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# It's Never Too Late: Supporting the Literacy Learning Needs of Tweens, Teens and Beyond

# Communication Matters

## AAC & Literacy: Best Practice Days

2 May 2019

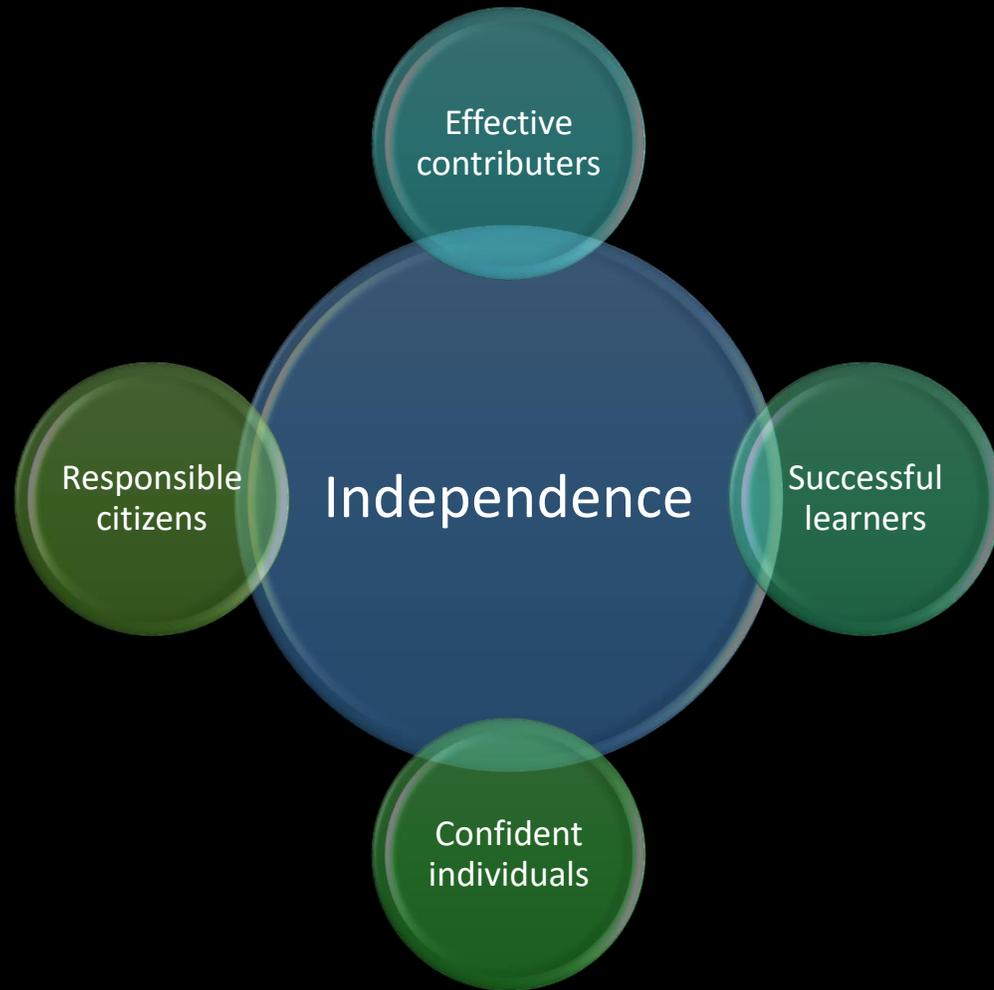
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The ultimate  
goal of literacy  
instruction for  
all:

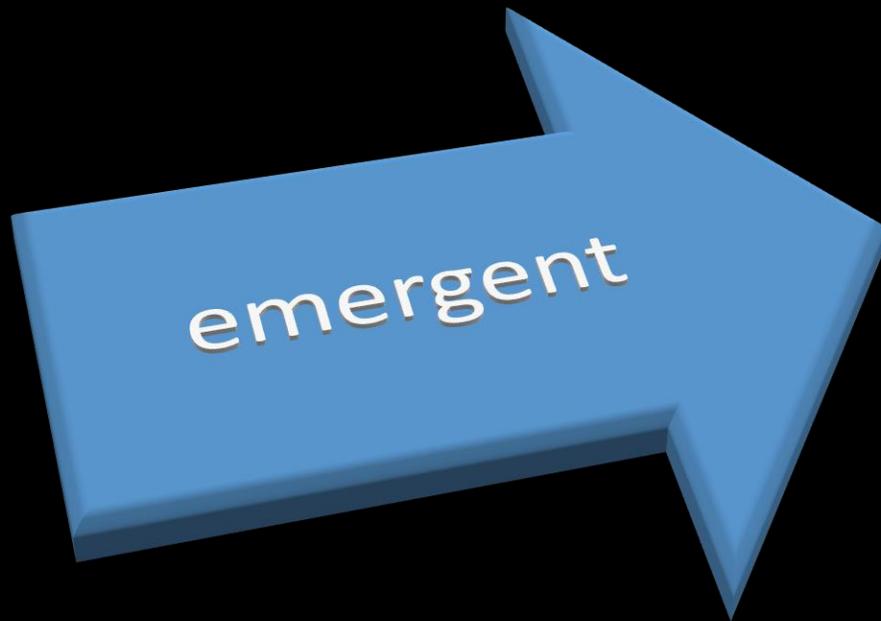


A person with long, dark, curly hair is seen from behind, sitting at a desk and reading an open book. The background is a blurred library or study area with bookshelves. The text is overlaid on the image in white.

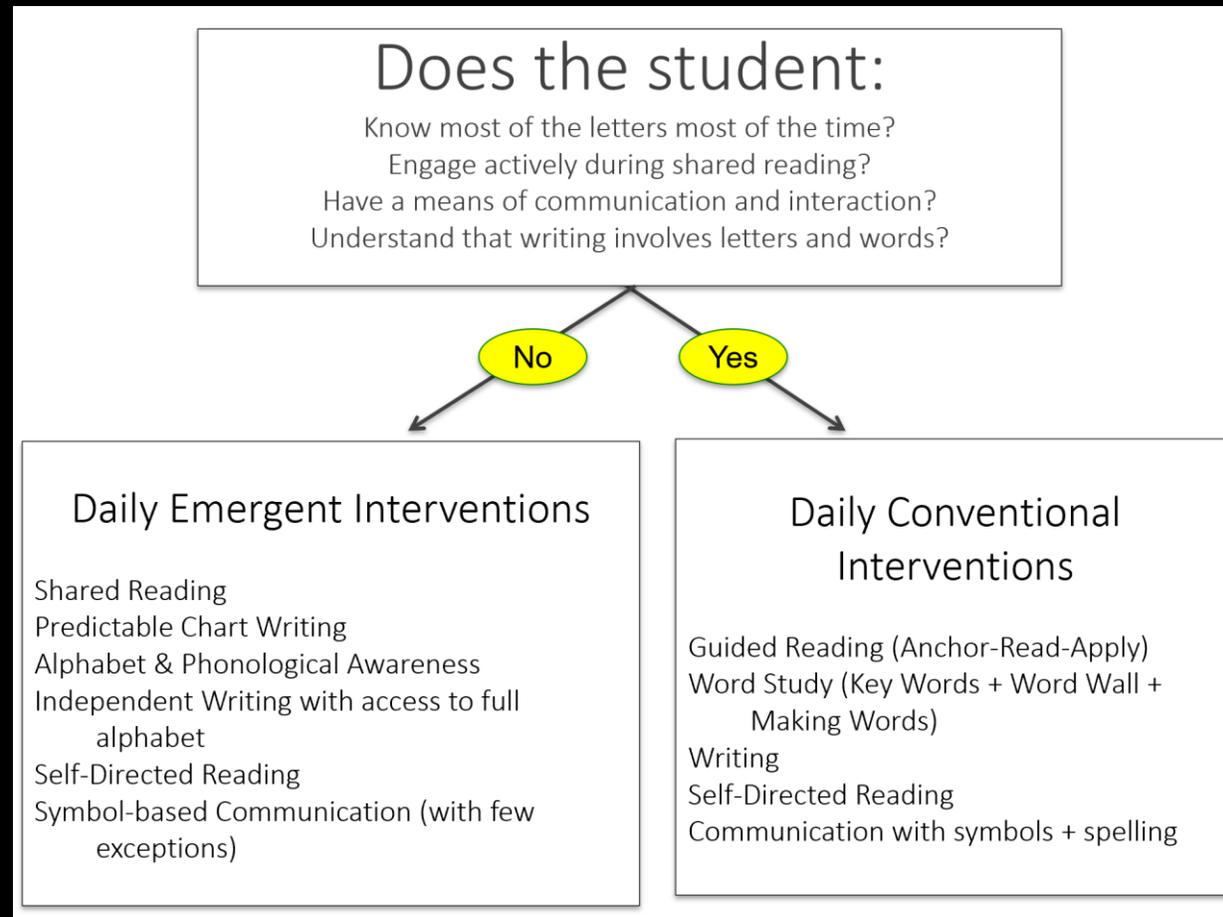
Let's think about our tween  
and teen AAC users...

Let's Bust Some Myths!

Beginners come in two colors:



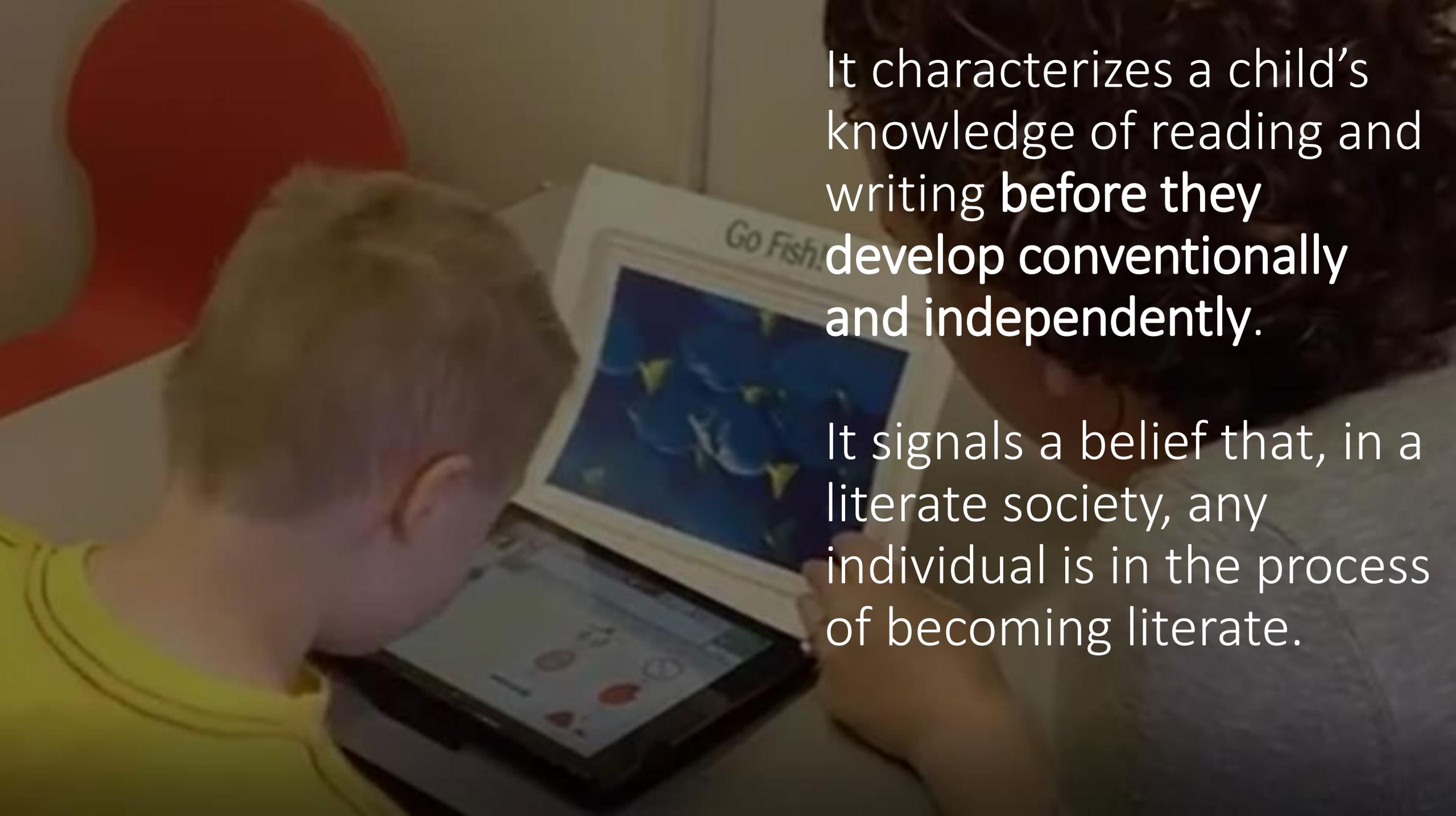
# Erickson and Koppenhaver sort it like this:



Since 80% of AAC users, including tweens and teens, are considered emergent, let's start there...

What is emergent literacy?





It characterizes a child's knowledge of reading and writing **before they develop conventionally and independently.**

It signals a belief that, in a literate society, any individual is in the process of becoming literate.

Ongoing process, that  
begins at birth if not  
before...



And progresses across a lifetime...



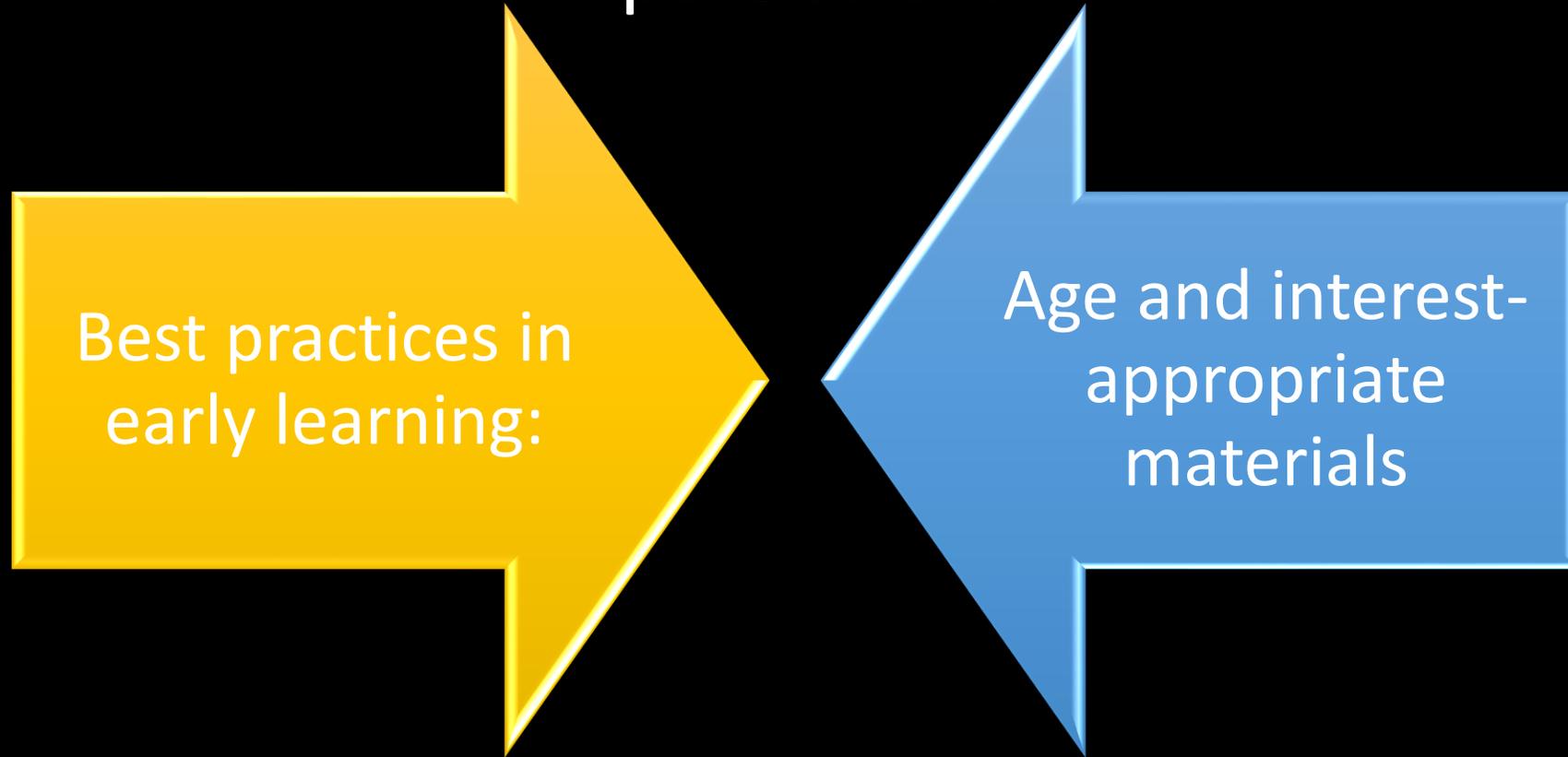
It's the 1,000-  
hour foundation  
upon which all of  
our conventional  
skills rest.

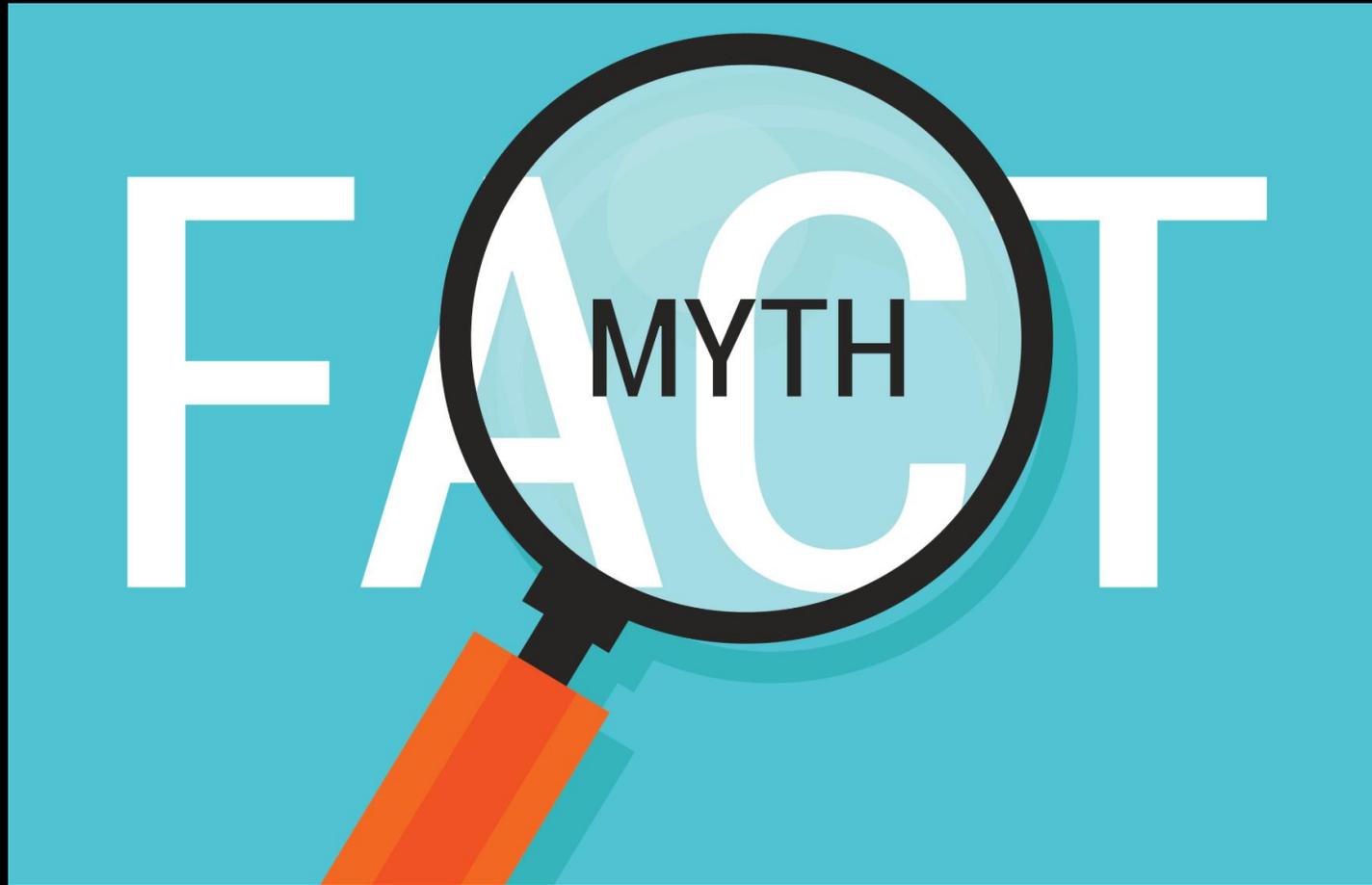


It can and does  
coincide with  
any age or  
point in  
development...



How does all of this relate to tweens and teens in particular?





Let's look at some myths about literacy and AAC...

An illustration on a teal background showing a hand with red nail polish holding a thin pin that is piercing a large, inflated green balloon. The hand is positioned on the right side of the frame, with the thumb and index finger gripping the pin. The balloon is on the left, and the text is centered over the intersection of the pin and the balloon.

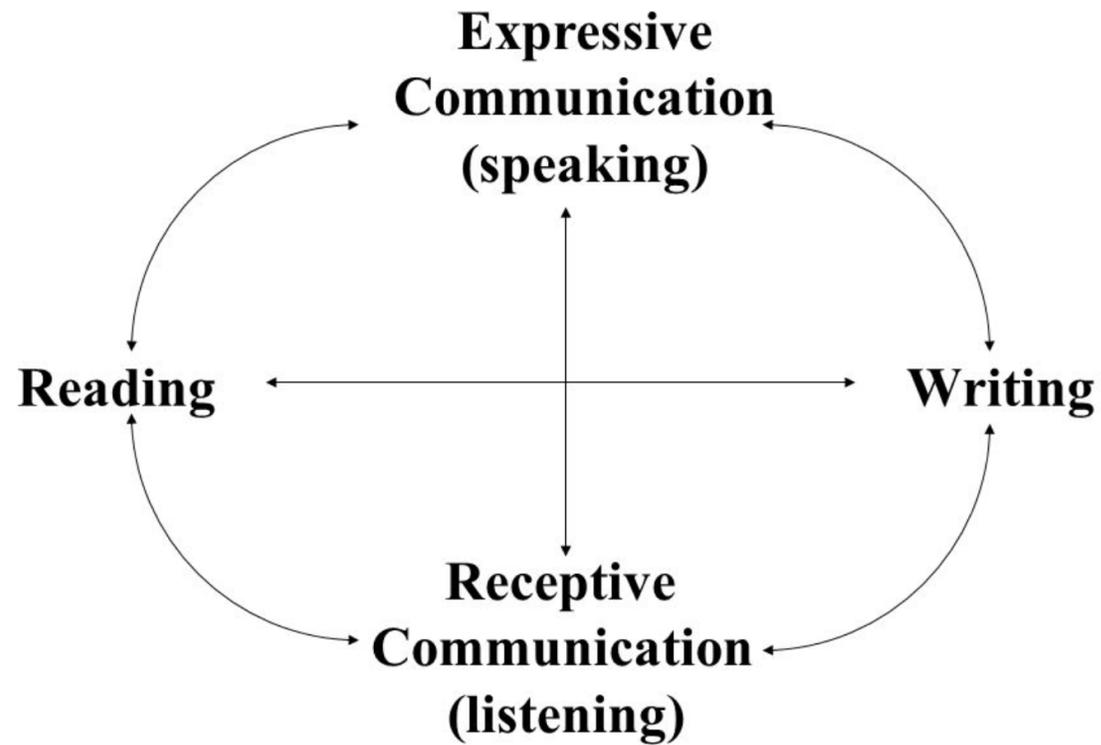
Then we'll bust them...

# Myth # 1: Mastery Matters

1. spelling
2. test
3. fridex 
4. why



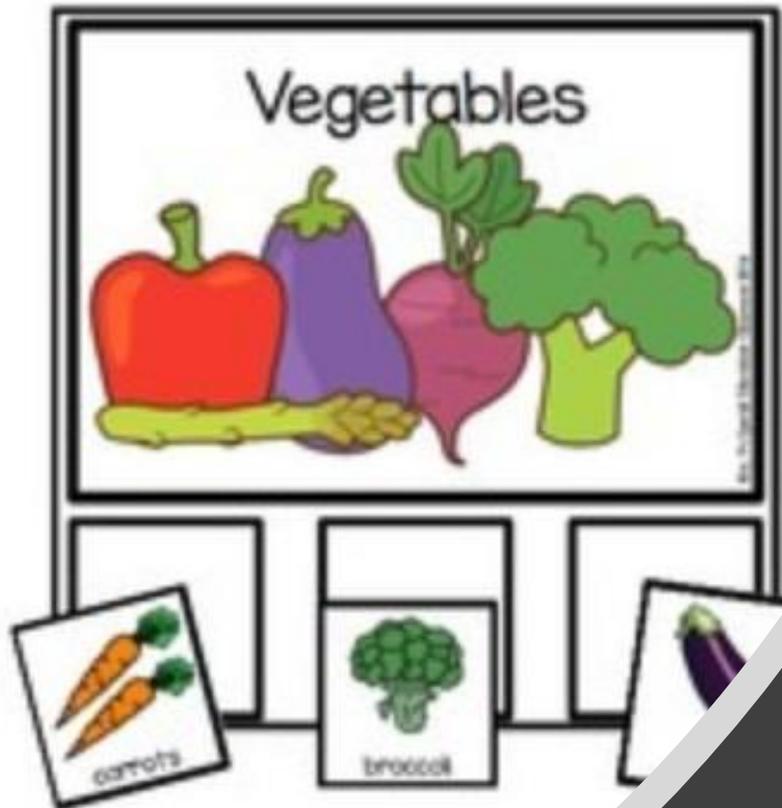
~~Myth #1: Mastery Matters~~  
Think spiral, not staircase



**Oral and Written Language Development**

(Koppenhaver, Coleman, Kalman & Yoder, 1991  
adapted from Teale & Sulzby, 1989)

# Functional Literacy Everyday Items Sort



Myth #2:  
It's too late to  
learn to read  
and write.



“No student is too  
anything to be  
able to read and  
write”

David Yoder, DJI-AbleNet  
Literacy Lecture, ISAAC  
2000

~~Myth #2: It's too  
late to learn to  
read and write.~~

Let's teach this  
flexible, complete  
symbol set:

---

a b c d e f  
g h i j k l m  
n o p q r s t  
u v w x y z

OVER 1 MILLION COPIES SOLD

***PEDAGOGY***

**OF THE**

WITH AN UPDATED INTRODUCTION BY DONALDO MACEDO

50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

***OPPRESSED***

**PAULO FREIRE**

BLOOMSBURY

Myth #3: Learners  
are like banks.

~~Myth #3: Learners  
are like banks.~~  
Think of learning as  
a social construct.



Let's do this  
instead:

- Cultivate our relationships.
- Apply the 90/10 ratio of teaching to testing.



Myth # 4:  
Phonics  
instruction is  
all they need.

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~~Myth #4:~~  
~~Phonics~~  
~~instruction is~~  
~~all they need.~~

---

Comprehensive  
Instruction = Success

### Daily Emergent Interventions

Shared Reading  
Predictable Chart Writing  
Alphabet & Phonological Awareness  
Independent Writing with access to full  
alphabet  
Self-Directed Reading  
Symbol-based Communication (with few  
exceptions)

### Daily Conventional Interventions

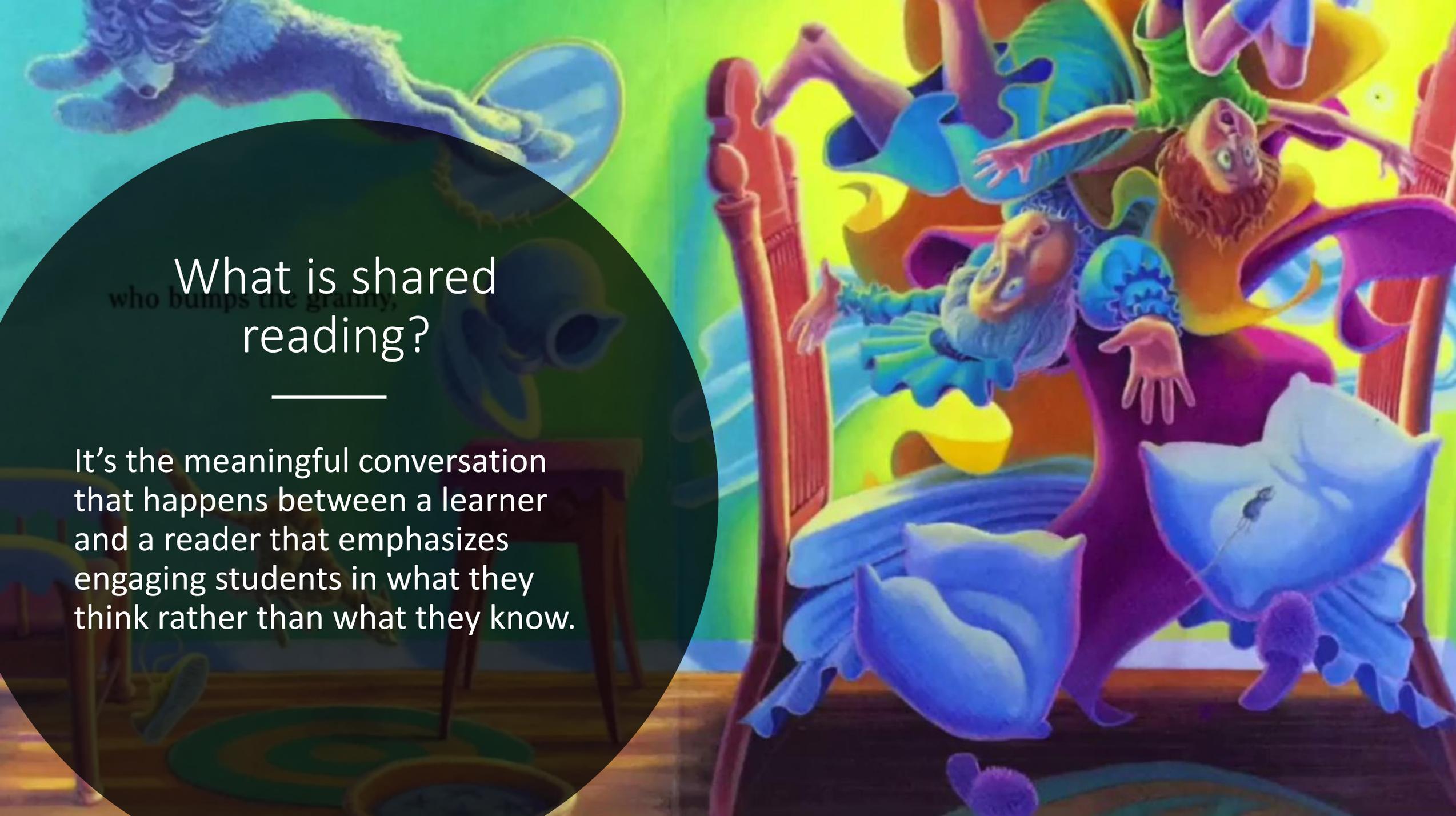
Guided Reading (Anchor-Read-Apply)  
Word Study (Key Words + Word Wall +  
Making Words)  
Writing  
Self-Directed Reading  
Communication with symbols + spelling



So what do we do?

These things....  
as often as possible.





## What is shared reading?

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It's the meaningful conversation that happens between a learner and a reader that emphasizes engaging students in what they think rather than what they know.

The goals are to help students:

- build background knowledge
- learn new words
- establish concepts of print
- connect to the pleasures and purposes of reading



# How to:



A crocodile is not a good pet.

- Comment (wait)...

- Ask (wait)...

- Respond (wait)...

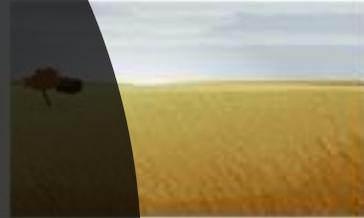


# What is self-directed reading?

a time for students to explore and read books independently at their own level.



Prairie Sky



What Is a Habitat?



Welcome Home



Habitat Opposites



Where You Live



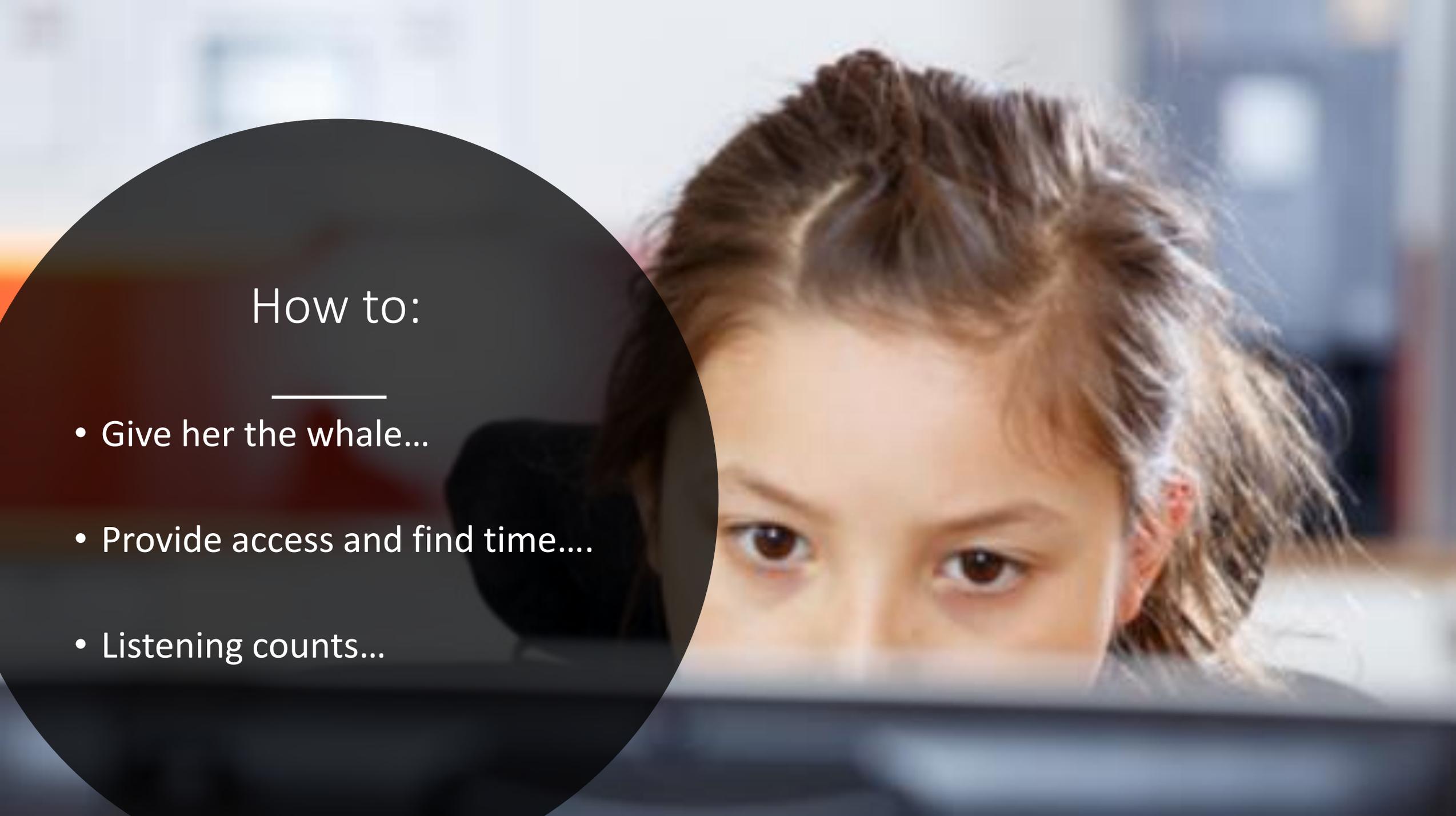
Be a Bee





The goal is to:

- create an authentic opportunity for students to see themselves as competent and engaged **readers**.
- *“If it ain’t selected by you, it ain’t self-selected reading.”*
- –Dave Koppenhaver



## How to:

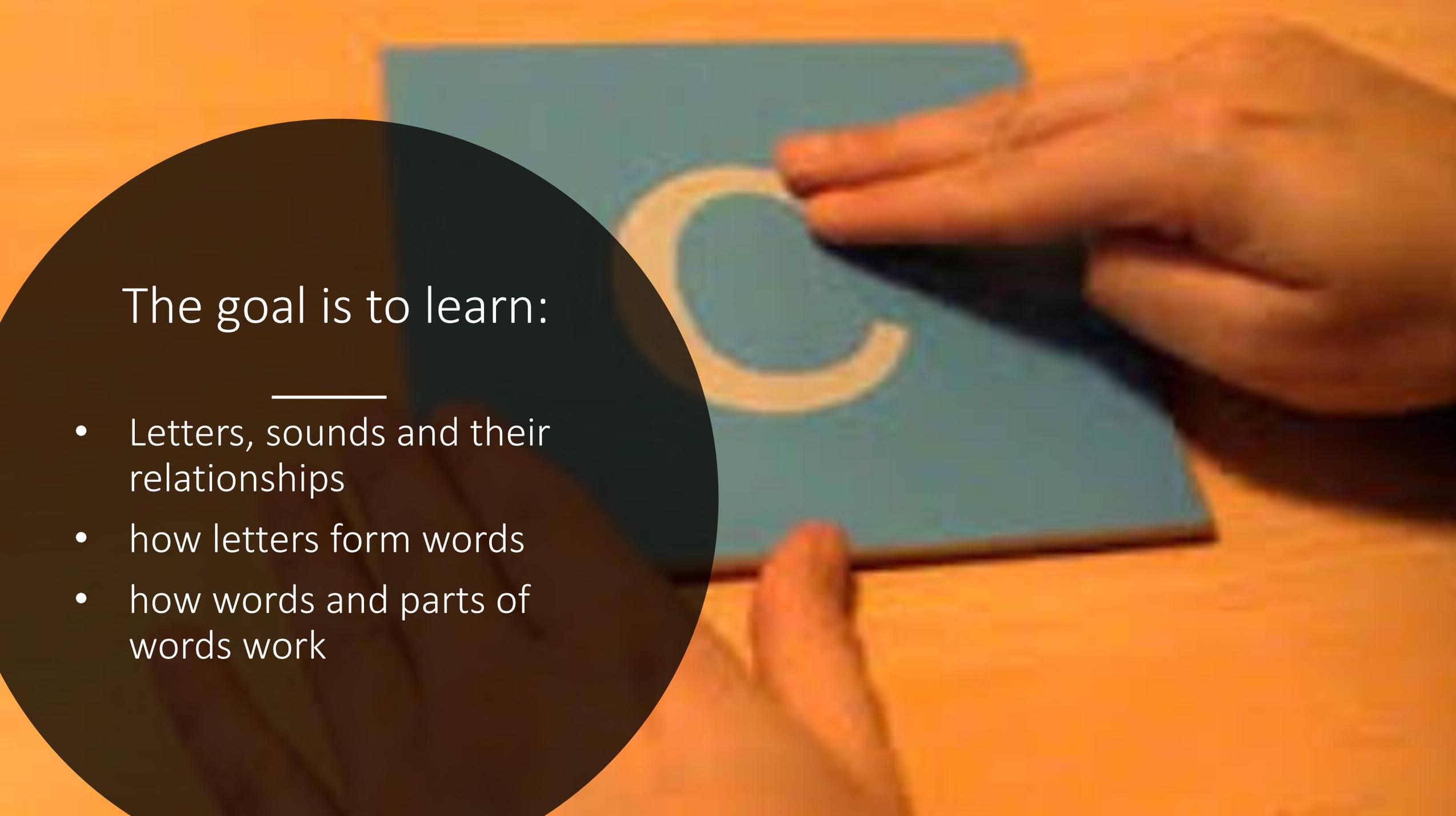
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- Give her the whale...
- Provide access and find time....
- Listening counts...

What are alphabetical and phonological activities?

Include all the activities whereby a student begins to identify and manipulate the units of language which include letters, sounds, words, and smaller parts of words.



A close-up photograph of a hand tracing a yellow letter 'C' on a blue card. The card is placed on a wooden surface. The background is a warm, orange-toned wall. A dark circular overlay is on the left side of the image, containing text.

The goal is to learn:

- 
- Letters, sounds and their relationships
  - how letters form words
  - how words and parts of words work

## How to:

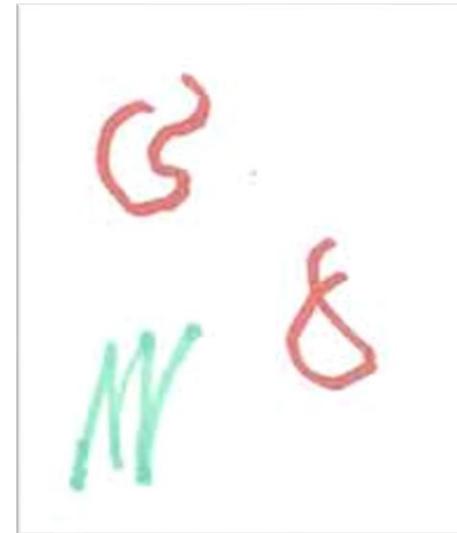
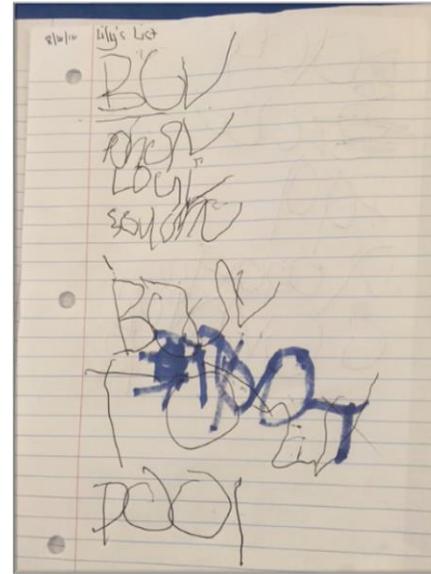
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- Think patterns not just letters & sounds...
- Connect these activities to text
- Play-based and exploratory in nature



# What is emergent writing?

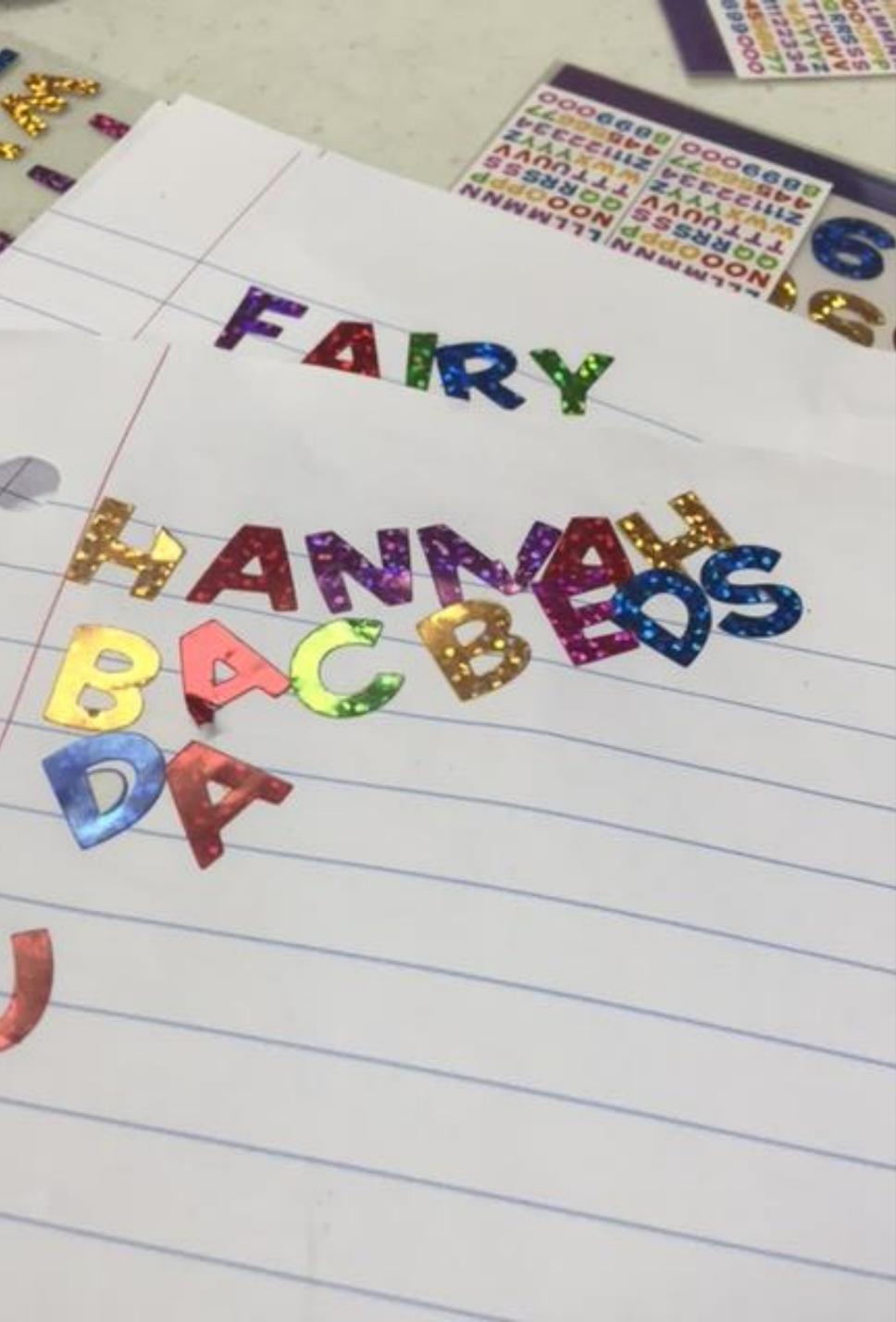
All the marks, lines, scribbles, and randomly selected letters, and letter-like forms of beginning writers.



The goal is to:

Help students understand that writing is how we represent thoughts, wishes, needs, and ideas.





## How to:

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- Find a pencil...
- Provide the entire alphabet...
- Emphasize meaning over convention...

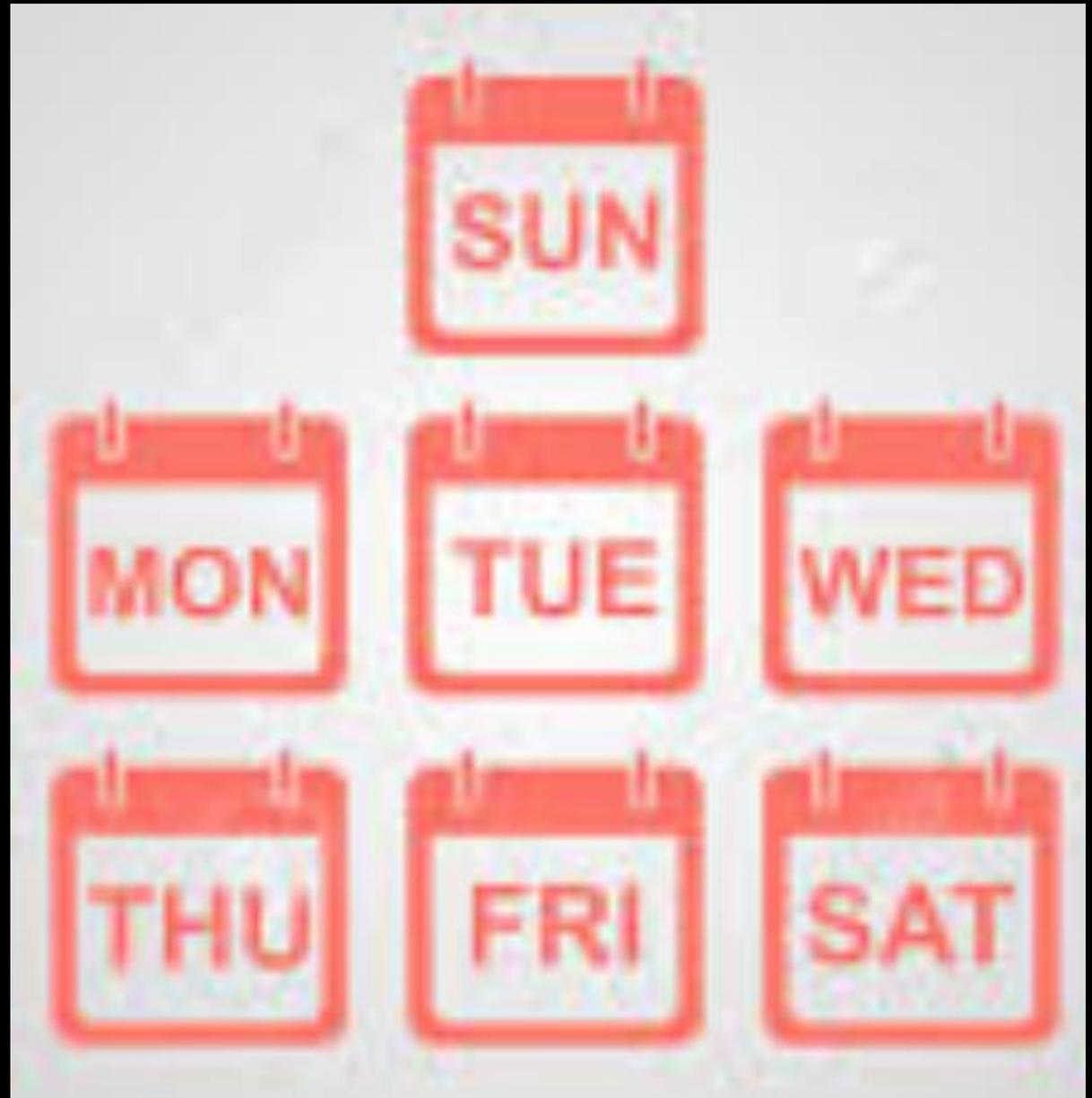
With AAC and  
communication at the  
heart of it all...



“As I shifted from classroom teacher to researcher and started to look much more closely at the use of AAC in schools, it became clear that the language- and print-rich learning environment paired with the thoughtful use of AAC was responsible for student gains; **one or the other on its own is insufficient.**”

---Erickson 2017

When?  
Every day!



# Key Reading Resources:

[www.tarheelreader.com](http://www.tarheelreader.com)

[www.Bookshare.org](http://www.Bookshare.org)

[www.Youtube.com](http://www.Youtube.com)

[www.audible.com](http://www.audible.com)

[www.litdis.com](http://www.litdis.com)

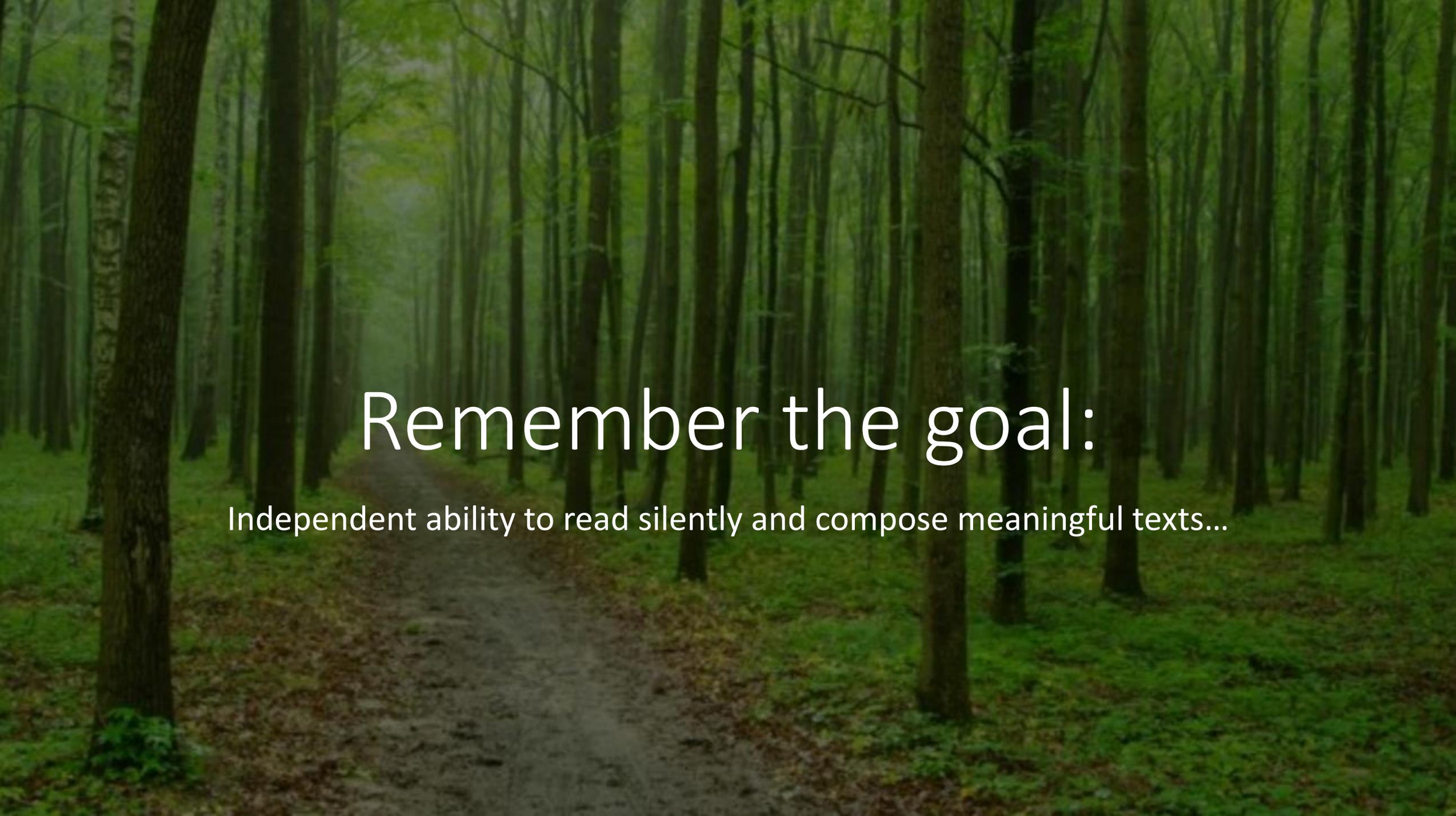
# Key Writing Resources:

[www.project-core.org](http://www.project-core.org)

[www.boardmakeronline.com](http://www.boardmakeronline.com)

*Co:writer by Don Johnston...*

[www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/products/available-for-purchase](http://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/products/available-for-purchase)

A photograph of a forest path with tall, thin trees and green foliage, overlaid with a semi-transparent dark green filter. The path is covered in fallen leaves and leads into the distance.

Remember the goal:

Independent ability to read silently and compose meaningful texts...



**Questions? Comments?**

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