


# Teaching Sight Words According to Science

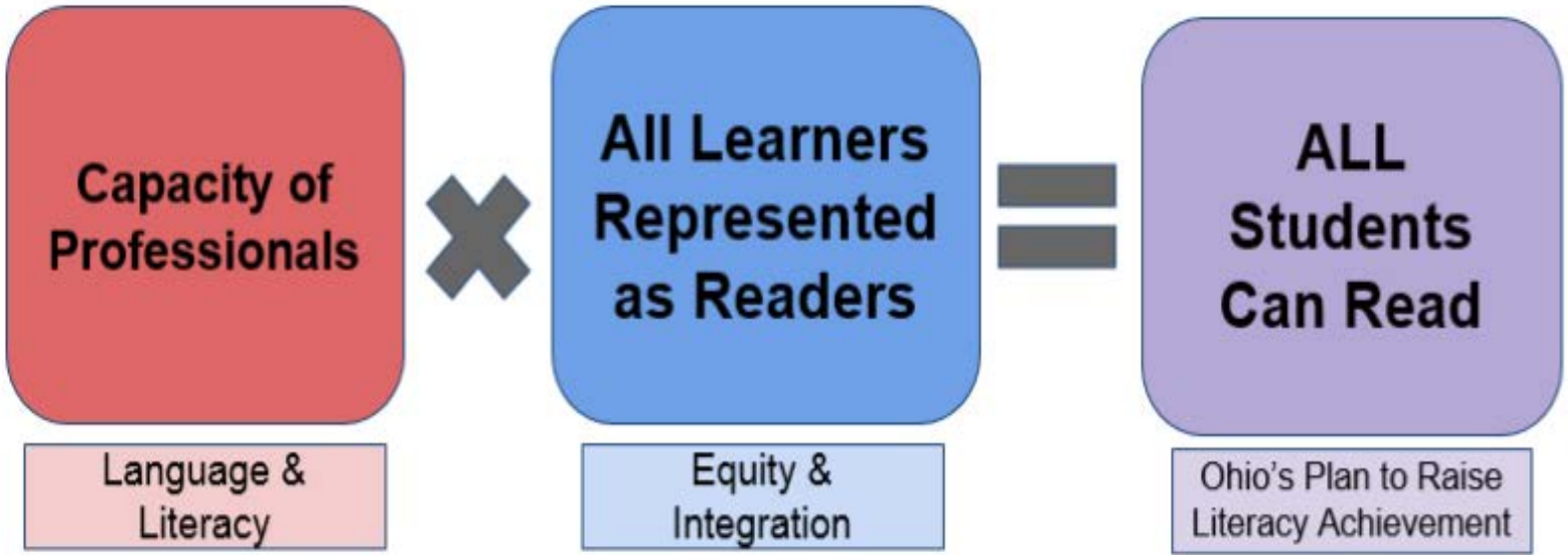


A collage of children's book covers surrounds a central white box containing the text "Why are we doing this?". The covers include "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle, "H.A. Ray" by H.A. Ray, "Kay Thompson's Eloise", "Blueberry" by Eric Carle, "Where the Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak, "If You're a Cookie" by Laura Joffe Numeroff, "Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day" by Judith Kerr, "Moon" by Margaret Wise Brown, and "The Rabbit" by Eric Carle. A badge in the top right corner says "ABBY WINNER 1995".

Why are we  
doing this?

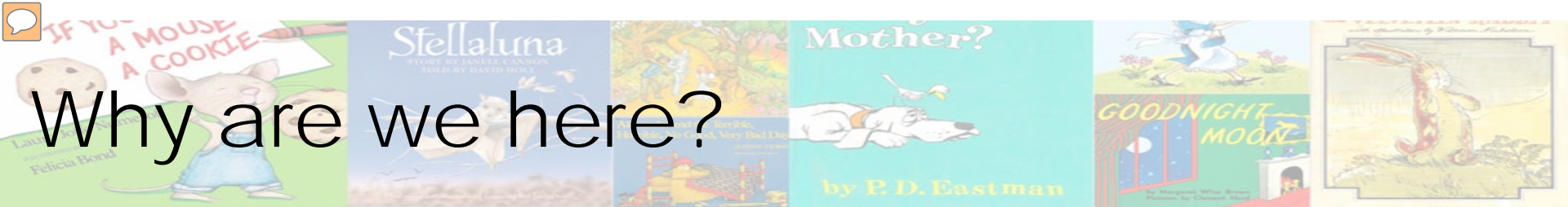


# Alignment with Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement





Why are we here?



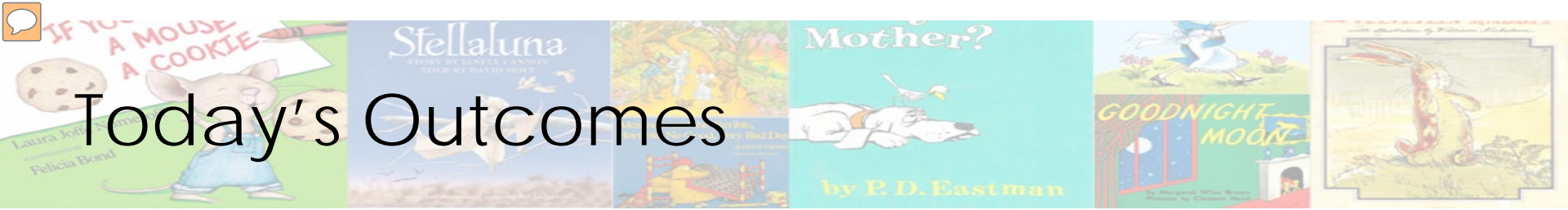
**According to the 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores, 37% of our nation's fourth-grade students were proficient readers.**





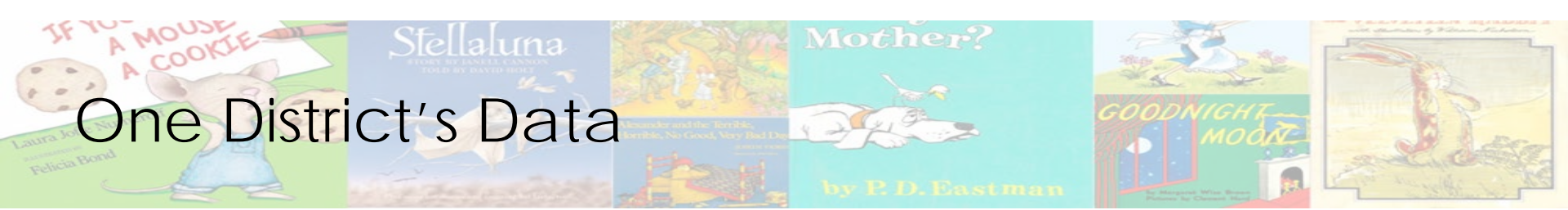
# Why are we here?

- Nearly 30 percent of Ohio's K-3 students are reading below grade level.
- Nearly 40 percent of students in grades 3-8 are not proficient on the OST in ELA.
- More than 50 percent of graduating seniors taking the ACT do not meet the college and career readiness benchmark for reading.



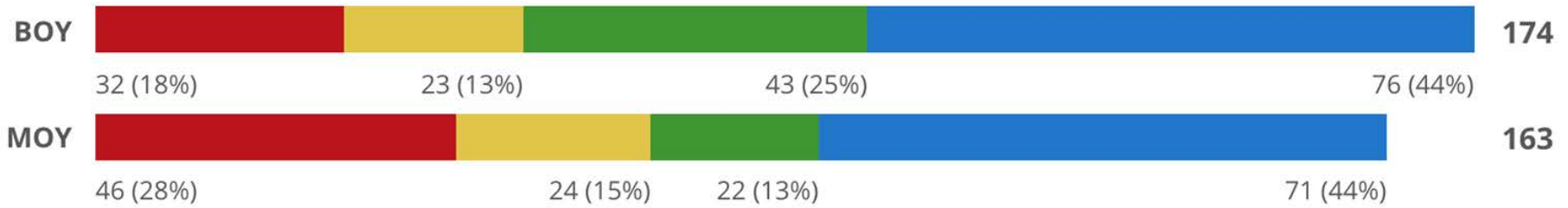
Participants will...

- Apply the theoretical models of the Simple View of Reading and Seidenberg's 4 Part Processing System for word recognition to instructional practices to teach words “by sight”.
- Understand the connection between phonology and orthography when storing words for automatic retrieval.
- Demonstrate instructional strategies to teach sight words according to science.

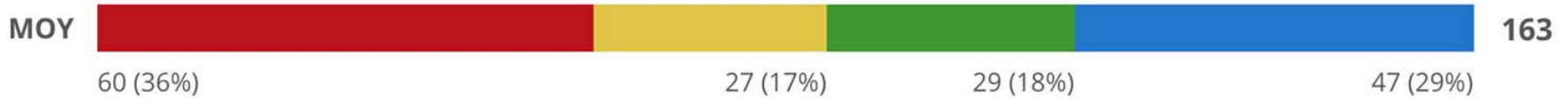


# One District's Data

## Composite Scores:



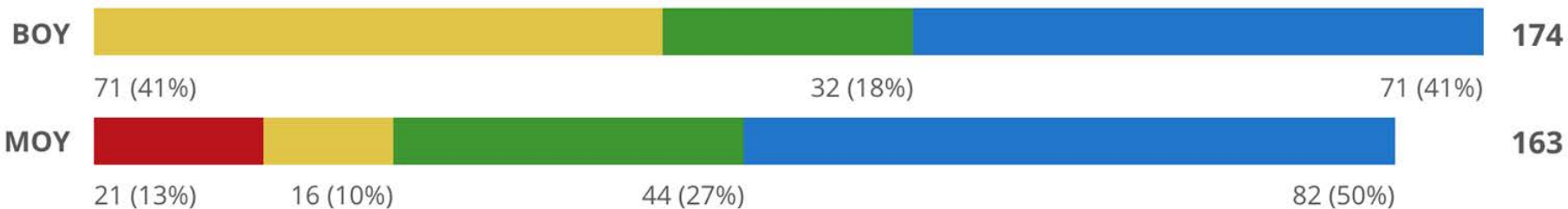
## DORF Accuracy:



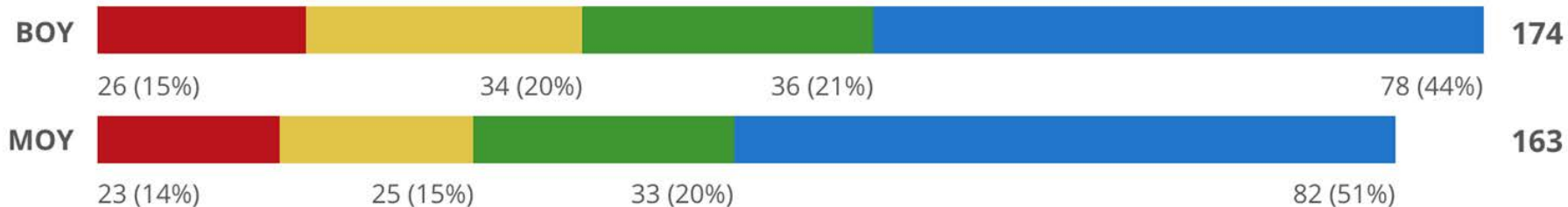
# One District's Data - Looking Deeper



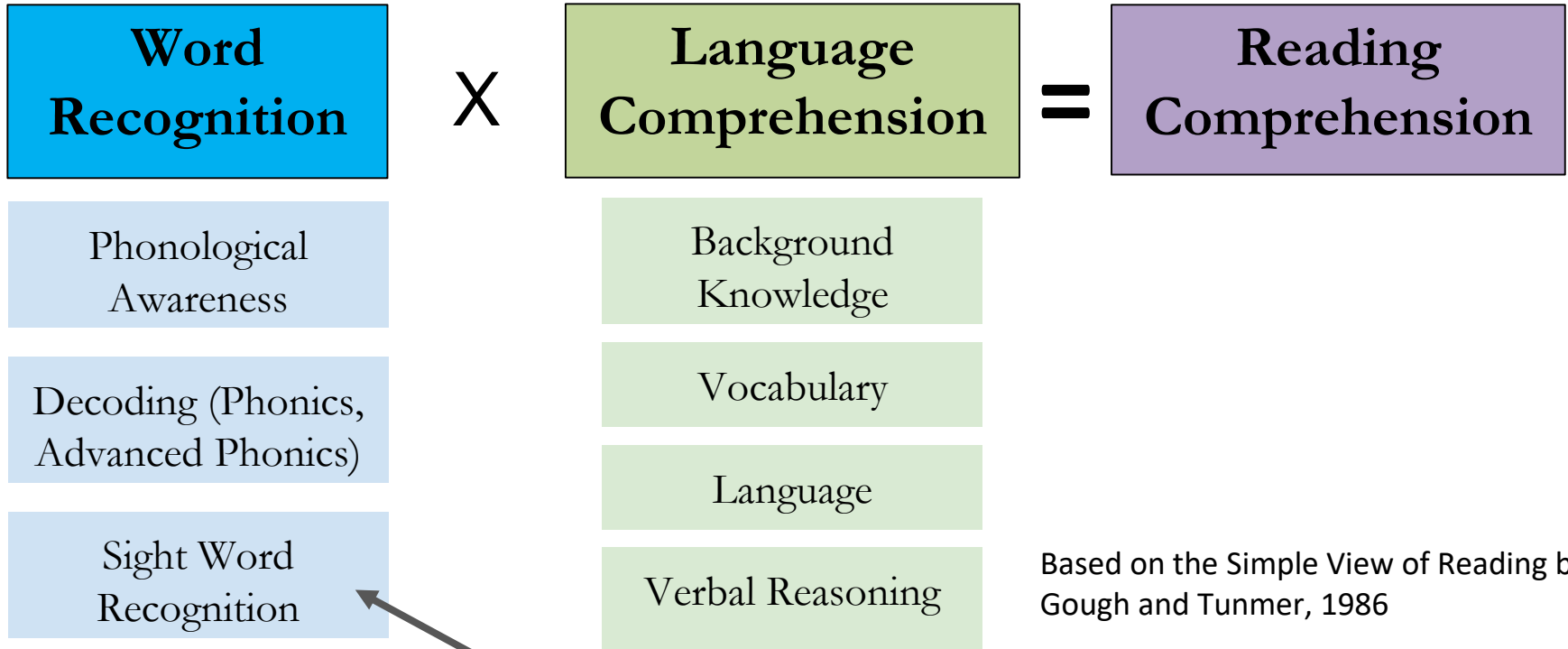
## NWF Whole Words Read:



## NWF Correct Letter Sounds:



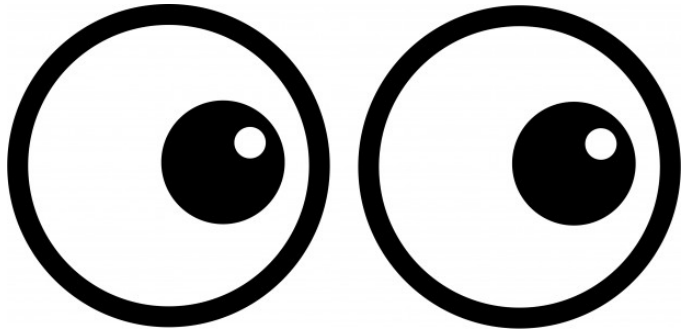




# The Simple View of Reading



# What is a Sight Word?

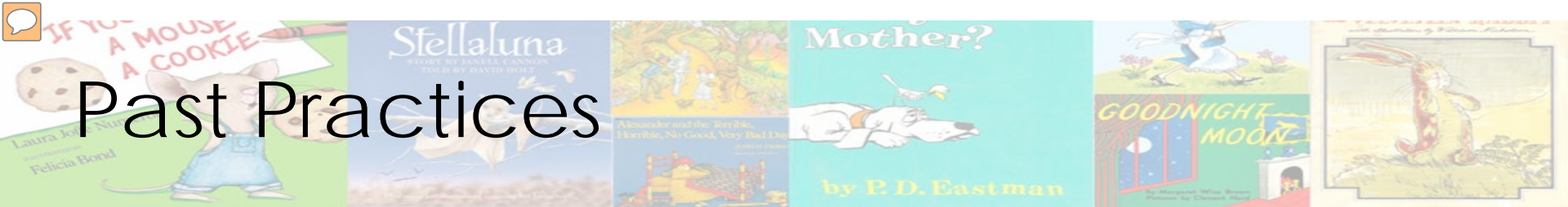


A sight word is any word that is recognized instantly and effortlessly, by sight, whether it is spelled regularly or irregularly



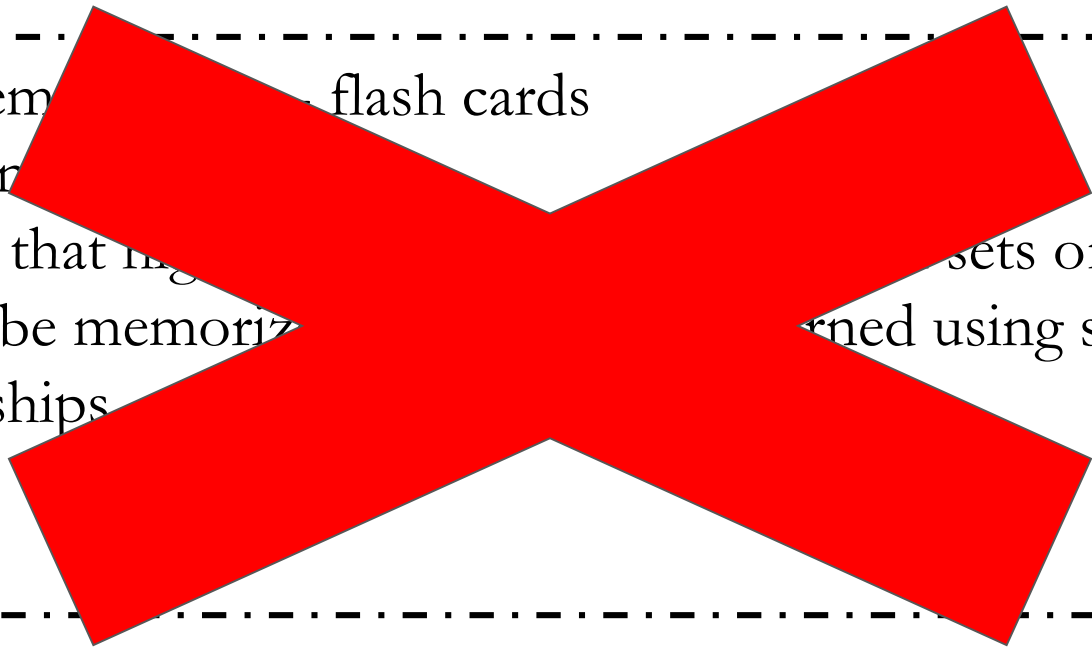
**Sight word vocabulary**  
**is NOT based on visual**  
**memory / visual skills!**

- Dr. David Kilpatrick, Plain Talk About Learning Conference 2018



# Past Practices

- Rote memorization of flash cards
- Focus on memorizing sets of words that need to be memorized without understanding sound-symbol relationships
- Assume that memorizing sets of words that need to be memorized without understanding sound-symbol relationships



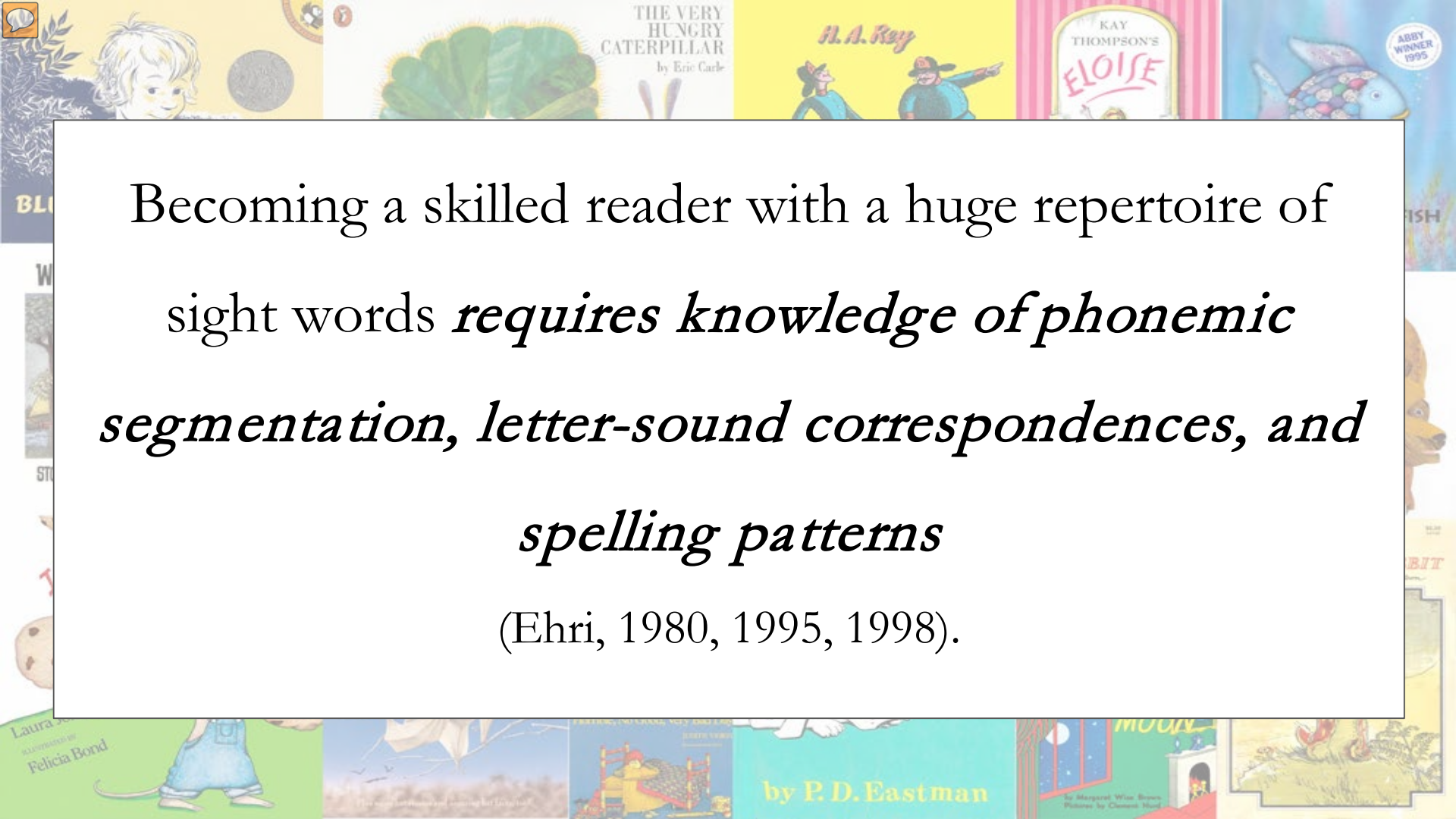


# Developmental Relationship Between Phonological Skills and Word Level Reading

- Input and storage are not the same thing.
  - Input is visual. Storage is orthographic, phonological, and semantic.
- Word reading correlates strongly with phonological skills.
  - Phonological awareness and word reading .5 to .7
  - Visual memory and word reading .1 to .2

- Dr. David Kilpatrick, Plain Talk About Learning Conference 2018



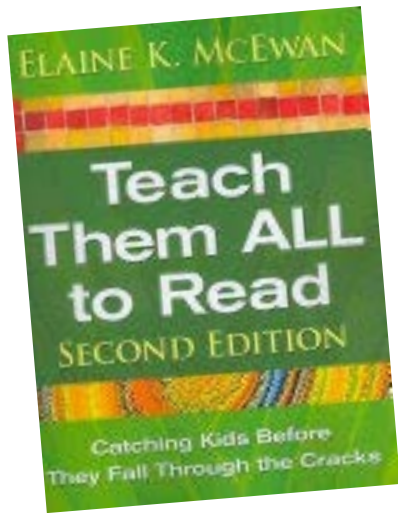


Becoming a skilled reader with a huge repertoire of sight words *requires knowledge of phonemic segmentation, letter-sound correspondences, and spelling patterns*

(Ehri, 1980, 1995, 1998).



# Teaching Smarter, Not Harder



(McEwen, 2002)

Acquisition of new sight words:

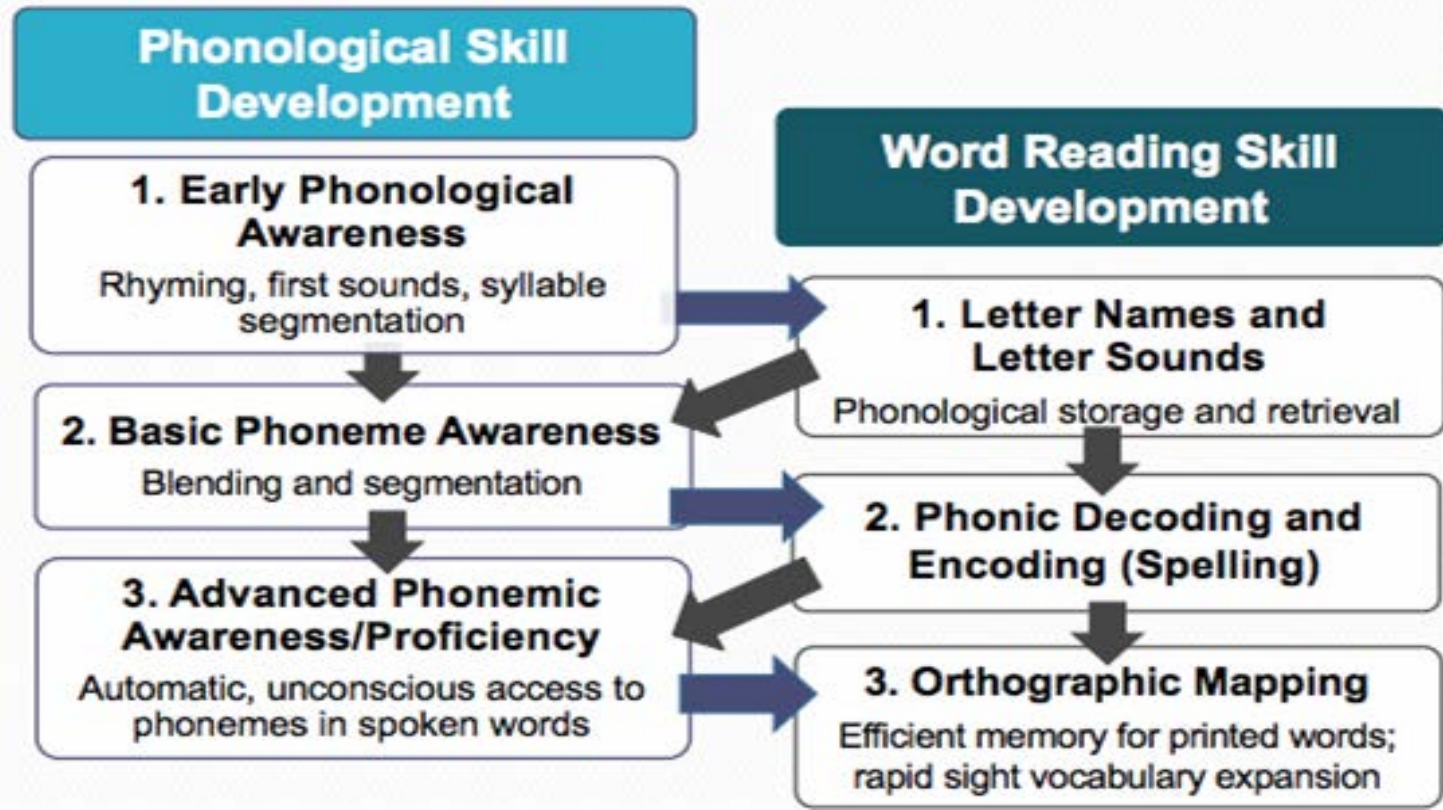
- w/ decoding: 4 quality encounters
- w/out decoding: 30 or more encounters
- Using whole-word memorization is inefficient and very difficult.



BeAr bear bEaR bear

Bear bæ bear bEar

# Developmental Relationship Between Phonological Skills and Word Level Reading



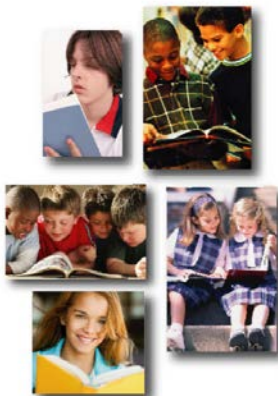


# Developmental Relationship Between Phonological Skills and Word Level Reading



## Equipped for Reading Success

A Comprehensive, Step-by-Step Program for Developing Phonemic Awareness and Fluent Word Recognition



David A. Kilpatrick, Ph.D.

## Essentials

of **Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties**

- Provides step-by-step guidelines for organizing an assessment, selecting appropriate instruments, and interpreting results
- Expert advice on formulating interventions and educational programming
- Conveniently formatted for rapid reference

David A. Kilpatrick

Alan S. Kaufman & Nadeen L. Kaufman, *Series Editors*

WILEY

Copyrighted Material





# Kilpatrick On Sight Words & Fluency

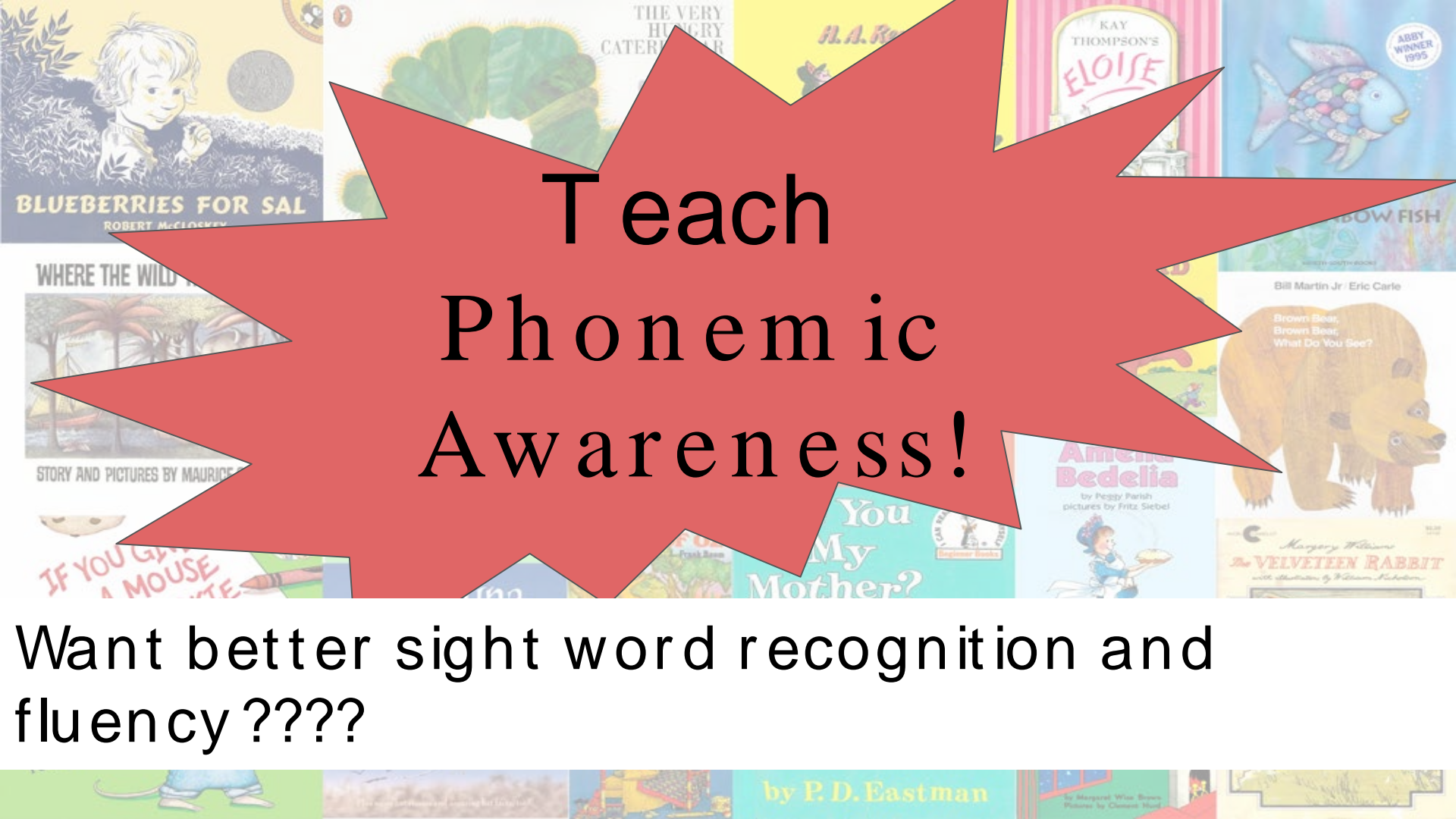
- Readers recall the sequence of letters, not the look of the word.
- Teach the sequence of letters through orthographic mapping.
- Fluency is the best thermometer for reading skills.
- When fluent, readers remember the words they read.
- To increase personal lexicons, readers need to read more words.

(Kilpatrick, 2019)



# Orthographic Mapping

- Orthographic mapping is the mental process we use to turn an unfamiliar written word into an instantly accessible, and familiar “sight word”
- Orthographic mapping requires:
  - Letter-sound proficiency
  - Phonemic proficiency (this goes well beyond what is tested on our universal screeners)
  - The ability to establish a relationship between sounds and letters unconsciously while reading



Teach  
Phonemic  
Awareness!

Want better sight word recognition and fluency????



zesk



# How should we teach sight words?

1. Make a connection to the SOUNDS in the words!!
2. Even the “rule breakers” follow some rules.
3. Teach kids word parts that they need to know “by heart.”



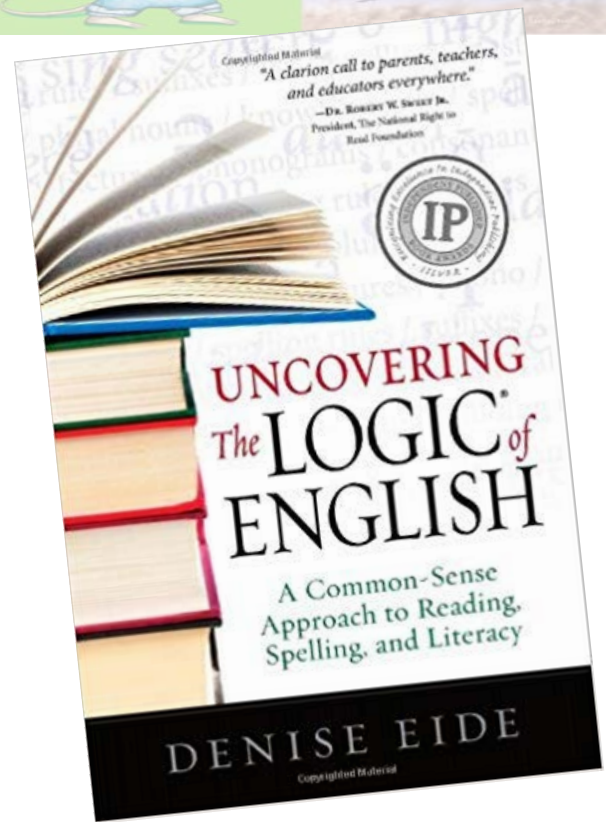


# Rethinking Instruction

- Students learn high frequency words according to patterns
- We can “rethink” instructional strategies when introducing these words
- High frequency words are decodable words with some “rule breakers” or heart words.
- Students are able to make sense of spelling patterns for these words



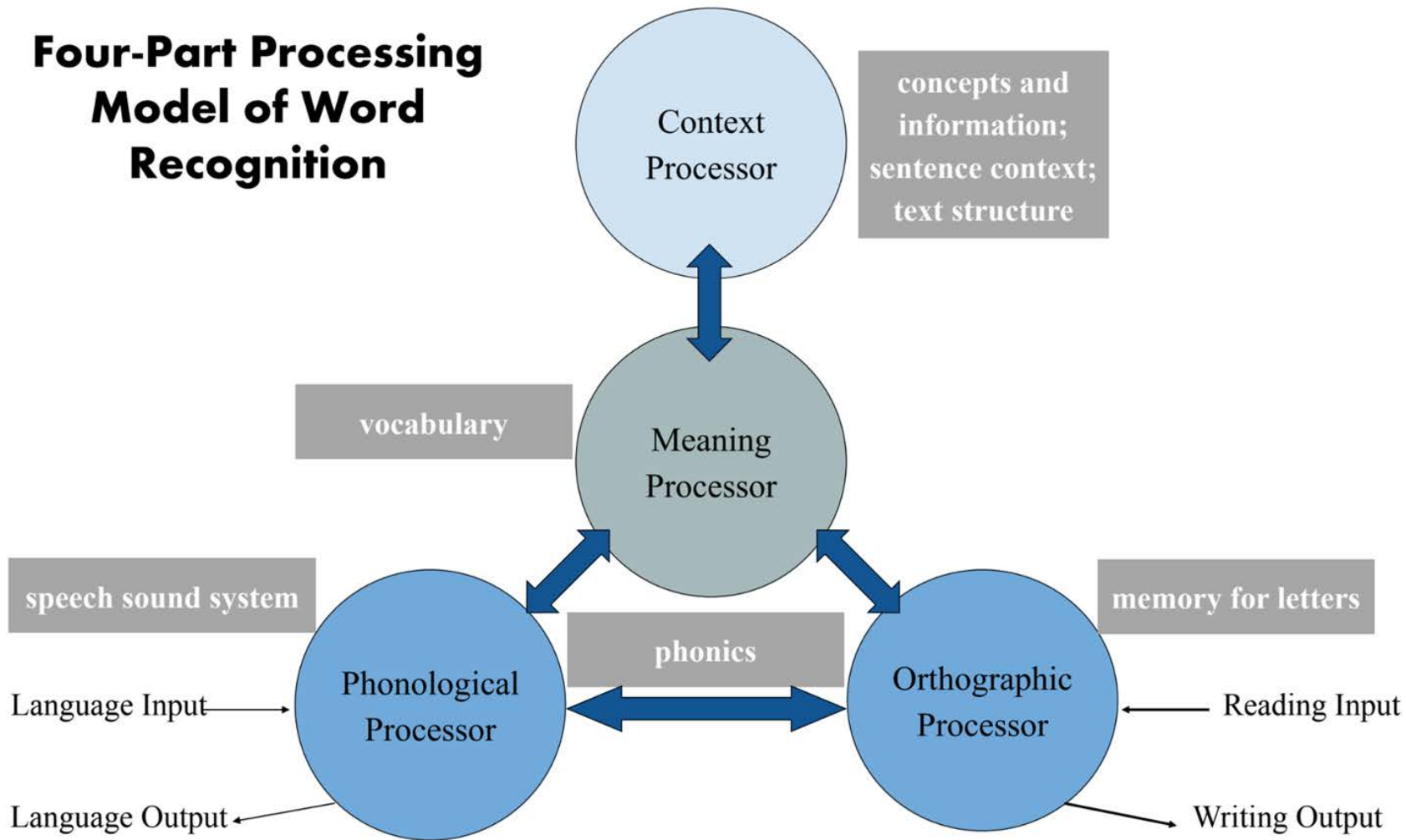
# How should we teach sight words?

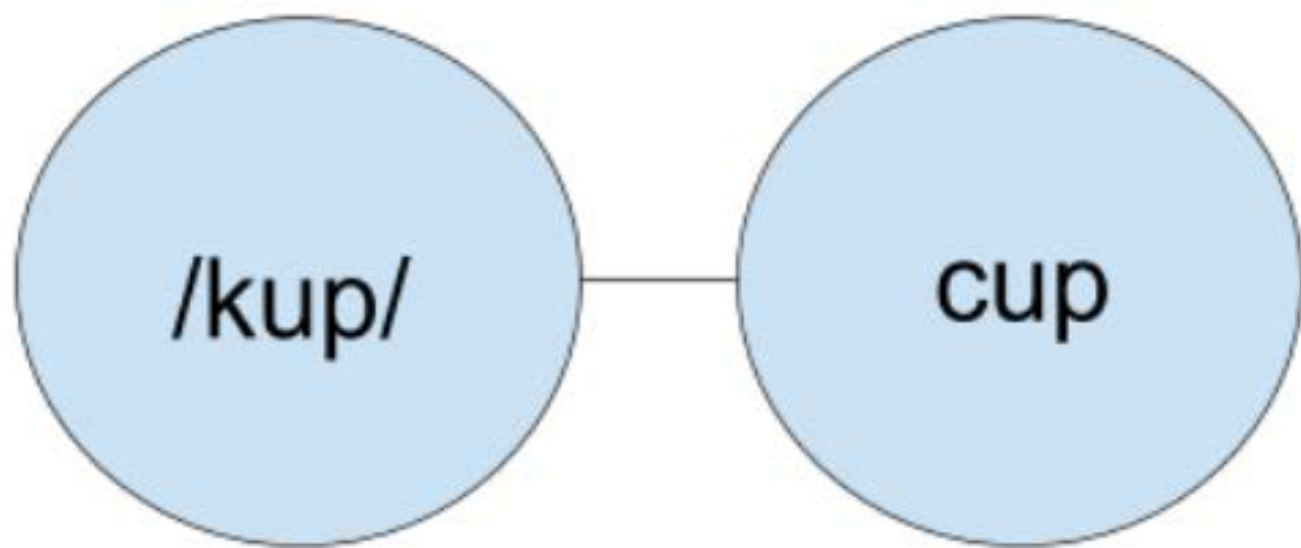


English isn't that crazy. If you don't know the rules, learn them!



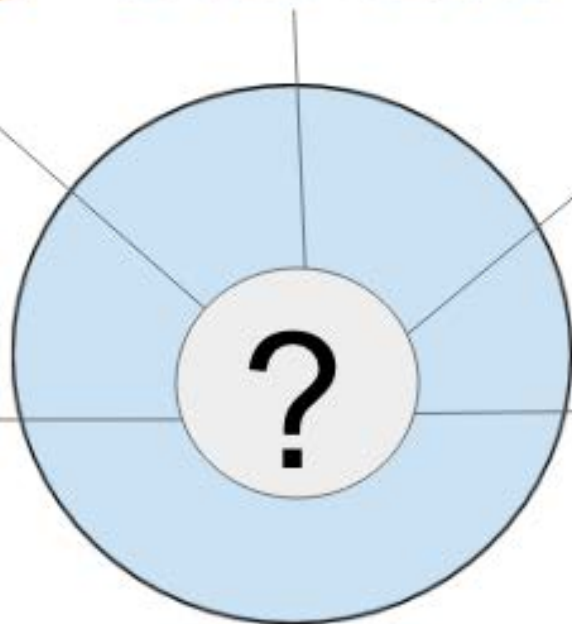
# Four-Part Processing Model of Word Recognition






Phonological Processor

Orthographic Processor



Meaning Processor





*I could sure use  
a **cup** of coffee.*

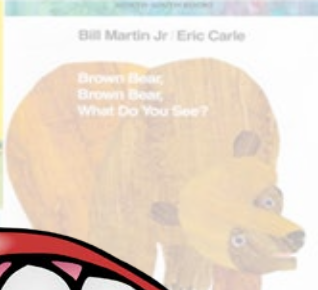
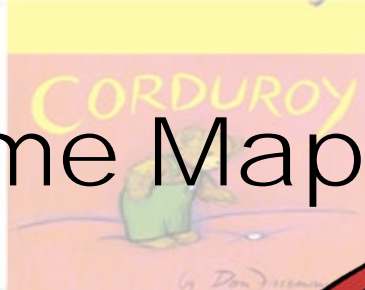
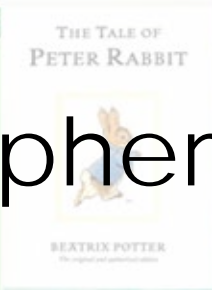
Context Processor



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE



STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK

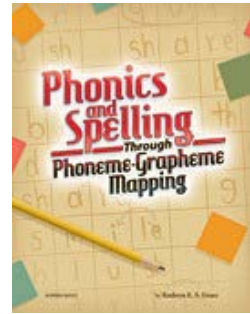
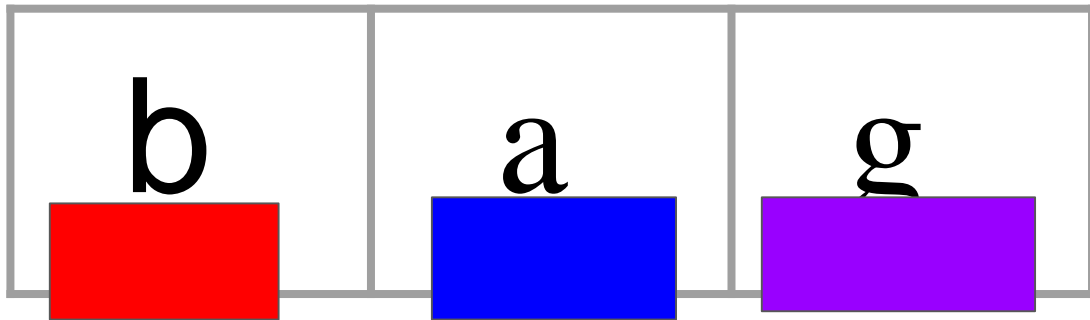


# Phoneme Grapheme Mapping

- Should be done following a phonics sequence.
- Reinforces phonics rules, builds spelling and sight word vocabulary.



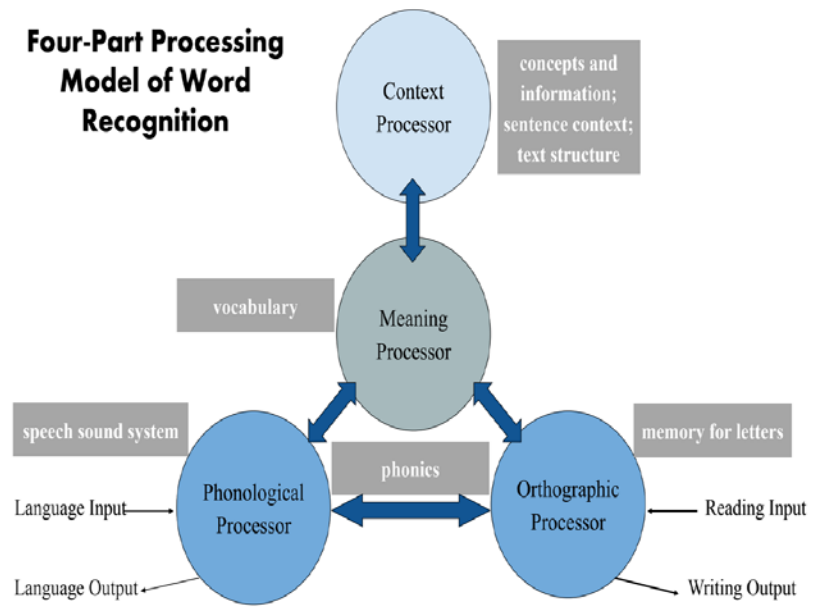
Focus on articulation!





# 4 Part Processing Model

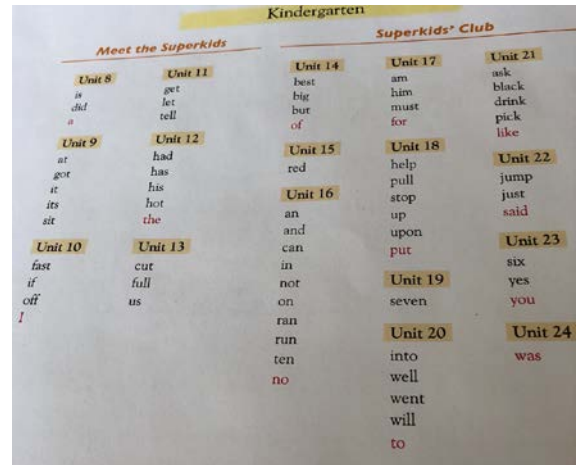
- Bottom Up
  - Build a foundation in phonology & orthography FIRST
- All 4 processors working together = fluency
- Use this to guide instruction!

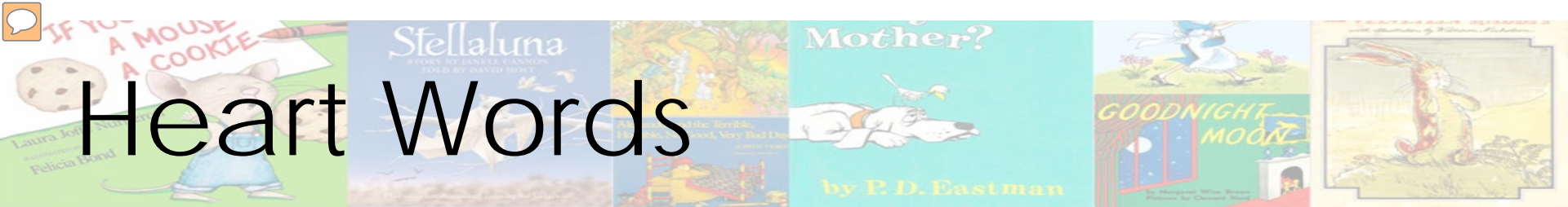




# Word Sort by Phonics Patterns

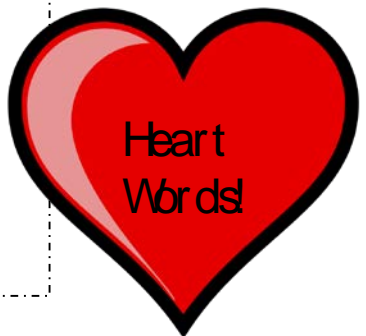
- Look at the sight words that have previously been taught in your K and first grade curricula. Sort them by phonics patterns or by sounds (phonology)
- Re-teach the phonics patterns and the words, making a connection to the sounds. Begin with phonemic awareness, then move to phonics
- Review - often!

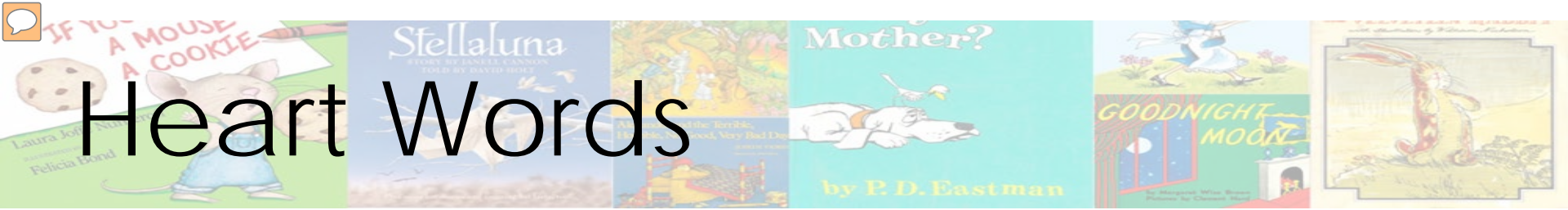




# Heart Words

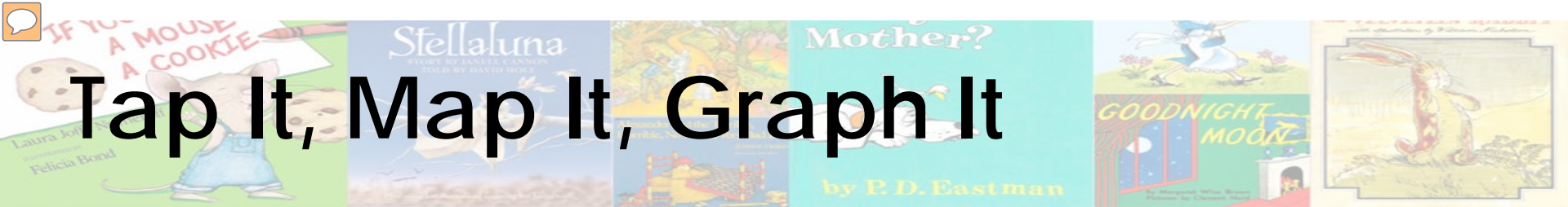
- Students need to “know by heart”
- Irregularly spelled high frequency words
- Some parts of the word are decodable
- Other parts of the word have to be memorized by heart





s	ai	d	
---	----	---	--



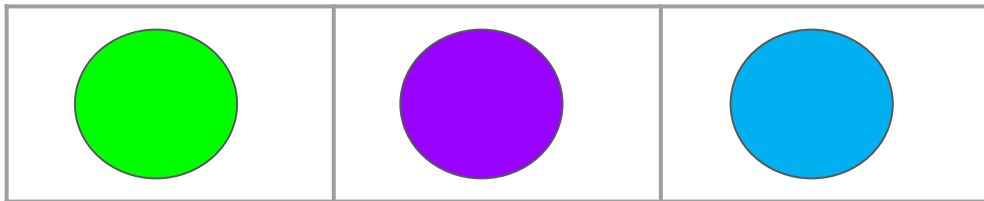


# Tap It, Map It, Graph It

**Tap It** – with non-dominant hand

**Map It** – with chips, blocks, or manipulatives

**Graph It** – write the grapheme

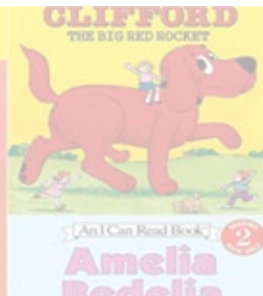
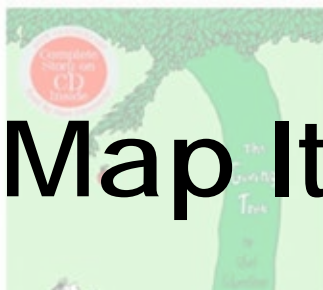




WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE



STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK

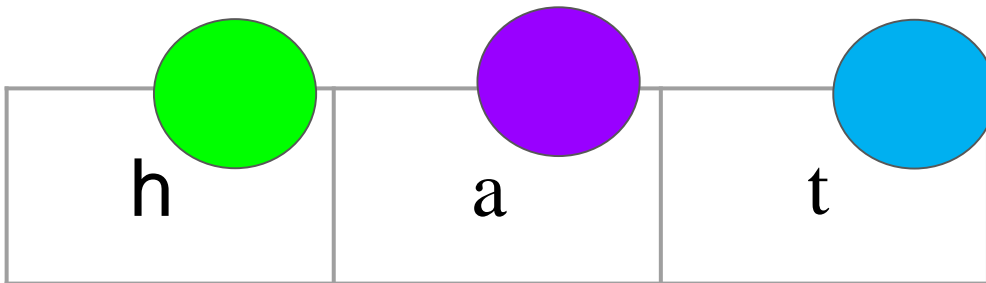


# Tap It, Map It, Graph It

**Tap It** – with non-dominant hand

**Map It** – with chips, blocks, or manipulatives

**Graph It** – write the grapheme



# Phoneme Segmenting & Blending

--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--



r	ou	n	d		round
f	ou	n	d		found
h	ow				now
d	ow	h			down
h	ow				how
ou	t				out
ou	r				our
a	r	ou	n	d	around
b	r	ow	n		brown

g

r

ow

kn

ow

sh

ow

y

e

ll

ow

ow

h

grow

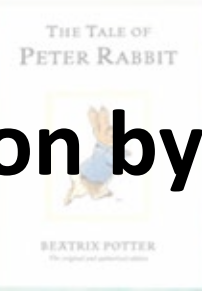
know

show

yellow

owh





# Play Concentration by SOUND!

- Create a set of, with 2 cards (words) for each sound.
- Limit the total sounds to no more than 10 (20 cards).
- Lay the cards out in 2 separate groups.
- Have kids draw one card from each group.
- They can collect the pair when they match a sound.

run

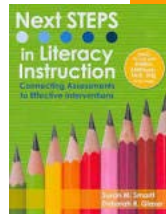
ran

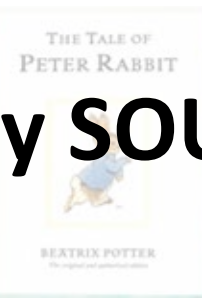
had

has

if

off





# Language Links by SOUND!

- Create a set of, with 2 cards (words) for each sound.
- Have the students link up to a partner that has a sound in common. They need to be able to read both words.

seven

sets

help

went

was

were



# Skywrite the Sight Words



- Using large muscles and a straight arm, ask readers to write the word in giant letters.
- For challenge or deep review, have readers close their eyes and write the words.
- Use a flashlight to write the words on the wall or ceiling.

Photo: Orton-Gillingham Approach to Sky Writing



- Let readers explore how the word looks by changing it and then returning to correct spelling.
- Use foam letters, letter tiles or magnetic letters. Ask reader to spell the word.
- While they close their eyes, swap the letter order or remove a letter.
- Have the reader identify what is wrong and make the correction.



# What Have You Learned Today?



- Reading is not a visual process! It is all about language!
- Students' automatic word recognition increases when they are able to make a connection to the phonology and orthographic patterns within high frequency words rather than rote memorization.
- Connect to the 4 part processor when teaching “sight words.”





Questions? Call or email



Michelle Elia  
Ohio Literacy Lead  
[michelle.elia@sstr5.org](mailto:michelle.elia@sstr5.org)