Sight Word Learning: What SLPs Need to Know
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- [Carolyn] At this time, it is my pleasure to welcome back to speechpathology.com our presenter, Miss Jeanne Tighe. This Tighe is the owner and clinical director of Beyond Communication LLC, a private practice serving individuals with communication and learning needs. She obtained credentialing by the International Dyslexia Association as a certified dyslexia practitioner. She has served on the board of directors of the New Jersey branch of the International Dyslexia Association. She is also a board certified specialist in child language, and an adjunct professor at the College of New Jersey. Miss Tighe has built an interdisciplinary practice that now includes a dozen professionals committed to using evidence-based practices to advance communication skills and academic achievement for all learners. Miss Tighe, welcome back to speechpathology.com, and at this time, I'll turn the microphone over to you.

- [Jeanne] Thank you so much, Carolyn. It's a pleasure to be back at speechpathology.com to talk to everyone today about sight word learning. This is a presentation I put together because I have seen in my work in the public schools throughout New Jersey, that were making a lot of gains in helping kids with structured literacy in evidence-based literacy learning practices. But sight word learning is kind of often, in my experience been sort of to the side of some of those practice changes. So today we're gonna explore what's the deal with sight words? What do we need to know? And what can we do to help our kids succeed in this area? So, first, briefly, I just need to mention that I have no financial or nonfinancial relationships relative to this presentation to disclose to you. And we have three learning outcomes for our time together today. At the end of this course, my goal is for all of you to be able to, first, be able to explain how it is that a word, a printed word is stored in long-term memory; to be able to explain the differences between a print-to-speech style of instruction and a speech-to-print instructional approach, which we're going to be going over today, and finally, to be able to describe a sight word instructional technique and apply it for sure, based on the principle of orthographic mapping. So, we are going to begin with a discussion about what is a sight word? This term gets a lot of attention, but it can

mean totally different things to different people. I see in classrooms that many teachers talk about sight words with their students, and with each other, and with parents as words that are just high frequency, just words that are common, commonly encountered in grade level print, particularly in the early grades. Words that show up frequently in kindergarten, first grade, second grade texts are frequently treated as sight words. And we see these words on the Dolch list for example, and the Fry list which were put together, quite simply through counting words that show up in text and how frequently they show up. So, just plain old high frequency word is often what people mean when they say a sight word. Now, another way that sight words are talked about by teachers and in classrooms is as a, words that are phonetically irregular or not highly predictable.

These words may be high frequency, may be not, but so often, teachers treat sight word as meaning a word that we can't decode. And those of us who've trained in a lot of different literacy programs have heard other words for this kinda word like red words, for example. Red words meaning stop decoding because they don't follow the rules. Now, the idea of a word being irregular itself is a bit problematic because many words are only temporarily irregular, meaning a child at a certain phase in development of literacy might not know, have noticed or been instructed in a certain orthographic pattern in that word when they're a kindergartner, or a first grader when they're five or six. But that pattern or structure of a certain word may become demystified later and actually be rule governed, they just don't know that rule yet. So sometimes words are only temporarily irregular. Some words have, have structures that are not very likely or unique to a certain word, but those are rarer than many think. With all of that said, all those footnotes, these two broad concepts, words that are just really common or words that are irregular are generally what I still see in classrooms, people talking about as sight words. Now, in contrast to that, you dive into reading science and the literature surrounding reading science, reading researchers and people who are advocating a scientific reading practice look at sight words differently. Here, there's this

idea that a sight word is any written word that is instantly, automatically recognized in print by the reader. So doesn't matter if it's high frequency, doesn't matter whether it's regular or irregular. If the reader looks at a word and instantly knows it, and instantly can say it, that's a sight word for that person. So for all of us, for example, who are joining together today to talk about this the word pathologist is a sight word. We've seen it thousands and thousands of times, we say it without thinking about it because we've had that connection to that word, and that learning opportunity. It is neither high frequency, actually, it happens to be quite regular.

So it's not irregular, but it's a sight word to us. This idea of sight words meaning words that are instantly and automatically recognized, this is what we want to achieve for our kids. So over the next hour or so, this is really what I'm gonna be talking about when I'm talking about sight words. Now, the creation of sight words in this way, meaning words that are instantly, automatically recognized in print, this is the key to reading fluency. So to illustrate this idea, what happens for kids who are new readers, they come across a new word in print, they may be decoded that word, maybe that word is just provided to them, maybe an adult just says the word for the child but somehow they get that word to match to speech, that is repeated a few times. And in typical development, those few exposures between speech and print are all that, that child needs to take that word and store it into long-term memory, and then have it be instantly and automatically recognized thereafter.

So that word is now a sight word. That little process happens over and over, and over again by the thousands, and what we get as a result of that process is reading fluency. If a reader can recognize the vast majority of words on the page instantly and automatically, they're gonna read smoothly and quickly and without a lot of spent bandwidth, which we need when we encounter words that are not instantly and automatically recognized. So I think this is an important point that we, decoding gets a lot of attention as well it should, but also in order to build reading fluency decoding

isn't the end of the story, it's actually the beginning of the story. We need kids to decode words and then store them so they don't have to decode those words anymore. I think it was about a month or two ago at the International Dyslexia Association Convention, Dr. Jan Wasowicz from Learning By Design, said to the people at the convention a quote that made the rounds, and I love it so much, I'm gonna share it. She said, "Every word wants to be a sight word "when it grows up." I think that's a great way of looking at it. I'm gonna expand that just a little bit to say, every word has the potential to be a sight word when it grows up. And that's what we want for kids. We want kids to make as many written words as possible, sight words. So how does that happen? How do we get a new word in print to become a sight word? First of all, let's think about knowing words in general. I'm going to talk through this concept of words having multiple identities.

This comes from the connectionist model of reading. The little graphic that you see here is adapted from the work of Mark Seidenberg, you can find a lot of information about this in his book: "Language at the Speed of Sight" from 2017. So let's think about how kids learning words and how words exist in cognitively, kind of exist in learning in a kid's brain. So, we're gonna use the word witch as an example. The word witch has multiple identities, just the way I have multiple identities as a mom and a wife and a speech pathologist, I am many things.

The word witch is many things, it is phonological, it's the sounds that you hear that has a phonological identity, those sounds: wu, itch, and how they go together in coarticulation when we actually speak those sounds together. That's it's phonological identity. Which, has a semantic identity. So we hear that word and it's going to trigger for us, probably, first and foremost, if we're evoking kind of an image, a semantic understanding, an image of maybe kind of the Wicked Witch of the West, kind of witch. It also has particular usage that's associated with it. That's its semantic and maybe some syntactic identities, which we're gonna continue to talk about as we go through.

5

And then, witch has an orthographic identity. So it has a spelling, a set of letters that are tied to it. And in this case, it's W-I-T-C-H. Which of course is different than W-H-I-C-H, which would have a whole different set of identities. So that orthographic identity W-I-T-C-H, ties to the semantic identity, ties to the phonological identity. And kids come to learning to read with, hopefully, we hope in typical development we expect that children are coming to school to learn to read with many, many phonological and semantic and syntactic identities of words stored in their long-term memory, that's in their language system already. And what our goal is as teachers, as people who are helping them become literate is to tie this new identity, this orthographic identity to those other two.

Now, that's how sight, that's one of the ways that sight words are created by bonding the orthographic identity permanently to the phonological and semantic identities. We need those things to be permanently, tightly glued together. And as we go on, and we talk about more about this, one of the things we'll discuss is what happens when those other identities aren't super solid when a child comes to reading? That's a preview of things to come. So for now, let's stick with normal development for a little while. Let's stick with typical development and expectations of kind of the process of word learning and typical development. Linnea Ehri is a wonderful reading researcher who has published a lot of fantastic information about how sight word learning occurs, and how word reading occurs.

I'm going to summarize here her phase theory, which is gonna be drawn primarily from her chapter in the 2005 book, "The Science of Reading: A Handbook." Although, of course, she's got many, many publications on this topic. So this theory describes typical development, but what we'll see as we talk about it is that kids who struggle, are kids with developmental language disorder, are kids with dyslexia. They go through the same phases, just maybe in different timelines and maybe not all the way to the end. So let's look at her, what Dr. Ehri says these phases look like. So first, children

start out in a pre-alphabetic phase. The pre-alphabetic phase describes a time in development. It often starts in the preschool years when children start to recognize words, but they're doing it by using visual or contextual clues, not by really doing what we'd call reading. So for example, a child may recognize the cover of their favorite book and know the title. So they can see that picture and pick that up, and name the book, "Oh, look, read me, "Goodnight Moon"," but they're not really reading that title, Goodnight Moon. Or they might see the golden arches of the McDonald's sign and say McDonald's, but they're not truly reading that sign.

This might also happen with something like finding your name tag at circle time in preschool. My name tag has a worm on it, so I look for the worm and I know that's my name tag, and I'm not really reading my name, maybe at that moment, but I'm using some cues. That may also be visual cues about the word itself, my first name is Jeanne. I remember as a young kid that my name began with a letter that was a hook with a hat. That hat was cool and I remembered that hat on top of the J, and that was a cue for me before I could fully read.

Now, they move through that phase into the next phase, which is the partial alphabetic phase as the child starts to acquire some letter-sound relationships, and also some phonemic awareness. So as children start to understand that words are made of individual sounds and start to be able to pinpoint what those sounds are, and also match letters to sounds, we get this situation where early literate children are using some of the sounds in a spoken word to read or spell it and using some of the letters in a written word to match it to spoken words, but not working all the way through all of those sounds and all of those sound-letter combinations. The example I have for you here, now, here's where we're, as a reminder, we're talking about typical development, but also kids who have language and literacy disorders don't really have a fully different process, they're going through the same process, but they get stuck. What you're looking at here on your screen is the work of a child who at the time that she wrote this

was eight years old. And according to typical development, probably, should have been well past the partial alphabetic phase, but was stuck there. And if we look at her work, we can see some of these partial phonetic and partial alphabetic patterns. Let me point out a few words to you. This is a really, I find this to be a really fascinating writing sample, and to give you some context, the child in this sample is telling about a story in which it's an anecdote, in which her family went to get a puppy. Their family adopted a Chihuahua. So she's talking about she and her sister, or her sister brought home this Chihuahua puppy. And the sample starts with this word. I'm sorry, let me get that right in the right spot.

This is the word my. So the child here, the author used some sound values in the word my, we have an M, and we have the letter I, but then we have this additional sound that doesn't belong there. So she's not fully representing the phonemes in the word. Here, we have the word decide. She used the letter D, which sounds like the syllable D. It is literally the whole first syllable of the word. So here a letter name is standing in place of an entire syllable. And then she has represented the rest of the sounds of the word, but there's a, the partial alphabetic situation there is that there's no representation of the E sound, it's integrated into the letter name. Here, this is her representation of the word Chihuahua. So what a difficult word to try to represent phonologically, right?

The letters we see are: C, R, O, W. This one was so phonologically overwhelming, this child couldn't parse out those sounds, and segment it, and manage all of those sounds. But we have a W, which is significant, because if you think about that way, that word sounds Chihuahua, that sound is very prominent, but clearly can't work all the way through the word. I'm gonna point out just one more. We could look at almost every word in this sample and really have a lot of, really be very intellectually excited 'cause it's such a cool sample. But take a look at this one down here, V-A-Y, this is they. So this error is a straight up poor phonological representation error, meaning in her long-term memory, she's struggling to just discriminate the sounds of V, and th,

8

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which we speech pathologists understand are very close in terms of their manner and voicing, and their acoustic characteristics. And she's not matching that to letter, she's really not parsing a sound phonologically or identifying it phonologically. So, this child certainly is using alphabetic principle to an extent, but it's partially alphabetic. And this is typical, these are typical errors for a child earlier, generally younger and earlier in the developmental phase. What we're looking at here is a child who's dyslexic and is older, but is still stuck at this stage. Now, let's kind of shift back. So typical development, then, or really, really although we're talking about typical development my point is also this happens to all kids.

Moving on. The next phase, let me get rid of my little arrow here because we don't need at the moment. There we go. The next phase is full alphabetic. So the child that hopefully moves from using some sound value and some letter combinations to fully representing a spoken word with all of the sounds present, and fully using all of the letters and the orthographic cues and written word to match to sounds and get to the full sound of the spoken word. Now, that sounds great. And it is, but it's not the end of the story because a child can represent a word with every sound in place and still have it be spelled wrong because English is not a transparent orthography and English is a, a couple things that are good to remember about English which I'm sure many of us in this group know but always good reminders: we are a morphophonemic language meaning that we don't just straight up connect letters to sounds, we are, we represent morphology as well.

And English is also really like almost all languages to an extent probabilistic, meaning there's for any given word we could come up with there are multiple possibilities of how we could spell it. And so, learning conventional spellings involves learning what is likely given various contexts. So here, let's take a look at this example to help illustrate what the full alphabetic phase can look like and why it's not the end of the story. For some context, the sample that you're looking at here is the work of an eighth grade

student who is dyslexic, and this student has a lot of very good skills as we can see in her writing, and yet she's stuck at the full alphabetic phase. So we can see, let's take a look at some of these errors. This is moisture. Well, she did a pretty good job of representing the sounds in the word, but it's not right. Revolve. Impeach. Require Squirt. If we think about the letters she's chosen to represent these words, they are very logical and they represent the sound in the words quite fully. So, that's the full alphabetic phase.

The student is able to. The student has solid phonological representations of the spoken word in their long-term memories and they are matching those solid phonological representations to letters but certain elements are still missing, specifically morphological information and units, orthographic units that help, that are conventions to represent, that are conventions that form spellings in certain contexts. So moving past that phase where we want to get our children, where we wanna get our learners is to the consolid alphabetic phase. In the consolidated alphabetic phase, the child not only is using all of the sounds, and is not only representing the word all the way through but is also storing and recognizing words with these morphographemic connections where units of the words are working together, they are unitizing. So they are using whole syllables.

They are using blends and clusters. They are using multiple vowel spelling options that may include many letters representing one sound. And they can move these building blocks as units rather than working sound by sound. The illustration you see here is actually from my own son's homework, it's from, in their spelling program in his school they're using the program Words Their Way, which really focuses a lot on unitization. It's trying to draw kids' attention to patterns and chunks, like as chunks in words, which is a good thing, in that the consolidated alphabetic phase happens for in typical development, has a lot of value. There's a potential difficulty though, that we need to be aware of for our kids who have vulnerabilities, which is for if a child is stuck at the

partial alphabetic phase, working on unitization is likely not helpful because they haven't prepared, they haven't moved all the way through the developmental steps and may not have the foundations needed to make use of those units yet. We need to move them step by step through this process. What's happening here, once a child gets through these stages of learning, and then can apply everything we just talked about? What's happening is what's called orthographic mapping. Now, orthographic mapping is the process by which the phonemes of the spoken word are, act like mental anchors, they're like pegs, they're like coat hooks stuck in your wall. And then the letters of the written word are attached to those pegs like hanging up your coats on your hooks. Doing this, hanging the letters on the sounds is relatively easy when a word has transparent orthography. It's a little harder when a word has more opaque orthography, meaning it doesn't look like quite how we'd expect it.

But regardless of whether the word, a word has transparent orthography or opaque orthography, this bonding, this phonological framework acting as hooks to hang the letters on it happens for all words. There's one process by which written words get stored in long-term memory. Doesn't matter whether they're regular, irregular or not. I've said this a few times 'cause I think it's really important, and I think this insight, I see it not quite having made its way into a lot of mainstream instruction yet. I think I see a lot of treatment of words teaching and learning as though there are two separate things that happen, how regular words get learned and how sight words get learned, and that's not the case.

At a cognitive level, the best available evidence that we have now says, it's the same process for regular and irregular words. There's a spoken word, the spoken word has sounds, the sounds act as anchors, and then the reader has to hang those written letters, like ornaments on the Christmas tree, which what, kinda what these look remind me of in my little graphic here, hang those on the sounds. So it's easy for a word like stop because those hooks go obvious places. It is more difficult for a word

like through, like through the tunnel, because we have multiple letters and they wouldn't necessarily be the ones that we expect hanging on a particular phoneme. But nonetheless, mapping is how those words get learned. So this is what we know about how word learning happens. So why is it if all of these things occur, why is it that for some children, sight word learning, in other words, storage of words into long-term memory so that they're instantly and automatically recognized and produced like in spelling, why is it that it's so difficult for so many children? I'm gonna go through now some possible reasons why this may go awry. As I do, I just wanna make a note that I'm going to start with an assumption. I'm gonna start with an assumption that we're thinking about kids, 'cause I'm sure all of us as we learn new stuff like this, we're thinking about kids we know, right? We're thinking about kids on our caseload, kids we've seen in classrooms. Excuse me. I'm gonna assume that we're thinking about kids who are acquiring or have acquired basic phoneme graphing correspondence with decent proficiency.

And I'm making that assumption because I think that's one of the things that our classrooms are best at. Teachers know from the time kids are three, four years old, we're gonna teach them their letters, and we're gonna teach them the sounds that the letters make. Some kids still have long-term lingering difficulties with that, but it's generally something that goes very well. Even the most struggling readers that I see generally know their letters and sounds pretty well by the end of first grade, even the ones who are struggling a lot. So let's for now assume that letter-sound knowledge isn't the problem. We are confident that they're acquiring that, okay. And if it isn't, if that's not happening, it's gonna get attention, so we're not too concerned about. We're gonna talk now about aspects of the, moving words into sight word status process that don't tend to get as much attention. So, first of all, let's talk about what the problem likely is not. This is a message I want to shout from the rooftops, sight word learning is not about visual memory. It is not a visual memory, visual storage process. Now, in the context of our hour and a half today, I don't have time to go over all of the research that

shows that this is the case. But if you're interested in the specific underpinnings of that knowledge, how do we know that it's not visual memory, it's all there. I'm gonna refer you one more time back to Mark Seidenberg. His book, "Language at the Speed of Sight" has a long explication of how all these studies and how they were structured so that we, that show us that visual memory is not the process at work here. So I'm gonna ask you for the moment to trust me on that one. And I think we'll see it's a linguistic process. So first of all, the problem likely isn't a visual memory problem. It's probably not basic lack of attention.

There are studies that look at treating kids for attentional problems, and then seeing that lots of things get better but reading doesn't if we don't change the reading instruction. It's probably not lack of practice. Kids who struggle to form sight words they're often the ones who are practicing with flashcards and repetition the most. We ask them lots of practice. The problem likely isn't that they aren't doing enough fancy multisensory things like sand writing, or making letters out of beans, which are the kinds of strategies I often see get put into place when teachers feel like I don't know what else to do to try to cement this word in my kid's brain. That's not the thing that's gonna cement it in their brain. And the problem also is probably not that it just hasn't clicked yet. Waiting isn't gonna help, I think all of us, I think we as speech pathologists are great advocate voices for getting in there early.

Although there's still out there in the world of literacy education, there's still a lot of give him time. And I say him because that's used frequently with boys, but in general, give them time and it'll just click. Not gonna just click. So what could be going awry? Well, remember those word identities going back, a bunch of slides you saw my triangle of circles, and I said words have multiple identities and let's focus on three main identities, phonological identity, semantic/syntactic identities, I'm gonna lump those together for the time being, and then orthographic identity. Well, one of the likely problems for kids who are struggling to store words in long-term memory is that maybe

that phonological word identity, phonological word identities in general are weak. We are well aware. We know, we've known for a long time that core problems with phonological processing are, have a heavy influence on outcomes in reading. And so, there's so much about phonology that could be the weak spot, that is, that for many kids makes it difficult to store printed words in long-term memory. So I think what's maybe a slightly new insight, though, than we've had is that, that core phonological problem, it doesn't become irrelevant when we talk about sight words. But I think in classrooms, it's often treated that way.

You need your phonological awareness to do the decoding, but then the sight words live over here in the corner, we do those at that station, and we do them differently. It's not different, kids need as strong if not stronger, and I'll explain that in a minute, phonological representations of irregular words and function words, and high frequency words than they need of the other ones. So those phonological representations if they're weak, that is very possibly a cause for breakdown in long-term word storage. We know that phonemic awareness training is vital. We know that I think we as speech pathologists were some of, you are the choir that I'm preaching to on that issue.

I do want to make a slight extension of that to say, there's great evidence that is out there and coming out and continuing to be looked at that shows that phonemic awareness training that includes teaching of articulatory gestures has bigger and longer lasting effects than auditory based instruction alone. So what I mean by that is, when we're teaching kids the sounds of their language, when we're including visuals of what their mouth is supposed to look like, when we're letting them look in the mirror to see their mouths, when we're drawing their attention to what's happening in their mouths, their noses and their throats with. I'm sorry, I'm hitting my microphone 'cause of course, I'm touching my face as I'm saying this, not that you can see me do that. When we're drawing their attention to the feel and the sight of how those sounds are

14

produced. So matching the articulation to the letters and the sounds, that boosts the effect of the phonological awareness training, on the phonemic awareness training. I think that's something that we need to kinda help get that good word out. It's such a great practice, it's so beneficial. And doing so it's gonna help our kids. And I say our kids, as speech pathologists, our kids who we are most focused on who have these real core phonological deficits. So with all that said, one thing that could be going awry with storage, long term storage of written words is that the phonological piece is weak.

I also I'm gonna give a quick plug to another speechpathology.com session, if I may, Kelly Farquharson has a session here on speechpathology.com that talks about phonological, long-term phonological problems and their connection to speech sound disorders and reading, that's very worth following up with if you're interested in what I'm saying right now, and haven't done that one yet, and want to learn more. So one issue we could have is that maybe the kid's stuck at the partial alphabetic phase because their phonological skills aren't working them all the way through the word accurately.

Another possible problem, remember the three ovals? Another possible problem is that semantic oval at the top, maybe the child is maybe the child is struggling to form good semantic or syntactic or morphological representations of the words that we're targeting. Now, here's some really important research for us as SLPs to know. The function, the linguistic function of the word that we're targeting as a sight word matters. It is easier to orthographically map and thus turn into a sight word words that are semantically concrete than words that are not. So for example, it is a lot easier to store the orthography for the word cat, C-A-T, than it is to store the orthography for the word be, like I want to be a speech pathologist when I grow up, simply because kids have a mental representation of a cat. How do you have a mental representation of be? You don't, it's not semantically concrete. Doesn't have much semanticity at all, it's really a purely syntactic word. So when there're those hooks, those connections, there's not as

much to connect a word like be to in their linguistic system. And I reference a study here by Miles and Ehri from 2017, where they show this, they illustrate this phenomenon that orthographic mapping to semantically concrete words is just easier, okay. Now, to take that a step further, Dawson and Ricketts also similarly showed that mapping is at risk when any of the other word identities is weak. So if the child has a weak phonological representation or a weak syntactic representation, meaning how do I even use this word? Or a weak semantic representation, I don't even know what that word means. Mapping is gonna be vulnerable. Now, this is really profound, I think to us speech and language pathologists because, because we work with kids with developmental language disorder. And kids with DLD have fundamental deficits in semantics, and syntax and morphology, right? So they're gonna have weaker representations of words that they're bringing to school in these early years as they're trying to learn how to read.

They're gonna already be vulnerable. Their ovals aren't all filled in, right? They're just weaker. And so, they're at a disadvantage for learning to read and spell some of these real function words. Kids with DLD may or may not have problems in phonology, but we certainly, I'm sure, all know kids who are those double deficit kids, who have the language content and structure problems, and also have the phonological problems. If you're familiar with the Simple View of Reading, which you are, if you did my previous speechpathology.com session, and I'm sure those of you who are interested in this topic are. But if you're not familiar, I refer you to my other speechpathology.com session.

So the Simple View of Reading talks about these two as two separate processes. There's the phonological meaning the word recognition part, and the language comprehension or the language content structure part. And we know that the bottom left hand corner of the Simple View of Reading says there's those double deficit kids who have struggles in all those areas. Well, no wonder it didn't make so much sense

then when we think about it. Of course, storing orthographic identities of words is gonna be difficult. And just to kind of further illustrate the point if we think about our kids with developmental language disorder, who struggle fundamentally with the structural parts of language, look at the kinds of words that are targeted early in the Fry list and the Dolch list. There are no real semantic identities for these words. I know one of the ones that sticks in my mind is of. One of the tests I give frequently, I ask a child to spell of.

And so many kids look at me with a blank look like, "What?" They can't even, until I say a sentence, until I use it in context, that doesn't trigger anything for them, and sometimes I have to give several examples, the United States of America; I have heard of that YouTuber before, and then maybe we get an, "Oh, okay." But that's really vague and difficult to map to, and children may not use some of these words, especially some of the irregular verb inflections correctly in their own speech. So yes, our children with developmental language disorder, especially our double deficit, phonological, and linguistic difficulty kids are vulnerable.

One more problem under the header of why sight word learning's so hard for some children. One more thing that could be going on is it could be that the child has they've got their phonological representations. Maybe they've got their semantic and syntactic language stuff put together, but they have never gotten to that consolidated phase. They're not unitizing, they're treating everything as letter by letter or or maybe small chunks but really sound by sound and not recognizing and using those morphemic kind of chunks and conventional chunks and units that speed storage and recognition. So these problems make sense, I think, and those of us who work with kids who are struggling readers, kids with language vulnerabilities, I think it's easy to recognize these processes in kids we know. And I know when I learned all these things I was, so I'm kinda saying to myself, yep, yep, yep, I see all of that, I see all of that in kids I know. So what do we do about it? Everybody's favorite part, let's talk about what we do

about it. I'm going to talk to you about speech to print style of instruction. The concepts in the following slides are drawn from and adapted from the work of Miles, Rubin, and Gonzales-Frey, David Kilpatrick and others, and I wanna take the moment, a moment right now to just mention, you do have the three handouts that are downloadable for today's presentation. One of them is a full bibliography and I've noticed several of you have asked me to kind of go back over something I suggest that you read. Take a look at that References page, you'll see the Mark Seidenberg book is on there. This article that is cited on this slide by Miles, Rubin, and Gonzalez-Frey is a fantastic full text available online, instructional, like outline kind of article that is great for you to download, have handy and share with others who maybe are not members of speechpathology.com, and are not doing this presentation. So do go look at that References page, there's a lot of great stuff for you there. So, speech to print instruction.

Now, before we dive into speech to print instruction let's talk about the opposite. What's happening now? What's happening in the kind of instruction that our kids are seeing in their classrooms? Now, of course, I'm gonna be making kinda some generalizations here, but I get to travel to many, many, many, many schools in my home state of New Jersey, and here are some things that I see are showing up in classrooms. So when teachers are trying to teach their children sight words, generally the very first thing that happens is the teacher shows the word.

Right there before anything else happens, if we start with showing a printed word, we're starting with print. That's why it's print to speech, we're starting with print. We show the print and then we work with it from there. Additional practice might include the activities like sky writing or sand writing, kids are asked to write their sight words in different colors just to kinda keep life interesting and practice a lot, just write them three times. So a lot of these activities that are happening in classrooms that I see frequently are just practice based. This one is really problematic. Some teachers are

still doing waterfall writing. So what that means is, let's say they're practicing the word where, like where did the dog go? They would write a W, and the next line W-H, and then the next line W-H-E, and then the next line, W-E-H-R, and then W-H-R-E. This is downright problematic because doing that practice breaks up units, it is actually working against unitizing. We need that W-H to be created in that child's memory as a unit. So that one is perilous. There's instruction that's happening where children are encouraged to look at the shape of the word, which letters are tall and which letters are small has no value. And unscramble words, that also is potentially contrary to unitizing.

Again, you're looking letter by letter rather than matching the logic of the orthography to the phonology. Fortunately, I see those last three things that I just mentioned rarely but they are out there and a quick Google search for sight words, if you do a Google image search for sight words you'll see instructional activities that are, that are out there on the internet that are those things and they are being used in classrooms. And one thing that I see that's happening a lot still is not, in my neck of the woods is still a dominant practice is looking at words that are high frequency words, practicing them a little bit and then putting them on the word wall in the classroom which is organized alphabetically.

And on that alphabetic word wall, you've got situations where you have the letter T, and you have a word, like tack, and then the next word under T is the. And yeah, they both start with T but that's not helping unitization it's not helping phonology, it's not really going to be a useful reference that's gonna build the kind of skills we're looking at. So these kinds of things are print to speech practices, meaning focusing on that print and trying to get it to connect other things. And these practices as a group, don't encourage the mapping that we've been talking about throughout this session that the science of reading the evidence tells us is what we need to have happen, so what can we do? Let's shift that, instead of going from print to speech let's go from speech to print. So the core principle of a speech to print instructional approach is very simple,

start with speech. Start with the oral language, start with the spoken word. The very first thing we're gonna do in a speech to print instructional lesson about a word is we're gonna say it, we're gonna start with the spoken word. We're gonna work with the properties of the word that exists in oral language first, and then we're gonna map on the letters. By doing it this way, we're harnessing, we're using that phonological framework that we talked about those Christmas ornaments on those hooks to make the connections from speech to print explicit, rather than just sort of hoping the kid is gonna figure that out on their own, which is really what a lot of instruction that's popular right now does.

Kind of crossing fingers and hoping that's just gonna happen, which it does in typical development for many kids but not for vulnerable kids. By doing this speech to print thing that we're about to look at. Our goal is that we're gonna build cognitive habits that promote orthographic mapping of all words, not just the ones we're gonna directly teach, because what you're about to see is I'm gonna walk you through teaching a written word. Well, we can't do that, of course, for all words, we can do it for a very few amount of words. We don't have instructional time with anybody to do that for lots and lots and lots of words, but if we craft our instruction of the words that we choose to teach as individual units, if we craft our instruction in ways that build habits, then we're giving the child tools to do that as a cognitive process on their own. Even for those irregular words, which are generally talked about like that, can't happen. It can, there is a process, there is logic to them.

All right, so I am going to show you in a few minutes, not quite yet. In a few minutes, I'm gonna show you a video of a sample lesson where I'm going to be doing a speech to print introduction of a new word with a student. But first I wanna walk you through what you're gonna see, okay. Again, quick reference to your handouts and your downloadable handouts, you have, one of those handouts is titled Outline Teaching Steps. This is a real clean, one page summary of all the steps of what you're about to

see me do with this kiddo in the demonstration. So it's here on your slides, I'm gonna preview it, but you also have just like, you could keep that one page handy and use it as a guide to do this right now, and in an hour and a half when you get out of here with your next kid. It's really simple and you don't need anything special to do it. So take a look at that handout for later on when you say, "Oh, I wanna try that. "What were the steps?" All right, so here's what you're gonna see. The situation we're thinking about is introducing a new targeted word. So this is the first time the lesson that you're about to see is a first introduction targeting a new word in print. So what am I gonna do? I'm gonna start with oral language. First thing I'm gonna do is say the word. I'm gonna have the student repeat the word. We're gonna use that word in spoken sentences. My outline says you as the teacher use the word in spoken sentence and then have the child use the word in a spoken sentence. You're actually gonna see in this video, in my casual interactions with this student, I ask him to do it first, I ask him, can you use that word in a sentence?

And he freezes. And he freezes because the word that we're gonna be using is does, and does is one of those words that doesn't have a super duper semantic representation. It's a pure function word. It's an irregular verb conjugation. And he for a moment goes, "Oh, my God, "I don't know if I know how to use that word. "I'm really kinda blanks." And then, you'll see I model for him to help him, and we use the word in both sentence and question inflection to kind of explore a few usages of it. All this time, all those things we're doing they're oral language, we haven't even looked at any print yet, no print. So we've started with oral language, then we're gonna move into phonology, we're gonna discuss the sound properties of the word in, depending on what word you're targeting, you might count, and depending on your student and where they are in their skills, and this is where knowing your student and what they need comes into play. You might count syllables. You might identify rhyme units in the word. You might, you're definitely gonna phonemically segment. I would say you're gonna phonemically segment probably, all of the words that you teach in this way. You

might identify morphemes if they are identifiable and present based on the word you're using and how far along your student is. If you've been working with a phonological or a phonemic awareness program that incorporates articulatory gestures, you're gonna make those references with this word, this probably irregular, function-based word. You're gonna use those articulatory references. In this video, I do not do that. You will not see me doing that with this kid, with this word in this moment, you will see there's an articulatory reference chart in the background because I do that sometimes, I did not do that in this moment. If that's something that's, you're doing with a particular kid, it's a great time to work it in. And then you're gonna mark a placeholder for each of the phonemes in the target word.

At this point, still, we've gone through a bunch of steps, it only takes, at this point, we've probably worked for about a minute. He's done no print. We have primed all of the oral language processes. We've primed the usage, we've primed the phonology, now it's time to bridge to print. You're gonna see me ask the student to predict what letters he thinks might be used to spell those sounds. So we're going to reference letter-sound knowledge by making predictions. Well, it sounds like it should be, and then I'm gonna write the word with the conventional spelling.

And we're gonna compare the conventional spelling to the student's prediction, in order to find the parts of the word that break our predictions. And also find the parts of the word that match our predictions. And I think this is a really important point because sight words, irregular words get a bad rep, right? We talk about them as shriek words, we talk about them as red words, we talk about them in these ways that are like, oh my gosh, these crazy rule breaking words, they have no logic. No, most of them have some logic. So by predicting what we think it might look like in print, and then looking at what it actually does look like in print, we're almost always gonna find something that matches. There are very few words in English, that don't have any letter-sound correspondence. In fact, I, off the top of my head, I'm thinking of only one. I think there

might be two or three, the only one that comes right to mind that's common is of. Of phonemically is U-V, and the letters are O-F. No sound-letter correspondence. But you're not gonna come across in instruction of common words with young kids, and even with some of our older learners, you're not gonna come across other words that have no letter-sound correspondence, there's gonna be some. So there's an anchor. Those are some anchors, we want our kids to know where their anchors are. And we want them to know where those little tricky spots are. And yes, okay, I just said they're tricky.

But where those prediction breaking spots are, so that they can focus that when memorization does come in, when their, "I just have to remember what this was," it's limited, they only have to remember some things, not the whole word. So we're gonna compare the conventional spelling to the prediction, we're gonna discuss the differences, and then, then the child writes the conventional spelling. We probably, I usually have the child write it at a couple times. I get rid of the predicted spelling and they never see it again. That is not something we dwell on it's a quick trick and then it's gone. And after that, we repeat and review spelling orally or in print or both. And I kind of change that up depending on again, the kid, how far along we are in the process, a few different factors.

Now, I wanna highlight right here, that in this lesson that I'm describing and you're about to see the child never read the word. All of the practice that we're gonna do, all of the child, all the practice that my student here is gonna do is on spelling. Spelling a word requires deeper orthographic knowledge of the word, than reading it. So if you have limited time, and of course you do with a kid to work on a word, you work on spelling it, because spelling yields double dividends, it yields spelling and yields reading too. But if you only have the child read their words, you don't get spelling dividends. Reading a word doesn't mean you can spell it. And I say this, I see a lot of practice in classrooms where kids are just doing the flash card thing. We're gonna go

through your sight word flashcards, read, read, read, okay, we're putting that away, we're done with that for today. Spelling is a much, it takes longer, than read, read, read, quick, quick flash the flashcards. But it's a much better investment of the instructional time. So spelling is really emphasized here in this suggested setup techniques to yield those double dividends. Okay, so with that said, let's take a look. We are ready let's go to the video to see this process in action. Ready for a new word?

- Mm-hmm.

- Okay. We're gonna do the word does, say it.

- Does.

- Does, can you use it in a sentence? This is a tricky one to use, go ahead, give it a thought for a bit. Does, maybe you make a question. How about I do one and then you do one? Does your dog like apples? Now you try one.

- Does your cat like ice cream?

- Very cool.

- So does, sometimes happens in a question. Sometimes it goes in a sentence, like my dog does like apples. Now you make one like that.

- My cat does like apples.

- There you go, very good. Okay, let's figure out the sounds of this word. Let's clap the syllables, okay? Let's do it, say the word and clap. Does, does .

- Does . How many syllables?

- One.

- One syllable, just one.

- Let's tap the sounds. D, A, Z.

- D, A, Z.

- All right, I like it. So one line for each sound, right? Go ahead and write your lines, and I'm gonna write my lines. Just do your lines right now, D, A, Z. Awesome. Now just me. I'm gonna write as we think about what sounds, what letters probably match those sounds, okay. So you tell me, don't read anything just yet this is my turn. It starts with what, what's the first one?

- D.

- What's the first sound?

- Da.

- Da, right. And so, you just said that's probably a D. Write that nice and quick. What was the middle sound?

- E.

- Tell me the sound first.

- A.

- A. And A, usually is spelled with U. And what was that last sound? Da, A, Z.

- Z.

- Usually spelled by?

- Z.

- Z. But you almost guessed it's gonna be an S because I think you might have seen this word before, and we've talked about other words where S sounds like Zzz at the end. So that's how it sounds but that is not how it's spelled. Okay, here we go, I'm gonna give you how we spell those sounds. Da, A, double, Z. Does. So now I'm gonna get rid of how it sounds 'cause we don't wanna think about that one. Let's focus on how we spell does. Can you write those letters on your lines? D, aa, Z, excellent. In this word, there's an aa sound, which two letters are making the aa sound?

- O, E.

- Mm-hmm, in this word, there's a Z sound, which letters are making the Z sound?

- S.

- Mm-hmm. Now I want you to flip your card over, and can you write does? Go ahead and see if you can write it again on the back. Great, tell me your letters.

- D-O-E-S.

- Excellent, hive five. Good job, okay. Okay, so you can see the steps of the process there, kind of work its way right through a lesson. So, and I'm cognizant of time, not meaning our time here, but meaning instructional time. So that first presentation of that word with this demo student, that took about three and a half minutes, and that was for one word, and that's a fair amount of invested time, in one word, but that was also only the first time. That whole process I'm not gonna do that whole process again in subsequent teachings unless my student really needs all of those things over and over again.

And what I'll probably find, what I generally find is that I need to do some of those things a lot. Like maybe some kids we're gonna phonemically analyze that word a lot, every time. Some of my kids I'm gonna do a lot of usage, we gotta keep practicing the usage of that word. But maybe the phonology's easier for some kids. So there's a, that's again, where knowing your students and knowing their needs helps drive your instruction in an effective way. I wanna make a comment about what you just saw, a really good question that was raised. I did this presentation at the ASHA Convention or a version of it as well and somebody asked me at the end, a question that I think raises a good point. My attendee said, I use the Arm Tapping method, which many of you may be familiar with. It shows up in some very popular instructional programs where the child extends one arm straight and with the opposite hands, taps down their arm while reciting a spelling. So they would tap their arm for D-O-E-S, and then slide their hand down their arm, does. And that's a strategy that's really, really just reinforcing the letter sequence in the word, and my attendee said like, "That seems to work for my students "and they need that repetition of the unpredictable letters "that isn't that kind of the magic in between "what you're proposing and actually remembering "those illogical, or not illogical, "but those low likelihood letter-sound correspondences." And my attendee said, "Do I need to abandon my arm tapping? "Should I let that go?" And my answer, and I think many of us may think things like that, because we are educated in programs and we've seen lots of ways of doing things. The answer is no, not

necessarily. That Arm Tapping strategy can be put right in at the end of the process, where I had my student I had my student there, write the word on the card, and then he flipped it and he wrote it again. Well, instead of flipping and writing it again, do you Arm Tapping or do both? It fits right in everything else we're doing, because yes, at some point, the rubber hits the road and the rubber in the road are the letters and the sounds, at some point, the letters have to show up. So if you're doing things at that letter correspondence level that are working, that's great. But what I think something like the Arm Tapping technique, for example misses, is all that oral language stuff in the beginning, beginning with speech, doing the phonological analysis, even when the word is irregular, making sure the child has the usage, making sure the semantic and syntactic identities are strong.

And then, once we get to letters, cool, do whatever, do the repetition, do the practice things that work for your students. So these kinds of techniques that I'm proposing, they don't necessarily represent ditching things that are already effective and helpful or familiar in order for all new stuff, not at all. It's a lot of practices that are out there are helpful, but maybe missed just some of the connections that are really vital in this kind of connection, this idea of how words get learned. That was a initial word instructional lesson. What about after the child has seen the word the first time and done all of those things? We have one more video of a child who's reviewing a word. So let's take a look at review. And the point I wanna make here is I can now review a word adhering to orthographic mapping principles, and this review takes a minute. So it doesn't need to be so time intensive. Let's watch a quick review video of an older student who, and we're also gonna be working in this video on a word that has a better semantic identity. We're doing the word laugh, which is a difficult word to spell, but semantically is fairly straightforward. So you're gonna see me not spend time on that. So here's a review example. Time for a review.

- Okay.

- Laugh, say it.

- Laugh.

- Okay. Tap the sounds.

- L, A, ph.

- Draw an underline for each of the three sounds. Good, in this word, we had some letters that didn't do what we predicted, right? Go ahead and write the letters for each of the sounds what we use to spell L, what we use the spell A. What we use to spell--

- The natural spelling?

- Yes, we're doing, we're always doing real spelling. Only I ever write the way it sounds.

- Okay, yeah.

- Were you correct?

- Yes.

- Good. Tell me the letters in laugh.

- L, A, U, G, H.

- In this word, there's a ph sound, which two letters make the ph sound?

- G, H.

- Mm-hmm. In this word there's an a sound, spelled by?

- What?

- Spelled by what letters?

- Oh, they're spelled by. A, U.

- Flip. Write the word laugh on the back. Excellent, erase. Okay, stop. Okay, so in our one minute review there, we still started with speech, we still did our phonemic analysis of the word because that was what I was really targeting with this particular student. We did multiple spelling practices, and remember, spelling yields double dividends. So even in one minute, I got my student to spell that word two times. That's a good investment of his time for a super quick review. We could have done Arm Tapping, if that was something I was into.

We could have done lots of other, we were using a whiteboard, we could have done other kinds of spelling, that word practice that works for me and for the two kids that you've seen here. But we can stick with an instructional sequence and a set of very lean focused activities that still promote orthographic mapping, not just trying to rely on memorization and a wing and a prayer, even in a short amount of time. So, I think it's clear, I think it's intuitive and it's logical, and we've got a great evidence base for speech to print instruction, even of words that have irregular spellings, even of words that are high frequency, even of words that were not encouraging a decoding kind of process for making these connections to phonology and semantics and syntax indirectly in our instruction makes a lot of sense. So, hopefully, at this point you're thinking, this sounds great. I wanna do some of this. And I want the teachers I work

with to do some of this. And I want the parents I work with to do some of this. How do I get these practices out there into application? That's what we're gonna talk about in our final section here. And application issues are real. As you'll see my videos we're one-on-one. I work in private practice, I get a lot of one-on-one time with kids. That's cool, but that's not everybody's reality. So I wanna make sure we think through what can we do about this? We here gathered in this session, are speech and language pathologists. Sometimes we as the SLPSs are the primary interventionists. Many of us sit down and do literacy instruction and intervention with kids one-on-one or in small groups, maybe sometimes even in classrooms. Often, we are not the primary interventionist, often someone else is teaching our kids to read, but we have kids on our caseload that we know we need to be involved in improving their language and working on the foundational things they need to make literacy instruction work, so we're working together with as a support player. So we're gonna talk about how that might work.

And sometimes we as SLPs, sometimes we're not involved at all in the child's direct instruction. But again, we know our kids need things and we wanna advocate for them to get instruction that meets their needs as kids with language vulnerabilities. So I'm gonna talk about some things to think about regardless of which of those three roles you find yourself in. So first, if you are the primary interventionist, meaning, you're actually the person who's sitting down with a kid or a few kids, or however many, and you're delivering the literacy instruction, or the intervention. The principles that I've described today fit really easily into existing structured literacy programs. If you're an OG person, if you teach Wilson Reading, if you're doing any of those kinds of interventions, what I'm suggesting probably looks a little bit different than sort of the program delivered. I know I am myself trained and certified in a variety of those things, and none of them do exactly all of the steps that I've just described, I think because our understanding of these connections is new, and it's not brand new, but it's developing so fast. But there is no reason why within any existing program you can't fit

speech to print, some of those early steps starting with oral language, building the semantics, static identities, building the phonological identities, into whatever you were already doing for these high frequency and irregular words. I would say that when you're the primary interventionist, it's helpful to choose words to teach in this way carefully by considering not just whatever words your program suggests, but looking at the children in front of you and considering the linguistic identities of the words, and whether they're temporarily or permanently irregular and deciding, does teaching a certain word as a, separate from the kind of decoding process?

Does it make sense for the students in front of you? So you may choose for your, for example, if you're working with children who you know, have DLD, who you know really have language vulnerabilities, as well as phonological and print vulnerabilities, you may decide that you want to give extra attention to certain words that are these function words in this way because it gives you an opportunity to pull in language practice in your orthographic instruction. And so, you may say, no, I'm gonna choose words that I hear my students struggling with to focus on in this way so that I can weave the language instruction right in with that orthographic mapping. That may be, that may work for you when you, I would say even in programs that are fairly prescribed, you can do that, you have that freedom.

These concepts if you're the primary interventionist, and really in any of the roles that I'm about to describe, but particularly when you're the primary intervention, this speech to print approach, it's a great element to add into your conversations with parents. There's nothing hard about really anything that we just went through. The hardest part is probably being able to phonemically segment a word. A lot of parents may not have that skill, real solid, because they may not have learned to read this way. And we know if we're talking about students with dyslexia, they very likely have dyslexic parents, it runs family, it runs strongly in families. So there's that possible connection. But if we can give parents a little support at that one step, teaching

parents. Oh, I'm so sorry, excuse me. Teaching parents this, this set of techniques gives them a way to practice with their kids at home in a way that's meaningful, and parents are hungry, many parents are hungry for that show me what to do because the sight words aren't. I'm sorry, the flashcards aren't working. Many parents try and try and try with flashcards and they're putting words on their refrigerators, and they're, and it's not working. Well, how about we give you four or five steps from this process that when you're reviewing words for homework you can do? And that's something that you could insert into your intervention. What about when you're not the support? I'm sorry, when you're not the primary interventionist? What about when you're the support person?

So in other words, what's probably happening in this scenario, which I would think is a common one is that the classroom teacher is handling a lot of things. They're handling letter-sound correspondence, they're handling phonics rules, they're handling, they're may be doing some more traditional kind of print to speech, sort of sight teaching and practice and they're doing fluency and all of those things. And you in this scenario are the SLP, whose maybe primary function is doing speech sound remediation with a child who has core phonological problems, maybe you're getting to do some of the phonemic awareness intervention.

And you've got kids with developmental language disorder, you're doing grammatical intervention, you're doing semantic intervention. So what can you do in light of this knowledge, when you're not responsible for really teaching the child to read, that's not your role? Well, first of all, if you're doing speech sound intervention, if you're doing phonemic awareness intervention, if you're doing grammatical interventions, then part of what you're doing is you're working on those identity bubbles, right? You're working on those ovals in some way. So right there, you're contributing to the process, but you can take that a step further, by selecting words from your goal areas, be they phonological or be they syntactic or whatever, and spend some of your therapeutic

33

time connecting the orthography of those selected words to whatever things you were already working on. You were working on phonological things because you have a child with speech sound disorder. Well, weaving in some of these two or three minute lessons where you're also tying in the orthography is going to support what you're already doing, and is going to tie your work to the classroom for your students. So I would encourage you to try to weave in some of these, like this orthographic learning on top of what your targets already are, and then share that with the classroom teacher. In fact, I think one of the most valuable things we can do ever is sharing this kind of information with the classroom teacher to suggest that they too can then implement some of these principles.

And maybe you sell these ideas well, and maybe that's difficult. I mean, I am well aware that sometimes teachers have their routines, and we may not be able to make big change in what's happening in other rooms besides our own. But if we can highlight, hey, I'm gonna work on these words because here's my goals, and here's what I'm targeting with this student because there are these needs, and I'm gonna be bringing the print in and hoping to support you. I think there's a possibility to build some good ties there. Also, in the, I'm gonna mention one more time that in the references list, I've listed the article called Rethinking Sight Words. Miles is the principal author.

That article is full text, free, online downloadable, and it goes through a very similar suggested instructional design as I showed you in my sample lessons here. That is an easily printable, hey, maybe colleague can we sit down and look at this and talk about this because this kiddo who you and I share has real vulnerabilities in these areas and needs this kind of support. So that's one to go look at, download, and maybe use to make connections with your colleagues who are working together in creating literacy in your students. And so, that kind of bridges into the last scenario. Sometimes we don't get to participate, really in the instructional part. Sometimes our main value to a larger

team, as far as literacy practices goes, is in sharing knowledge. This set of knowledge that I've tried to share over the past 80 minutes, it's growing, it's getting out there it's having its moment but it's not there yet. Lots of teachers have never heard these principles. The idea of these multiple word identities and making these connections and the fact that vulnerabilities may exist in their kids that they may not understand. They don't necessarily have this perspective. So, that perspective, I'm gonna champion and advocate can come from us as the language experts on the team. So how can you share this?

You can share this by the article that I suggested, you can sit down and share handouts from the talk we've had today and try to give some examples and tie them to students in conversation that you have on your caseloads. But here's what I'd really like to kind of suggest that you convey, major takeaways. Number one, we want our teachers to understand that they should draw attention to the sounds of words, even when those words are irregular. Even trick words, their sounds matter. That one insight I see as being pretty revolutionary to many teachers and their practices with our kids.

That's something to try to get across. Another thing to get across is that the child's usage of the target word is important so that its usage, its content and structure identity is strong in their long-term memory. So, I'll give you an example, I was in a classroom earlier this week, in which I saw a group of children with very low oral language skills, children who were speaking maybe single words or maybe small phrases and not communicating verbally at the sentence level. And they're reading instruction, focused on sight words from Dolch list, kinda things that none of those children were using orally. That's the conversation I wanna have with that teacher, to talk about, it's not to say we can't teach those words, but boy do we have to build the oral language as a primary part of this process. Otherwise, we are, we don't have hooks to hang the word on. So getting, helping build knowledge surrounding the language function in building word knowledge is really important. And then, the other

quick, simple takeaway that we'd like to give, hand over to our teachers if we can, even just impart a little bit of wisdom is increase the spelling practice. Flashcards alone aren't as good investment of time as having the child spell the word. So if we could do one thing different, really, if we could do two things different, I would like to focus on the sounds of the word and then do a lot more spelling. And even if those two things were like simple changes, those might be first steps to building connection with teachers. And then hopefully, more sharing of knowledge and skills can move from there.

So we are nearing the end of our time together. And I would like to wrap by leaving you all with three big takeaways from this session. Number one, learning sight words, meaning storing printed words in long-term memory is not a visual process. If we start there, if we start with, this is language, this isn't visual memory, great, then we can bridge into effective practices. Number two, all written words are learned and stored through the same process, which is phonologically and linguistically anchored. There aren't two kinds of words that happen one way and happen another way, there aren't red and green words.

All words at a cognitive level are learned through the same linguistic channels and processes. And number three, our kids as SLPs, our kids with DLD, our kids with phonological vulnerabilities, they need instruction even for these sight words even for these irregular words that we want them to learn as units and learn instantly. They need instruction that targets the phonological and linguistic foundations so that they can map effectively. So with that said, I have learned a little trick as a college professor, which is to not ask, do you have any questions, I have learned to ask, what questions do you have? What questions do you have for me in our final five minutes? I'm happy to answer some. While those come in I'm gonna address a couple things that have popped up over the, as I've been talking that I've been seeing out of the corner of my eye. Number one, I referenced Kelly Farquharson's course. It is, the course number, I'm

sorry, I don't have the title right in front of me, and if I switch windows, I'm afraid I'm gonna lose you. The course number here on speechpathology.com is 8920. So that was the course I recommended that talks about underlying phonological processes and their connections to speech sound disorder and then the connection to reading. So if you were looking for that. Let's see. Actually, Carolyn, I'm having some trouble seeing the questions from participants, my window is.

Oh, I'm sorry, I think I can fix it. I'm sorry, give me just one. There we go, I can see it now. Let's see. I was asked what is the best way to assess a child's phase in the phase theory? That's a great question. So I think it's really about thinking through the major features. So I would absolutely and if you notice, we were talking about sight word like reading, right? But most of what we've been talking about today is spelling. Spelling, I believe it's Louisa Moats, who says, "Spelling is a window into a child's "whole language and literacy system and learning." So I'd start with spelling, and I would look at, and I do look at a child's spelling as you saw in my examples and see, are they consistently? Let's assume that you know they're passed pre-alphabetic, 'cause you know that one. Really the question is, are they at partial, full or consolidated, right?

So, you're gonna know it's partial alphabetic. If you see a presence of errors where they didn't represent all the sounds in the words, sounds are missing, or they're off, remember vey for they, that phonology is still not complete. That's partial alphabetic. Full alphabetic you're gonna notice when you look at the child's spelling errors, and you say, these are so logical, they've got all the sounds, that's the full alphabetic feeling. And then consolidated is where you really see that the vast majority of the time the child's able to recall conventional spellings, so looking at their spelling is a window. And I also do wanna say that I think if Dr. Ehri were here, and I'm representing her work, I hope I did her justice which is a difficult thing to do in her brilliance, but I hope I did her justice. I think she would say the phases aren't like, stairs on a staircase, you don't just move quickly from one to the other and then you're done with it. They're

gonna overlap, right, to an extent. So give yourself that grace to say, well, okay, it looks like this child is just about in full alphabetic, where I see a little bit of lingering phonology, but we're mostly there. So, yeah, you're gonna be able to see probably some overlap as well, but that's how I would look at it. There's a question about, it's a great question, and I think this is a complex question, but I'm happy to try to address it. Is it okay for teachers to use the common sight word practices, which I outlined as like, oh, potentially problematic? Is it okay for those things to be used with typically developing readers or should they be avoided in general? That's a great question. I think there's, so I'm sure many of us who are involved in some something like this, and coming to a session like this are aware that there's a lot of heated debate out there about literacy instruction.

And certainly, I have opinions. I've referenced the science of reading through these presentations, and I am, I work hard to be an evidence-based practitioner and go to the research. So with that said, here's what I know and what I feel, I would say, there are many typically developing readers who do fine with the things that I have listed on that slide of common instructional practices. In fact, I guess I'll answer this by telling a little anecdote. I myself have a child, I'm the mother of a fourth grade boy who is typically developing, has had no trouble learning how to read or spell, no problem. It's all very, going very typically according to plan. And he saw me preparing for this presentation and he was interested and asked, "Well, what's this whole thing gonna be about?"

And so, to answer his question, I said, well, let's do it. Come on, I'm gonna do it with you right now. And I walked him through this kind of lesson on a word he already knew. I think we use the word because, which he can spell, but it seemed like a good example. And at the end of it, he kind of was just quiet. And he said to me, "Gosh, that was great. "I really wish my teachers would do that." And he truly had this insight like, "This word makes sense. "I had no idea that this word made sense. "I didn't know

words could make sense like this at all." Now, this was not a struggling kid, but is that insight beneficial? I absolutely think it is, because there are going to be more and more complex words, right? So I guess my short pitch is, I think there's no reason to not do these things with all readers, it's going to benefit all readers, and even quote, unquote, typically developing kids if they have any linguistic disadvantage, they really are gonna benefit from this kind of instruction.

So I guess I'm gonna leave my answer there. I was asked quickly, and I know I need to wrap up, what about students who struggle to hear the sounds and words, students who have? I'm kind of combining a few questions like, what about kids with auditory processing? What about kids with dyslexia? I mean, these are the kids that this is all about. All throughout the whole idea here is bringing instructional practices in line to meeting the core phonological and linguistic needs of kids and absolutely phonological. So kids with auditory processing problems, kids with dyslexia. I mean, fundamentally, it's the phonology that we're really talking about as problematic. So yes, yes, yes, all, do all of this with all of those kids. And for the kids who struggle to quote, unquote, hear the sounds, well, they're at partial alphabetic. We gotta go back and do serious phonological intervention. There, I would refer you back to my note about how using phonological interventions that include articulatory gestures, it's a particularly effective practice that is worth looking into. If anyone wants some more information about that, I'm gonna give you my contact information, here at the end. Am I Carolyn at the end here? Can I take one more question? How am I doing on time?

- [Carolyn] Yes, yeah, feel free to take one more. There were a few more that came in, I had them all sent to my email so I can forward them over to you to review as well.

- [Jeanne] Thank you, thank you, okay. I will take one more quick. There's a lot of good ones here. I'm sorry, I'm not gonna be able to get to them all. But I'm going to take a final question here, which I think is similar to something we just said, but will tie it up.

"Do I have recommendations specifically "for a student with poor sound repetition accuracy?" So if you're finding that you have a student and you're, you say a word to a student, and you ask them to repeat it back. If they're not able to repeat it back correctly? Well, what's going on there? Somehow there's some core underlying phonological problem. Whether that could be the case for kids with hearing loss, that could be the case for kids who have auditory processing issues, that could just be the case for kids who, for whatever reason, we would attribute it back to have some sort of underlying phonological core deficit. So what I recommend for that student is doing all of the phonological work with them that you can. And absolutely, I'm not gonna try to work on the print of a word until I've got that student saying that word accurately by whatever means I need to do.

I'm probably gonna go right to articulatory gestures. I'm gonna say it, I'm gonna have them try to say it. I'm gonna show them and have them feel, and go sound by sound if we need to, or go syllable by syllable if we need to, until the student can say that word, that targeted and print word accurately. But I think what that signals if you're describing a student with poor sound, poor repetition accuracy, you're signaling a core phonological problem.

And again, I would refer you back definitely, piggyback learning this session on to the session I referenced earlier on those kinds of phonological disorders that spans speech sound disorder as well as reading. But this is exactly the kind of bridge that those children need. All right, so with that I'm looking at the clock. I'm going to wrap up there and thank everybody so much for their attendance and participation. If you would like to reach out to me I welcome that. I can be reached, emails to hello@bcpractice.com will all get to me. If there are questions or kind of requests for next steps. You can follow me on Twitter @TigheJeanne. I tweet about literacy and language things, and share articles and references. And I would be more than happy to continue the conversation. And thanks again.

- [Carolyn] Thank you so much, Miss Tighe. This was so informative, and you should also call it myth busting. I learned so much and I'm not even an SLP, stuff that I thought was true. So and it was wonderful to see all the participation from our participants that allowed us to continue the conversation in the course, dig a little deeper. So thanks to everybody for your attendance today. Just wanna remind everyone to log into your account at speechpathology.com and take the Outcome Measure so that you can earn CEUs for today. And we hope to see you all in another course online again soon. Also I wanna extend a Happy Holidays to everyone, now at the end of the year. Thank you and have a great afternoon. Bye bye.