

# SPELDNSW

## Learning Difficulties Q & A

### *What are the important components of an early literacy program?*

Has your child just started learning to read? Perhaps they have entered pre-primary or commenced Year One this year? As a parent, it is useful to understand 'how' children learn to read and what the research tells us about successful reading instruction. We know that almost every child has the capacity to become a confident and competent reader with evidence-based teaching and that parents can support this process in the home.

Some of the strategies that underpin an effective and evidence-based initial reading program include:

- Reading aloud to children often, sharing many different types of books and other print materials and discussing books with them before, during, and after reading;
- Helping children to discover that spoken words have parts and that the words they hear come apart into smaller units of sound (for example, cat is made up of three sounds /c/ /a/ /t/ whereas shampoo is made up of five sounds /sh/ /a/ /m/ /p/ /oo/;
- Teaching children to pull apart (segment) and push together (blend) the individual sounds in a word (learning to 'segment' sounds helps children to spell words while learning to 'blend' sounds helps children to read words);
- Ensuring children recognise the shapes of the letters of the alphabet, the names of alphabet letters and, most importantly, the sound most often associated with each letter;
- Explicitly and systematically teaching children how individual letters and letter groups are linked to specific sounds;
- Teaching children to analyse and sound out unfamiliar words rather than guess from pictures, the first letter(s) or the surrounding context;
- Teaching children "irregular" words they will see and read often, but that do not completely follow the letter-sound relationships they are learning. These are often called **sight words**--words such as *said, is, was, are;* and,

Providing children with many opportunities to practice these letter-sound linkages by reading stories that contain the letter-sound linkages that are being taught. These stories are often in the form of decodable readers, examples of which include Dandelion, Little Learners Love Literacy, and Pocket Rockets.

Copyright © 2016 The Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation of WA, All rights reserved.

If you wish to unsubscribe please email [it@speldnsw.org.au](mailto:it@speldnsw.org.au) with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

## SPELDNSW

2/ 172 Majors Bay Rd Concord NSW 2137

T. (02) 9739 6277

F. (02) 8765 1487

E. [enquiries@speldnsw.org.au](mailto:enquiries@speldnsw.org.au)

W. [www.speldnsw.org.au](http://www.speldnsw.org.au)

PATRON: Mrs Linda Hurley  
ABN: 27 508 096 871 CFN: 11013

