

Welcome to Empowering  
Homeschool Conversations,  
your authority in  
navigating the world of  
homeschooling diverse learners.

Featuring Peggy Ployer from  
Sped Homeschool,  
Annie Yorty from AnnieYorty.com,  
Leilani Melendez from Living with Eve,  
Stephanie Buckwalter from ELARP Learning,  
and Dawn Jackson from Dawn  
Jackson Educational  
Consulting and Tutoring.

With over seventy five years  
of combined homeschooling expertise,  
experiences and perspectives,  
this group is eager to  
share their wealth of  
wisdom to empower your  
homeschooling journey.

So grab your favorite mug,  
settle in and get ready for  
insightful discussions,

valuable insights and practical tips.

Give your homeschool the  
power boost it needs to  
successfully educate the  
unique learners in your home.

Thank you.

Hi, everyone,  
and welcome to Empowering  
Homeschool Conversations.

Today,  
we are going to talk about Unlocking  
Literacy,  
Empowering Kids with  
Disabilities to Read.

And my guest today is Stephanie Hull.

She has been teaching  
children to read for years.

She holds advanced degrees  
in both children's  
literature and early childhood education,  
and she has experience running preschools,  
homeschools,  
and local storytime programs.

Stephanie developed the ABC See, Hear, Do,  
Learn to Read method.

to make learning, early learning,  
fun and easy for kids and their parents.

Stephanie lives in

Pittsburgh with her husband,  
five children, and two very silly dogs.

Maybe we'll hear a little  
bit about those dogs too.

Well, welcome, Stephanie, to the show.

Thank you.

Thanks so much for having me today.

Absolutely.

So we are going to talk about reading,  
which I know a lot,  
a lot of parents really struggle with.

I struggled with it.

I didn't even know what the  
word phonics was when I  
started homeschooling.

And so the whole the whole  
process of reading, I just thought, well,  
people just learn to do that.

And I didn't realize, you know.

as a very uneducated educator,

that there's processes

involved with that.

And so people like you that

write curriculum and that

have background are just a

wealth of information to

our community because I

think the more information

we have and the more that

we can learn what supports are out there,

the less intimidating it feels for us,

especially when we have a

child that struggles.

And we kind of feel like,

what do I do?

You know, how do I even approach this?

And so I'm excited to have

this conversation with you today on that.

Let's just set the stage a

little bit for this

conversation because I want

parents to realize, first of all,  
they're not alone.

And these may be our common  
things that other people deal with.

But why can this process of  
learning to read be  
especially challenging for some learners?

Yeah.

So I think parents kind of go, yeah,  
my child is, can't be, you know,  
it's just hard.

So yeah, I'll let you go.

And I mean,

a lot of people like you think  
that learning to read  
should be something that  
just comes naturally that, you know,  
kids learn to speak by,  
they just pick it up by us  
speaking to them.

And I think a lot of parents  
think that it's going to be  
the same for reading,

but that's really not the case.

learning to read is a very  
complex process and it  
takes a lot of steps and it  
takes a lot of years.

And children can have  
difficulties with like each  
different step.

So while they might understand that C says,  
they might not be able to  
blend that with other sounds,  
or they might not be able to decode or,  
They might not be able to  
process it fast enough.

I mean,  
there's so many factors that go  
into learning to read that  
it can just be really challenging.

The parents are definitely not alone.

It's actually quite  
frightening the numbers of  
kids that struggle to read  
by fourth grade.

About sixty percent of kids  
are struggling with reading.

Like it's a big problem.

Yeah,

so parents are definitely not alone  
if their kids are struggling.

That's actually more the norm than not.

So yeah,

learning to read is a very  
difficult process.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I've had guests on before talk about that,  
too.

And it's nice to know that, you know,

it wasn't just because I

think a lot of times we turn and just say,

well, it was just, you know,

how I taught or the

curriculum or my childhood.

There's so many things to blame it on,

but there's so many steps

involved and there could be

a plethora of things at every step.

Like you're saying that that

could be missing the boat.

And so so, yeah,

it's it's not as easy as

just like one place to

point your finger to and be done with it.

Yeah.

So but what are the

obstacles that that

children can be challenged

with when they're approaching reading?

Well,

there's many things and a lot of

technical things that I'm

not going to get into all of those.

Obviously, there's things like dyslexia,

which is often very underdiagnosed.

And that can appear in a lot

of different ways.

A lot of people just think

it's like letters,

but it actually involves

other processing skills as well.

So there's things like that.

But then there's also just...

challenges of connecting

sounds to the letters,

the challenge of being able

to fluently blend the

sounds together to read a word.

Sometimes they can blend the

sounds together to read a word,

but then by the time

they're done doing that,

they can't connect what that word means.

So they might be able to say the word,

but that doesn't mean

they're actually

understanding the word they're reading.

Sometimes that's a challenge.

And then another problem

with is that is just frustration.

Often kids feel that reading is too hard,

so they don't want to do it

or they give up.

And often it's because  
they're given books that  
are just way too hard for them.

And so then they think, oh,  
I can't do that.

I can't read.

Right.

So then they don't want to try.

Is it something that they  
just get frustrated with or  
they fail at and then they  
don't want to do it anymore?

Absolutely.

All of us are that way.

Whatever we're faced with, we're like,

I'm just not good at that.

And I think we live in a society that

Everything should happen instantly.

At least we're kind of led  
to believe that.

And then so if we don't do it well,  
then we must not be good at it.

But there's so much involved

in persistence and a child

can only persist for so

long without feeling like

they're a failure.

Learning to read does

require so many steps and take so long.

I think parents and teachers

and educators often think, oh,

they can blend a word together.

They got it.

Here's a book, read this.

And it's like,

they're not ready for that yet.

And so it just kind of builds this,

it just builds the frustration.

Right.

Is that how like traditional methods,

you know,

for teaching reading are kind of

set up that when a child

hits a certain skill,

that then they're just

given a certain thing to do.

And,

and then that's where the failures

fall in or how does that kind of lead to.

So traditional methods of

teaching reading are usually very,

they're just focused on

visual and auditory methods.

It's like,

Um, you know,

there's been battles over the

years about phonics or not

phonics is absolutely the

best way to learn reading.

Um, but often it's like, sit down,

you're going to learn this

and we're going to go through this.

Um,

and it's often boring and difficult and,

um,

just not fun and so it

just often doesn't suit

kids that don't learn well

in that way you know

there's kind of just been  
this like one way like  
you're going to learn to  
read like this and if you  
have the kid that learns  
like that that's great and  
it works um but for those  
of us that have kids that  
maybe learn a little  
differently it's a real  
challenge when those  
traditional methods just  
aren't working very well  
Yeah, yeah, absolutely.  
they focus on one pathway basically.  
And if you don't match that pathway,  
then good luck and,  
or we'll stick you in a  
special program and,  
and you may get a little more help, but,  
but still sticking with those.  
Did most of those  
specialized programs still

stick with that same method of, of like,  
just delivery of content?

Yeah.

Yeah.

And the other issue with  
traditional reading methods  
is that there's this big gap between,  
okay,  
you have phonics and a child can  
maybe understand that the A says ah,  
and the C says k,  
but there's this big gap  
between understanding a  
letter makes a sound and  
learning how to blend those  
sounds together.

And people just assume that  
as soon as a child understands the sounds,  
that they're going to be  
able to put those sounds  
together to read a word.

But there isn't really a lot  
of instruction of how to do that.

And that is its own skill.

And so it's important to

kind of break this learn to

read process into these

little baby steps so that

the child can be confident and

and be successful the entire time.

Yeah, that does make a lot of sense.

But a lot of us who know

nothing about this whole

process of all those steps

and what is a prerequisite

skills for other things,

it can be very confusing.

And I know you have a background in this,

but also you have a

personal story that led to

the development of your curriculum.

I would love for you to

share that and just how your approach

is so different from what

other curriculums that you

saw that were out there

yeah absolutely so um as  
you said I have five kids  
and um my oldest is twenty  
now so I taught her to read  
eons ago back before I knew  
anything about teaching  
kids to read so I was just  
like everyone else I I did  
not know anything back then  
um and so I just used  
whatever a friend had recommended um  
And it didn't go very well with her.  
And she actually ended up hating reading.  
And I was like,  
I've ruined my child forever.  
And that was a big struggle.  
And so then my next three boys,  
I still didn't really have  
any other resources.  
And I was like, well,  
I don't know what else to do.  
So I used the same traditional methods.  
And for them, it worked better.

They just were their  
personalities were more suited for it.

And they learned to read.

I mean, it wasn't fun, but we did it.

And right.

Yeah, it was fine.

And then I had my youngest  
child who a whole new ballgame.

He wouldn't sit still.

He wouldn't listen to me.

You know, he was very defiant.

He was not interested in  
books or learning or anything.

I was like, there's, I'm like,

I was just like,

I don't even know where to  
begin with him.

Like none of these methods I  
use for my other kids are going to work.

Like,

I just know it's going to be a fight  
and a disaster and he's  
going to hate reading.

And I really didn't want that.

Yeah.

And so at the time I was  
actually in my grad school program,  
my master's of education in  
curriculum and instruction.

And so I thought, you know what,  
I'm going to dive into  
teaching kids to read for  
one of my classes for a research project.

And so I started doing a  
deep dive into research  
about methods of teaching  
reading because I was like,  
there's got to be something  
else out there.

And I had actually seen one  
of my older kids' preschool  
teachers use a method that  
used movement to teach reading.

And I was like, that's genius.

And I was like,  
there's got to be something like that.

But that method was designed  
specifically for like a classroom use.

And I was really looking for  
something that a parent  
could just pick up and use  
with their child.

And I just couldn't find anything.

And, um,

at the time I was also trying to  
become a children's book author.

And so kind of all my worlds collided.

Um, I just decided, well,

I'm just going to design my  
own program that fits my  
son and what he needs.

Um,

and I did that and I tested out a bunch  
of different things and then I,  
I ended up adding movement  
and doing that.

And I tried it with my son.

He was,

it was right before his fourth

birthday and it clicked and

it was like magic.

I started crying and I was like, oh,

this is amazing.

Like hearing him read his

first word when I thought

it was going to be just impossible.

And he was happy and having fun with it.

And that's when I was like,

I'm onto something here.

And this is something I have

to share with other parents.

Um,

because it just made the learn to read

process so much easier and more fun.

Yeah, that's amazing.

And, um, how inspiring that, you know,

yeah, like you said,

all your words collided and, um,

and yet at the same time, it helped your,

your child that was really struggling.

And, um, that's encouraging for all of us.

Um,

So so multisensory, you know,  
that kind of explained to us, you know,  
what how does that open  
doors that that wouldn't be  
opened with traditional methods?

Right.

So because learning to read  
is such a complex process,  
it uses a lot of different  
parts of your brain for each process.

And when you use traditional  
methods of teaching to read,  
you're really only  
accessing visual and auditory,  
those parts of your brain.

So when you add in movement  
and multi-sensory things,  
you're really unlocking  
other parts of the brain.

And the more parts of the  
brain you use and access,  
the more like neural pathways it creates,  
which allows

different types of learners  
to learn much more easily  
and to retain it much more  
easily because there's more  
parts of their brain firing  
and being accessed.

And kids especially are  
naturally kinesthetic learners.

They're always moving.

They want to be moving.

And so not only does adding  
in that multisensory  
movement make learning more  
fun and engaging,  
it actually increases  
learning by ninety percent.

Research on this is huge.

That is a big, big difference.

And so really,

it just makes it click for a lot of kids.

It's like that missing piece  
that really just seals the deal.

Yeah, absolutely.

That's just amazing.

And yet the fact that we don't do it.

And I know because a lot of  
curriculum is created for a  
classroom environment.

And if you had kids moving  
in every direction,  
it would be very difficult  
in a classroom setting.

But what an advantage we  
have as homeschool parents  
to be able to have that  
time to focus one-on-one  
and to be able to allow our  
child to move.

I know my kids moved a lot  
when they were learning.

And it's just the way they want it to be,  
you know?

And I think that as you get  
older and you become an adult,  
you don't need to move as much.

And so in our adult brains, we're thinking,

oh, for my child to learn,  
they need to be like  
sitting and listening.

And we just have it in our  
brains that that's how kids  
should behave when they're learning.

Right.

And I'm a huge proponent of  
shifting that whole mindset  
and realizing that

No,

often kids learn way better when  
they're moving.

Whether in my book,  
the movement relates  
directly to the letters,  
but even if you're not  
doing a movement that's  
specific to the learning, it still helps.

Even if they're like,

Just fidgeting or something too.

Sorry, what did you say?

Even just fidgeting?

Yeah, even fidgeting.

Yeah,

which I know drives so many parents  
crazy.

But it actually helps their brain.

And so if parents can kind  
of change their mindset and  
realize that they're  
fidgeting because they need to.

Right.

Right.

And it actually makes their  
brain function better.

Yes.

Yeah, absolutely.

So we got a couple of people on live.

I know one.

One viewer just said that  
she decided to homeschool her sons,  
now fifteen, will be sixteen February,  
gets his high school diploma in January.

Well, congratulations.

We're talking about reading today,

so if any of you have  
questions about teaching  
reading or helping your  
child who is struggling in reading,  
we'd love to be able to  
answer those questions too  
while we are live.

um definitely join in on the  
conversation so yes we are  
live and would love to make  
you part of the  
conversation so um but yeah  
that that makes a lot of  
sense and it is hard as an  
adult who learns very  
differently and has you  
know able to focus and  
concentrate longer because  
kids just can't their their  
concentration periods are  
so short um so being able  
to to have those  
a curriculum that helps us

to change our mindset as well is,  
is just genius.

So because otherwise, you know,

I found myself a lot of

times trying to like in the

spur of the moment,

come up with something that

I could do that would keep a child,

you know, focused and on topic that,

and it, it never turns out very good.

Yeah.

You know, some good ideas,

but it's nice to have

somebody who's like

pre-thought that out and kind of,

you know,

knows back to what you were

talking about earlier, those steps.

There's just those

complicated steps and

learning to read and to

think through that much

more diligently and systematically.

So, you know,

I think as we talk about this,

a lot of parents,

they feel overwhelmed or

discouraged because

They just,

they feel like I've done this

for so long.

I don't even know if this is, you know,

what, what to do next.

Do you have any advice for

those that are just feeling

frustrated or defeated in the process?

Yes, absolutely.

Because I think a lot, a lot,

a lot of parents feel

frustrated when they're

trying to teach their child to read, um,

either because their

child's not progressing as

quickly as they think they should or,

or their child is

frustrated and just doesn't

want to do it anymore.

Um, I mean,

there's a lot of reasons to be  
frustrated.

So yes, I totally get it.

It's totally normal.

Um,

so my advice to parents is if you are

frustrated, um,

to just take a step back to

stop whatever it is you're

doing and to reassess and

to really think about your

child's individual needs

and the way that they learn the best.

Because often,

It's so hard to find a curriculum.

You know, there's so many options.

And a lot of times parents are like, well,

I just spent hundreds of dollars on this,

so we're going to do it.

And so you stick with it.

To the demise of you and your child,

unfortunately.

Exactly.

So I always suggest that

parents really try to

understand their child and

come to where their child

is instead of expecting

their child to come to them.

that makes sense.

So for example, you know,

think about their child and

their strengths and,

and what they love to do.

So like, even if you're adding in movement,

add in movement in a way

your child likes it.

Like if your child loves to dance,

figure out a way to

incorporate that into learning to read,

which you might think that sounds crazy,

but I promise it'll probably work.

Yeah.

Or, you know, if your child loves sports,

you know, on our website,  
we have tons of these  
sensory games and activity ideas,  
but you can incorporate these things like,  
okay,  
if your child is tired of practicing  
phonics and they're not getting it,  
but they love soccer.

Okay.

Well then put flashcards on  
cones and have them kick  
the soccer ball to kick it over.

And then, you know, when they get it,  
they have to say that sound, you know,  
incorporating

Ways that your child,  
things your child likes and  
ways that they learn.

So yeah, when people are frustrated,  
it's usually because what  
they're doing is not  
working and not a good fit.

So it's time to reassess and think of,

or just come up with a new game plan.

The other thing is often if

the child is frustrated,

I always suggest going back two steps.

because maybe their

foundation isn't strong enough.

And so if they don't really

have a solid grasp of all

the letter sounds,

and then you're moving on

to long vowels or, you know,

really hard words,

and they don't really

understand the basics,

they're going to be

frustrated and not going to

want to do it.

And then you're going to be frustrated.

Yeah.

So I always suggest making

sure the foundation is really,

really strong before moving on.

Yeah.

I did that with one of my  
children when I found really,  
really struggling because  
when we did go back,  
then all of a sudden the  
successes started like  
piling up and he was  
feeling better about  
himself and not so down on  
his inabilities because he  
was seeing the gaps.

So I love that suggestion  
because it really does work.

Yeah.

Like my oldest, when she could read,  
finally,  
she wanted to read all these  
books that I thought were  
too babyish for her.

And in my ignorance,  
I kept trying to push her  
to read harder and harder things.

And she didn't like those

books and didn't want to.

And now that I'm much older and wiser,

I understand it's because

she was still working on

those skills at that level.

Like I,

I thought she should be a part of that.

Um,

But no,

if your kid really wants to read

certain books, let them read it.

That's probably skills

they're still working on

and they're confident.

They know they can read that book,

so they want to read that book.

Whereas when you're pushing

them and pushing them to

read harder things,

they don't want to do it

because it's actually still

too hard for them.

Right.

Yeah.

And there's always time.

There's always time.

And we can always do read

out louds if they're not

reading it or companion

reading so many other

things that I've done with my kids.

I've got we've got a

question from a viewer.

Jennifer had asked,

where do things like IQ come into play?

My two oldest children who

are adopted have IQs of

fifty six and seventy two with autism.

intellectual disabilities.

And she said,

I worry about our

relationship over time to keep teaching,

reading when I wonder if

they'll fully ever get it.

If you're worried about your relationship,

meaning like because you're

getting frustrated and like  
upset with them type of thing.

So to that,

I always say your relationship  
always matters more.

Absolutely.

Absolutely.

don't, uh,

over anything like don't hurt  
your relationship because  
you're so worried about  
them learning to read.

Um, this is sort of unrelated,  
but that happened with me  
and my daughter when she  
was in third grade and like  
over homework and like stuff.

And it was starting to ruin  
our relationship.

It was becoming a battle.

I was like, I'm done.

Like I'm not ruining my  
relationship with her over

getting homework done, you know?

Exactly.

Um,

So my first piece of advice,

there's definitely that,

like do whatever you can to

keep a strong relationship

because that matters the most.

And then the whole thing

with them ever being able

to learn to read.

I mean,

I don't know your specific children

and what their needs and challenges are,

but I wouldn't give up hope.

I mean, I think maybe they won't be,

you know, reading college textbooks, but,

you know, they might,

progress as well as they can.

And you can be proud of those moments.

And, um, I would definitely, you know,

if you've tried a lot of different things,

um,

I would definitely give the adding  
movement a try.

I've had a lot of,

I've heard a lot of success

stories from parents of

kids with disabilities that

this has kind of been the,

the thing that finally

clicked for them and worked.

So I wouldn't give up hope yet.

Um,

Yeah, it's hard.

It is hard.

And especially with the adopted kids,

because you have there's probably trauma.

There's probably a whole lot

of other things.

I have ten adopted siblings,

so I completely get that.

And and so there's a lot of rebuilding.

There's a lot of trust that

needs to be established and use those.

You know,

my suggestion is use that time to  
read as a bonding time  
rather than than a dividing time.

And whether that means that  
you do a lot of it and you  
just point at the words  
instead of the child always  
feeling like they're on the spot.

And, you know, I think when I,  
my oldest didn't learn to  
read till he was twelve.

And my goal in the back of  
my mind was I want him to  
love literature.

And so that was my goal was  
to just pour into him literature.

At age twelve,  
he started reading because  
he had the excitement for  
it and he wanted to actually do it.

And so then he started just really,  
you know, reading.

It just took him.

He's a very frustrating child,

but still as an adult,

kind of the same way.

But yeah, she said the clarify,

they're eighteen and sixteen.

So.

So, yes.

But you never the truth is

we never stop learning, though.

The brain is has plasticity.

So it's true.

So, yeah,

I would say if you haven't tried

the adding movement, which I would say,

give that a go and see what happens.

Yeah, absolutely.

We had another viewer asking

about a segment on math.

We've done a couple episodes

on math recently,

so you may want to check

back on our YouTube channel

or on our podcast.

And I'm sure there'll be  
other episodes coming up too.

So we talk about reading and  
math a lot because I know  
those are things you guys  
all struggle with and many  
other parents too.

So yes, definitely.

So check that out.

So what are some tips for  
this keeping learning to  
read fun and engaging?

I know we, we talked a little bit about,  
um, just making it more hands-on and,  
and using movement.

I loved your idea about the  
soccer and the soccer ball.

My son loves shooting things  
with Nerf guns.

So we definitely  
incorporated that into a  
lot of his schoolwork.

So, so yeah.

Um,

anything like that, like doing crafts,  
doing sensory activities, going outside,  
doing games.

I mean,

there's a billion things you can do.

Like I said, our website,

we offer tons of letter learning ideas,  
all these kinds of ideas.

Because the point is,

you don't want it to feel

like they're learning.

It's not like, sit down,

we're going to have this lesson.

It's, hey,

let's play this fun game and

we're going to practice our

letter sounds while we do it.

And, you know, the kids, excuse me,

often don't even realize,

like they just think

they're having fun and playing a game.

So I think anything you can

do to make it more fun and interesting,  
get them moving, get them  
you know, painting, making a craft,  
whatever it is, all these things, again,  
access different parts of their brain,  
and it gets them learning  
in different ways, which again,  
builds those different  
neural pathways and helps  
them learn and retain it.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I think we as parents just  
have to get beyond the fact  
that we think that those  
things are extras instead  
of the way to open up the  
learning that is happening.

And that's probably a bigger  
hurdle sometimes than just, you know,  
changing the lesson plan.

Well, yeah, because it's tiring.

It takes a little.

As parents, we just want to sit.

Right.

So sometimes you got to  
match your kids energy.

Absolutely.

That,

that is hard and it's hard to  
maintain that.

It doesn't have to be  
anything like big or crazy  
or overwhelming.

Like a lot of the ideas we  
put on our website are just  
like super simple that  
anyone can do without any prep.

Like I, you know, I've had,

I have five kids.

I get it.

Like you don't want to spend  
hours prepping for something.

It's gotta be stuff that's  
just really easy and ready to go.

Mm hmm.

Yeah, that's it.

I think once we start to  
change that mindset and we  
have some help in doing that and,  
you know, with the resources like you,  
you create and it it over time.

it makes that shift easier to move into.

And but, but it is, it's a,  
it's a shift in how we've been taught.

Most of us have been taught  
to read through auditory and reading  
in visual ways.

And so when we start adding  
all these more multisensory approaches,  
it just seems very awkward and,  
and it doesn't make a lot  
of sense to us why we  
should do all these extra things.

But, but I think like you said, when,  
when you start to see the  
results and that they stick  
so much quicker that I hope  
parents as parents,

you do that,  
it will encourage you then to  
continue because I know I  
just remember watching like  
the whole demeanor of my  
children change when we did  
more hands-on activities  
versus just sitting and  
reading from a book because that's,  
my kids were all very active learners.

Absolutely.

Yeah.

So how can you,  
we build children's  
confidence if they don't feel confident,  
if they've, they've been learning,  
whether in a school setting  
or we've been using a much  
more rigid approach to  
teaching and they kind of feel defeated.

Um,

what are the best ways to start working  
them towards feeling like

reading is something they  
can still approach instead  
of I'm done with this?

Yeah.

So, um,

Like I said earlier,

I think it's about going

back to the basics and that foundation,

like find like kind of that

sweet spot where they do feel confident,

whether that's reading Bob

books or level two books or whatever,

find something they can

read where they are

confident and go back to

that spot and stay there

for a while to kind of

rebuild that confidence.

One of my biggest pet peeves

about the publishing world

is the issue is a lot of

the early readers are just

way too hard for kids to read.

Really?

Yeah.

And every publisher has a  
different system.

So it's not like you can go  
just pick up a book that  
says level one and it's  
going to be where your kid is.

Oh, I noticed that years ago.

Yes.

Because every publisher does  
their levels differently.

And so  
it doesn't actually really mean anything.

And often those level one books are,  
they're just way too hard.

They're really for like a second grader,  
you know, like a seven or eight year old.

They're not, you know,  
and so that can be really  
crushing to a kid when you're like, well,  
you're this book says it's  
for a five to eight year

old and you're six,  
you should be able to read it like that.

Right.

It doesn't mean anything really.

And so you have to really be  
careful about finding books  
that is actually at your child's level.

So that's one thing.

And then also just like  
celebrating the small  
things and giving a lot of  
praise and kind of trying  
to relieve that pressure from your child.

Because I think kids do feel  
a lot of pressure about learning to read.

because really it's like the  
most important academic  
thing they need to learn.

And so- And they're  
surrounded by opportunities  
or group settings where  
they're kind of put on the spot.

I know, I even noticed that in my studio,

a lot of the girls talk  
with each other and they're like,  
can you write?

And I have one that has  
severe dyslexia who often  
will come quietly to me and say,  
can you write this for me?

Can you read this for me?

And, um,

even in a group of peers that  
really do accept her and  
they would never judge her,  
but she just feels that way.

And so it's definitely a lot  
of social pressure around reading,  
especially if a kid is  
asked to read out loud and  
they don't feel confident in it,  
it can be really embarrassing.

Um, you know, and,

and so just being aware of  
that and kind of being  
patient and like

reinforcing to your child that,

you're going to get there.

You're going to learn how to read.

It's okay.

Sometimes it takes a little

bit longer for some kids and that's okay.

So I think doing that can be

a big help too.

Yeah, I think sharing as they get older,

too,

you shared a statistic that sixty

percent of kids struggle to read.

I think if they knew that

they were in the majority,

that would be helpful,

especially as they get older.

And, you know, you're not alone.

This this is something a lot

a lot of people struggle with.

And yeah,

you just instead of thinking I'm

the only one out there just

to know that there's a lot.

They're not alone.

Yes, exactly.

I had one parent said that  
they read a lot of magazines, circular,  
smaller stories.

And that can give you content then at,  
you know, interest levels,  
especially as kids get older.

I know, you know,  
some of those earlier to  
read books are have content  
for younger kids.

people or, um, you know,  
maybe they can read to a  
younger sibling and so they  
aren't feeling like they're  
reading the book for themselves.

Um, but maybe just, yeah.

So there's lots of,  
lots of great things out there.

Yeah.

And then, yeah, parents saying like,

I have dyslexia and I'm

teaching a child with dyslexia.

That is really common.

It does run in families.

I'm not sure if it's genetic or how that,

if there's enough research

out to say much about that.

But I do know that if one parent struggles,

it's usually pretty typical

that one or more children

will struggle too.

yeah and with and kit with

dyslexia like you really

have to learn to read in a

totally different way and

so that's just a whole

nother challenge for sure

right yeah absolutely so

yes so so what about like

encouraging like literacy

and a reading friendly home

because we may have some

viewers whose children do

well with reading or they

just don't feel like they  
get enough time to get  
enough like extra reading  
time in and so what might  
be some ways that  
parents can go about to to  
just make sure that they  
don't you know they don't  
just do the textbooks um  
that they actually get good  
literature in as well yeah  
well I mean of course I  
think everyone knows like  
reading to your child  
tonight at night is before  
bedtime is you know always  
a great thing but I think a  
lot of parents feel like  
they only need to read to  
their kids before bed when  
they're little um  
But research actually shows  
there's huge benefits of

continuing to read to your  
children out loud until they're older,  
like even middle school.

I mean,

you can keep reading novels to them.

It does wonders for your children.

I mean, just bonding,

but also helping them with

their academics.

There's a lot of benefits to

things like that.

So I always recommend that.

Keep

continue reading to your children,

even when you don't.

Okay.

I guess it's a lot of

parents stop reading to

their kids once their kids

can read on their own,

but that just because you

can read on their own

doesn't mean you should

stop reading to them.

Um,

so I always recommend continuing to read,

um,

for kids learning to read

older siblings can be a great resource,

um, or even a younger sibling, actually.

So if you have like a six or

seven year old learning to read,

one way to build confidence

in them is to often ask

them to read to the younger sibling,

which can, you know,

maybe they're reading easier books, um,

And helping or, you know, hey,

why don't you practice

letter sounds with your younger sibling?

And, you know,

those kinds of things can

involve the whole family

and help build confidence.

Right.

And then, you know,

just having having a lot of  
books in your home,  
go to the library a lot.

Audio books are wonderful.

For a lot of kids that struggle to read,  
audio books are a great resource.

Absolutely.

Whether you're listening in  
the car or at home or whatever,  
some kids just really  
thrive on the audio books.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Those, and those all build into habits too,  
you know, as the more that you do them,  
they just become a way of  
how your family operates.

And I remember making those  
shifts when my kids were  
younger and going, this is so difficult.

But then all of a sudden it's like,  
we woke up one morning and they're like,  
okay, what, when are we going to do this?

And it was just expected, you know, that,

and it was like, oh my goodness,

this is such a relief now

that we got through the hardest.

It's like teaching your kids

how to do chores.

You know, it's,

it's never easy when you're

in the process of it,

but when they get it,

then it makes life so much easier.

So true.

It's so true.

Yeah.

And then they move it into adulthood.

I know we were headed out on

a family vacation and the

kids are already, you know,

my adult children are

asking which books are we

going to listen to in the car?

So, yes, it it will perpetuate itself.

And so you have to think of

what you're what you're

building long term as well.

So, yeah, it's very true.

so for parents beginning the dream,

maybe they don't even know, um, like what,

what they're going to do,

what their child is,

what should they be looking for in a, uh,

a reading program that would,

would help them to be able

to teach much more efficiently?

Um, well,

you definitely want a program

that teaches phonics, um,

So if people don't know what that means,

it basically means

understanding that each

letter makes a sound.

Because when you learn to read,

each letter has a name,

but the sound it makes is

different than the name.

So for example,

the alphabet song that we sing,  
you're singing the letter names.

And parents are very focused  
on that and concerned, oh,  
my kid needs to know all  
the letter names.

which is great and all,  
but knowing letter names  
doesn't actually help a  
child learn to read.

Um,

so I always recommend make sure you're  
teaching the letter sounds  
even from babyhood, you know,  
alphabet books, you can teach, Oh,  
this is the a, it says, ah,  
the B says book and really  
reinforcing that will  
really help with early  
reading skills because it's  
the sounds that they need  
to know to learn to read.

Um,

So looking for a reading program,  
definitely something focused on phonics.

All the research shows that  
that is the best way to  
teach children to read.

Our country moved away from  
phonics for a while and it  
was pretty much a disaster.

And then look for something  
that fits your child's learning style.

You know,  
if your child is a visual learner  
then a traditional reading,  
learn to read book might  
work really well for them.

If your child has, you know,  
some disabilities or  
learning challenges or just  
can't sit still,

you're going to want to  
look for something that  
incorporates movement and  
makes it easy for them to

learn in other ways with  
that whole multisensory aspect.

Absolutely.

And I'm going to put a plug  
in for your resources, too.

Stephanie, if you're watching on YouTube,  
that link is already in the show notes.

But if you go to Linktree  
forward slash Stephanie Hull,  
you can also find her there.

And it's that link will be  
in all the show notes, too.

So for the podcast and everything.

So but then you can find out  
more about her program, ABCC Here Do.

So that will incorporate all those things,  
I'm certain.

So I would love to, you know,

we were talking,

we've been talking about

teaching kids with

disabilities to read too.

And I know that that is a

much more long-term process  
for kids that really, really struggle.  
How can a parent long-term  
just incorporate  
continually work at building  
confidence for a student  
who is going to be in this  
for a lot longer than a typical child?

Yeah.

I mean,

I think just taking it in small  
chunks every day, like, you know,  
even if you're like,  
we're just going to work on  
this a minute a day and  
we're just going to work on, you know,  
practicing the letter sounds,  
or we're just going to work on  
reading three words a day  
and blending them together.

You know, doing whatever you can do,  
even if it's, honestly,  
even if it's one minute a day, over time,

that builds up and

eventually it's going to

stick and they're going to get it.

And just kind of having that long view,

like, okay,

maybe it's going to take my

child an extra five years

to learn to read.

And that's okay.

It's finding...

what they're interested in, what they like,

what they can do.

Um, and just,

I think being patient in that

and letting them learn at

the pace that's right for them, you know,

there's no advice.

Yeah.

I think a lot of us have it

in our mind that our kids

have to read by a certain age,

but I mean,

why like right exactly

that's a very good question  
why some kids are going to  
read when they're four some  
kids aren't going to read  
till they're twelve or  
sixteen or whatever because  
each child is so unique and  
different and has their own  
learning challenges um that  
I think it's important to  
not freak out as a parent.  
Like if your child's not  
doing things exactly what  
they're supposed to be doing them,  
you know,  
because every child is so  
different and unique.  
Absolutely.  
And yes,  
and taking it at the child's pace  
and really breaking it down  
like you were just talking  
about is it's so important

because as a parent,

I think when you spend time

teaching your kids and homeschooling,

you know when they're about to lose it.

And you've got to cut it off before then.

Otherwise,

the whole rest of the day is

just going to be awful.

But I think we often push

that envelope because we're like, well,

this is in the lesson plan.

We're supposed to get this done.

But just be okay with, well,

we're going to hit that

breaking point soon.

Now is the time to stop.

I'm just going to put a

marker right here where we're at,

and we will pick this up next time.

And I think that's great

advice because that also

will go back to what we

were talking about earlier

and not ruining those relationships.

And it it will not create  
learners who feel so defeated,  
which we've also talked  
about in this conversation  
to the point where they're  
just not they're shut down.

And I know a lot of parents  
who have very shut down  
learners because they've  
been pushed so much.

So exactly.

And if they are shut down,  
then it's time to take a  
break from that and  
approach it from a different way.

Yeah, yeah, exactly.

And sometimes that just  
means that you have to take  
a break from the  
instruction and find that  
stories are fun and that, yes,  
you take those steps back

like you talked about earlier.

I love that suggestion is  
going further back so that  
they can have a lot of  
successes in that direction.

So there's also so, so,  
so many different types of  
books and literature that I  
also think a lot of times  
kids say they don't like reading,  
but that really just means  
they don't like reading  
this one type of specific  
book that they've been  
absolutely given the opportunity because,  
you know,  
there's a lot of kids really  
prefer nonfiction.

And, you know, if a parent loves fiction,  
they often don't think of  
offering that as an option.

Right.

But there's fiction, there's nonfiction,

there's graphic novels,  
there's novels in verse, there's,  
you know,  
there's just a plethora of  
options out there.

So I think that's another  
thing is finding the books  
that really speak to your child.

Absolutely.

My husband only reads nonfiction and I,  
I mean, I read a little nonfiction,  
but I love fiction more.

And, you know, it's not fair if you say,  
if you only offer a child  
fiction and they're just  
not that into it for them to say, Oh,

I don't like reading.

And it's like, well,  
maybe you do like reading.

You just haven't found the  
books that you really connect with.

Um,

So obviously that comes

after the whole learning to read process.

But I think it's important for parents,

especially homeschoolers,

to remember like, oh,

there's this wide world out there.

And if my kid is saying I hate reading,

then it's like, OK,

let's find a different book for you.

Absolutely.

That's that's such good advice.

There is.

And I wouldn't be the one to

recommend poetry,

but some people like that too.

But yeah.

And so, yeah,

your child's going to

approach that uniquely.

And why not with something

that they really want to engage with?

Great advice.

So as we're wrapping up,

do you have any final words,

encouragement, things for our audience?

Again, just...

to remember that, um,

your child will be okay.

They will learn to read, um,

try to not get frustrated.

And if you are to just try

something else and keep on going and that,

uh, and that you're not alone, all of us,

you know,

so many parents out there

struggle with this and so

many kids struggle with it

and that's okay.

Um, there are

there are other ways to

teach them and other ways to learn.

And we just have to figure

out what those ways are.

Yes.

So true.

Yep.

And for some, it's very short.

I remember my youngest  
taught herself to read  
before I even opened a book and, you know,  
my oldest didn't read till twelve and,  
and it had nothing to do with me.

They each have their own tracks and,  
and you just got to be okay  
with the process.

And I,

I want to thank you for this last hour.

I think you just really spoke into that,

that it's just going to be

a journey and we have to

let our child lead and we

need to follow and use materials and

and resources that are going

to help them to learn the

way they need to learn and

read when they learn to read.

Right.

Yeah.

Well, thank you, Stephanie.

And Stephanie's got some

great resources and curriculum as well,  
reading curriculum.

You can check out all of  
those things at her Linktree.

It's stephaniehole.

And that link will be in the  
show notes too.

So you can find her and all  
those resources there.

And like I told her before

we started the show, I said,

I'm impressed that she's

written this because I'm not, I mean,

I've written one book and

it was kind of a mess.

Yeah, that is not in me to do that.

So I'm always impressed with

people that can put all of

their thoughts and methods

into writing and just

thankful for people like

you that provide resources

for our families that really need them.

And so thank you for what you do.

Well, thank you for having me.

I'm just really passionate  
about helping parents help  
their kids learn to read.

So this has been wonderful  
being here today.

Awesome.

Yeah.

All right.

Well,

and thank you all for joining us  
today on the show.

Next week, we are,  
it's going to be Thanksgiving week.

So we have pre-recorded a  
conversation with me and  
the other co-hosts of  
Empowering Homeschool Conversations.

We're going to be talking  
about advocating for your child,  
navigating co-ops, field trips,  
and public spaces on your

homeschool path.

And we have a very

interesting conversation.

Let's just put it that way.

So you'll want to stay tuned

because we've all had

different experiences in those.

And so we'll share those

with you and some of the

wisdom that we've gained from that.

So thank you again, Stephanie.

Thank you all for joining us

today on the show.

And we'll see you here again

next week on Empowering

Homeschool Conversations.

Bye, everybody.

Thanks.

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