instruction and intervention.

## Chapter 4: Understanding Word Recognition Difficulties

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>Chapter 4 looks at the research and implications of phonic decoding and orthographic mapping. It also describes the importance of phonological awareness in every step and every element of the word-reading process.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>What are the specific components needed for both phonic decoding and orthographic mapping?  <b>Proficient letter-sound knowledge; proficient phonological awareness (basic and advanced); phonological blending; and vocabulary/phonological long term memory.</b></p> <p>What are early, basic and advanced phonological awareness skills?  <b>Early - rhyming, alliteration, being able to segment words into syllables, and being able to identify the first sounds in words</b></p> <p><b>Basic- phoneme blending and phoneme segmentation</b></p> <p><b>Advanced- manipulating phonemes (deleting, substituting or reversing phonemes within words).</b></p> <p>Which letters are easiest to learn?  <b>Letters that contain their sound in the initial position in their names.</b></p> <p>What are the similarities and differences between phonic decoding and orthographic mapping?  <b>Similarities: Both are components of skilled reading; both require letter-sound proficiency; both have to do with sounds/phonemes</b></p> <p><b>Differences: Phonic decoding is an old teaching method, while orthographic mapping is a comparatively recent discovery. Phonic decoding is a strategy for identifying unfamiliar words and goes from print to sound. Orthographic mapping is a strategy for storing unfamiliar words and interactively goes between sound and print. Phonic decoding required phonological blending while orthographic mapping requires phonemic awareness/analysis.</b></p> <p>What are the 3 levels of reading development?  <b>Level 1- letters and sounds</b>  <b>Level 2- Phonic decoding</b>  <b>Level 3- Orthographic mapping</b></p> <p>How does the orthographic mapping process work when learning to read regular and irregular words?  <b>Orthographic mapping requires advanced phoneme awareness, letter-sound knowledge, and phonological long-term memory. These three interact in such a way as to produce a long-term orthographic memory of all the words that we learn.</b></p> <p><b>We use the pronunciations of words that are already stored in long-term memory as the anchoring points for the orthographic sequences (letters) used to represent those pronunciations. We store words based on an alignment between the letter sequence and the phoneme sequence in the word's pronunciation. Orthographic</b></p>

	<p>memory involves a connection-forming process in which the oral phonemes in spoken words are “bonded” to the letters used to represent those phonemes. The whole sequence of letters is recognized as a stored, familiar sequence.</p> <p>The orthographic mapping process does not presume that letters and sounds are consistently related to one another. It does not require perfect regularity to letter-sound relationships. When exception words are learned as sight words, they are secured in memory by the same connections as regularly spelled words, with only the exceptional letters unsecured.</p> <p>What did the intervention studies with highly effective outcomes each include? Intense phonemic awareness training to the advanced level; intensive phonic decoding training, and substantial opportunity for reading connected text.</p> <p>Summarize the typical reading development of a student. Preschool students apply their basic phonological skills and memory skills to the paired-associate learning task of attaching names to letters. Readers then begin to use their developing letter-sound knowledge and phonological blending to sound out words via phonic decoding. As phonic decoding skills develop, it appears to directly promote more advanced phonemic awareness. Then, as more advanced phonemic awareness skills develop, there is a dramatic increase in the speed and efficiency with which students develop their sight vocabularies. The more words are added to the sight vocabulary, the more fluent their reading becomes allowing for greater focus to be placed on reading comprehension.</p> <p>What is the best approach to addressing fluency? Be sure that a student has proficient orthographic mapping skills. Fluency is not seen as a separate reading subskill, but rather as a byproduct of having instant access to most or all of the words on the page.</p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Orthographic Mapping - the process that readers use to store written words for instant and effortless retrieval. It is the means by which readers turn unfamiliar written words into familiar and instantly recognized sight words.</p> <p>Alphabetic principle - the insight that there is a direct connection between the sounds of spoken language and the letters in the written words.</p> <p>Self-teaching hypothesis - once children become somewhat proficient at phonic decoding, they can teach themselves new words. For example, if they know take, they can figure out make and lake if they can manipulate the first sound.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>What appears to be the only effective way to build the orthographic lexicon (sight words)? Orthographic mapping</p> <p>What is the most common reason why children struggle in word-level reading? The phonological-core deficit</p> <p>What is the significance of the phonological lexicon (pronunciation)? It represents the “anchoring point” in long-term memory to store the letter sequences that represent written words, it appears to assist in phonic decoding, and it appears to include the semantic lexicon (pool of words for which an</p>

	<p>individual has partial or full knowledge of each word's meaning) that helps us understand why vocabulary correlates with word reading.</p> <p>How are written words stored for later, instantaneous retrieval? Letter sequences in written words become aligned/attached to the phoneme sequences in spoken words.</p>
Implications for the Classroom	<p>The very common instructional suggestion that weak readers should learn irregular words as unanalyzed wholes is based on intuition and tradition and is not supported by any empirical research. The irony of this teaching practice is that exception words require more letter-sound and phonemic analysis than regular words, not less.</p>

Chapter 5: Understanding Reading Comprehension Difficulties

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>Chapter 5 examines factors that contribute to reading comprehension that are not primarily related to word-level reading.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>What skills are important for making sense of text?  <b>Many skills are important for making sense of text. Some of these include word reading, vocabulary, syntax, background knowledge, inferencing, attention, metacognition, and working memory. Text and task factors can also play a role in the breakdown of comprehension.</b></p> <p>Why is specific topical background knowledge so important?  <b>Specific topical background knowledge is so important that poor word readers outperform good word readers when they happen to know more about the specific topic than the good word reader.</b></p> <p>What is important about creating a situation model?  <b>As we read or listen to something that is read to us, we create a situation model of what is occurring. Poor comprehenders seem to have a more difficult time constructing a situation model.</b></p> <p>How does attention affect comprehension scores?  <b>Some students with poor attention have listening comprehension scores that are lower than their reading comprehension scores.</b></p> <p>What is an important consideration when working with ELL students?  <b>The progress of ELL students in reading comprehension is directly related to their abilities to comprehend spoken English as well as their abilities to comprehend spoken English words.</b></p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Syntax - the order of words in sentences.</p> <p>Situation model or mental model - A mental representation of the information in the real, or an imaginary world. The reader's mental model is developed as the text progresses, and may include information derived from inferences and from background knowledge, as well as what is explicitly stated in the text itself.</p> <p>Text factors - genre, text structure, readability, text clarity, interest level of content, ect.</p> <p>Task factors - a student's instructional environment, response expectation during reading instruction, responses on classroom-oriented reading assessments, and types of responses expected on individualized reading evaluations.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>What is the most common reason that a child may do poorly in reading comprehension?  <b>Poor word-level reading</b></p> <p>Why would general background knowledge or specific topical knowledge be so important in understanding what is read?  <b>Reading comprehension requires inferencing, and research shows you can make</b></p>

	<p>better inferences about things you know about.</p> <p>Why are good inferencing skills needed for reading comprehension? Because not everything in the text is explicitly stated and some things need to be inferred.</p>
Implications for the Classroom	<p>Some have argued that background knowledge is the key to comprehension. What specific things can classroom teachers and school districts do to help build the background knowledge of our students that lack the experiences to have developed strong background knowledge?</p>

## Chapter 6: Assessing Phonological Processing Skills

Purpose of the Chapter	To explore the research on phonological awareness assessments and to determine the best practices in this kind of evaluation.
Big Ideas to Look For	<p>Why should you avoid using composite scores from assessments?  <i>When analyzing assessment results, avoid using composite scores because many tests are combined to create that score and a strong sub-test can mask a weakness in a vital area.</i></p> <p>What is the goal of intervention-oriented assessment?  <i>The goal of intervention-oriented assessment is to develop a working hypothesis about why a student struggles in order to design well-targeted interventions.</i></p> <p>Why is IQ not the most important score when looking at word-level reading?  <i>The skills required for word-level reading are not substantially correlated with IQ test scores.</i></p> <p>What is the cause for most word-level reading problems?  <i>Deficiencies in phonological awareness are responsible for most word-level reading problems.</i></p> <p>Why is phoneme manipulation more important than phoneme segmentation from first grade on?  <i>From first grade onward, manipulation tasks display higher correlations with reading measures than segmentation tasks.</i></p> <p>When might phoneme reversals be important to include and why?  <i>Middle and high school, because phoneme reversals appear to be quite sensitive to reading problems for students in middle school and high school.</i></p>
Terms defined	<p>RAN- Rapid Automatized Naming</p> <p>WM- Working Memory</p> <p>PAST- Phonological Awareness Screening Test</p> <p>Phonological Manipulation - adding, deleting, substituting, or reversing sounds in spoken words.</p>
Review Questions to Discuss	<p>What is intervention-oriented assessment?  <i>Assessment with the goal of acquiring a better understanding of a child's reading difficulty in order to guide intervention (the goal of this type of assessment is NOT to make special education identification decisions)</i></p> <p>Why should phoneme manipulation tasks be included in an assessment rather than just phoneme blending and segmenting?  <i>Manipulation tasks can best assess advanced phonemic awareness</i></p> <p>How might a student "cheat" on phoneme manipulation tasks?  <i>Use a mental spelling strategy rather than phonemic awareness</i></p>

	<p>How can you add to an assessment to avoid this problem? Add a timing element to the assessment; use orthographically inconsistent words in phonological tasks</p> <p>What are the benefits of giving the PAST assessment? It correlates more strongly with reading than most commercially available assessments, it has a timing element, it is free, it has five alternate forms</p> <p>Why should we assess RAN and WM? Both predict reading skill development, response to intervention, and only take a few minutes to assess</p>
Implications for the Classroom	Phoneme Segmentation Fluency is often the only screener given in early grades even though segmentation tasks are not sensitive enough to identify many of the students with poor phonological awareness. Universal screenings should include a phonological manipulation test. Replace PSF with PAST in screening students.

Chapter 7 - Assessing Phonics Skills

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>To explore the research on phonics assessments and to determine the best practices in this kind of evaluation.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>Why is it important to teach the code in an explicit way?  <b>An incidental approach to teaching the code has been shown to be significantly less effective than explicitly teaching the code.</b></p> <p>Why are phonics programs by themselves not enough to consistently lead to substantial improvements in sight-word development or fluency?  <b>Sight-word learning and fluency require orthographic mapping, which is based on both letter-sound knowledge and more advanced phonemic awareness skills. Most phonics programs do not have extensive training in the advanced phonemic awareness/analysis skills.</b></p> <p>What does poor spelling often indicate?  <b>Because spelling is an index of orthographic knowledge, poor spelling can indicate phonological and orthographic weaknesses and often indicates the phonological-core deficit</b></p> <p>What kind of tasks appear to be the best way to evaluate a student's phonics skills?  <b>Timed nonsense word tasks</b></p> <p>Why might nonsense words spelling tasks be easier than real-word spelling?  <b>Nonsense word spelling is an index of basic phonic knowledge and phonemic awareness, but not orthographic knowledge because there is often more than one correct spelling.</b></p> <p>What is the most common reason a student struggles in nonsense word reading?  <b>Poor phonological awareness and blending skills</b></p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Phonics - A system for approaching reading that focuses on the relationship between letters and sounds. Phonics helps with sounding out unfamiliar words.</p> <p>Self-teaching hypothesis - A view proposing that the process of sounding out unfamiliar words directs a student's attention to the word's spelling pattern and facilitates orthographic learning.</p> <p>Orthography- (From the Greek "straight writing" ) This refers to the correct spelling of words.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>What is orthographic knowledge comprised of?  <b>What are permissible or impermissible strings of letters in English and an accumulation of familiar sequences , whether whole words or parts</b></p> <p>What are nonsense words?  <b>Pronounceable letter strings that are not English words</b></p> <p>Poor proficiency with the cipher negatively affects which two things?</p>

	<p><b>Phonic decoding and orthographic mapping</b></p> <p>If a student gets “stuck” in his or her progress in phonics, what needs to be addressed first, before they will make much gain in phonics?</p> <p><b>Phonological awareness deficits</b></p>
Implications for the Classroom	<p>The research shows that for assessment in phonics, a timed screening test of nonsense words along with a criterion-referenced test on particular letter-sound combinations will help you know how to remediate low areas. We need to give Dibels NWF and a beginning and advanced decoding assessment to be able to decide how best to help a student who is weak in reading.</p>

Chapter 8 - Assessing Word Identification and Reading Fluency

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>To explore the research on word identification and reading fluency assessments and to determine the best practices in this kind of evaluation.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>What are some informal indicators that a word a student reads is not in the student's sight vocabulary?  <i>The child can get the word correct in context, but not in isolation; the child pronounces a word inconsistently; It takes the child 1 second or longer to begin a response to a word; the child pronounces the word slowly; the child self-corrects; the child pauses during the correct pronunciation of the word; the child puts the stress/accent on the wrong syllable; the child pronounces the word with at least one unusual sounding vowel or consonant, different from how the child would say the word orally.</i></p> <p>What is one of the best tools we have available from reading-related assessments?  <i>Timed, context-free word-level reading tasks</i></p> <p>What is the correlation between isolated word-level reading and reading comprehension?  <i>The correlation between isolated word-level reading and reading comprehension is quite high. We do not see a fluent reader with limited word identification skills.</i></p> <p>What is the largest factor that determines a child's fluency?  <i>The size of a student's sight vocabulary.</i></p> <p>What does the research say about repeated readings?  <i>The repeated reading approach seems to presume that reading speed can be improved with practice. There is plenty of research that show repeatedly reading a passage will improve the speed and accuracy of that passage. However, generalizations to unpracticed passages is very limited. Techniques that do not promote orthographic mapping have limited value in promoting fluency.</i></p> <p>What is the route to reading fluency?  <i>Letter-sound knowledge and phonological blending produce phonic decoding; phonic decoding skills combined with advanced phonemic awareness produce a sight vocabulary; and a strong sight vocabulary produces instant and accurate word reading, which in turn produces fluency.</i></p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Competitor word - a word that looks or sounds similar to the target word.</p> <p>Set for variability - The ability to correctly determine a word based upon an incorrect pronunciation of that word.</p> <p>Prosody - expressive reading, which includes timing, phrasing, emphasis, and intonation that speakers use to help convey aspects of meaning and to make their speech lively.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>What two factors can influence a student's guessing on word identification tests?  <i>They can correctly guess a word that has been partially decoded phonically and words that have few or no "competitors" in the child's phonological or semantic</i></p>

	<p>lexicon are more likely to be correctly guessed than words with more competitors.</p> <p>What are two approaches to avoid the inherent confound between sight-word recognition and correctly identifying unfamiliar words in reading tests? Use a timed, graded word list and include only irregular words</p> <p>What is a drawback to passage fluency tests? They cannot, by themselves, indicate why a student has poor fluency</p> <p>Why do timed word-reading subtests provide a better estimate of the size of a student's sight vocabulary than untimed tests? Sight words are instantly accessible so the more words instantly read on a timed test, the larger the sight vocabulary and if they have to sound out more words, they get fewer correct within the time limit.</p>
Implications for the Classroom	Becoming more fluent is associated with larger sight vocabularies. Instead of wasting valuable class time doing a variety of repeated reading techniques, spend time working on activities that promote orthographic mapping.

Chapter 9 - Assessing Reading Comprehension and Related Skills

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>To explore the research on reading comprehension assessments and to determine the best practices in this kind of evaluation. The focus of this chapter is on the skills that affect reading comprehension apart from word-level reading.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>Why is it helpful to understand the simple view of reading?  <b>The simple view of reading provides a starting point for untangling the factors involved in reading comprehension difficulties.</b></p> <p>What may cause a student to struggle in reading?  <b>A student may struggle in reading due to poor word-level reading skills, poor language skills, or both.</b></p> <p>What is best practice in reading comprehension assessment?  <b>Best practice in reading comprehension assessment will involve multiple subtests and the assessment of the key skills that underlie reading comprehension and general language comprehension.</b></p> <p>What is the goal of intervention-oriented assessment for comprehension?  <b>The goal of intervention-oriented assessment is to determine the reasons why a student struggles in reading comprehension.</b></p> <p>For a student who displays difficulty with reading comprehension, what should you assess?  <b>An assessment of listening comprehension is highly recommended for any student who displays difficulty with reading comprehension.</b></p> <p>For ELL students, what is the biggest factor affecting their reading comprehension?  <b>Vocabulary is the biggest factor affecting the reading comprehension of many ELL students.</b></p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Hyperlexic - student with good word-level reading but weak language skills.</p> <p>Mixed - student with poor word-level reading and weak language skills.</p> <p>Compensator - student with mild form of dyslexic pattern but compensates with strong language skills.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>Which two patterns of reading difficulties have reading comprehension difficulties that cannot simply be the result of poor word reading?  <b>Hyperlexic and mixed</b></p> <p>If there is a suspicion that a student may be struggling in reading comprehension as a result of subtle language problems, what may be the best assessment option?  <b>A language battery administered by a speech-language pathologist</b></p> <p>For which comprehension-related skills are there limited opportunities for formal assessment?</p>

	<p><b>Inferencing and comprehension monitoring</b></p> <p>If a reading comprehension test relies more on word-reading skills than language skills, what is likely to happen? <b>It will overestimate the reading comprehension skills of hyperlexics and it will underestimate the reading comprehension skills of dyslexics and compensator types.</b></p> <p>What would a student's skill profile include? <b>Word-level reading proficiency, particularly the size of a student's sight vocabulary; comments by teachers, parents, and the students themselves; listening comprehension, vocabulary, and other language-related test performance; other factors that are likely to influence reading comprehension (background knowledge, working memory, genre knowledge, etc) and issues such as motivation, previous learning opportunities and instruction as well as reading experience outside of school.</b></p>
Implications for the Classroom	<p>If a student struggles to comprehend what he reads, the first question is to ask if he can understand a story that is read to him. If so, there is likely a weakness in his word-level reading ability. If he struggles to comprehend stories that are read to him, more assessment is necessary and speech/language pathologists are the best people in most buildings to consult for next steps.</p>

Chapter 10 - Effective Approaches for Preventing Reading Difficulties

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>The goal of this chapter is to present the most effective, empirically validated approaches for preventing reading difficulties with a primary focus on word-level reading problems.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>What is the difference between components of effective reading instruction in prevention and intervention?  <b>The components of effective reading instruction are the same whether the focus is prevention or intervention.</b></p> <p>How can we substantially reduce the percentage of students who display reading difficulties?  <b>Training kindergarteners and first graders in phonemic awareness skills, along with explicit and systematic phonics instruction will substantially reduce the percentage of students who display reading difficulties.</b></p> <p>What is a struggling reader?  <b>A struggling reader refers to any student who is displaying reading skills below his peers.</b></p> <p>When is a student considered at-risk?  <b>A student is at-risk when they display signs that they are likely to have reading difficulties in the future.</b></p> <p>Explain what is meant by phonemic awareness being integrated with learning letters and written words.  <b>Phonemic awareness has its greatest impact when it is integrated with the learning of letters and written words, but that does not mean using letters as prompts. Phonemic awareness is using sounds only. When letters are added, it becomes phonics. Phonemic awareness activities are a great warm up just before moving into a phonics lesson.</b></p> <p>What kind of results come from teaching phonics in an explicit way?  <b>Children taught through an explicit phonics approach display scores on word-level reading test that are 6-7 standard score points higher than students that are taught phonics skills more informally.</b></p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Explicit instruction means the teacher provides clear and precise instruction.</p> <p>Systematic instruction means that the teacher has a specific plan or sequence for introducing letter-sound relationships.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>What does being ready for word-level reading mean?  <b>Having the letter-sound knowledge and phonological awareness skills needed to acquire and apply the alphabetic principle</b></p> <p>What does research suggest about preventing reading difficulties in English language learners?  <b>While they may require more attention in terms of language development and converting to different letter-sound patterns, most of the same principles of prevention are involved with ELL learners as with native English speakers.</b></p>

	<p>What combination of teaching practices provides far greater results in word-level reading skills than any other teaching practice that has been studied?  <b>Phonological awareness training plus opportunities to apply phonological awareness to letters and words</b></p> <p>What is the difference between a digraph, blend and diphthong?  <b>Digraph- two-letter combinations that represent a single phoneme</b>  <b>Blend- common consonant patterns of two and sometimes three letters that preserve the typical letter-sounds relationships</b>  <b>Diphthong- vowel combinations that when pronounced, produce a continuous vocal output in which the mouth, lips, and/or tongue position change midway through the pronunciation.</b></p> <p>Which letter names are more easily learned?  <b>Letters that contain their sound in the initial position in their names - b,d,j,k,p,t,v,z</b></p>
<p>Implications for the Classroom</p>	<p>If we systematically teach phonological awareness to every kindergarten and first grade student, we will reduce reading problems by 50-75%. If we add systematic and explicit phonics instruction, we will have many more students ready to read. We have to move away from the three-cueing system and whole word learning because we have evidence that phonemic awareness and phonics works better.</p>

Chapter 11- Effective Approaches for Overcoming or Minimizing Reading Difficulties

<p>Purpose of the Chapter</p>	<p>The goal of this chapter is to present the most effective, empirically validated approaches for correcting reading difficulties with a primary focus on word-level reading problems.</p>
<p>Big Ideas to Look For</p>	<p>What should intervention efforts be based on?  <b>Intervention efforts should be based on an understanding of both typical reading development and on the factors that disrupt this process.</b></p> <p>In order for students to be successful readers, what do they need?  <b>Students need to develop good phonic decoding skills, the capacity to easily remember the words they read, and a great deal of reading practice.</b></p> <p>What percentage of elementary students would read below a basic level if the best prevention and intervention approaches were used?  <b>If the best prevention and intervention approaches were widely used, the percentage of elementary school students reading below a basic level would be about 5%.</b></p> <p>What did highly successful interventions all include?  <b>Highly successful interventions (12.5-25 standard score point gains) all aggressively addressed and corrected phonological awareness difficulties and taught phonemic awareness to the advanced level, provided phonic decoding instruction and reinforcement, and provided students with ample opportunities to apply these developing skills to reading connected texts.</b></p> <p>For interventions that were less successful, what did they not include?  <b>Less successful interventions did not include all 3 parts or only trained phonemic awareness to the basic blending and segmenting level.</b></p> <p>Why might a student get “stuck” in phonics?  <b>The belief that some students with severe reading disabilities simply cannot learn phonics is inconsistent with the research. Students get “stuck” in phonics due to weak phonemic awareness. Once that is addressed, students will become more responsive to phonics instruction. The statute of limitations never runs out on phonemic awareness.</b></p>
<p>Terms defined</p>	<p>Treatment Resisters- students who do not respond to conventional reading interventions.</p>
<p>Review Questions to Discuss</p>	<p>Of the studies that had minimal to modest intervention outcomes, what key element was most commonly missing?  <b>Training advanced phonemic awareness skills</b></p> <p>What might be a reason that repeated readings does not have a gap-closing impact on struggling readers?  <b>It does not directly address the phonic decoding deficiencies many of the struggling readers have; It does not train phonemic awareness to the point where students can become good at orthographic mapping; it does not involve activities that integrate phonemic awareness and letter-sound knowledge with the goal of</b></p>

	<p>promoting orthographic mapping.</p> <p>What is the best way to determine if an intervention has helped weak readers narrow or even close the gap with their typically developing peers?</p> <p>Standard score point gains on normative reading tests</p>
<p>Implications for the Classroom</p>	<p>Many commercial intervention programs claim to be research based, but if they don't include all 3 of the elements of highly successful programs, they won't likely be successful at closing the gap between our least successful and most successful readers. Whatever we put into place, we need to be diligent to make sure it includes phonemic awareness training to manipulation level, explicit and systematic phonics and opportunities to practice those skills in connected texts.</p>

Chapter 12- Case Illustrations - several case studies illustrate some of the principles and concepts from the text. They serve as clarification of how student profiles might be interpreted.

Chapter 13- Reading Difficulties and Learning Disability Identification

Purpose of the Chapter	This chapter provides some insight to evaluation teams in determination of reading disabilities.
Big Ideas to Look For	<p>Is there consensus in the research field on SLD identification?  <b>The reading research field has not developed a consensus on SLD identification. Reading problems fall along a continuum, with no clear dividing line.</b></p> <p>How can most phonological awareness difficulties be remediated?  <b>Most phonological awareness difficulties can yield to explicit phonemic awareness intervention.</b></p> <p>What characteristics need to be considered when attempting to determine whether a student has a reading comprehension disability?  <b>The child's word-level reading skills and they need an evaluation of attention, working memory, vocabulary, general language skills, and background knowledge.</b></p> <p>What is lacking in most students who do not show progress in phonics?  <b>If a student is not showing much progress in phonics, it is almost always due to poor phonological awareness skills.</b></p> <p>What do you need to examine if you have RTI group sizes of 8-10?  <b>Tier 1 general education instruction</b></p> <p>What are three types of students who may be good candidates for having a reading disability?  <b>Any student in the bottom 5th percentile in reading skills, based on nationally normed assessments should be considered a good candidate for having a reading disability.</b></p> <p><b>Students whose reading skills are so low that an improvement of a standard deviation would still leave them in the bottom quartile may be good candidates for an SLD designation.</b></p> <p><b>Students with borderline untimed reading scores yet very low timed reading scores are good candidates for having a reading disability.</b></p>
Terms defined	Phonological Core Deficit - A term used by researchers for problems with the phonological underpinnings of learning to read, which can be caused by genetics, the environment (inadequate early language opportunities) or both.
Review Questions to Discuss	<p>What are the two key factors that appear to be the most relevant in determining the presence of a reading disability?  <b>Severity of reading problems and responsiveness to highly successful interventions</b></p> <p>With highly effective reading interventions, the largest reading gains occurred within how many hours of instruction?  <b>15 - 20 hours</b></p> <p>Which students does research suggest will have a higher likelihood of being</p>

	<p>treatment resisters? If students are weak in multiple factors critical for skilled reading</p> <p>Why might giving a student the designation of an SLD be best for their progress? Because the level of intervention the student needs is well beyond what would typically be provided in a general education RTI service and if they are designated as SLD, they can be given highly effective intervention approaches with daily small groups in a special education program.</p>
Implications for the Classroom	For RTI to be effective, we must reduce the total number of struggling readers with our Tier 1 instruction. Instead of using repackaged versions of classic approaches that have not proven to work, we need to shift to scientifically validated approaches.