

# Knowledge shared = Knowledge<sup>2</sup>



## Chit Chat Discussion Sheet

### Pamela Snow – Why a shift in reading education is so important

Welcome to the Chit Chat between Carla McNeil of Learning MATTERS and Professor Pamela Snow of La Trobe University, Melbourne. During this Chit Chat, Carla and Pam discuss why a shift in reading education is so important.

We encourage you to listen to the Chit Chat (52 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.

- Why has the teaching of reading been controversial for some time? What has the problem been here?
- Pam refers to Whole Language as being an ideology, why does she describe it like this?
- What were the major findings of international studies and inquiries in relation to how children should be taught to read?
- What does Pam mean by “we’ve ended up with a language that is semi-transparent”? Discuss or consider the implications of this for teaching and learning.
- Discuss or consider the difference and benefits Pam highlights between implementing a Structured Literacy as opposed to a Balanced Literacy approach.
- What does Pam discuss research indicates will happen for students who do not achieve success with basic decoding skills after 3 years at school? Consider what this means for our instruction and frameworks for teaching and learning.
- Why is it that teaching the code in a structured way may be slower initially and what are the benefits of this?
- When we are wanting to support others to embark on this change what might we consider doing and/or pointing people to?
- What is meant by the term Snake Oil? What will we need to be aware of?



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?

