EBLI ESSA EVIDENCE PACKET

UNDERSTANDING
ESSA Evidence

LXD RESEARCH
ESSA Level 3 Evidence

Evidence guidance under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) are designed to ensure that states, districts, and schools can identify programs, practices, products, and policies that work across various populations.

The Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) requires education programs to provide evidence of effectiveness and impact in order to be federally supported. The Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology provides standards to assess the varying levels of strength of research for education products.

The categories for ESSA Evidence are: strong, moderate, and promising evidence of effectiveness, or demonstrates a rationale to be effective.

This product meets the requirements for Level 3: Promising

✅ In correlational design, students who used the program are compared to normed referenced samples or other group averages for comparison.

✅ A study with the proper design and implementation with at least two classrooms and 30 students

✅ Study uses a form of a program that could be replicated

✅ At least one statistically significant, positive finding

"Educators and researchers continue to uncover important insights about how people learn. Digital Promise's Research-Based Design Product Certification recognizes the edtech products that incorporate research about learning into their design and development. Congratulations to EBLI for demonstrating that research informs product design!"

– Christina Luke Luna, Chief Learning Officer, Digital Promise

EBLI Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

Learning Experience Design (LXD) Research & Consulting
A division of Charles River Media, Inc.

EBLI

TEACHING THE WORLD TO READ

An accelerated, systematic, explicit, and integrated instructional **speech-first approach** to spelling and reading.

"We know that children who have not developed foundational reading abilities by approximately nine years of age are highly likely to struggle with reading throughout their educational tenure, if not the rest of their lives, and may never read efficiently enough to acquire information or to enjoy the process."
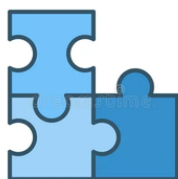
National Institute for Child Health and Human Development, 2003

The power of speech-first approach

Logical Understanding

There are 44 speech sounds represented by 26 letters or groups of letters in the alphabet.

Representation of Phonemes

Helps develop phonemic awareness skills while weaving in new phonics information at the same time, in the same activity.

Skill Transferability

Enhances transferable skills enabling reading and spelling proficiency across unfamiliar words.

EBLI Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction™

ETSL: EBLI Teacher & Student Lessons

Teachers can enhance their classroom literacy instruction with the EBLI Training and Student Lessons (ETSL) that follow a speech-first approach. This approach recognizes the vital role of speech and language skills in a child's ability to decode and comprehend written text effectively. The materials provide explicit instruction in the five essential components of reading, as well as handwriting, spelling, and writing.

Grade (Lesson Count): K (120), 1 (100), 2-3 (80), 4-5 (50)

Initial Teacher Training & Modeling

A **full-day asynchronous orientation** equips educators with theoretical and background knowledge for effective EBLI implementation. Teachers **observe EBLI experts modeling lessons,** both through role-playing and videos featuring real students in classrooms.

1

Watch Instructional Video Alone

Unique activities are revisited with different content through EBLI student lessons that contain over 100 activities teaching the five essential components of reading, as well as spelling and writing, based on a speech-first approach.

Asynchronous videos model each lesson, guiding both students and teachers. As teachers become more familiar with EBLI, they gradually take over teaching the lessons as the teaching-learning role transitions.

2

Ongoing

Educators can access monthly live coaching calls and a video library of over 3,000 EBLI activities with different grades and group sizes.

4

Teach Students without Videos

Initially, lessons in the early weeks of the school year are primarily delivered to students through videos. However, as time progresses, the teachers transition to teaching without relying on videos while still having access to support from instructional videos and other resources discussed in step 2.

3

Use Instructional Video in Class with Students

During planning, teachers preview and participate in the video as students, then play it to their students while facilitating and providing error corrections. With repeated activities and new sub-skills, video reliance decreases until phased out entirely, with the teacher leading all lessons (step 4).

EBLI Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction™

EBLI offers comprehensive teacher training and ongoing support, along with student lessons and materials, to bridge the gap between research and classroom instruction.

Studies indicate that coaching-based professional development can enhance teachers' self-confidence, crucial for effective literacy instruction (Varghese et al., 2016).

Through explicit instruction in reading, handwriting, spelling, and writing, EBLI equips teachers to streamline literacy instruction and enhance student learning. EBLI uses speech first method as it is more effective than other alternatives.

Read more to find out what the research has to say, and why it works...
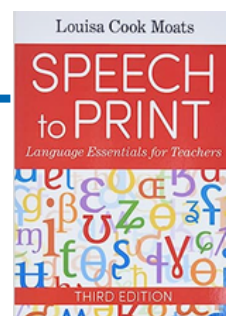
Speech to Print or Print to Speech? It Makes a Difference
Reprinted blog post segment by Louisa Moats, May 2021

Why use speech to print to teach beginning reading?

While I do not know of a controlled study that has directly compared the speech-to-print and print-to-speech approaches, research reviews have shown that the inclusion of encoding activities (speech-to-print) in code-focused reading lessons produces better results than decoding (print-to-speech) only (Weiser & Mathes, 2011). Furthermore, the speech-to-print approach allows for a more logical and complete understanding of how the English system works; our 26 alphabet letters do not contain symbols for some speech sounds that still must be represented (/sh/, /ng/, and others), and many letters often do several different jobs in our orthography. For example, if we teach students that "u" is a vowel, there is an obvious contradiction: In "quit," it represents a consonant (/w/). Letters are not consonants or vowels—they are used singly and in combination to represent consonant and vowel phonemes.

In the big picture, any systematic, explicit teaching of the code is better than none. Unfortunately, too many prevalent practices reflect the (unstated) assumption that learning to read and spell depends on rote visual memory of strings of letters. This assumption underlies the use of leveled readers that beginners are expected to "read" by pointing to whole words as they recite the text from memory. With this look-and-say approach, context-driven guessing substitutes for knowing what the letters represent. To be clear, this is not what we mean by a "speech to print," and it's time we got this right in our classrooms.

EBLI Foundational Research Summary

EBLI (Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) is a groundbreaking approach that challenges the limitations of traditional phonics programs. EBLI offers a comprehensive solution to bridge gaps and enhance reading skills by focusing on structured linguistic literacy. EBLI benefits include:

- Catapult all students to higher literacy proficiency
- Free up teacher planning and instructional time
- Multi-modal, engaging, interactive instruction
- Student-facing PD for teachers embedded in EBLI lessons

We explore in the next few sections the shortcomings of conventional methods, the benefits of structured linguistic literacy programs like EBLI, and how EBLI can transform reading instruction to meet the needs of all students.

Traditional Phonics Programs and Their Limitations

Most phonics programs follow a print-to-speech approach, providing systematic and explicit instruction in foundational skills, beginning with letter names and sounds. However, some programs, like CKLA, take three years to cover all 44 phonemes. This delay results in spelling alternatives like 'qu', 'wh', 'wr', and 'kn' being introduced only in second grade. Dr. Louisa Moats (1998) highlighted a flaw in these programs, stating that they teach the code backward, going from letter to sound instead of sound to the letter. This conventional phonics approach leaves gaps, confuses students, and leads to inefficiencies.

"One of the most fundamental flaws found in almost all phonics programs, including traditional ones, is that they teach the code backward. They go from letter to sound instead of sound to the letter…. the print to sound (conventional phonics) approach leaves gaps, invites confusion, and creates inefficiencies."

- Dr. Louisa Moats (1998)

"In fifteen years in the field of education, I've taken many, many trainings and professional developments as well as Master's classes. Hands down, EBLI has been the very best of them all…I believe that EBLI is what teacher prep programs are missing."

ALAINA KRAMER
Multiage Classrooms
Grades 1-3

EBLI Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

EBLI Foundational Research Summary

> "I realized that what I had been taught to do in college, in my masters classes, my additional 30 credits after my masters, and even through district PD was actually what was failing kids. It has been a whirlwind three years, but I finally feel -- after 20 years of teaching -- that with EBLI, I finally have the tools I need to teach EVERY child to read."
>
> **JULIE VANLIER**
> Kindergarten Classroom Teacher

Structured Linguistic Literacy Programs as Alternative

Structured linguistic literacy programs, such as EBLI, offer explicit, systematic, synthetic, and multi-sensory instruction with a clear scope and sequence. These programs are built on the principle of starting with speech, which aligns with how humans naturally learn. Linguistic phonics is based on five key concepts: oral language development, letters as symbols representing speech sounds, sounds represented by one or more letters, multiple ways to spell sounds, and letters representing multiple sounds.

Growing evidence (Petscher et al., 2020) suggests that linguistic phonics is faster than traditional programs in developing students' phonemic awareness, letter-sound knowledge, decoding skills, and ultimately improving reading comprehension.

EBLI as a Structured Linguistic Literacy Program

EBLI is a Structured Linguistic Literacy Program that can be implemented in classroom instruction or intervention settings. Districts committed to systematic and explicit approaches to enhance students' reading skills can benefit from EBLI. By embracing evidence-based reading instruction, districts can ensure all students are prepared for success in college, career, and life.

Recognizing the struggles of students in the current print-to-speech methodology (Pinker, 1997), there is an urgent need to address the gap efficiently. The traditional approach may not meet the desired timeframe, making EBLI a valuable alternative.

EBLI
Evidence-Based
Literacy Instruction

Logic Model for EBLI

PROBLEM STATEMENT

A significant number of students need help to achieve adequate literacy levels in reading and writing English as a result of ineffective teaching methodologies. Educators often have not been equipped with the knowledge and skills to effectively teach reading, resorting to practices that yield suboptimal outcomes. As a result, nearly two-thirds of U.S. fourth graders are not proficent readers.

RESOURCES
What resources are or could be available?

- EBLI Classroom Training
- EBLI Student Lessons
- Materials to teach students directly
- Access to internet and video/projection equipment
- Teacher Support
- Whiteboards and Markers for each student
- EBLI apps
- EBLI YouTube lessons

STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES
What will the activities, events, and such be?

- Teacher learning immediately applied to Student Instruction
- Teacher coaching
- Student instruction videos will be utilized to build strong foundations for students
- The materials provide an activity for students to practice.
- Individualized instruction
- Reading and spelling taught simultaneously.
- Consistent skills, concepts, activities, and info for all students in Tier 1, 2, and 3 (whole class, small group, or 1:1)

OUTPUTS
What are the initial products of these activities?

- Teachers provide evidence based literacy solutions
- Teachers teach, correct errors, and differentiate in whole class instruction.
- Teachers spend less time planning and more time teaching
- Students gain exposure to speech first based reading technique which supports effective reading and spelling
- Teacher training and student instruction, including lessons and materials, are intertwined and teacher support is ongoing

SHORT-TERM AND INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- Students have improved reading, writing, and spelling proficiency
- Improves student test scores
- Reduced cognitive load for educators
- Enhanced communication and demonstration of understanding
- Improved student engagement and classroom behaviors
- Teachers increase their use of research-based instructional strategies
- Teachers reduce their planning time
- Empowers teachers to teach reading, spelling, writing, and handwriting concurrently, catering to diverse student groups in various settings
- Cultivates unparalleled student skill acquisition with integrated activities

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

- Students, including those dyslexic show improved overall literacy skills
- Students and teachers gain enhanced critical thinking and problem-solving abilities
- Students have increased confidence and motivation and develop lifelong love for reading
- Closing achievement gaps by improved literacy rates
- Empowered educators to be diagnostic and prescriptive to differentiate instruction as the teach any age group and ability level how to read

Assumptions:
- Teachers will be allowed to discontinue use of literacy products using a different approach.
- Teachers are provided the flexibility to advance students' reading skills beyond a traditional scope and sequence.

EBLI Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

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EBLI Foundational Research

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EBLI Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction

Evidence Based Literacy Instruction (EBLI) Case Study:
Grade K, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Prepared by Rachel Schechter, PhD

Study Summary

After 21 years of teaching, our featured teacher sought fresh methods to raise reading achievement with her students effectively. Beginning in Fall 2020, she incorporated EBLI methods into her classroom with her kindergartners to push their literacy skills by Spring 2021 with encouraging results.

Following these students into first grade, a school year with new instructors and without EBLI, benchmark data shows a stark contrast in student achievement between the two years. A larger study hopes to examine and demonstrate the relationship between EBLI and its ability to help students master literacy skills.

Product Description

EBLI is not a hard and fast collection of workbooks and teacher guides for educators to follow with their students. Rather, this program trains teachers in "speech-to-print" literacy pedagogy, providing them with methods that reach students across academic standing and learning styles. Empowering teachers to hone EBLI's resources to the unique needs of their students not only provides them with a sense of ownership in the program while also building a strong foundation upon which literacy growth can continue.

School Description

Our featured elementary school is a Title I school located in a diverse school district near Grand Rapids, Michigan. Situated in a large suburban environment, their school has 352 students enrolled, 81% eligible for free or reduced lunch.
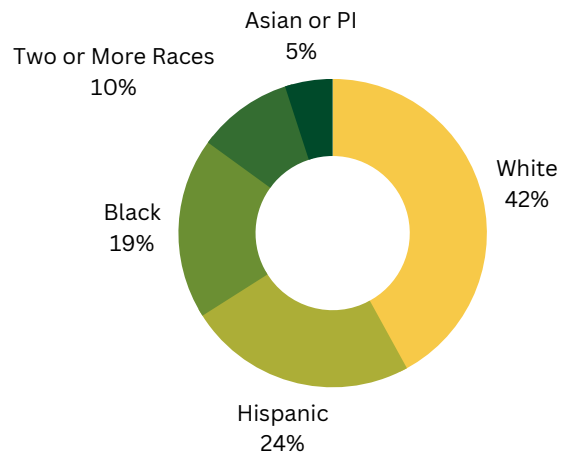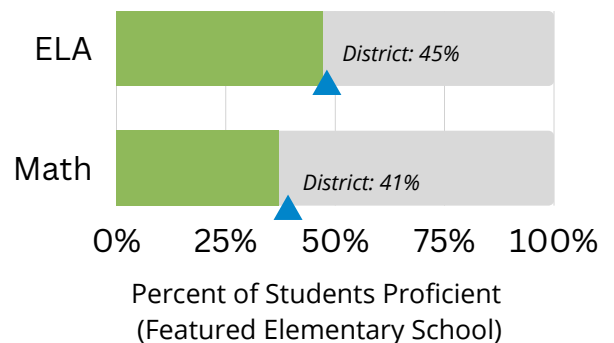

Figure 1: School Enrollment by Ethnicity

- Asian or PI 5%
- Two or More Races 10%
- White 42%
- Black 19%
- Hispanic 24%

Figure 2: School Test Results

ELA — District: 45%
Math — District: 41%

Percent of Students Proficient (Featured Elementary School)

▲ District Average

Source: nces.ed.gov

Study Description

Results recorded below reflect the Acadience Reading Composite Scores (RCS) of the EBLI teacher's kindergarten students with scores for at least two assessment periods during the '20-'21 and '21-'22 school years (sample sizes ranged from 14 students to 27 students for each assessment period. We continue with her students through first grade, where they have different instructors who use a "Balanced" literacy approach to teach reading.

Key Findings - Kindergartner

The post-pandemic year of using EBLI with her kindergarteners showed promising results. 62% of her students started the Fall 2020 semester with reading scores Below or Well Below grade level benchmark standards, with 50% falling into the latter category, a clear impact of pandemic learning interruptions. By the end of the year, 74% of students tested At or Above grade-level benchmark standards. The Well Below group fell to only 10% by the end of the year.

Year One: 2020-2021

Year Two: 2021-2022
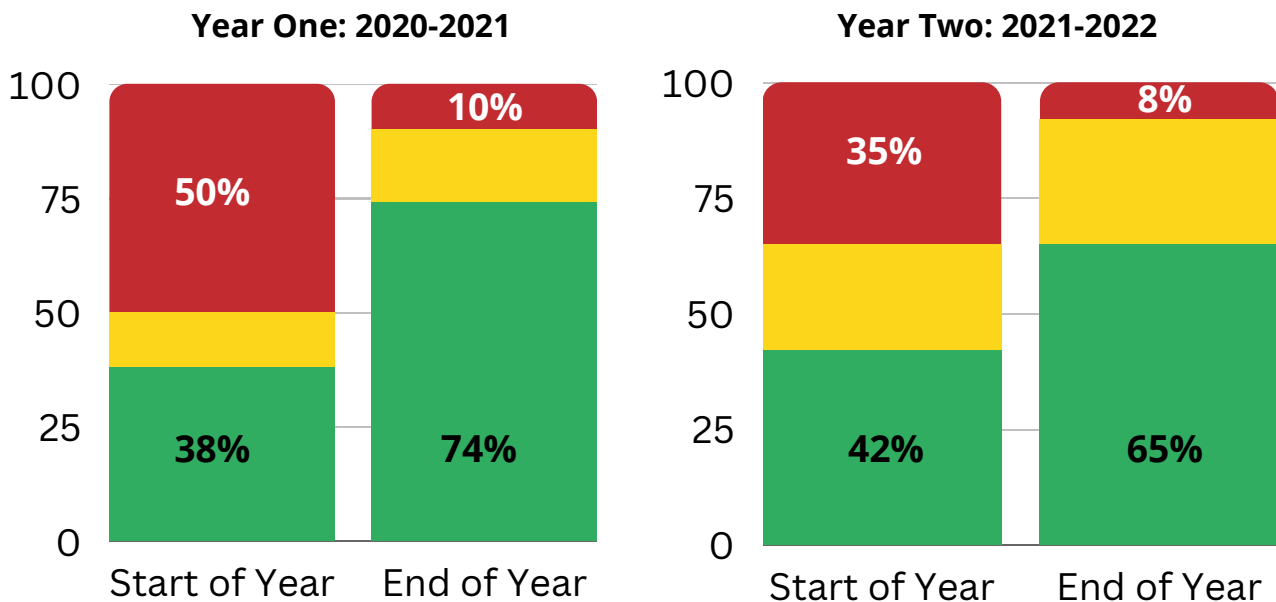
Using EBLI for a second year yielded similarly impressive results. While her second cohort of students started more distributed across achievement levels than the '20-'21 students, their growth throughout the year is undeniable. At the beginning of the year, 42% of this class scored At or Above on their benchmark test, 23% came in Below, and 35% tested Well Below standards. Mid-year growth was slight, but by the end of the year, 65% of these students were At or Above benchmark standards. The Far Below group sunk to 8%.

Despite the pandemic's impacts on student learning, the EBLI teacher managed to get most of her students on track for literacy achievement in first grade by the end of both school years.

Key Findings - After Losing EBLI (First Grade)

When this group progressed to first grade, students were split among two teachers, neither of whom incorporated EBLI into their reading instruction. While the EBLI teacher's investment supplied a strong foundation of literacy skills in kindergarten, between the two first-grade classes, only 57% of them retained that level by the beginning-of-year benchmark testing time. At the final round of benchmark testing, only 43% still met or surpassed grade-level expectations.

The graphs below specify the individual Acadience reading scores from each of the first-grade teachers.

■ Well Below Grade Level Spring 2022

Kindergarten (year 2)	
First Grade (Teacher 1)	
First Grade (Teacher 2)	

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%
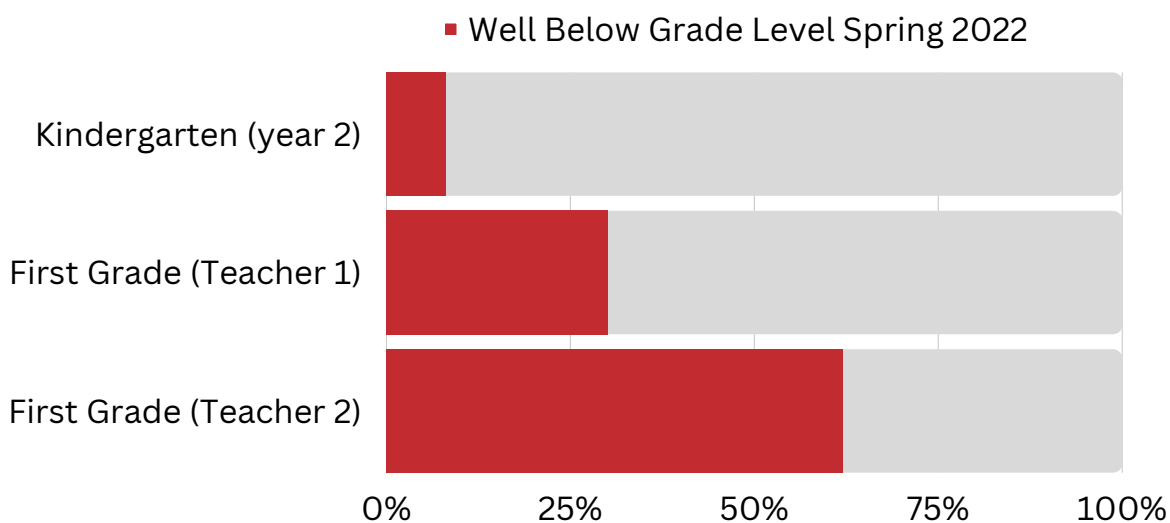
Conclusions

A key strength of EBLI's instructional approach is the way Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) is instructed. A metric in the Acadience assessment framework and hallmark of the speech-to-print outlook found in EBLI, segmentation is the practice of splitting spoken words into sound segments. This valuable skill supports both reading and writing, and likely due to its interdisciplinary application, the kindergartners who learned EBLI started off their first grade year with strong foundational skills.

PSF is not a tenet of Balanced Literacy to the degree it is with EBLI, thus, it is unlikely to have received equal focus in these students' first grade reading lessons. A deviation from focusing on PSF, in addition to the natural fluctuations that occur between educators and their individual strengths in reading instruction, combined to illustrate a contrast between benchmark scores in kindergarten and first grade.

This is a small and promising story of EBLI's effectiveness and what may happen to student achievement levels after they have to switch to a Balanced Literacy curriculum. Future studies will compare students with teachers using EBLI to those who are not, during the same year.