



the Spalding NEWS

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Spalding Education
INTERNATIONAL

★ 20 Beginning Readers Printed ★



They are here! All 20 Spalding Beginning Readers in the *Learning to Read and Loving it* series are now in stock.* Each reader provides phonogram practice and reinforces knowledge of text type as well.

Level 1 narratives (8) provide practice of the first 26 phonograms and 2 to 5 additional phonograms per book until 53 phonograms are practiced.

Level 2 informatives (8) provide practice of the first 26 phonograms and 2 to 5 additional phonograms per book until 70

phonograms are practiced by Book 16.

Level 3 informative-narratives (4) provide practice of all 70 phonograms.

The readers are carefully matched to skill level without resorting to mind-numbing word repetition. Printed in the Spalding font, each book tells an engaging story or provides information of interest to children.

Spalding Beginning Readers are a unique and much needed addition to the marketplace of early readers. ★

* 8 of 20 shown

Brain Research and Teaching Phonics



A recent article, "Why Phonics Teaching Must Change," in the September issue of *Educational Leadership*,¹ explains why the usual way of teaching phonics is not correct.

Author Jeannine Herron* condemns worksheets and scripted lessons, the mainstay of many phonics programs, as "tedious and unproductive." She believes they are the reason some teachers are biased against phonics.

Herron also would do away with the practice of having students copy from the board. She points out that students can copy without thinking about what they are doing. She recommends dictating, because it forces students to activate verbal memory by pronouncing words silently, and applying the alphabetic code to write the words.

In addition, she advises de-emphasizing the names of letters, saying teachers will avoid confusion if they refer to letters by their sounds rather than by their names.

The only characteristic of a letter that is relevant to reading or writing is its sound.

Going from letter to sound, as most programs do, is wrong, Herron says, and quotes researcher Louisa Moats to emphasize the point. Moats asserted that such programs "teach the code backwards" and that going from letter to sound instead of from sound to letter "leaves gaps, invites confusion, and creates inefficiencies."

Right Way

As the preceding paragraphs indicate, not only is *The Spalding Method* an exception to the 'usual,' but it is one of the few programs that incorporates what the author identifies as necessary for effective instruction. Many thanks to SCTI Victoria Wilber for sending SEI a copy of *Why Phonics Must Change*.

Herron elaborates on how phonics should be taught and in so doing describes

instruction that sounds very much like *The Spalding Method*. Herron recommends teaching children the sounds in words (phonemic awareness) before they see the letters, just as Spalding instructs.

The right kind of early instruction is important, she emphasizes, because it determines how the brain will organize itself for reading.

Neuroscientists and cognitive scientists have established that the foundation of reading is speech. Therefore, Herron writes, reading skills in the brain need to be built on that base. Children's first experiences with letters and words "dictate how the brain establishes the neural networks that may become habitual pathways as reading skills develop."

The three essential elements of reading, "pronunciation, meaning, and the visual appearance of words," are typically stored in the left hemisphere of the brain, connecting "the new visual experiences to areas already devoted to speech and comprehension." Phonemes, Herron explains, are *articulated* sounds.

It is the left hemisphere that sequences and remembers phonemes. Good readers are able to store and access critical reading elements directly in the left hemisphere speech center.

When dyslexics read, however, areas in the right-hemisphere of the brain, away from left hemisphere speech and comprehension areas, are activated, making the process more complicated.

Significantly, studies show that when these same readers receive phonemically-based interventions, they improve, and activation moves to the left hemisphere nearer speech and comprehension areas. Activation in dyslexic's brains then looks more like the activation patterns typical of good readers. Herron summarizes:

This finding suggests that early reading profoundly affects how the brain organizes these skills.

The Writing Road

Herron endorses writing (encoding) as a much more effective way to begin instruction than decoding (reading words) in teaching children to read. She explains that starting with decoding is

The Spalding News

In 1986, Romalda B. Spalding established the Spalding Education Foundation (now Spalding Education International, or SEI) to perpetuate her Method, and to maintain the principles and procedures which have made The Spalding Method so effective.

Through ongoing professional development, SEI provides the highest quality literacy instruction to public, private and home educators, and ultimately to all students. Today, SEI trains teachers and accredits schools in *The Spalding Method*, which continues to be validated by current research about the way children learn.

President Warren J. North
Vice President. Dr. Ronald G. Sipus
Director of Instruction
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more difficult because pronunciation and meaning are delayed until visual recognition of words is accomplished. The beginning reader must remember letter patterns and configurations first. Encoding is a better way to teach phonics because it combines sound and meaning from the start. She describes how instruction should proceed:

The teacher guides instruction of decodable consonant-vowel-consonant words in a systematic way so students gradually build up a repertoire of the 40 letters and digraphs that represent the basic phonemes in English. Neural networks for these 40 paired associations will thus be laid down consistently without the confusion of dealing with more complex spelling patterns. Writing becomes an efficient route to early reading rather than a separate subject.

Although there were no brain scans to reveal the system of neural areas and pathways underpinning the ability to speak and comprehend written language, Mrs. Spalding understood the importance of teaching sounds first and then having students write and read the phonograms, integrating writing and reading. As Herron explains, writing and reading "are two halves of the same learning task," and "practice with encoding enhances facility with decoding..."

In *The Spalding Method*, writing not only allows students to apply their phonetic understanding, but enables teachers to evaluate what has been learned and adjust instruction accordingly.

Mrs. Spalding also stressed the importance of constant teacher-student interaction to require students to articulate what they do, as well as the reason for doing it.

The Brain and Whole Language

Your editor cannot resist commenting on the implications of brain research.

Whole language may not be merely ineffective but, by failing to establish the neural networks necessary to the development of reading skills, may actually inhibit learning to read.

Dr. Norman Doidge,* in his book, *The Brain That Changes Itself*,² provides insights germane to that possibility.

He explains that neuroscience has refuted the long-held belief that the brain is fixed early in life and subject only to deterioration after that. Using case histories and research studies, he describes the brain's ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections throughout life, even into old age. He describes our brains as "plastic" and governed by constant competition for processing resources and space.

There is an endless war of nerves going on inside our brains. If we stop exercising our mental skills, we do not just forget them: the brain map space (brain processing areas) for those skills is turned over to the skills we practice instead.

Doidge says that's why bad habits are so hard to break and 'unlearning' is so much harder than learning.

When we learn a bad habit, it takes over a brain map, and each time we repeat it, it claims more control of that map and prevents the use of that space for 'good' habits.

He would agree with Herron that the right kind of early instruction is critical.

"It is best to get it right early, before the 'bad habit' gets a competitive advantage."

Similarly, Dr. Sally Shaywitz, professor of Pediatric Neurology at Yale University, found that although poor readers had the systems for reading in place, they'd never been properly activated. "They weren't connected up the same way as good readers..." Or, as Doidge would say, those systems were crowded out by the formation of other, less efficient systems.

Doidge also points out that changing

a brain map requires the learner's undivided attention.

While you can learn when you divide your attention, divided attention doesn't lead to abiding change in your brain maps.

Consider the dilemma of children who, never having been taught the skills necessary to decode automatically, must divide their attention between drawing meaning from print and trying to figure out words.

The Brain at Work

Herron packs a great deal of information into 5 1/2 magazine pages, more than can be distilled in this review. By connecting the components of effective phonics instruction with the way the brain works, she illuminates the science behind Mrs. Spalding's remarkable insights. Herron's article is a valuable resource for those called upon to explain Spalding and why it differs from most reading programs.

Doidge broadens our understanding of the way learning occurs and explains how the brain can overcome injury and the challenges of aging. His book will be of interest to those who teach learning disabled students or have family or friends who are stroke or brain injury victims.

1. Herron, Jeannine "Why Phonics Teaching Must Change," *Educational Leadership*, September 2008, Vol. 86, No. 1, 77-81.
2. Doidge, Norman M.D., *The Brain That Changes Itself*, Penguin Books, 2007. (Paperback edition.)

*Jeannine Herron, is a research neuropsychologist and principal investigator on four reading research studies funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

••Norman Doidge, M.D., is a psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, and researcher at the Columbia University Center for Psychoanalytic Training and Research in New York and the University of Toronto's department of psychiatry.

Franklin West - 2008 Blue Ribbon School

It gives SEI great pleasure to report that Benjamin Franklin West, Mesa Unified School District, received a No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Award for 2008. The awards were presented October 20-21 in Washington D.C. by U.S. Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education, Kerri L. Briggs.

Franklin West is one of only 320 schools in the nation to be recognized for outstanding achievement. Blue Ribbon schools are selected based on one of two criteria: schools with at least 40% of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance to high levels on state tests; schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10% of their state on state tests. Franklin met both of these criteria over the past three school years.

Secretary Spellings, announcing the award recipients, said,

These Blue Ribbon Schools are an example of what teachers and students can achieve. Our challenge, she said, is to replicate effective strategies and help every student improve.

The Spalding Method, according to Principal Emily Kelly, is one of the effective strategies that contributed to Franklin's success. As she states in the Blue Ribbon Schools application,

This multi-sensory approach to reading (WRTR) is used in the Franklin schools because it is systematic and allows the skills developed each year to be consistently reinforced in succeeding years. It was chosen and partially developed by parents, thereby increasing parental share holding in the school.

Franklin West students are educated according to an academic model created in 1978. At that time, in the words of Principal Emily Kelly, "a close bond was created between Franklin and SEI."

That bond has strengthened over the years to encompass the establishment of three additional Mesa District Franklin schools.

their dedication and leadership over the years.

The summer issue of *Spalding News* reported the retirement of Donna Schaffer after 27 years service as teacher and principal. One of the original group of teachers certified by Mrs. Spalding in 1986, Donna embodied Mrs. Spalding's legacy of dedication and devotion to students.

Although this is Kelly's first year as principal of Franklin West, she had a front row seat in observing the people who worked so hard to make Franklin a success. Starting as a kindergartener in 1979, Franklin's second year, she learned to read and write with Spalding. She even remembers Mrs. Spalding visiting her classroom.

When she decided to become a teacher she "couldn't fathom using any other language arts program than Spalding." After finishing her training, she returned to Franklin to teach fourth and fifth grade, became Basic Skills Specialist for 6 years and now is principal, following in the well-placed footsteps of Donna Schaffer.

And now for the rest of the story. Emily Kelly is a second generation Spaldingite in more ways than one. Donna Schaffer is her mother.

From left to right: Karen McCasland, teacher for 27 years at the Franklin schools, Aba S. Kumi, Director of NCLB Blue Ribbon Schools Program, US Dept. of Education, Franklin West Principal Emily Kelly.



The four Franklin schools and teachers work closely together ... Without the close teamwork of the four Franklin campuses, this Blue Ribbon Award for Franklin West would not be possible.

Ms. Kelly credits Franklin West teachers, staff, students and parents for making the award possible, and she gives special thanks to founding Principal Marc Mason and former Principal Donna Schaffer for

IDA Conference Highlights 2008

Dr. Mary North, Director of Research and Curriculum, Warren North, Spalding President, Janie Carnal, Associate Director of Research and Curriculum, Carole Wile, Director of Instruction, Certification, and Accreditation, and Jim Sexton, Director of Outreach and Marketing attended the recent International Dyslexia Association Conference in Seattle, Washington. As always, the proceedings, Oct. 29 – Nov. 2, 2008, were packed with informative speakers. Especially interesting to the Spalding contingent was the day-long symposium entitled *Quality Teacher Preparation Reading Programs: A Prerequisite for Effective Reading Teachers*.

Recent studies revealing that most schools of education do not provide prospective teachers with scientifically-

based reading instruction was the topic of discussion (See *The Spalding News* –Volume 21, Issue 3, 2006 : “New Studies Quantify Institutional Barriers to Science-Based Education.”)

The six panelists* discussed a variety of related issues. Space constraints allow mention of only two of these. Louise Spear-Swerling discussed the implications for teacher education of changes in the identification of students with learning disabilities. She provided a list of readings and resources suitable for an education school reading course. Susan M. Smartt discussed the institutional barriers to developing highly qualified teachers of reading. She shared suggested criteria with which to assess and rate teacher preparation programs.

If colleges of education were evaluated against these criteria, it would be the first step in bringing scientifically-based reading instruction to teacher preparation institutions and into the nation’s classrooms. ★

*Susan M. Smartt, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Vanderbilt University; Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D., Consultant, IDA Vice-President; R. Malatescha Joshi, Ph.D., Professor of Literacy Education and Educational Psychology, Texas A & M University; Louise Spear-Swerling, Ph.D., Coordinator, Graduate Program in Learning disabilities, Southern Connecticut University; Jeannette P. Cornier, Ph.D., Assistant Commissioner, Colorado Department of Education, Office of Standards and Achievement Support; Debora L. Scheffel, Ph.D., Director of Literacy Grants and Initiatives and Colorado Reading First, Colorado Department of Education.

★ Carole Wile Receives 2008 Innovator Award ★

Director of Instruction, Certification, and Accreditation, Carole Wile, received the Innovator Award in the category of Outstanding MSLE Teacher at the annual International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC) Board Meeting. The board meeting is held in conjunction with the annual IDA conference. Carole is a board member.

SEI is proud of Carole and her dedication to Spalding Professional Development and the SCTs and SCTIs she mentors.

Through Carole’s efforts, and the efforts of Spalding Executive Trainers, the number of Spalding teachers and instructors continues to grow.

In addition to qualifying new teachers and instructors, Carole has become expert at matching instructors to venues and courses.

Having come to Spalding 22 years ago as a teacher in search of a better way to teach reading, Carole has personal knowledge

of the difference Spalding makes in both teachers' and children's lives.

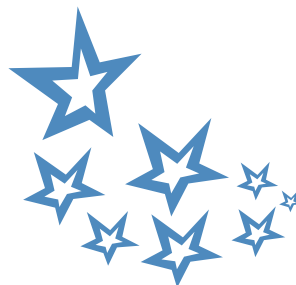
She is committed to the belief that all children can learn to read if their teachers have the information and the skills to teach them.

That's what Spalding is all about and it is what motivates Carole. She may not go where no man (or woman) has gone before, but she has gone to quite a few out-of-the-way places to teach courses, observe classrooms and advise teachers and administrators.

Congratulations Carole.



Carole Wile and President of IMSLEC Phyllis Meisel at the award ceremony.



Spalding in Australia

A Specialist Spalding Clinic for Special Students

by Dr. Carol Margeson*

We all have a vision of our “dream job,” but here in Sydney we have come close to achieving that ideal. We have created a consortium of Spalding-trained specialists to address the needs of learning disabled children and adults.

Learning disabled students and children with special needs often tax the resources of the mainstream school system. In many instances, these students receive a diluted, fragmented or inefficient service. Not surprisingly, they often fall behind academically, lose motivation and fail to reach their potential.

At our private clinic, we begin with a careful evaluation to determine each student's level of cognitive and academic functioning. This diagnostic profile identifies strengths and weaknesses so that lessons can be tailored to meet individual needs. *The Spalding Method* ensures consistency of management and goals, even when several professionals are involved.

Speech pathologists work with students who have problems with sound awareness, articulation, vocabulary, sentence formulation and comprehension.

Students make more rapid progress because Spalding begins with hearing and attending to the sounds in words before seeing them in print.

The Spalding Method ensures consistency of management and goals, even when several professionals are involved.

Students make more rapid progress because Spalding begins with hearing and attending to the sounds in words before seeing them in print.

Occupational therapists work with students who need help with visual motor skills. Students with visual processing problems make more rapid progress in reading when they have the benefit of the Spalding marking system. With Spalding, students with motor planning problems often master handwriting skills that previously eluded them. They receive clear verbal cueing as they write phonograms, words and sentences.

A psychologist works with students who have memory, attention, and organization problems. Developmental pediatricians often recommend *The Spalding Method* for students with attention problems because each lesson is designed to improve concentration, retention of essential information, and mental self-discipline.

Classroom teachers and parents report positive changes in confidence and social adjustment as students become more confident readers, writers, and communicators.

Spalding reading and writing lessons are integrated with content knowledge. Tutors provide massed practice with essential sub-skills of literacy, and they integrate



Spalding reading and writing lessons with content knowledge. Parents are active partners who learn Spalding skills and strategies so they can support their students' learning at home.

The goal of our clinic is to provide the best multi-disciplinary, Spalding instruction in the Southern Hemisphere. The happy faces of students, the praise from parents and schools, and our own job satisfaction confirm that we are on the right track. ☆



**Dr. Carol Margeson is a clinical psychologist, and all her colleagues at the Sydney learning disabilities clinic are Spalding trained.*





Q The words *any* and *many* follow the vcv pattern but do not break after the first vowel. Are they exceptions or am I missing something?

A In the words *any* and *many*, the pattern is vc and cvc to maintain the first sound of a. You prove that by saying the word with the second sound of a. Children learn to try the syllable patterns. If it is a nonsense word, they try the second possibility.

Q What about *between*? This word is a vccv, right? Usually these words break between the two consonants. Is this an exception or might this be a compound word?

A This is a cv word, *be + tween*.

Q I have a second grade daughter. I am wondering what to do to cement words in her memory? What kind of practice activities do you do? After dictating the words into the spelling notebook, and using them in the practice sentences, what would be your next step before testing the child?

A The last step in spelling dictation (WRTR 49-51) is always to have children read the words two ways: for spelling and for reading. Reading for spelling trains the brain to sound out the

words sequentially – the skill they need for spelling and writing words. Reading for reading practices instant word recognition the skill they need to fluently read text. See the second-grade Teacher Guide, Delivering section page 29. This is such an important practice, that you also have children read two ways at other times during the day. For example, before lunch ask them to select a page of the spelling notebook to practice reading two ways. It really transfers those words from short to long-term memory.

Q I have taught 5th grade for many years but am new to WRTR, as is the 4th grade teacher next door. We are both having some problems understanding how to make it work in the upper grades and still DIFFERENTIATE, especially in spelling. Any help or suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

A In the Fourth and Fifth-grade Teacher Guides there are 32 weeks of spelling, writing, and reading lesson objectives that set forth the daily routine. In spelling, each day you do an Oral Phonogram Review (OPR), Written Phonogram Review (WPR), and Spelling Dictation (SD) of the week's words which includes reading for spelling and reading.

After each segment, you differentiate instruction by asking check for understanding questions that are geared to the needs of individual children. For example, in an OPR, ask children who have difficulty easy questions like "Where may I use this phonogram (ay)?" Then ask the child who learns easily "May I use this phonogram in the word today?"

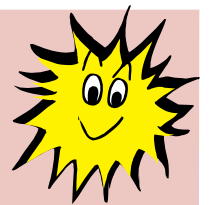
This concept of easy and hard oral questions in whole group helps everyone. Then, in the writing lesson, after hard and easy oral sentences, ask each child to write two or three sentences (difficult words for the children who learn easily, and easier ones for those having difficulty). This strategy works well even with seventh and eighth-graders.

Q I am trying to explain the following to my son. Am I correct? The silent e on the word "noise" is dropped to write "noisy" because of rule 11.

A You are correct. Words ending with a silent final e are written without the e when adding an ending that begins with a vowel. ☆

Editors Note:

This is for everyone who has tried to impress upon students the need to proof their papers and then proof them again. These were culled from church bulletins. Many thanks to Col. Barbara Smith for sharing them with SEI.



"Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It is a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands."

"Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get."

"Don't let worry kill you. The church can help."

"Eight new choir robes are currently needed, due to the addition of several new members and the deterioration of some old ones."

"For those who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs."

"Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person(s) you want remembered.."

"Attend and you will hear an excellent speaker and heave a healthy lunch."

"A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow."

"The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict."

Spalding Coaching 1 Held At SEI

A second *Spalding Coaching I* course held in September at the SEI office classroom received enthusiastic reviews from participants.

SEI now has 46 *Coaching 1* graduates prepared to more effectively assist colleagues implement *The Method*. ★



Participants studying their *Spalding Teacher Guides*.



"Great! An excellent tool to bring back to my school."



Dr. Mary North and Janie Carnal instructing. ★

"Very good information. Knowing teachers' level of concern is critical to helping them."

"Now I have knowledge and structure, not just instinct to follow as I try to help others." ★

"A great reminder to direct teachers back to the guides to review proper procedures."



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Take The Writing Road
to Reading success