

Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

A professional learning series presented by David Kilpatrick, Ph.D.

Module 2 Session 2

*Sponsored by the Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) and created in collaboration with
Specific Learning Disability Specialists Jill Marshall and Veronica Fiedler*



COLORADO
Department of Education

Module 2: Current Approaches to Reading Instruction: Why Many Learners still Struggle

Session 2: Why Current Reading Instruction Does Not Work Well For Struggling Learners

Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

Objective:

Through engagement in this series of 13 on-demand webinars, participants will understand the current research, implications, and the essential elements necessary for assessing, preventing, and overcoming reading difficulties.



ASSESS



PREVENT



OVERCOME

Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

Webinar Series Modules

Module 1: Reading Research and the Research to Practice Gap

Module 2: Current Approaches : Why Many Learners Still Struggle

Module 3: The Simple View Of Reading

Module 4: Word-Level Reading

Module 5: Reading Comprehension

Module 6: Introduction to Reading Assessment; Assessing Phonological Skills

Module 7: Assessing Phonics Skills

Module 8: Assessing Word Identification and Reading Fluency

Module 9: Assessing Reading Comprehension and Related Skills

Module 10: Effective Approaches for Preventing Reading Difficulties

Module 11: Effective Interventions for Reading Difficulties

Module 12: Case Examples of Reading Disabilities

Module 13: Specific Learning Disability Identification

Module 2 Overview

Module 2:

Current Approaches to Reading Instruction: Why Many Learners Still Struggle

2.1 A Very Brief History of Reading Instruction

2.2 Why Current Reading Instruction Doesn't Work for Many

2.3 Visual Memory Theory of Reading

2.4 Three-Cueing System Theory of Reading

2.5 Phonics- Strengths and Limitations

Learning Intentions



Module 2 Session 2: Current Approaches to Reading Instruction: Why Many Learners Still Struggle

Participants will be able to:

- ✓ Identify the classic approaches to teaching reading.
- ✓ Understand why these classic approaches are not effective for one third of the student population.

The Bad News

- National Assessment of Educational Progress
 - Data since the 1990s (previously Title 1 data since the 1960s)
- Title 1 Data since the 1960s
 - Yes, we will always have a bottom third, but . . .
- Drop out rates
- Behavior issues
- Self-esteem issues
- College and career choices, quality of life

The Classic Reading Approaches

- The classic philosophies have been around for centuries
- All developed in the absence of any scientific inquiry into reading development and reading difficulties
- Top two thirds of students will learn to read no matter what approach is used
 - Perhaps the true test of a reading philosophy is how well the bottom third performs

The Whole Word Approach

- Students must figure out much of the alphabetic based writing system on their own as they are exposed to words
 - Often get some explicit teaching or reinforcement, but limited
 - The top two thirds of students figure out the system
 - The bottom third does not
- Phonemic awareness must be developed on its own
 - This also happens naturally in the top two thirds of readers, but not the bottom third
- We know that all skilled readers have mastered the alphabetic system, whether directly taught it or not
 - It is not optional for reading an alphabetic-based writing system

Whole Language/Balanced Instruction

- Displays the same concerns as the whole word approach
- Letter-sound knowledge and phonemic awareness must either be developed on their own, or with limited guidance, practice, and reinforcement
- Explicit and systematic vs. implicit and opportunity based
- The bottom third does not benefit from this approach
 - This approach relies heavily on contextual guessing, which does not promote the much-needed knowledge of our alphabetic system of writing

The Phonics Approach

- Provides explicit letter-sound instruction but typically lacks adequate phonemic awareness (PA) instruction
 - Normally in phonics programs, explicit PA skills are ignored or only developed up to the level of a typical ending first grader
 - Yet PA development from 1st to 3rd influences word memory
 - Students with milder PA difficulties may take off with phonic instruction—they are phonic success stories!
 - Students with moderate PA difficulties become good decoders but do not remember the words they read
 - Limited sight vocabulary & fluency, good nonsense word reading
 - Students with severe PA difficulties do not benefit much from phonic instruction

The Linguistic Approach

- Easiest in terms of initial exposure to reading
- Limited to earliest phases of reading
 - Late kindergarten to first months of first grade
- Rime units need to be eventually anchored at the letter-phoneme level, not at rime-level as this approach implies
- Provides no phonemic awareness instruction to enhance phonics and word memory

Summary: Module 2 Session 2

- ✓ The four classical approaches all go back before reading was studied scientifically
 - ✓ Classic approaches keep getting re-used and repackaged
 - ✓ More fun and more visually appealing than earlier versions
- ✓ The classic approaches do not adequately address the needs of the bottom third of readers
- ✓ Research in the last 40 years has demonstrated the language/phonology requirements of skilled reading
 - ✓ Oral/phonemic processes are central to word reading
 - ✓ This was not known when the classic approaches were developed
 - ✓ Classic approaches cannot be faulted for leaving this out
 - ✓ We must now learn and apply this knowledge



Reflect and Connect:

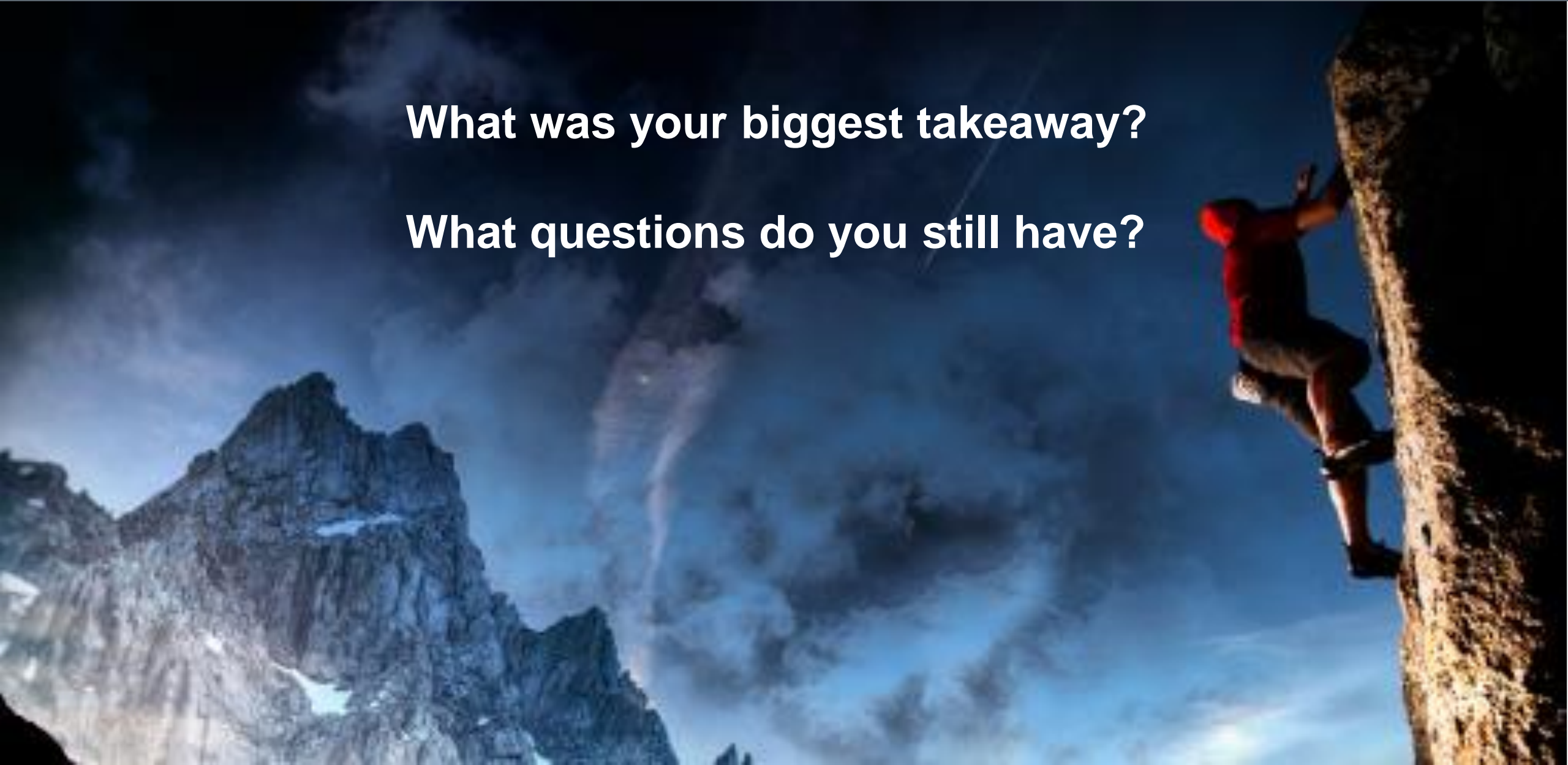
What makes the classic approaches to teaching reading ineffective for one third of students learning to read? If your school is using a curriculum that is based in one of these classic philosophies, how might you supplement your instruction to reach your most struggling readers?



Wrap Up

What was your biggest takeaway?

What questions do you still have?



Up Next

Module 2.3

Visual Memory Theory of Reading





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Please visit the CDE Specific Learning Disability Website for more information:

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-SLD>