5th Anniversary of Explicit Phonics Advocacy

I started lobbying FGSD in 2007, while subbing in the district. Upon retirement in 2009, the dream continued: after two international efforts in Korea and Costa Rica, I'm recommitting to helping ***ten million US children 5-7*** benefit from what I consider to be the best reading program ever.

Experts Support Explicit Phonics

And

Spalding's Four-Year Longitudinal Study

Dolores Hiskes, The Right to Read Report, February 1998

"Scientific research has clearly demonstrated that explicit phonics is the most effective for all students."

(Comparing implicit phonics and explicit***) "Implicit phonics, the most widely used form of phonics taught in schools today…moves from the whole to the smallest parts. Approximately 300 words a year ate taught as whole words. The student must make her "best guess" as to what the word is by its shape, beginning and ending letters, any context clues…or pictures."***

Explicit phonics moves from the smallest parts to the whole. Students first learn letters and their sounds and then build and recombine them into syllables and words… Students are able to read anything in their comprehension vocabularies, which Dr. Seashore of Northwestern University estimates to be about 30,000 words by third grade. Compare this with the 900 words third-graders are able to read using Whole Language."

There is so much confusion between implicit and explicit phonics because…explicit phonics has not generally been included in graduate teaching curriculum for over 50 years, and…teachers cannot teach what they do not know."

"Scientific research has not only reaffirmed the importance of explicit phonics, but as also brought to light the essential role of phonemic awareness in learning to read."

"Students should receive:

1. ***Direct instruction in phonemic awareness.***
2. ***Direct instruction in letter sound relationships, one at a time, in isolation.***
3. ***Explicit instruction in blending, to establish smooth eye tracking skills***

4. ***Instruction in building sound spellings into words as soon as possible***
5. ***Opportunity to practice reading using decodable text...with automaticity…"***

"Explicit phonics instruction is a critical step leading to a truly balanced "whole" language reading program. It is the indispensable key that gives students the skills

needed…to demystify reading…"

Dr. Robert C. Aukeman, Approaches to Beginning Reading

Devotes 10 pages to The Spalding (Riggs) Method, citing national scores from many schools that obtained exemplary test results. The average grade level score of the 14 first grades in his sample was 2.8, of the 16 second grades, 3.76, of the 12 third grades, 5.24.

"It is quite clear that [the explicit phonics] method works extremely well with children who may not be native speakers of English… We compared a first, second and third grade to their respective control classrooms on the Comprehensive Test Basic Skills total reading scale. The [explicit phonics] classes were 66th, 67th and 67th respectively. The control classrooms were about 20 percentage points below that…"

"Spalding/Riggs most remarkable contribution is the invention of a marking system that enables children to connect spelling rules to reading…After a few hours of practice, children…are not merely recognizing words by sight but are at the same time, recognizing what parts of them embody generalizable rules. …one of the most important aspects of this program is its emphasis upon problem solving. …the children's arithmetic skills improved following a few months of training in this literacy program. …improvement was sometimes dramatic. "

P.G. Aaron, R. Malatesha Joshi, Reading Problems, Consultation and Remediation. The Guilford Press, 1992

"The Writing Road to Reading Program was developed by Romalda Spalding and has been extensively tested, with good results."

E. McEwan, The Principal's Guide to Raising Reading Achievement, Corwin Press, Inc. (1998)

The Gallego School in Tucson, Arizona has been a "Spalding School" for 15 years, a remarkable achievement in a day when innovations appear and vanish overnight. …60% of the students receive free lunch and over 80% are Hispanic. The school has, however, consistently ranked at or above the

national and state averages on a standardized test. …the school enjoys a remarkable consistency of instruction and purpose….”

Maureen Street, a Senior Teacher at Youngtown Primary School, Launceton, Tasmania,

… began the Spaulding/Riggs Program with her fourth grade class and their success let to a formal evaluation of The Method. Spelling classes were begun with grades 1 and 2 for thirty minutes, four mornings a week. Their assessments showed the students improved between 150% to more than 200%.

Wiley Blevins, author Phonics A to Z, Master of Ed. Harvard

“Explicit instruction is the most effective type of phonics instruction, especially for children at risk for reading difficulties.”

Arizona State University

Four Year Longitudinal Study

Finished in 2009, ASU’s four year study showed Spalding-trained students scored **10 points higher** on reading assessments than control classrooms at the end of ***each*** of the first four years of their reading instruction.

www.spalding..org/research