## Dyslexic Advantage NEWSLETTER

## THE READING WARS



### WILL DYSLEXIC STUDENTS BE HELPED?

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

- CO-FOUNDER OF REMIND, BRETT KOPF
- FOUNDER OF ALASKA ALCHEMY ORTHOTICS & PROSTHETICS
- BATTLE BETWEEN "BALANCED" AND STRUCTURED LITERACY
- DR. DORESA JENNINGS, STEAM CHASERS

- DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE IN TRANSLATION
- REAL WORLD LEARNING WITH DR. GLENN STERNER
- LEARNING DOUBLES TO BOOST MATH FACTS FLUENCY
- DYSLEXIA NEWS

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SUMMIT



Fernette Eide MD, Editor





Recite \*\*

Dear Friends,

Remember to encourage your college students to apply for our KARINA EIDE COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP. This year we'll be making at least SIXTEEN AWARDS! The deadline is March 1st. Over \$20,000 will be given away!

For K-12 students, the Karina Eide Young Writers Awards deadline is soon, January 21st. Apply HERE. Over \$1000 will be awarded.



#### - Fernette Eide

Check out our wonderful sponsors: Winsor Learning / Sonday System All About Learning (Reading & Spelling), Scanning Pens, FastBridge, Summit Center, Churchill Center & School, Touch, Type, Read and Spell, Recite Me, and The Writers Studio.



We're happy to announce that our partner NEUROLEARNING has launched their iPad-based Dyslexia app for adults and ages 7 - 70! The app provides a dyslexia score as well as a report with weak areas and strengths. 3% of profits are donated to Dyslexic Advantage.

Thank you to volunteers Trish Seres, Dayna Russell Freudenthal, Michelle Williams, and Shelley Wear for their tireless proofing and feedback. Thank you Lady Grace Belarmino for her beautiful design work and admin support by Sarah Macapobre.

### **GO PREMIUM**

Editors' Note: to ensure that our dyslexic members are able to read our publication without difficulty, our editorial policy is to avoid the use of fonts or typefaces, such as italics, that can impede readability.

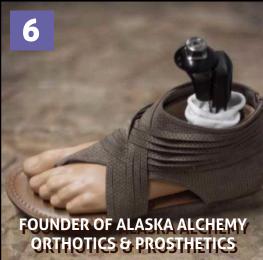
If you're reading a print copy of this issue, you can find the digital copy with all the interactive features here: https://joom.ag/Ssse

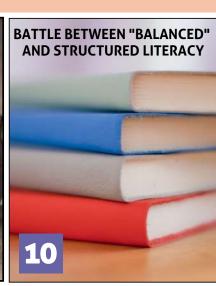


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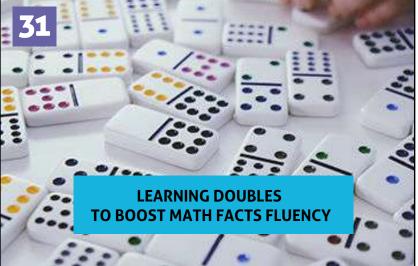














# CHAT WITH CO-FOUNDER OF REMIND BRETT KOPF

"I like to tell people I started the company in fifth grade. That's a lie. But, I was diagnosed with a bunch of learning disabilities as a kid and I really struggled in school. I had this teacher that totally changed my life, named Miss Whitefield. My parents were really involved in my education. So the whole hypothesis of the company was based on the belief that, if we could figure out a way to increase parental engagement and help make teachers better teachers; if I can give every kid a Miss Whitefield on a really big scale, what does the world look like?"

- Brett Kopf

Before Brett had reached the age of 30, he was named to Fast Company's most creative people and he was founder and CEO of Remind, a classroom app that connects over 30 million students, parents, and teachers and hit #1 in the Apple App Store.

How did he get to this point, and what did he look like as a kid? Thankfully, Brett shared a great photo of himself (opposite page) at the age of 7.

He did not look like a budding entrepreneur as a child and if we saw him as a sophomore in college, he said he compared himself to a boiling pot of water. He didn't fit into the system. School was so hard for him.

As he came closer to the end of his sophomore year, Brett said he came to the realization that he couldn't just go work for a company after he got out of school. He realized he had a lot of creative energy and he wanted to solve a problem.

Brett credits one of his college professors, Dr. Glenn Sterner (now at Penn State) for really helping put him on the road to creating Remind, the company.

#### **BRETT THEN AND NOW!**





Brett recalled that he ended up majoring in Agriculture after 5 majors because his grades weren't good enough (that was the system). In the Agriculture Department, he became a Bailey Scholar (at Michigan State) which was part of an experiential, cooperative, and interest-based learning program.

Students were asked what they wanted to learn about, and if one student suggested kayaking, another cooking, and another technology, they would interconnect the different subjects to become a shared curriculum. Brett was interested in technology, but didn't know anything about it...so Glen gave him a push, and said, "Go do it!"

To listen to my entire interview with Brett including his advice to fellow entrepreneurs and young people with dyslexia, click below.

Check out Brett's company **REMIND HERE.** 

# FOUNDER of ALASKA ALCHEMY ORTHOTICS & PROSTHETICS

"I wouldn't have made it through school if it wasn't for shop class."

- Wil Sundberg, Owner Alchemy Orthotics & Prosthetics

I first learned about Wil Sunderland in a news article about Alaska's struggles to identify dyslexic students. Wil is founder of Alchemy Orthotics and Prosthetics. As I learned more about his company, I was impressed by how he had infused his business with a lot of creativity and empathy, put together with a lot of spatial talent.



When it comes to arms and legs, every one is different, and differences aren't just related to anatomy and structure - how we walk, run, reach and grab, and everything else needs to go into the design of a good orthotic or prosthetic.



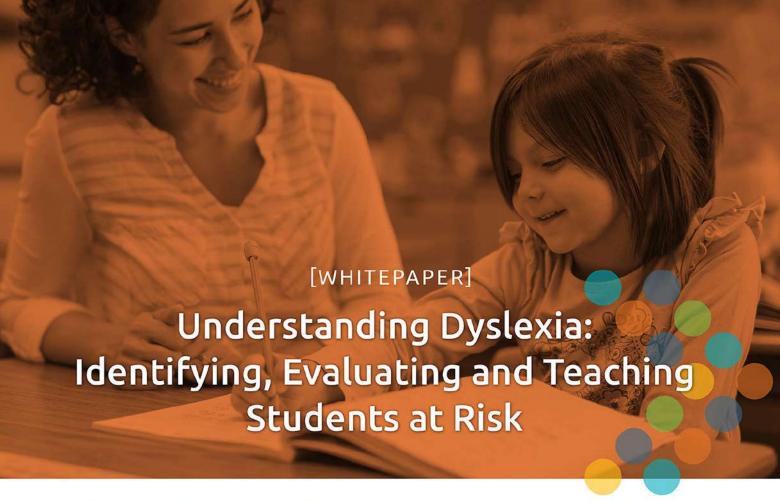


- EVERYONE can be an effective multi sensory teacher
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National Center for Learning
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evaluated the Sonday System(r) and deemed that the
program contained the required elements for teaching
reading identified by the
Nation Reading Panel.

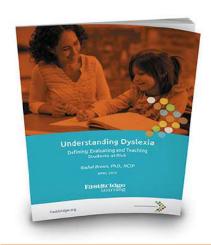


Dyslexia is top-of-mind among educators as more and more states pass legislation to provide early screening and support for students with symptoms of dyslexia.

Read this whitepaper to better understand, identify and help these young students overcome their learning difficulties and be successful in school.

#### Read the whitepaper to learn:

- How to define dyslexia
- · Common myths surrounding dyslexia
- The importance of early screening for dyslexia
- Steps for effective diagnostic evaluation
- · Effective teaching methods for dyslexic students



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#### **INSPIRATION**

Check out my interview below with Wil. School was brutal for him, but thankfully he found a way out and today he's an important positive force in the world.





# Allow people with dyslexia to use your website barrier-free

me

Recite Me helps people with dyslexia and sensory issues to read and understand website content by letting them change the look and feel of a site to suit their personal needs. A user can fully customize the background and text color as well as the font type, sizing, spacing, and line-height. This includes the specialist Open Dyslexic font, which is designed to give letters extra weight at the bottom, so words don't jump around the screen.

To support reading, dyslexic users can choose to have text read aloud via the fully customizable screen reader. To check word definitions on the page the toolbar has a built-in dictionary and thesaurus.

To find out more about Recite Me assistive technology visit our website or contact the team today!



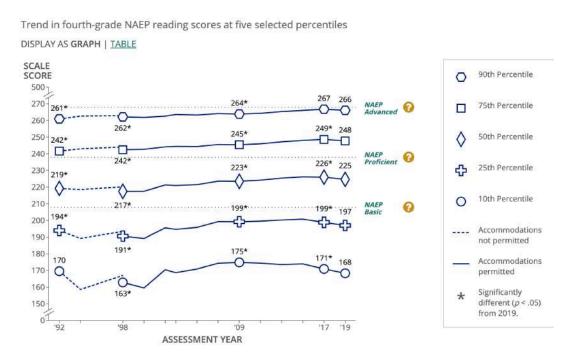
### **READING WARS:**

# BATTLE BETWEEN 'BALANCED' AND STRUCTURED LITERACY

"Over the long term in reading, the lowest performing students – those readers who struggle the most – have made no progress from the first NAEP administration almost 30 years ago"

There are discouraging reports from the 2019 NAEP Reading Assessment. NAEP stands for National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Look at the reading assessment scores of 4th graders from 1992 to 2019.



Almost across the board, scores are down from 2017 to 2019. The lowest performers (NAEP Basic) are reading at even lower levels than their classmates from 2019. What's going on?

We take the struggle out of

## Reading and Spelling









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Use typing drills to learn arithmetic facts and science vocabulary

#### **READING**

Battles continue to rage about appropriate reading interventions for students.

For families with dyslexic students, the statistic about how reading scores for the weakest readers haven't improved over the past 30 years is shocking considering the advances in our understanding of dyslexia and the demonstrated benefit of targeted intervention.

Why are dyslexic students not receiving appropriate intervention in public school?

#### MOST DYSLEXIC STUDENTS AREN'T IDENTIFIED

Dyslexia is often missed in classrooms. New legislation and clarifications by the Department of Education have made it more likely that dyslexia will be recognized as an entity in schools; however, few schools conduct universal screening and many students can hide or compensate for their difficulties well enough that they aren't recognized as having problems.

Even with states passing "early screening" laws, these screening exams (taking 1-8 minutes) are screening for important skills such as phonological awareness, but they aren't screening for dyslexia. Some benefits come from being identified as having a need for phonological training, but because dyslexia is much more than reading, lack of formal identification means these students won't be recognized for necessary accommodations, reading, writing, math, and foreign language supports, and differentiation of their curriculum in the event they are also highly intelligent.

### EVEN IF STUDENTS ARE KNOWN TO BE DYSLEXIC, MANY MAY ONLY RECEIVE "PHONICS-LITE" CURRICULA

Recently, one of the most influential reading teachers in the country, Dr. Lucy Calkins of Columbia Teachers College published published an open letter, "No One Gets to Own the Term, 'The Science of Reading'", which seemed to be pushing back at the notion that curricula that she developed as part of "balanced literacy" is unscientific, or at least not keeping up with advances in the science of reading.

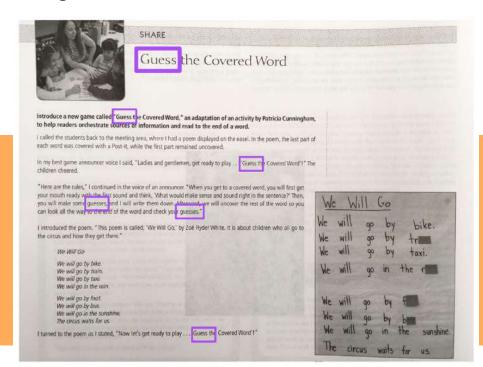
## THE NAMES ARE CONFUSING, BUT BALANCED LITERACY IS 'TYPICAL LITERACY' WHICH EMPHASIZES AUTHENTIC BOOKS OVER INTENSIVE PHONOLOGICAL REMEDIATION

If your dyslexic students are in public school, it's best to be aware of these issues because your students may be encouraged to "guess and go" rather than being given explicit instruction and practice breaking down down words in order to decode them. This may be because the teachers trained in the balanced literacy approach may put greater priority on learning to read from "authentic texts" rather than decodable readers (books that only contain words that students have learned to decode on a phonetic basis).

Experts are challenging (in both <u>nice</u> and <u>not-so-nice</u> ways) Dr. Calkins' position that balanced literacy (including her own curricula) are keeping up with science.

At Reading Rockets, <u>Martha Goldberg</u> recently reviewed some of the lessons taught to teachers at one of the training institutes at Columbia:

"Our trainer frequently used the word "guess" to describe what good readers do. Your programs, Units of Study for Teaching Reading and Units of Study for Teaching Phonics, use that word as well received."



Click image at left to enlarge and see how often the word "guess" is used in Dr. Calkins' reading materials.





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#### SCHOOL DISTRICT DYSLEXIA THERAPIST

"With the help of the C-Pen Reader, my students can now go to the library and choose a book of interest that they truly enjoy reading. This has broadened their interest levels, vocabulary and exposure to fiction and nonfiction books. Before the ReaderPen, my students were limited to books at lower lexile and independent reading levels. For this reason many of them were bored by the content or frustrated by the sheer act of reading."



#### **From Dr. Timothy Shanahan:**

"Most primary teachers when asked if they teach phonics are, in my experience, likely to say, "Yes." However, when I visit some of those classrooms, what they mean by phonics is pretty pale and thin; often no more than marking up a worksheet. Bloodless teaching not likely to help kids to figure out the decoding system.

When teaching the simple sound-symbol correspondences, teachers should make sure the kids can hear those sounds and distinguish them from other sounds; they should make sure kids can recognize these letters within words; they should make sure the kids can sound out unknown words or even nonsense words using those correspondences; and they should be able to read and write words with those elements, too.

Showing kids a spelling pattern and its pronunciation is a necessary step, but it's not sufficient, if the goal is enabling kids to read and spell. Phonics teaching should provide opportunities to decode and spell words, to sort words, to recognize misspellings, and to gain proficiency in using all this information.

Although the numbers of phonics skills to be taught is usually pretty limited, the amount of phonics instruction kids should be receiving is considerable. Experts usually recommend 20-30 minutes or so of daily phonics instruction in grades K-2 (in other words, about 200 hours of such teaching). That means there is a need for thoroughness and depth; we want mastery, not familiarization."

The teacher who I mentioned earlier, the one who may be doing no more than having kids mark up the daily phonics worksheet, can honestly say she is "teaching phonics," since those lessons are being dispensed."

From Reid Lyon and Vinita Chhabra about the science of reading:

"The majority of children who enter kindergarten and elementary school at risk for reading failure can learn to read at average or above-average levels—if they are identified early and given systematic, intensive instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension



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#### **READING**

strategies (Lyon et al., 2001; Torgesen, 2002a). Substantial research carried out and supported by NICHD indicates clearly that without this systematic and intensive approach to early intervention, the majority of at-risk readers rarely catch up. Failure to read by 9 years of age portends a lifetime of illiteracy for at least 70 percent of struggling readers (Shaywitz, 2003)."

#### Margaret Goldberg again:

"Some struggling second grade readers will quietly flip through books during independent reading, but others quickly grow bored. More than once, I've seen a child throw a book bin and shout, "I hate these stupid books." There's no convincing an eight year old that his Level C books aren't stupid.

Children who struggle with reading realize something many adults do not understand-- they do not learn to read by reading. Desire to learn and time to practice are not sufficient for most students. They need to be taught how to read.

I began to question why we prioritize independent reading in our instructional minutes when I saw beginning and struggling readers sitting alone with books, waiting to be taught."

These scenarios may seem all too familiar, unfortunately.

In the past few years, dyslexia groups like Decoding Dyslexia have made dramatic inroads into educational policy. Laws have been passed in an overwhelming majority of states, but then comes the slow process of forming committees, deciding on curricula, training teachers, and so on. Confusion and ambiguity over what level of rigor in decoding instruction is needed for students makes it less likely that students who need such instruction, get it.

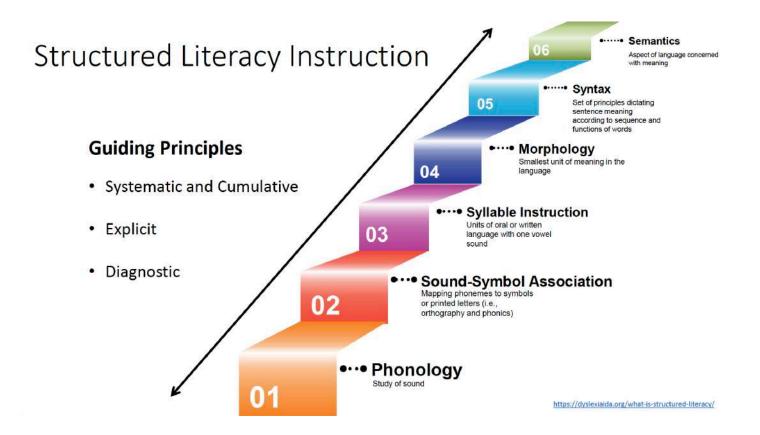
In 2016, Martha Youman published a helpful <u>review</u> matrix of multisensory structured literacy programs, but there are no plans to update it and many valuable curricula are missed. The quirky "What Works Clearinghouse" is not a good resource for reviewing dyslexia curricula; the approval process is opaque and at least some reviews don't seem to have a first hand knowledge of teaching students with dyslexia.

#### **READING**

Understanding the different components of curricula are important because some programs are appropriate for general classroom students, whereas others are intended for students with moderate to severe dyslexia (Tier 3 in the RTI system).

Most strong school districts have access to multiple reading curricula; if a student isn't showing progress, another curricula with additional supports may be indicated or existing curricula may need to be modified or supplemented.

In the figure below, see the different components of structured literacy, the gold standard for dyslexia remediation. Is your dyslexic student a fluent reader? If not, they may need targeted remediation that involves all the components listed below and immediate feedback for errors when they occur. Students may still listen to books at home and use audiobooks for content - it's just that it should never be assumed that dyslexic students will just "pick up reading" by having them read more. Explicit incremental multisensory instruction unlocks the code for students and it's worth fighting for.



#### STEM / STEAM





### DR DORESA JENNINGS, STEAM CHASERS

Dr. Doresa Jennings is the author of an exciting book series that has positive role models for dyslexia and underrepresented minorities, and it's an exciting book with humor and amazing facts. Doresa has also generously donated a STEAM Chaser kit that would be an amazing gift for any middle school classroom. Sign up for a chance to win this great giveaway **HERE**.

#### From Doresa's successful Kickstarter:

"Middle Grade readers (9-12 year olds) will be introduced to more than twenty Black Americans that contributed to our knowledge of the cosmos in unique and impactful ways. They will learn about Adolphus Samms dubbed, "The Father of Invention" by the United States Army and holds five patents that make multistage rockets possible. They will learn about the Dr. Patricia Cowings, the first American woman to be trained as a scientist astronaut (although she never made

#### STEM / STEAM

it to space) and her life changing contributions to controlling motion sickness with astronauts by helping them control 26 different physiological functions.

This book is not only packed with amazing facts, it also keeps and ramps up the humor and fun had by our main characters. "Thunder and Lightning" don't disappoint with their antics and Shar's wit keeps everyone on their toes.

As always, there is a social justice scenario woven through the storyline, this one dealing with bullying and learning to embrace the things that make us different. For Ebony, it is about accepting her dyslexia and allowing her knowledge of astronomy and rockets to shine through."

#### Our Januaray Giveaway of the Steam Chasers Swag Pack includes:

- The Blackness of Space (book)
- The STEAM Chasers Phases of the Moon Journal
- Space shuttle pen
- The STEAM Chasers swag bag (notebook, pencil, stoplight kit, pencil sharpener, calculator ruler)
- The STEAM Chasers wristband
- The STEAM Chasers:
   We Made That (book and audio).
- The STEAM Chasers button



This would be a GREAT gift for middle school students (and younger with help) and classrooms in advance of Black History Month (February).



## DYSLEXIA FOR TEACHERS ONLINE COURSE

#### For General Classroom Teachers

- » How Dyslexia Presents
- » What Good Remediation Looks Like
- » Evidence-Based Strategies that Work
- » Ways to Support with Accommodations
- » Gifted, ELL, Social Emotional & more!

#### **CLOCK HOURS & GRADUATE CREDITS**

**Dyslexic Advantage & Seattle Pacific University** 

[ON-DEMAND WEBINAR]

### Build a Framework for the Early Identification and Intervention of Dyslexia

Join Sally Grimes, Founding Director of the Grimes Reading Institute, and FastBridge Learning® in this free, on-demand webinar about how to build a reading program that supports students with dyslexia.

#### You will learn:

- Key characteristics of dyslexia and related language difficulties
- The importance of early screening
- Pre-literacy interventions for Pre-K and Kindergarten
- Other elements critical to supporting students with dyslexia

WATCH NOW

https://go.fastbridge.org/dajan2



FastBridge Learning "I had no idea I could like school! At Summit Center, I found out I was both dyslexic and smart... and I think differently. They gave me the tools I need to succeed."

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Summit Center specializes in helping students with complex learning profiles and differences – including kids who may be gifted, and those who might be both gifted and have challenges (known as twice-exceptional or 2e). We provide formal evaluations of strengths and challenges, and offer specific strategies and recommendations to guide growth and maximize potential.



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#### STEM / STEAM

#### INTEREST STUDENTS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EARLY

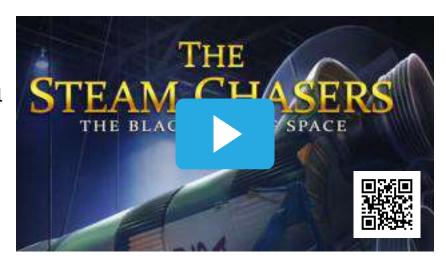
In my interview with Doresa, she mentioned the importance of introducing science, technology, and the arts early for students, and we couldn't agree more. Many children are passionately interested in these subjects, but they and their parents may not know how to learn more and develop scientific or tech abilities.

Dyslexic men and women are among the most accomplished scientists and technology experts of all time, and many aspects of dyslexic thinking are well-suited to careers in science and technology.

Listen to my interview below with Dr. Jennings below. Her enthusiasm is contagious!

The Steam Chasers has two dyslexic characters in the book series. One character is a stealth dyslexic.

Here's the video Doresa used to fund her successful Kickstarter.



Enjoy Fernette's interview with Doresa HERE --->

#### DYSLEXIA ADVANTAGE IN TRANSLATION

# DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE IN TRANSLATION





This past week, we received inquiries about Dysexic Advantage from India and Italy. Our book The Dyslexic Advantage is now translated into Spanish, Chinese (coming), Japanese (coming), Korean, Polish, and Dutch, but also our ENTIRE **DyslexicAdvantage.org** website can be translated into over 100 languages - many with audio translations as well.

ReciteMe is a sponsor of Dyslexic Advantage who gifted us with their state-ofthe-art text-to-speech platform. Not only does it allow you to listen to all articles, it will also translate them visually and into to speech files that can be listened to, as well!



Articles can also be downloaded as mp3 files that can be listed to in your mobile devices or listened to offline without an internet connctions.

For more information about how Reciteme works at DyslexicAdvantage.org, click **HERE**.



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# REAL WORLD LEARNING WITH DR. GLENN STERNER

In our interview with CEO Brett Kopf on page 4 of this newsletter, he told us that the experience of being part of the Bailey Scholar program at Michigan State University was life changing in terms of finding a positive future for himself.

He told me that his advisor was a really inspirational and creative guy, so I thought it would be nice to interview him, too!



The <u>Bailey Scholars</u> program is part of the College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences, but the curricula is entirely student-driven and not limited to either Agriculture or Natural Sciences. Here's what the program says about itself:

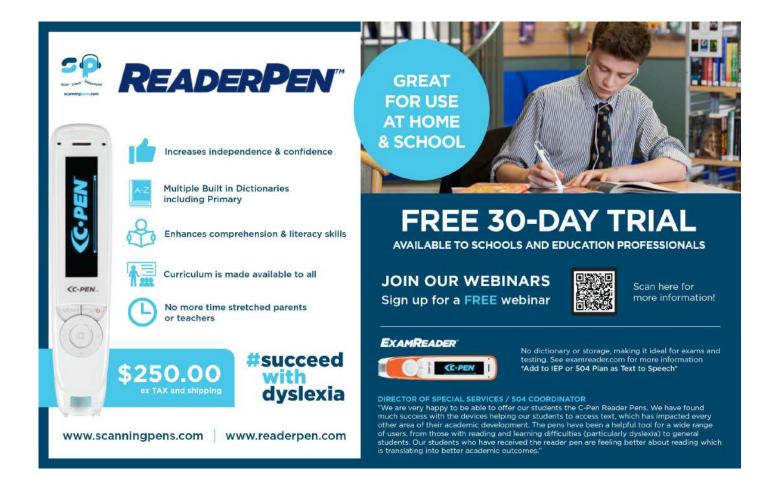
"At its core, BSP is a learning community where each student, graduate and faculty fellow design their own learning journey and achieve whole person development. In this program, community members work towards fulfilling personal, professional, and academic goals. There are two facets of the Bailey Scholars Program: the Minor in Leadership in Integrated Learning and the Bailey community."

What a wonderful program design! Based on individual interest, integrated learning, and leadership training. An essential component of the program are real world experiences like internships, volunteer experience, or leadership experience.

The students are given the entire responsibility for designing the learning experience...including setting goals, designing methods of assessments, and determining how they are going to learn. For instance, in Brett's case, bringing in an expert to help them learn the technology he needed in order to eventually develop his Remind app.

In the case of having to learn technology, Brett partnered up with Glenn for two independent study electives that helped him learn the technology he needed under the guidance of another Michigan State University faculty member.

Glenn really hit the nail on the head when he said what is so important in Brett's case was to have the faculty members (and department) give Brett and other students the space and flexibility to pursue their dream work. Listen to more from my interview here:



#### Helping Children, Teens, Adults, and **Families Realize Their Potential**

assessment | consultation | treatment

Summit Center specializes in helping students with complex learning profiles and differences, including kids who may be gifted, and those who might be both gifted and have challenges (known as twice exceptional or 2e). We provide formal evaluations of strengths and challenges and offer specific strategies and recommendations to guide growth and development.



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#### IN THIS ISSUE:

- DOES SEQUENCING MATTER?
- COMPREHENSION

#### TEACHING READING TO ADULTS

### PREMIUM





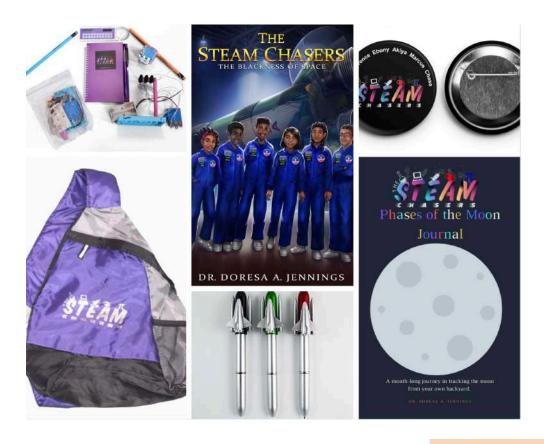
- DYSLEXIA & COGNITION
- WORK HACKS
- DOES SEQUENCING MATTER?
- DRIVING WITH DYSLEXIA
- GRAMMAR & READING COMPREHENSION
- DYSLEXIA & MATH: ESTIMATION
- READING INTERVENTION FOR ADULTS

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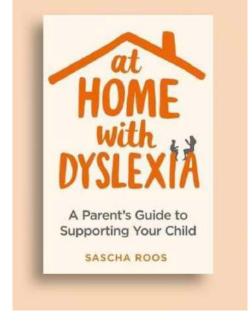
### **JANUARY GIVEAWAY!**

Register HERE for a chance to win Doresa's STEAM Chaser giveaway or Sascha Roos' At Home with Dyslexia.



At Home with Dyslexia is a parent's guide by Sascha Roos, a guidance counselor in the UK who has supported parents and children with dyslexia for over 15 years.

Listen to Fernette's brief interview with Sascha below.



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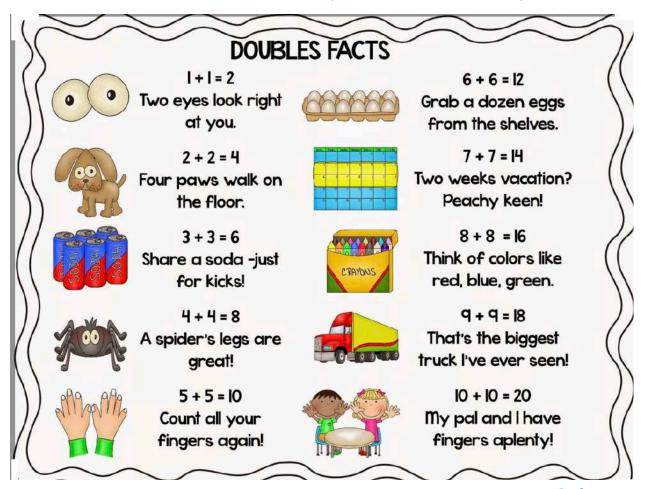
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# LEARNING DOUBLES TO BOOST MATH FACTS FLUENCY

Learning doubles math facts can help with number flexibility. After learning how to count and "count on", doubles may be the next skill to learn.

<u>Origo Education</u> has a nice post about how to introduce and practice doubling facts with students.

First, students look for doubles in nature (see some ideas below).

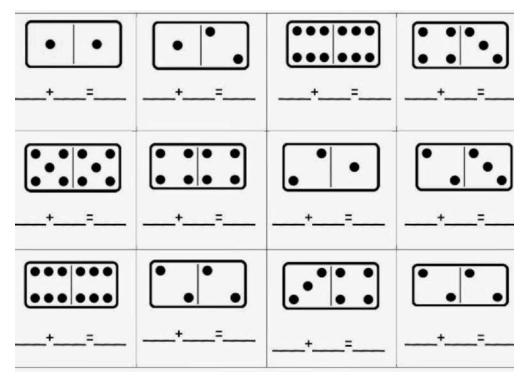


<u>Reference</u>

Next, students can practice doubling in pairs, where one student holds up fingers, the other mirrors, and both try to say the double the quickest.

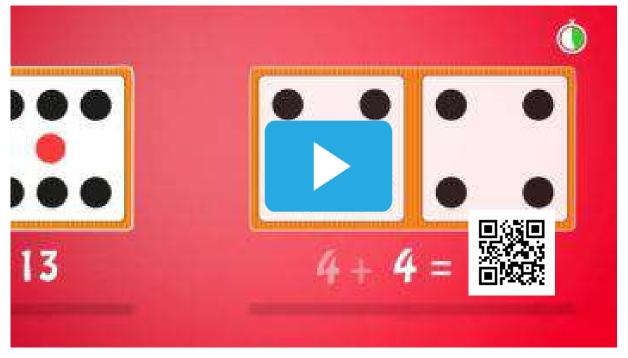
#### **MATH**

For students who need more time, working with double dominoes or dominoes sheets can build familiarity with doubles math facts.



A nice free resources for learning math facts can be found **HERE** from Bill Hanlon

**Reference** 



After learning and mastering double facts, then doubles + 1 or doubles - 1 are fairly easy to learn as a next step.

#### **DYSLEXIA NEWS**



Most Popular Reading Programs Not Backed By Science
Education Week



Nation's Report Card: Reading and Math Scores Drop
US News & World Report



What I Wish People Knew About My Son's Dyslexia
Yahoo The Mighty



How to Recognize Dyslexia - Including English Language Learners

**KQED - NPR** 



Video Game Developer Interviewed About Her Dyslexia -Katie Goode

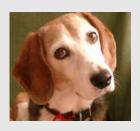
**Ross Duncan** 



Another Literacy "Expert" Makes Statement That Dyslexia Doesn't Exist

**Education Week** 

#### **DYSLEXIA NEWS**



**Everything You Wanted to Know About Being Dyslexic in 20 Peanuts Cartoons** 

**Dyslexic Library (blog)** 



3 Ways Daymond John Rose to Success wth Dyslexia Moguldom Nation



Oklahoma Doesn't Screen Students for Dyslexia, the Most Common Learning Disability

**KGOU (NPR)** 



### K-12 ARTSHARE!

**Lody**, by Sophie 8. Denver, CO.

"This monster was designed with the idea of creating a new soft toy. It is based off of a dyslexic brain with the creative part and an alien from another planet. We are all different and unique in our own way.

Sophie will receive an art or photography book by a talented dyslexic creative.

Submit your work **HERE**.



Share your ideas for a future issue!

