



Education Psychology Literacy Conference: Improving Outcomes for Pupils with Literacy Difficulties

Monday 18th June 2018

Buckfast Abbey Conference Centre | 09:30 – 16:00

09:00 Registration, Refreshments, Networking and Exhibition

09:30 Welcome and Introduction

Esther Maher and Dr Michaela Cole, Educational Psychologists, Babcock LDP

10:00 The Rhetoric and Reality of Teaching Reading (Part 1)

Language Skills and Vocabulary Knowledge Underpin Children's Reading and Decoding Skills and not Their Phonic Knowledge

Dr Jonathan Solity, Director, Optima and Honorary Research Fellow, UCL

The first keynote talk will discuss the tensions, myths and conventional wisdoms that exist in teaching reading. If they remain unchallenged it is likely that the educational outcomes for the lowest achieving 20% will continue to remain the same. The conventional wisdoms that inform current discussions and practice about teaching reading are: (i) phonics underpins children's reading; (ii) 'real books' are not phonically regular; (iii) children must be taught with phonically regular texts that can be decoded with 100% accuracy; (iv) children should be taught several phonemes that represent certain graphemes (i.e. 'ch' is pronounced differently in chip, chef and school). The talk will review the evidence on which these views are based and demonstrate that children's success in learning to read is dependent on their language development and vocabulary knowledge rather than their phonic knowledge and skills.

The talk will examine both (i) children's language in the home and (ii) the extent to which they share books before they start school, and their impact on learning to read. For example, it is estimated that children from language rich backgrounds will have heard approximately 32 million more words than peers from less language rich backgrounds. The implications of this research once children start school will be explored and show that children's progress in learning to read will be largely determined by, them having the opportunity to read a wide range of highly quality books in Key Stage 1. However, a major obstacle to their success is the requirement that children are taught to read exclusively through phonically decodable reading schemes.

11:00 Refreshments, Networking and Exhibition

11:30 The Rhetoric and Reality of Teaching Reading (Part 2)

Systematic Synthetic Phonics: A Possible Cause of Pupils' Literacy Difficulties?

Dr Jonathan Solity, Director, Optima and Honorary Research Fellow, UCL

The second Keynote talk will further address the myths and obstacles that limit children's progress in learning to read. Research, underpinned by instructional psychology (a little known area of psychology) and the theory of optimal instruction, will be introduced that places the emphasis in determining what to teach on an analysis of the learning environment rather than assessing children's cognitive development and therefore: (i) analyses the skills required to read real books; (ii) establishes the core, generalisable skills that are most useful when learning to read and then (iii) identifies the instructional principles through which they are best structured and taught. The research identified numerous flaws in commercial systematic synthetic phonic programmes (SSP) that are potentially a major cause of pupils' difficulties in learning to read. The talk will conclude with guidance on how best to overcome the limitations in SSP programmes and identify the most useful and generalisable phonic knowledge and high frequency words that it is

 [#BabcockLiteracy](https://twitter.com/BabcockLiteracy)



[Click here to book your place](#)



Education Psychology Literacy Conference: Improving Outcomes for Pupils with Literacy Difficulties

Monday 18th June 2018

Buckfast Abbey Conference Centre | 09:30 – 16:00

essential children are taught.

12:30 *Lunch, Networking and Exhibition*

13:30 Workshop 1



Applying Theory and Research to the Classroom

Dr Jonathan Soly, Director, Optima and Honorary Research Fellow, UCL



Effective Recording

Judy Crane and Ginny Coggles



Desert Island Resources for Students with Literacy Difficulties

Deborah Lynch and Ann Atherton, Advisory Teachers, Devon SpLD (Dyslexia) Service

14:20 Workshop 2



Applying Theory and Research to the Classroom

Dr Jonathan Soly, Director, Optima and Honorary Research Fellow, UCL



Vocabulary and Reading

Alison Jones, Primary Literacy Advisor: Reading Recovery, Babcock LDP



Using motivational theory to support reluctant readers and writers

Esther Maher and Dr Michaela Cole, Educational Psychologists, Babcock LDP

15:05 *Refreshments, Networking and Exhibition*

15:30 **Plenary with Jonathan Soly**

16:00 *Close of Conference*

 [#BabcockLiteracy](#)



[Click here to book your place](#)

Sessions and timings are subject to change