

# Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties

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

## Module 10 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 10: Effective Approaches for Preventing Reading Difficulties**

*Session 2: Instructional Practices that Help Prevent Reading Difficulties*

# 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 to Reading Instruction: 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 10 Overview

## **Module 10: Effective Approaches for Prevention Reading Difficulties**

10.1 Evidence for the Prevention of Reading Difficulties (incl. origins of RTI)

**10.2 Instructional Practices that Prevent Reading Difficulties**

# Learning Intentions



## **Module 10 Session 2: Instructional Practices That Help Prevent Reading Difficulties**

Participants will be able to:

- ✓ **Identify specific instructional practices that reduce the likelihood of difficulties**

# Foundational Instructional Practices

- The two foundational instructional Tier 1 teaching practices for kindergarten and first grade are
  - Explicit and systematic letter-sound instruction
  - Explicit and systematic phonological awareness instruction
- These had the greatest prevention effects for word-level reading difficulties
- The meaning of *explicit* and *systematic*
- Letter-sound instruction is not enough
  - Studies including letter-sound instruction without phonemic awareness did not do as well

# Double Dose for Students At-Risk

- Most studies with the best outcomes focused on Tier 1 *or* Tier 2, not both in conjunction with one another
- However, best practice would suggest starting Tier 1 instruction in letter-sound skills and phonological skills early and supplement that with at-risk students in small group



# Using Letters to Teach Phonemic Awareness

- A statement by the National Reading Panel (NRP; 2000) has been interpreted by many to say phonemic awareness should be taught using letters
  - “. . . explicitly and systematically teaching children to manipulate phonemes with letters. . .”
- This was not the intent of the NRP
  - Examining the studies which “used letters” vs. “did not use letters”
  - Examining the Panel’s example study to illustrate their point
  - Directly asking the chair of that section of the NRP
- Phonemic skills must be eventually oral and automatic
  - Teaching the skills may involve multisensory prompts, however

# Using Teaching Phonological/Phonemic Awareness

- Phonological awareness includes
  - Rhyming, first sound awareness, syllable segmentation
  - Onset-rime awareness
  - Phoneme awareness
  - It is ***phoneme*** awareness that interacts with reading because alphabetic writing uses phoneme-based characters (i.e., letters); the other levels are preparatory for phoneme-level awareness
- Multiple tasks have been successfully used at K-1
  - Segmentation, blending, categorizing, identifying, manipulation
  - Phoneme manipulation more important for remediation (See Module 11)

# Learning the Code - Letters

- Teach letter names or sounds first
  - People have very strong opinions – the research is equivocal
  - Sounds needed for blending, names already known from alphabet and can be helpful instructionally for reading and spelling
- Teaching digraphs and blends
  - Digraphs – function like individual letters
  - Blends extremely common in English
- Precisely pronounce letter sounds in isolation
  - T does not say “tuh”!
  - Imprecise letter sound instruction affects blending for at-risk students

# Teaching the Code – Additional Concepts

- Teaching phonic rules
  - The basic rules are useful
  - Teaching all the exceptions to the rules have not been shown to help students catch up
- Combine with spelling
- Use distributed practice
- Embedded Picture Mnemonics

# Summary: Module 10 Session 2

- ✓ There are many features and factors that make early word-reading effective
- ✓ It is most effective to directly and systematically teach phonological skills to the point where those skills are automatic and oral only
- ✓ Also most effective is direct teaching of letter-sound relationships, using precise pronunciations, and given many distributed practice opportunities



A woman with long brown hair and black-rimmed glasses is shown from the chest up, looking upwards and to the right with a thoughtful expression. Her right hand is raised to her chin, with her index finger pointing up. The background is a light grey color with several black question marks scattered throughout. On the left side, there is a large black thought bubble with a white border. Inside the bubble, the text is written in white. The overall image conveys a sense of deep thought and reflection.

## **Reflect and Connect:**

What reading comprehension subtests do you use? How might you use or interpret them differently?

# Wrap Up



**What was your biggest takeaway?**

**What questions do you still have?**

# Up Next

**Module 11.1**  
**How Do We Determine What is Effective?**







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

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