

Knowledge shared = Knowledge²



Chit Chat Discussion Sheet

James Chapman – History of Reading Instruction in New Zealand

Welcome to the Chit Chat between Carla McNeil of Learning MATTERS and Professor James Chapman, formerly of Massey University New Zealand. During this Chit Chat, Carla and James discuss the history of reading instruction in New Zealand.

We encourage you to listen to the Chit Chat (35 minutes) with your colleagues, team and/or staff, and consider the following questions and discussion points along the way. We hope this helps to cause some robust conversations, build shared understandings and offers an opportunity for reflection.

You may wish to use the strategy of **READ** (*this discussion doc*) → **LISTEN** (*listen to the Chit Chat*) → **CHAT** (*with your colleagues*), sharing your thoughts, learnings and reflections.

- What does James mean by his reference to radical constructive literacy teaching and where did this come from? How do you believe this has influenced our instruction over the years?
- What was the fundamental underlying belief in the past as to how children learn to read?
- Finish this statement. The theory was that if you immerse children into a print rich environment they will _____.
- Where did the beliefs stem from that influenced our instruction for decades?
- What is the change James recommends we need to see in our teacher guidance texts?
- What do teachers need to know to be able to teach every child in front of them?
- Discuss with your colleagues what framework (for teaching) you adhere to in your school.
- James discusses the prompts used by teachers (when students come to unknown words) and studies conducted looking at these. What might we consider now when prompting struggling readers or those who don't know how to decode a word?
- What is it that James and Carla believe need to happen in literacy education in NZ for positive outcomes to be achieved by teachers and students?



We hope you found the Chit Chat thought-provoking and a good opportunity to reflect on your practice. Perhaps you have begun your journey into Structured Literacy and the Science of Reading and there was a lot of affirmation, or perhaps this is your starting point. Either way, you are on your way. We wish you all the best as you too work to make a greater evidence-based shift in your setting.

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- Do you have more to learn? What will you do now? What do you think are the next steps for your school?
 - Build more knowledge?
 - Improve teaching practice?
 - Consider resourcing?
 - Build consistency across classrooms?

