

## What We Know for Sure (Thanks, Oprah!): Read Aloud and the Science of Reading

The research is clear:

- A strong vocabulary leads to strong comprehension
- Most language acquisition is a result of exposure
- Read aloud is a powerful way to build vocabulary and knowledge

### The Power of Read Aloud and the JOY it Brings!

Amanda and I strongly believe in the power of read aloud and the joy it brings to students. It is our mission to bring children the best new books while we build vocabulary, deepen comprehension, and explore author's craft. This month, we'd like you to think beyond the student-friendly definitions and games to connect to what we also know about brain science.

### Phonics. Read Aloud. JOY. Sounds like a secret sauce to me.

Maryanne Wolf, author of *Proust and the Squid* and *Reader, Come Home*, is the Director of the Center for Dyslexia, Diverse Learners, and Social Justice at the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. She is known for her research on dyslexia and the reading brain circuit. Last month, she discussed our reading brain during Mossflower's Supper Club. During that hour, she repeatedly referred to what she considers to be *essentials*:

- Phonics needs to be explicit and systematic, but always connected to meaning.
- Phonics is essential, but it is also essential to never disconnect from the other parts of language: syntax, semantics, and morphology.
- We need to think of foundational skills in an expanded way. Instruction must be integrated. We need application of phonics in decodables AND read aloud. "No cherry-picking!"
- Phonics instruction can never be at the expense of story.
- We cannot lose the JOY of reading. The apex is fluent comprehension and JOY.

We wish you a memorable December filled with family, friends and JOY!

*Spread the Word. Spread the Joy.*

*(December 2023 Tip of the Month)*

