



Hi [name],

Today, we'd like to talk about a recent debate in the science of reading world around phonological and phonemic awareness instruction.

Something that's important to us here at The Literacy Architects is making sure our PD and curricular recommendations are tied to research and evidence. Well, a few months ago, [an article was published](#) by The Reading League that caught our attention.

In the article, Dr. Susan Brady makes the case that mastering larger units of phonological awareness such as rhymes or syllables doesn't transfer to phonemic awareness (the awareness of individual sounds in words). And, since phonemic awareness is one of the skills that is most tied to reading success, **teaching larger units of phonological awareness to students — especially students in kindergarten and above — may not be necessary.**

For many early childhood educators who were taught to sing rhyming songs, clap syllables, and do alliteration picture sorts throughout the school day, this is big news!

Classroom connection →

As I mentioned above—this is huge! This means that if your kindergarten or 1st grade student can't tell you how many syllables are in *elephant* or what rhymes with *chair*, you **don't need to go back** to teach syllable or rhyme awareness. **Instead, skip directly to explicitly teaching phonemic awareness.**

Phonological awareness skills may develop out of order, and that's okay. It's not necessary for students to go back to master earlier skills before progressing to more complex ones.

[**Read more about these implications here.**](#)

What's the biggest challenge you've faced in teaching phonological or phonemic awareness skills? What do you think about these recommendations?

Reply to this email and let us know!



What We're Working On

We recently partnered with the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to offer our four [early literacy courses](#) — on phonological and phonemic awareness, emergent writing, and alphabet knowledge — to public and charter school teachers and school leaders across Washington, D.C.

Here are some highlights of the feedback we received!

- **100%** of participants in our Phonemic Awareness course stated that they would refer the course to a friend.
- After taking our Phonological Awareness course, participants' self assessment of their knowledge of phonological awareness **increased by approximately 18 percentage points**.
- We had some great reviews from participants, including statements such as:

"I have not felt such satisfaction from completing PD in a long time."

"[Your] courses should be mandatory for general ed teachers, as well as special education teachers who want to improve."

Look out for more updates in our next issue!

One of the most expensive problems you can create is a kid who does not master phonemic awareness by the end of 1st grade.

Larry Berger, CEO of Amplify

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