THE EARLY READING ACCELERATORS WEBINAR SERIES:

Webinar 1: Key Content Considerations for Monolingual Students and English Learners

Here you'll find a list of the resources mentioned during Webinar 1, with hyperlinks to the source where possible. Following the resource list you'll find Meredith Liben and Lily Wong Fillmore's answers to the "Q and A" questions shared by participants during the webinar.

Resource	Link	Notes
Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID 19 School Closures	https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/313/CGCS_Unfinished%20Learning.pdf	This resource presents district curriculum leaders and staff with an instructional framework for addressing unfinished learning and learning losses, as well as a review of essential skills and content in English language arts and mathematics to support access to grade-level content in key grade transitions for all students
2020-2021 Priority Instructional Content in English Language Arts/ Literacy and Mathematics	https://achievethecore.org/page/3267/2020-21-priority-instructional-content-in-english-language-arts-literacy-and-mathematics	These documents name instructional content priorities in mathematics (K–8, high school) and ELA/literacy (K–12) for the 2020–21 academic year.
Early Reading Accelerators content collection	https://achievethecore.org/collection/9/early-reading-accelerators-k-2)	This site is full of content information on foundational skills and building knowledge and vocabulary, and resources that can be used to turn these ideas into action.

American Speech and Hearing Association	https://www.asha.org/practice/multicultural/phono/	Useful resources such as phonemic inventories of many languages.
Spanish/English Contrastive Phonology	https://www.asha.org/Events/convention/handouts/2013/1060-Villanueva-Reyes/	Slides from Dr. ALberto Villanueva Reyes (University of Puerto Rico)
What teachers need to know about language	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/2664788500_What_Teachers_Need_to_Know_About_Language	Excerpt from CAL Series on Language Education. Bristol: Multilingual Matter.
English Language Development: Acquiring the Language Needed for Literacy and Learning	http://assets.pearsonschool.com/asset_mgr/current/201010/English%20Language%20Development.pdf	Paper by Lily Wong Fillmore
Best for All: Sounds First Phonemic Awareness Program	https://achievethecore.org/page/3300/best-for-all-sounds-first-phonemic-awareness-program	Free grade-specific, daily phonemic awareness lessons designed to supplement existing foundational skills instruction in English. (Meant for grades K-2, can be adapted to support older students with unfinished learning.)
Rollins Center for Language and literacy-phonemes video	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBuA589kfMg	A video meant to demonstrate how to pronounce the 44 phonemes in the English alphabet.
Video of child in Lagos	https://www.dyslexiafriend.com/2020/06/letter-sounds-by-kid-from-lagos.html	The video on this page is meant to illustrate the joy and careful pronunciation that go into learning a new language.
Weekly Fluency Protocol	https://achievethecore.org/page/3259/weekly-reading-practice-routine	Weekly fluency protocol, developed by Orange County, CA, which lays out 3 models for working on reading fluency.
Fluency Resources -grades 2 and above	https://achievethecore.org/page/2756/fluency-resources	Resources including printable packets of English grade level texts for students to practice oral reading fluency.

The Power of Text Sets	https://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Text%20Set%20Guidance.pdf	Guidance on this easy, research-based and fun way to become a stronger reader
Juicy Sentence Guidance	https://achievethecore.org/page/3160/juicy-sentence-guidance	This guidance outlines some ideas for fostering conversations around "juicy sentences"- a strategy developed by Dr. Lily Wong Fillmore.
Classroom Example of Teaching Complex Text: Butterfly	https://vimeo.com/47315992	This New York City kindergarten class of English Learners demonstrates Lily Wong Fillmore's guidance in how teachers can support students in acquiring and using academic language and working successfully with complex text.
Read Aloud Project resources	https://achievethecore.org/page/944/read-aloud-project	Lesson resources including text-specific questions and tasks for common read aloud trade books meant for grades K-2 (some include a supplemental "companion text set" to build knowledge around a topic).
Choosing "Juicy" Complex Excerpts and Sentences	https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/251/CGCS_GCS_Complex%20Sentences_flyer_v6.pdf	Examples of how to choose Juicy sentences in the classroom.

Q and A on following page

Questions and Answers from Webinar 1 (answers provided by Meredith Liben and Lily Wong Fillmore after the presentation):

ANSWER:
How should we teach sound-spelling when the local dialect doesn't match "school English" pronunciation? For example, in New Orleans, short a in words like "leg" pronounced "lag" or "boil" pronounced "berl"?

ANSWER:

This question is an important one—how to teach children the differences between the sound system of book English and a regional sound system of English. What is at stake here is insuring that children learn to decode despite whatever mismatches there are between the sound-spelling correspondences of book English and the English they speak. A key to this is to get across the message that there are many ways to speak English: in a sense, everyone in the U.S. speaks a dialect of English (hardly surprising given the size of our nation, and the diverse history or our society). Although speakers of American English share a common core grammar and lexicon, we do not necessarily sound alike. How we pronounce the words we use may differ somewhat from one region to another, and how we pronounce words may differ from the English used in books. Vowels, for example, can differ from region to region as in the *leg/lag* difference you mentioned: in one area of the U.S., the words *cot* and *caught* are sound distinctively different; in another, they are pronounced the same. And in yet another area, the vowel sound in *caught* is pronounced as if it comprised two syllables, the second of which sounds like "wha" or something like "kowhat".

It is critical to stress that differences are just differences: book English is not better than the English children speak, and while they will be learning how language sounds and is pronounced in books, it is for reading and not necessarily for speaking. Thus the focus in reading instruction should be on teaching the sound and spelling patterns that will enable children to decode and put into speakable English the language of English texts. To get this point across will require a few extra steps: the first is to identify the ways in which the variety spoken in the local area differs from the book English sound/spelling patterns being taught in school. As you noticed, such differences can be found especially in vowel sounds and at the ends of word syllables where sounds are pronounced or not (you might want to start with the fact sheet on phonics and dialects of English put out by the Center for Expansion of Language and Thinking <https://www.celtlink.org/fact-sheet-9-phonics-and-dialects-of-english> , and if you want to learn more, you can look up Wolfram, Adger and Christian's Dialects in Schools and Communities (1999).

So how to help kids learn to hear in their mind's ear the sounds of book English? One way is, after doing a read-aloud book for children, use a recorded version and call out ways that particular words can be differently pronounced, and then point out that the sound and spelling

patterns they are learning match the ones in books, and then help them hear the difference in the way those same words are pronounced in their community. Letting kids in on this can help them see there is nothing wrong with them, their ears, the way they speak, or books. There is variation in the world that makes things more interesting but are nonetheless understandable.

In a small district providing ELD/ESL supports (that does not have bi-lingual, dual language or a newcomers program) is it possible to overdo phonics-and provide so many reading interventions the student does not have the opportunity to develop oral language in their classrooms with their peers? And as the writer above notes - how do we mitigate overidentification of CLD students in SPED when schools are so dependent on fluency and phonics assessment and progress monitoring to measure progress?

ANSWER
It is *possible* to overdrill in foundational skills if a teacher is overzealous. It is not very common though! But if the district is not requiring that teachers engage in (and know the results of!) regular formative assessments to figure out which students are progressing well and which are not thriving, problems both ways will occur. Some students won't be getting what they need, and some students who should be moving on will be stagnating. In general, the solution when students aren't learning to read is to give some students more practice opportunities, not less…
I'd say more than an hour of foundational skills instruction + student practice opportunities (which should be and can be lively and fun!!) is going to cut into time for rich language exchanges and students' chance to develop language proficiencies and social interactions and to interact with text and learning in a variety of other forms. And to have recess and art!!! All these things are super important too.

QUESTION
How does Online/Video instruction impact learning foundational skills? We are seeing some progress with Phonemic Awareness with our students, but concerned that the remote instruction will not be as effective as in person. Note: Meredith addressed many elements of this question in her presentation- question was asked prior
ANSWER:
As we said, this is a real concern- and one we don't have research on as of yet. There can be some use of video supports such as recorded lessons, and practice opportunities can travel home without a teacher present, but this concern is real and challenging. We will be learning more about this over the course of this year.

QUESTION
You said that babies are capable of learning every language at 3 months. Can babies learn these languages simultaneously, or do they need to learn one first and then another?

ANSWER:
Note: Babies do not need to learn the languages sequentially. As Lily mentioned, at a very young age, babies are able to reproduce all sounds from various languages. This window closes

as the brain focuses more narrowly on the sounds needed given the contest. For a comprehensive look at the most recent research on learning more than one language simultaneously I recommend: https://www.nap.edu/resource/24677/DLL.pdf

Babies who are socialized in more than one language can and do learn more than one language, as long as they have enough quality interaction with caregivers speaking those languages. The child in the little video clip shown in the presentation, Mateo, is in fact learning Spanish and English. His parents and grandparents speak to him in Spanish, and his uncles interact with him exclusively in English. Mateo, at age 3 and a half is fluent in both languages spoken in his extended family home. But this happens only when the learner has direct interaction with the speakers of the languages spoken in the home. There is ample anecdotal evidence that just overhearing a language spoken in the home does not do the trick—we all know of people who grew up in homes where parents spoke a heritage language to one another but not to the children. In those families, the children do not learn the parental language because it was never used in ways that would have allowed them to learn it.

QUESTION
My district focuses on leveled reading as the primary form of intervention for students who aren't reading at grade level. Do you think we can support the linguistic needs of our EL and below level readers this way?

ANSWER
Absolutely not. There is zero evidence of this being supportive of English learners, rich language acquisition or grade level reading ability developing. Students who are learning to read need to be read rich text to build their language, knowledge, syntax and more, **and** they need to learn to decode and have a chance to practice decoding words in meaningful print! Relying only on leveled texts holds far too many children back and at this point, should be getting challenged as a serious equity and civil rights concern.

QUESTION
For clarification: Is it a good idea to label a classroom with English and Spanish text? I.e, Label a desk with desk and escritorio?

ANSWER
It is a great thing to do! Objects have names! We can learn and see them! But it will only be effective as a learning tool if adults create a culture where attention is being paid to the environmental print. By itself, it will not create positive outcomes for students, but can be a sign of a setting where language and print and words are celebrated.

QUESTION
Do you have any guidelines on the amount of online instruction (minutes)? With the suggested direct instruction for phonics being done synchronously, and practice that parents may consider doing online, there are concerns with the number of minutes students are on screens.

ANSWER

I do not have any special expertise in this area, but have seen some recent articles about it and how much harm it is doing students who are sitting and trying to focus for too long. Myself, I would give children at *least* 3 minute activity breaks (get up and hop on one leg for 30 seconds, then the other, then stretch your arms toward the ceiling...) at LEAST once every 15 minutes. I know the challenges of parents who are trying to get their own stuff down while supervising their children, but if you have good ideas and engaging activities for the offline time, parents will appreciate the thoughtfulness. As far as I can tell (very limited perspective and data though), many parents are quite concerned about this question too. Keep dialog open and honest between school and parents too!

Also, I would lean on paper and pencil packets or physical practice materials as much as possible. Big districts and rural areas alike figured out how to get materials to students along with school nutrition deliveries last spring. That eliminates equity gaps in who has access to good broadband or lots of devices (one per child) and who does not… In my experience, most students like to do paper and pencil practice tasks, or at least tolerate them.

QUESTION

Do you believe dual language development will slow down a child's reading and language development? English is the dominant language at home, learning Spanish in preschool? How can this help or diminish child reading and language development?

ANSWER

I do not believe that dual language development will slow things down! Children have a great capacity for language development and as long as they have opportunities and enough direct interaction with speakers of the both languages in meaningful activities, they will learn the languages well! As for reading instruction, my advice is to teach it in the child's native language first and when they have that pretty well under control, to add on reading in the second language. There are people who argue that since Spanish phonics/phonology is so much more regular than English phonics/phonology that English speaking kids who are in Spanish English dual language programs should be taught to read in Spanish first. Sigh. It might be OK for some kids, but honestly—children should know the language they are learning to read in well enough to know what they are reading. That goes both ways: for Spanish speaking children learning to read in English and for English speaking kids learning to read in Spanish. Reading is not just figuring out what sound letters represent—it is most importantly discovering how printed symbols can represent meaningful language. Reading builds on spoken language.