

**Susan Hall** on  
Reading and  
Parental Involvement





## Susan Hall on Reading and Parental Involvement

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## The Expert Answers: Susan Hall

### What are the Early Warning Signs of a Reading Difficulty?

#### SchwabLearning.org asks:

What are some early warning signs of a reading difficulty? What should parents look for?

#### Susan Hall responds:

A parent may be the first person in a child's life to recognize a reading problem. A parent's observation is critical because some of the earliest signs that foreshadow a reading difficulty can be seen during preschool and kindergarten years.

**Difficulty manipulating sounds in words is one of the hallmark characteristics of reading difficulties and can be seen at a young age.** Your child might struggle with rhyming, word games, or recognizing words that start with the same sound.

Often children who had repeated ear infections or speech delays during their early years eventually have trouble learning to read. Children who have articulation problems or are late to talk, as compared to peers, should not only receive a speech and hearing screening during the preschool years but should be monitored for possible reading difficulty.

Let's turn to some stories from parents of children who later had trouble reading. What were some warning signs they saw as early as the preschool years?

- One parent first noticed her daughter couldn't learn letter and number symbols when she was a preschooler. Despite the mother's extensive efforts to teach her daughter the alphabet, her child entered kindergarten knowing only 2 of the 26 letters.
- Another mother noticed just before her son's third birthday that he wasn't speaking at the level of his peers. He had experienced repeated ear infections and later had tubes inserted; his speech improved somewhat, but he eventually had reading problems.
- Another parent first began to suspect a problem when her preschool son disliked nursery rhymes. She would leave off the last word to see if he could fill in the blank of the rhyme. Despite having heard the same rhyme many times, he couldn't do it. He just didn't seem to recognize the pattern of similar sounding words that is characteristic of rhyming.

“A parent's observation is critical because some of the earliest signs that foreshadow a reading difficulty can be seen during preschool and kindergarten years.”

Sometimes parents notice difficulties during first grade because a child who's just beginning to learn to read may have **trouble making associations between sounds and letters**. Problems include detecting differences in speech sounds and performing tasks that require this skill, such as:

- Pronouncing new words and remembering them
- Breaking words apart into sounds

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## What are the Early Warning Signs of a Reading Difficulty?

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- Blending sounds together to make words
- Remembering the names and sounds of the letters

A child with weak phonological skills often prefers to guess at unknown words while reading because he is not very good at figuring out the sounds or blending them together. Being able to sound out unknown words is an important skill your child needs in order to read text. Beyond third grade, the text contains more difficult words that often cannot be predicted from context clues or limited pictures.

If you ask your first grader to read aloud to you and he resists doing so, this may be a warning that there's a problem. Children who struggle often find reading is such a belabored process they avoid it.

By the middle of first grade your child should be able to read at least 100 common words, such as *the*, *and*, and *is*, and know the letter-sound associations well enough to read words in simple books. Watch for these warning signs as you listen to your child read aloud:

- Doesn't know the sounds associated with all of the letters
- Skips words in a sentence and doesn't stop to self-correct
- Can't remember words; sounds out the same word every time it occurs on the page
- Frequently guesses at unknown words rather than sounding them out

**You can also look at your child's writing for clues about reading difficulty.** By the end of kindergarten a child should be writing words that contain most of the consonant sounds in a word, even though the vowels will often be missing or inaccurate until later.

These warning signs can be helpful to parents who suspect learning to read isn't progressing smoothly. However, just because your child is struggling doesn't necessarily mean there is a serious problem. Learning to read is a complex process that doesn't occur overnight for most children; it takes time and plenty of direct, systematic instruction.

It's important not to panic if you see some of these warning signs in your child. Lists of early warning signs can help you be on the lookout; however, there is no precise list of surefire signs of a reading difficulty. Each child is unique and may exhibit only some of the signs. Knowing what to look for can help you decide whether you need to investigate further. Calm and reasoned reactions are the most effective for your child.



## The Expert Answers: Susan Hall

### What Kind of Assessment Helps Struggling Readers?

#### SchwabLearning.org asks:

Are there ways to assess a young child's reading difficulty without going through a full evaluation? What type of assessment is the most effective in determining appropriate instruction?

#### Susan Hall responds:

Often parents who are concerned about their child's reading difficulties jump to a full evaluation. While a complete assessment is the right step for some children, there are other less expensive alternatives that provide needed information. There are many different levels of assessment — from an informal screening to full psycho-educational or neuropsychological testing. Knowing which level to choose requires clarity about **why** parents are having their child tested — what they want to know, and what they plan to do with the information.

**Before parents decide what type of evaluation is right for their child, they need to know what kinds of screening or testing their child may already have had at school.** New assessment tools that help kindergarten through second grade teachers evaluate reading readiness and early reading skills are now used in many schools. These tools differ from those used to test children for potential learning problems. The purpose of these new tools is to screen all students to identify children who are "at risk" for reading difficulties. Then specialized instruction can be delivered to those whose skills are weak.

**Screening tools enable teachers to predict which children are at risk of reading difficulty before they even begin learning to read.** These screenings usually take less than 15 minutes to administer and typically are given three times a year, starting no later than mid-kindergarten. Kindergarteners are screened for knowledge of letter names and sounds, language comprehension, familiarity with the way books are read, and, most importantly, phonemic awareness. In first grade, other skills are assessed, including a child's ability to recognize common words, sound out unknown words, and understand text.

Phonemic awareness, which is critical to being able to read, is the ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in words. There are 40-44 phonemes in the English language, depending on the classification system used. Some sounds are represented by two letters, such as *sh* and *ng*. A child who can recognize that the word "cat" has 3 speech sounds, or who can change the /m/ sound at the beginning of "man" to the /r/ sound and know the word is now "ran," is demonstrating phonemic awareness. The ability to hear separate sounds in a word is an auditory skill that underlies the ability to use an alphabet to read and write.

Schools have been screening children for letter knowledge for a long time, but this addition of screening for phonemic awareness is important. Recently, researchers who study reading concluded

“Only after a child has received explicit and systematic instruction, and is still not successful, is it possible to conclude that the child should be tested for a learning disability.”

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## What Kind of Assessment Helps Struggling Readers?

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the two best predictors of how well a child will learn to read in first grade are phonemic awareness and letter knowledge.

With appropriate, early, explicit instruction, most children will learn to read. Only those who have severe reading disabilities may need more specialized help. For most children, phonemic awareness can be developed with a limited amount of instruction in kindergarten or first grade using activities and games that call the child's attention to the sounds in words. This preventive model, rather than the "wait to fail" model, is strongly advocated by The National Institutes of Health and leading reading researchers.

In addition to determining if the school has performed adequate screening, it is important to know what method of reading instruction is being used. Many children simply need a more explicit and systematic approach to recognizing the sounds in words, the correspondence of letters to sounds, and how to blend sounds in words. Frequently, once a child receives appropriate instruction, he catches up quickly. Only after a child has received explicit and systematic instruction, and is still not successful, is it possible to conclude that the child should be tested for a learning disability.

Some parents choose to have their child evaluated privately. It's important that parents determine what they want from the evaluation before deciding who will conduct it. If parents simply want an independent opinion about whether their child is reading on grade level, hiring a knowledgeable reading tutor to assess the child's skills will generally accomplish this. The key is to find a tutor who is trained and experienced in reading instruction.

Another resource for a private evaluation is a specialized reading clinic that typically works with children with reading problems. This type of clinic is not the same as a commercial learning center that provides after-school tutoring but is uninformed about reading disabilities.

If parents find their child is behind grade level despite appropriate instruction, they may want a full psycho-educational evaluation to identify whether problems are due to a learning disability. If parents have their child tested privately for reading difficulties, it is important to choose a psychologist who is knowledgeable about all aspects of reading. Parents should interview the evaluator to determine his qualifications and experience and find out if a written report with specific recommendations for appropriate instructional approaches will be provided. It is well worth spending some extra time up front to find the right person to assess your child.

Parents who feel their child has a disability and is not receiving educational benefit can request an assessment through the public school. Rights and responsibilities for evaluation are defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).



## The Expert Answers: Susan Hall

### Does My Child Have a Reading Disorder or Developmental Lag?

#### SchwabLearning.org asks:

How do parents know if their child's reading delay is a real problem or simply a "developmental lag?" How long should parents wait before seeking help if their child is struggling with reading?

#### Susan Hall responds:

As I travel across the country speaking to groups of parents about reading difficulties, I often say "beware of the developmental lag excuse." I have several reasons for saying this. First, I have listened to parent after parent tell me about feeling there was a problem early on, yet being persuaded to discount their intuition and wait to seek help for their child. Later, when they learned time was of the essence in developing reading skills, the parents regretted the lost months or years. Second, **research shows that the crucial window of opportunity to deliver help is during the first couple of years of school.** So if your child is having trouble learning to read, the best approach is to take immediate action.

“These research conclusions make it imperative for schools to implement screening tools that emphasize phonemic awareness skills.”

Knowing how soon to act can be easy if you are informed about important conclusions from recent research. Reading researchers tell us the ideal window of opportunity for addressing reading difficulties is during kindergarten and first grade. The National Institutes of Health state that 95 percent of poor readers can be brought up to grade level if they receive effective help early. **While it is still possible to help an older child with reading, those beyond third grade require much more intensive help.** The longer you wait to get help for a child with reading difficulties, the harder it will be for the child to catch up.

The three key research conclusions that support seeking help early are:

- 90 percent of children with reading difficulties will achieve grade level in reading if they receive help by the first grade.
- 75 percent of children whose help is delayed to age nine or later continue to struggle throughout their school careers.
- If help is given in fourth grade, rather than in late kindergarten, it takes four times as long to improve the same skills by the same amount.

Parents who understand these research conclusions realize they cannot afford to waste valuable time trying to figure out if there really is a problem or waiting for the problem to cure itself.

These research conclusions make it imperative for schools to implement screening tools that emphasize phonemic awareness skills. As discussed in the earlier Q & A on Assessment Issues, the best plan is to begin screening children in mid-kindergarten and continue screening at least three times a year until the end of second grade.

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## Does my Child Have a Reading Disorder or Developmental Lag?

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Reading researchers who designed these screening tools recommend identifying and providing additional assistance to the lowest 20 percent of children. The rationale is that it is better to slightly over-identify the number of children who may be “at risk” of reading difficulty than to miss some who may need help. The worst outcome of over-identification is that a child who would eventually have caught on receives some additional help. Parents should follow this strategy and act early because the worst that can happen is their child will get a little extra help she really didn't need.

Yet identification is only the beginning. Effective and intense intervention must be offered immediately. **Students who lag behind their peers must be given extra help, preferably in groups of three or fewer students, by a well-trained educator who knows how to deliver effective instruction.** Assignment to these groups can be fluid, with children joining whenever the teacher determines skills are lagging and others moving out as they master skills.

**Early signs of difficulty should not be attributed to immaturity.** When a kindergarten child confuses letters, associates the wrong sound with a letter, or cannot distinguish a rhyme, it usually has nothing to do with social maturity. These warning signs do not necessarily mean the child has a reading disability; these signs may indicate the child had insufficient preschool preparation. If a child has not been exposed to letters and letter sounds, she usually catches on quickly once exposed. It is only after effective instruction has been provided and the child is still struggling that one can conclude there may be a more serious problem.

Why do parents wait to seek help? In a recent Roper Starch poll, parents' attitudes about their child's learning problems and the public's general awareness of learning disabilities were explored. **The poll showed many parents waited far too long to seek help for their child because they worried their child might be stigmatized if found to have a learning problem.** Nearly half (48 percent) of parents felt having their child labeled as “learning disabled” was more harmful than struggling privately with an unidentified problem. Of the parents who expressed some concerns their child may be having trouble, 44 percent said that they waited a year or more before seeking help.

Parents who understand the risks of delay in getting help for their child's reading problems are motivated not to wait. Children can be brought up to grade level much more successfully and with less effort if effective intervention is offered early on. Once parents understand the risks of waiting, hopefully it will be easier to overcome concerns and get help immediately.



## The Expert Answers: Susan Hall

### What are the Components of Effective Reading Instruction?

#### SchwabLearning.org asks:

What are the components of effective reading instruction for students who have difficulty learning to read? What can parents do at home to develop pre-reading skills and reinforce instruction at school?

#### Susan Hall responds:

Parents are often advised to evaluate the reading instruction their child receives in the classroom, yet how can they recognize good instruction when they see it? Although delivering excellent early reading instruction requires a well-trained educator, recognizing whether a teacher is using a research-based approach is not that difficult if you know what to look for. Parents don't need to know how to teach reading — just how to evaluate the approach used and to identify whether it is working for their child.

Fortunately, parents can look to a federally funded report for a summary of the scientific research on reading. Teaching Children to Read, published in March 2000, is the result of the work of the National Reading Panel, 14 people commissioned by Congress in 1997 to assess research-based knowledge about reading, including the effectiveness of various approaches to teach children to read. The panel reached these critical conclusions about effective reading instruction based on convergence of significant data from reliable research studies.

“Struggling readers especially need explicit and systematic instruction in both phonemic awareness and phonics.”

- **Explicit instruction in phonemic awareness (PA) improves a child's reading and spelling skills.** PA can be taught during kindergarten and early first grade using game-like activities. Children are taught to blend and segment the individual sounds in simple words, first orally and later with the associated letters. When visiting a kindergarten class, parents might see the teacher using a puppet to play an oral word game. The puppet says the initial consonant sound of a word, the teacher says the rest of the word, and the children are asked to blend the parts together and say the word. An example of a PA activity to segment sounds is when the teacher asks the students to delete one sound in a word. The teacher might say to the students, “Say the word ‘beam.’ Now say ‘beam’ without the /m/ sound. What's the word? The word is ‘bee’.” At home, parents can play similar word games that draw a child's attention to the separate sounds in words.
- **Systematic phonics instruction significantly improves reading and spelling skills of kindergarten — 6th grade students, especially those who struggle in reading.** First graders who were taught phonics systematically were better able to read and spell, and they showed significant gains in their ability to comprehend, as well. Systematic phonics is not merely a useful component of early reading instruction, it is a necessary component. A common practice in systematic phonics instruction is to teach children to say the sounds of letters and blend them to read unfamiliar words. Instruction is typically organized in a planned, sequential set of phonics lessons rather than teaching letter sounds randomly as they occur in the literature children are reading. Activities should reinforce letters and sounds that have been taught. One

## What are the Components of Effective Reading Instruction?

activity is where the teacher gives each child three letter cards (e.g., “p,” “t,” “s”). She then says words (e.g., “puppet,” “tail,” “salt”) and asks the children to hold up the letter with the sound they hear at the beginning of each word. Using sounds that have been taught at school, parents can make up similar activities at home to reinforce skills.

- Teachers who teach systematic phonics often use books with controlled vocabulary (sometimes called “decodable books”) in the first few months of first grade. These books contain simple words that can use letters and sounds children have been taught. This enables children to read all the words successfully rather than resort to guessing strategies when given books that contain words with sounds they haven’t yet learned.

Scientific research shows that the most skilled readers are efficient at reading single words accurately and fluently and that they rely on context very little for figuring out unknown words. Even though it appears they skip words and effortlessly absorb meaning in a global way, studies tracking eye movements confirm good readers read virtually every word and process the print letter-by-letter. Therefore, the most effective practice is to teach children to sound out words. Guessing a word from context or picture clues is not effective or efficient, especially once a child reaches fifth grade when most of the text contains no pictures and introduces considerably harder vocabulary. Therefore, parents should always encourage their child to sound out words rather than guess.

- **The practice of asking children to read aloud with guidance and feedback, sometimes called guided oral reading, helps develop reading fluency.** Parents can listen to children read aloud and provide coaching as needed to help read words accurately and quickly enough to construct the meaning.
- It also is important to explicitly teach children a variety of **strategies to guide and improve reading comprehension.** Some of these strategies include learning techniques to help monitor understanding while reading, developing and answering questions, using the structure of a story to recall events, and using graphic organizers to create a visual representation of the information.

Although the conclusions of the National Reading Panel apply primarily to general education classroom instruction, effective instruction for the struggling reader incorporates the same components. Struggling readers especially need explicit and systematic instruction in both phonemic awareness and phonics. Children who don’t easily make the associations between letters and sounds often benefit from a multisensory approach to teaching — one that uses all the senses — auditory, visual, and kinesthetic/tactile.

“Parents don’t need to know how to teach reading — just how to evaluate the approach used and to identify whether it is working for their child.”



## The Expert Answers: Susan Hall

### How Can I Learn a School's Instructional Approach?

#### SchwabLearning.org asks:

How can parents find out which instructional approach their child's teacher is using to teach reading? What are some questions to ask a teacher about the reading program used in your child's school?

#### Susan Hall responds:

Determining the instructional approach a teacher or school district is using is critical to helping a child struggling with reading. Research confirms many children who get off to a slow start in reading simply need a different approach to teaching reading. One of the best ways to help a child who is struggling is to try an alternative approach — usually one more explicit and systematic — before deciding to test for a possible learning disability. Parents need to be informed about how reading is taught and then, if not effective, encourage the school to try a different method.

How can parents find out the instructional approach their child's teacher is using? **Parents can gain information by attending open house or back-to-school night typically held a few weeks after school starts.** Teachers give an overview of their instructional program, and parents are encouraged to ask questions at these meetings. Another source of information is the teacher's weekly newsletter which often includes mention of sounds taught that week, the words children have been reading and writing to practice those sounds, and activities to do at home to reinforce skills.

Many school districts use a reading curriculum developed by educational publishing companies — often called a “basal” reading series. Typically this curriculum contains a teacher's guide outlining lesson plans for a language arts curriculum and a whole host of student materials, including classroom copies of books for children to read, individual workbooks, letter cards, and other assorted materials. Find out which reading series is being used and whether it is considered research-based.

“ Research confirms many children who get off to a slow start in reading simply need a different approach to teaching reading.”

Although this is a starting point, it won't reveal everything that needs to be known. Even if a parent discovers the curriculum follows best practices, **the teacher's skill in delivering the program is at least as important as the materials themselves.** Often, experienced teachers supplement a reading series, when it is weak in a particular instructional component, with additional materials.

Many districts do not adopt a published reading series and opt instead to purchase other materials or encourage teachers to design and develop their own curriculum. However, the teacher must be experienced and well-informed to be able to design a complete and balanced curriculum that teaches skills in a systematic and sequential way.

**Because teaching reading is a complex process, the best way to assure high quality reading instruction is to have experienced teachers who are knowledgeable about the components of reading identified through scientific research.** These informed teachers also must be skilled at identifying whether a particular approach is effective for each child in the class and then know how to intervene when a child is not progressing.

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## How Can I Learn a School's Instructional Approach?

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Parents can learn a lot simply by looking around the classroom. In first grade, there most likely will be letter cards with a picture of an object that starts with the same sound as the letter. There might be charts with words organized according to their sounds or lists of common words children find in easily decodable readers. **If you visit the classroom during language arts time, look for lessons involving systematic phonics instruction:** the teacher may be at the board writing words and asking the children to sound them out or dictating words that follow common spelling patterns and having the children write them down. Children should be given plenty of time to practice skills by reading stories with words they can decipher using sounds already taught. Associations between letters and sounds also are reinforced through diverse writing activities.

Figure out how your child is being instructed by carefully observing the strategies she uses when reading aloud to you. **When children who are taught with systematic and explicit phonics come to a word they don't recognize automatically, they begin to sound it out from left to right.** If your child consistently looks at the pictures, guesses from context clues, or skips a word to read to the end of a sentence, find out if these strategies are encouraged over sounding out words. Samples of your child's writing and spelling also help you monitor progress with phonics.

Parents can learn a great deal from the first grade teacher by asking some specific questions:

- Do you explicitly teach phonemic awareness and systematic phonics?
- In what sequential order will sounds be taught?
- Do you use decodable books?
- How many common sight words does my child recognize?
- Can you show me samples of my child's writing and explain how closely her invented spelling represents the sounds?
- How do you evaluate reading progress?
- What can I do to help my child with reading at home?



## The Expert Answers: Susan Hall

### How Can I Find a Good Reading Tutor?

#### SchwabLearning.org asks:

How do parents find a good reading tutor for their child?

#### Susan Hall responds:

For parents who have decided to hire a private tutor, choosing the right tutor is one of the most important decisions in the journey to help a child struggling to learn to read. Teaching reading is complex. Although parents can do lots of things to help support their child's reading progress, most do not have the expertise, skills, or materials to be their child's primary reading teacher. Sometimes even when parents have the skills to teach their child to read, they prefer not to do so. They don't want to risk confusing or potentially jeopardizing the parent-child relationship if their child resists efforts to help.

#### Some of the characteristics of a good tutor include:

- Well-trained in effective instructional approaches
- Plenty of prior experience tutoring children in reading
- Good at working with children, including establishing rapport — developing a relationship — so that your child *wants* to go back

“Changing tutors can be disruptive, so why not hire someone eminently qualified the first time?”

The first characteristic listed above is extremely important and should be a major guideline in deciding whom to hire. Effective instruction for students who struggle with reading differs somewhat from what was recommended by the National Reading Panel for all classrooms. It includes all the same components, except the language structure is taught more explicitly, children are given more chance to practice with guided feedback, and multisensory techniques are used whenever possible.

Most of the best reading tutors who help struggling readers have extensive training in a **multisensory structured language (MSL) approach**. MSL is an umbrella term that describes a type of instructional approach for teaching reading and writing, especially for teaching sound-letter relationships, by incorporating all the senses. Multisensory techniques are used, such as tracing letters in cornmeal or sand, so that the auditory, visual, and kinesthetic/tactile senses can all be employed to help focus the student's attention and the brain to imprint the letters and sounds that go together.

There are many “brands” of reading programs, including Orton-Gillingham, Wilson Language Training®, Lindamood-Bell® programs, and Project Read®, all of which are excellent and are based on similar principles about instruction. Learning how to teach one of the MSL approaches takes more than attending one brief overview workshop. Training courses are more than a week long and typically include a practicum where the tutor is supervised by a master teacher. This supervision provides feedback on how to plan lessons and interpret errors children make. Organizations that accredit MSL teacher training programs recommend that newly trained tutors work 100 hours or more in a supervised practicum. Such requirements clearly demonstrate that it is not only the materials and the approach that are important but that the most effective tutors have been well-trained under informed supervision.

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## How Can I Find a Good Reading Tutor?

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Sometimes parents who have not had their child tested yet and, therefore, have not identified a reading disability, ask whether they really need such a specially trained tutor. My response is that it can't hurt and usually is your best decision. If the child doesn't have a reading disability, or it is mild, he will make great progress and won't need the tutor very long. Changing tutors can be disruptive, so why not hire someone eminently qualified the first time? Hiring a tutor who is going to use somewhat the same approach your child is getting in the classroom is not likely to be as effective.

There are several ways to find a good tutor. Many times, after completing standardized testing, a psychologist gives parents the names of tutors. Parents can call their local branch of some of the major learning disability organizations and ask for a tutor referral list. Sometimes universities have clinics that provide testing and tutoring. Specialized reading clinics focus on reading disabilities and are preferable to a commercial learning center if you believe your child needs specialized help. One of the best sources of information about good tutors in your local community is other parents.

When interviewing potential tutors, don't be afraid to ask lots of questions before you decide whom to hire. Some possible questions to ask include:

- What is your background, training, and experience in teaching struggling readers?
- Do you use a multisensory, structured language approach to teach reading?
- What special training or certification have you completed? Did you receive a supervised practicum as part of that training?
- How long have you been tutoring children in reading?
- Approximately how many students have you tutored over the past five years and what were the outcomes?

Most tutors are willing to schedule a one-hour free consultation. Ask the tutor to estimate the length of time your child will need to be tutored to achieve the goals you have set. Also ask for references — other parents whose children have worked with that tutor.



## The Expert Answers: Susan Hall

### Resources & References

#### Early Warning Signs of a Reading Difficulty

##### Books

Straight Talk About Reading: How Parents Can Make a Difference During the Early Years  
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0809228572/schwabfoundation/>  
 by Susan L. Hall and Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D.

##### On the Web

Developing Reading Skills in Young Children  
<http://www.schwablearning.org/Articles.asp?r=37>

What Research Tells Us about Learning to Read  
<http://www.schwablearning.org/Articles.asp?r=22>

#### Assessment Issues

##### Books

The "T" Book — Testing: Critical Components in the Clinical Identification of Dyslexia  
<http://www.interdys.org/servlet/bookstore?section=OrtonEmeritusSeries>  
 by Jane Fell Greene and Louisa Cook Moats

##### On the Web

Resources for Testing Kindergarten through Second Grade Students  
<http://www.proactiveparent.com/Assessment%20Tools%20k%20-%2012>

Learning to Read — Research Informs Us  
<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?g=1&r=22>

Assessment — Public or Private?  
<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?g=1&r=326>

Special Education Assessment – Federal Rights  
<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?g=1&r=31>

#### Reading Disorder or Developmental Lag?

##### On the Web

The NICHD Research Program in Reading Development,  
 Reading Disorders and Reading Instruction  
[http://ld.org/research/keys99\\_nichd.cfm](http://ld.org/research/keys99_nichd.cfm)

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## Resources & References

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### Reading Disorder or Developmental Lag? (continued)

Measuring Progress in Public & Parental Understanding of Learning Disabilities:  
Highlights of the Roper Starch 1999 Poll  
<http://aboutld.org/factsheet.html>

How to Catch Children Before They Fail at Reading  
<http://aboutld.org/Howtocatch.html>

### Components of Effective Reading Instruction

#### On the Web

International Dyslexia Association: Orton Emeritus Series' The "R" book —  
Reading, Writing and Spelling: The Multisensory Structured Language Approach  
<http://interdys.org/servlet/bookstore?section=OrtonEmeritusSeries>

National Institutes of Health News Alert — National Reading Panel Reports  
<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/new/releases/nrp.cfm>

SchwabLearning.org: Management Strategies — Reading  
<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?g=1&r=47>

SchwabLearning.org: What the Science Says:  
Effective Reading Interventions for Kids with Learning Disabilities  
<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=745>

#### Reference

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development: —  
Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read  
<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubskey.cfm?from=nrp>

### Learning a School's Instructional Approach

#### Books

Straight Talk About Reading: How Parents Can Make a Difference During the Early Years  
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0809228572/schwabfoundation/>  
by Susan L. Hall and Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D.

Teaching Reading IS Rocket Science (pdf)  
<http://www.aft.org/edissues/downloads/rocketsci.pdf>  
by Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D.

International Dyslexia Association: Orton Emeritus Series' The "R" book – Reading,  
Writing and Spelling: The Multisensory Structured Language Approach  
<http://interdys.org/servlet/bookstore?section=OrtonEmeritusSeries>

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## Resources & References

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### Finding a Good Reading Tutor

#### Books

Parenting a Struggling Reader

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0767907760/schwabfoundation/>

by Susan L. Hall and Louisa C. Moats, Ed. D.

#### On the Web

International Dyslexia Association

<http://www.interdys.org/index.jsp>

International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council Accredited Programs

<http://www.imslec.org/>

Learning Disabilities Association of America

<http://www.lidaamerica.org/StatePages.html>

SchwabLearning.org: What the Science Says:

Effective Reading Interventions for Kids with Learning Disabilities

<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=745>

SchwabLearning.org: What the Science Says:

Questions to Ask Tutors

<http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=80>



## Visit SchwabLearning's Online Resources



**SchwabLearning.org** is a parent's guide to helping kids with learning difficulties.

We'll help you understand how to:

- **Identify** your child's problem by working with teachers, doctors, and other professionals.
- **Manage** your child's challenges at school and home by collaborating with teachers to obtain educational and behavioral support, and by using effective parenting strategies.
- **Connect** with other parents who know what you are going through. You'll find support and inspiration in their personal stories and on our Parent-to-Parent message boards.
- Locate **resources** including Schwab Learning publications, plus additional books and websites.

**SchwabLearning.org**—free and reliable information at your fingertips, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



**Sparktop.org™** is a one-of-a-kind website created expressly for kids ages 8-12 with learning difficulties including learning disabilities (LD) and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD). Through games, activities, and creativity tools, kids at SparkTop.org can:

- Find information about how their brain works, and get tips on how to succeed in school and life.
- Showcase their creativity and be recognized for their strengths.
- Safely connect with other kids who know what they are going through.

**SparkTop.org** is free, carries no advertising, and is fully compliant with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

Schwab Learning is a nonprofit program of the Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation.