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February 2026

President's Message



Dear CLD Colleagues,

Happy New Year! This is an exciting time for CLD as we move forward with planning for our 2026 conference in Fort Worth, Texas, October 22–23 at the Sheraton Fort Worth Downtown Hotel.

Our conference is a great opportunity to explore new ideas and meet new colleagues who are engaging in exciting research. Please submit proposals that highlight your research results, collaborations within the field of LD, as well as those that prioritize translational research to reimagine possibilities for individuals with LD and their families within a changing educational environment. Conference proposals are due March 29. For a copy of the call for proposals, [click here](#). As you finish your conference proposals, please also consider serving as a proposal reviewer. Questions can be directed to Dr. Nate Stevenson, vice president and conference chair, at nsteve15@kent.edu.

As we look forward to spring, it is also a great time for some spring writing! The Research Committee hosts the **Research to Practice Corner** on the CLD website which supports the translation of research to practice across many areas of learning disabilities. These are great resources for educators and pre-service teachers, as well as a perfect writing opportunity for doctoral students, early career faculty, and others with expertise they are willing to share. However, because research is changing so quickly, it also means that we must be good stewards by updating those same resources so we are providing the most relevant and appropriate information. I have challenged the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees to help in this process, but we also need your help. Notice an area of research that is missing in the Research to Practice Corner? Notice an article that is outdated? Please help us contribute to this amazing free resource. Contact Research Committee co-chairs Drs. Soyoung Park and Anna Gibbs at soyoung.park@ucf.edu and agibbs14@utk.edu, respectively, to discuss your ideas.

Finally, be on the lookout for spring award nominations. Consider nominating outstanding members from your area for the Floyd G. Hudson or Teacher of the Year Awards. We

would love to see a diverse slate of candidates represented. Additionally, consider submitting your work for the Outstanding Researcher of the Year Award. CLD members within doctoral programs, and who are early career faculty, should consider applying for the Leadership Institute and Leadership Academy. Both the Leadership Institute and Leadership Academy are wonderful ways to be involved in the organization, receive support for your professional growth, and expand your network. I became involved in CLD as a member of Cohort 3 of an earlier iteration of the Leadership Academy when I was a doctoral student. It was a great experience that led to research collaborations, friendships, and opportunities within CLD. Nomination forms and applications for all awards will be available later this spring.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I might be of service to you. Thank you for making CLD your professional home.

Sincerely,

Apryl L. Poch

2025–2026 CLD President

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Call for Proposals for the 48th International Conference on Learning Disabilities

October 22–23, 2026 | Fort Worth, Texas

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: MARCH 29, 2026

The Council for Learning Disabilities, in partnership with the National Center for Learning Disabilities, invites you to join us for our 48th annual conference at the Sheraton Fort Worth Downtown Hotel in October 2026. The Call for Proposals is now open!



Submit Your Proposal at <https://cld.simpleselect.com>

**Also accessible through the CLD website at
<https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/cld-annual-conference/>**

Amplifying Impact: Expanding Access to Learning Disability Research Through Multimedia Innovation

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Kimberly McFadden, *The University of Iowa* • **Lola Aneke**, *University of North Texas, Denton*
Joo Young Lee, *University of Maine* • **Marilyn Roberts**, *Texas Woman's University*
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Research dissemination is a key player in the adoption and implementation of evidence-based practices (EBPs; Cook et al., 2019; D'Agostino et al., 2024). Yet barriers to widespread dissemination and uptake of EBPs are well documented in the special education literature and largely remain unresolved across student populations and educational contexts, including students with learning disabilities (LD) with varying extent of support needs (Boyd et al., 2022; Sanetti & Luh, 2019; Smolkowski et al., 2019).

A recent survey of 175 school administrators across 18 states in the United States found that a lack of training and knowledge on implementation approaches significantly hinders the implementation of EBPs (Pauling et al., 2023), suggesting a need for school administrators to more effectively access knowledge about EBP implementation to guide school- or program-wide implementation of effective practices. Prior research examining teachers' barriers to adopting EBPs indicated that limited time and insufficient professional development are major obstacles to learning and implementing new practices (Basckin et al., 2021; Merle et al., 2022). These barriers, coupled with the demanding nature of a teacher's job, suggest that teachers likely lack the administrative resources (e.g., funding, dedicated professional development time) needed to engage in professional development activities that require additional time and resources (e.g., joining professional organizations, attending conferences, accessing and reading research publications).

A major barrier to accessing research and gaining current knowledge on research-supported practices is the high cost of subscription to peer-reviewed publications. While there has been an emerging emphasis on open-access publishing in the field of special education to improve the transparency of and access to special education research (Cook et al., 2021; Lindström et al., 2025), this practice is only supported by a very small portion of the journals in special education (Fleming & Cook, 2021). Given these barriers, educators often have limited access to special education research and opportunities to update their knowledge of EBPs.

The authors of this article, who are scholars in the Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD) Brian Bryant Leadership Academy Cohort 13, aimed to amplify the impact of LD research and increase access to EBPs through innovations in research dissemination, which led to the conceptualization of this project. We opted to use podcasts and infographics to promote multiple means of accessing information, in alignment with Universal Design for Learning principles (CAST, 2024; Gunderson & Cumming, 2023). These formats can be easily shared via social media platforms, which have been cited as an effective tool for disseminating information to teachers (Newton & Williams, 2021). In this article, we will outline our process for turning research insights into digestible information in the form of a podcast and a one-page infographic, provide examples of our products, and briefly discuss lessons learned and future directions.

Method

Project Coordination

The authors met in person for one hour at the CLD annual conference in October 2024, to conceptualize the study. After this kick-off meeting, the second author coordinated two additional 1-hour online meetings in December 2024 and February 2025. Documents were shared via Google Drive to allow for collaborative reviewing and editing of the work. All authors communicated with one another via email throughout this project to provide updates, ask questions, and problem solve. With distributed effort across time, the project took approximately one year to complete, from its conceptualization to the dissemination of the final products (i.e., podcast clips and infographics uploaded on the CLD website, <https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/>).

Interviews with Scholars

We invited three scholars who received research-related awards from CLD in 2024 to participate in a virtual interview. We informed the awardees that the interview would be

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turned into a podcast and an infographic. The 2024 awardees include (a) Dr. Hyojong Sohn, who received the 2024 Early Career Researcher Award for validating an observation protocol measuring evidence-based reading instruction within a multi-tiered systems of support framework (Sohn et al., in preparation); (b) Dr. Lindsay Diamond, who received the 2024 Must Read Award for her research on early behavioral indicators of dysgraphia and dyslexia published in *Intervention in School and Clinic* (Baggett et al., 2024); and (c) Dr. Soyoung Park, who won the 2024 Must Read Award for her systematic review examining methodological rigor in mathematics intervention meta-analyses published in *Learning Disability Quarterly* (Park et al., 2024). The following interview questions were jointly developed by the authors.

1. Can you give us a brief overview of your study and why you were interested in this topic?
2. What were the key findings and insights from your research?
3. What are the implications of your results for future research, policy, and practice?
4. Is there anything else you would like us to highlight from your article?

The interviews lasted 7, 15, and 24 minutes respectively. Although the interviews were anchored with four questions, interviewers asked follow up questions to obtain more information, as relevant, and the interviewees were encouraged to share any related insights freely. Therefore, the interview duration varied greatly due to personal conversation style and

the scope of the conversation. Each interview was recorded and transcribed through the video conferencing platform. Dr. Lindsay Diamond invited a co-author, Dr. Abbie Olszewski, for the interview.

Podcast Development

Developing an Initial Storyboard

A podcast storyboard consists of a sequential and timed outline of the podcast components and typically involves mapping out the main audio content (i.e., speech), music, sound effects, and transitions with time stamps. The storyboard serves to provide a clear structure for the podcast, identifies the exact time needed for each piece of audio, and minimizes the inclusion of unnecessary audio or gaps. For this project, our storyboards included transcripts of interview clips that we planned to feature in the podcast and transcripts of any additional narration to serve as transitions between interview clips. The authors utilized a generative artificial intelligence (AI) platform (i.e., ChatGPT) to turn each interview transcript into a podcast storyboard. First, we inserted the interview transcript into ChatGPT. Then, we described the purpose of the podcast (i.e., to spotlight LD research and its impact in the field), followed by prompting ChatGPT to generate a podcast storyboard that included brief narration scripts and quotes from the interviewee to highlight key content in their responses. Two authors independently reviewed the storyboard to ensure the (a) accuracy of information, (b) relevance of content, and (c) conciseness of narration and quoted responses.

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Table I. Multimedia Products Summary and Links

Scholar	Award	Research Focus	Multimedia Product Links
Dr. Hyojong Sohn	Early Career Researcher Award	Reading instruction within multi-tiered systems of support	Link to Podcast 1 Link to Transcripts 1 Link to Infographics 1
Dr. Lindsay Diamond (with co-authors Mercedes Baggett and Dr. Abbie Olszewski)	Must Read Award	Dysgraphia and dyslexia indicators	Link to Podcast 2 Link to Transcripts 2 Link to Infographics 2
Dr. Soyoung Park (with co-authors Dr. Young Ri Lee, Dr. Gena Nelson, and Dr. Elizabeth Tipton)	Must Read Award	Meta-analysis of math interventions	Link to Podcast 3 Link to Transcripts 3 Link to Infographics 3

Note. All materials can be accessed through Council for Learning Disabilities website > Conferences & PD > Brian Bryant Leadership Academy > Cohort 13's Brian Bryant Leadership Academy Projects: <https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/cohort-13s-leadership-academy-academy-projects/>

Adding Narration and Transitions

The second author coordinated a meeting with a digital media editor to determine the most effective process for transforming the storyboards and recorded audio into finalized podcast episodes. The media editor produced the initial episode based on the first storyboard generated with AI assistance, which was reviewed and approved by the author team prior to the development of the subsequent podcast episodes. Following the completion of the first podcast episode, the second author identified key quotes, provided timestamps, added narrator transitions, and incorporated introductory and closing audio segments for the remaining two podcast episodes. Three of the authors each served as a narrator for each of the podcasts and audio-recorded their narration on their computers or phones. The media editor produced the remaining two podcast episodes.

Infographics Development

An infographic is a simplified, visual representation of complex or dense information. In the context of research dissemination, infographics often include charts, images, tables, and reduced text that highlight key findings. Sources of information for the infographics included (a) the research article or manuscript, (b) interview transcripts, and (c) additional materials (e.g., conference presentation slides) requested from the interviewees. The authors developed a one-page infographic to summarize each awardee’s research study. The infographics were developed using PowerPoint. The products corresponding to each research study are linked in Table 1 on page 4.

Discussion

Lessons Learned

Having clearly defined and agreed-upon roles was an important factor that contributed to efficient processes. Further,

having one person take the lead on organizing meetings and communication (i.e., second author) and another lead the writing and synthesis of materials (i.e., first author) also contributed to the coordinated implementation and completion of this project.

Related to the cost and resources required for implementation, it should be noted that this small-scale dissemination effort required some financial resources to cover incurred technology costs (e.g., software, hosting platforms, editing of recordings), and team members needed to be comfortable using these tools. The success of this project also depended on the willingness of interviewees to share their time and materials, as well as the commitment of team members to devote time to interviewing, reviewing transcripts, and developing multimedia materials. An overview of lessons learned and recommendations are presented in Table 2 below.

Future Directions

Future efforts will require sustained coordination and commitment to continue producing and sharing multimedia products. Establishing infrastructural support within CLD (e.g., designated team or committee) could better facilitate ongoing work and maintain quality over time. Allocating or securing additional funding will be necessary to enhance the quality of the products and increase engagement. In addition, it would be essential to evaluate the impact of these dissemination efforts and strategically allocate resources towards the most impactful methods.

By continuing to invest in innovative dissemination methods, CLD will increase the impact of LD research, reach practitioners more effectively, and ultimately benefit students with LD. From an organizational standpoint, it is in the interest of CLD to continue being a leader in the field of LD by embracing innovative means of conducting and disseminating research.

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Table 2. Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Category	Lessons Learned	Recommendations
Coordination	Defined roles and timeline improved efficiency	Establish clear leadership roles early
Resources	Editing and hosting required modest funding; Time was primarily devoted to interviews and product development	Budget for software and media editor costs
Sustainability	Sustained coordination and commitment were necessary to produce and share multiple products	Develop organizational infrastructure for sustained dissemination

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Diversity Committee Update

Happy 2026! The Diversity Committee is pleased to announce that we are going to host the Journal Article Discussion Club during spring 2026. It will happen monthly from March to June, each hosted or co-hosted by Diversity Committee members. The first Journal Article Discussion Club will be held on Thursday, March 19th, from 1:00–2:30 pm EST/10:00–11:30 am PT by Dr. Haerin Park, who also proposed/initiated the idea of the Club. Dr. Park, the host of the March Club, will choose a journal article related to diversity issues for discussion.

This event will later be advertised/promoted through the CLD listserv as well as a registration link on the CLD web-

site banner. Club discussions will be around ideas on how to apply the information from the article for future teaching practices and research.

The upcoming club dates and times for April, May, and June will be posted in the April issue of LD Forum. All CLD members are welcome to join us for this event. We look forward to the discussions and to seeing you!

Yun-Ju Hsiao
Diversity Committee Chair

Finance Committee Update

The Finance Committee is proud to continue our work in support of CLD, the Executive Committee, our standing committees, and the full membership. Our purpose is to ensure sound fiscal planning and practices that safeguard CLD's long-term financial stability and capacity to advance evidence-based practices and high-quality research in the field of learning disabilities.

Committee Membership

- Rebecca K. Shankland, Treasurer (Chair)
- Steve Chamberlain
- Sharon Ray
- Shannon Pardue
- Yan Wei

Our Charge and Ongoing Responsibilities

At a time when many colleges, universities, and schools face reduced budgets for conference travel and professional engagement, the Finance Committee's work has become increasingly vital. We remain committed to carefully stewarding CLD's financial resources and strengthening the organization's fiscal future.

To support the Executive Committee (EC) and ensure responsible financial management, the Finance Committee supports the Treasurer by:

- Reviewing CLD's revenue and expenditures
- Examining the financial reports prepared for the EC and BOT
- Ensuring that CLD's financial records are accurate and complete
- Supporting the Treasurer in conducting CLD's internal audit process
- Analyzing financial statements and historical trends to aid long-range planning

CLD's investment portfolio continues to maintain a thoughtful balance between growth and income strategies, positioning the organization for long-term sustainability.

Transition in the Treasurer Role

I assumed the role of Treasurer in late June 2025, and I extend deep gratitude to Dr. Beverly Weiser, who completed

two terms in this role. Dr. Weiser served CLD with exceptional care, dedication, and professionalism.

Working closely with our Executive Directors—first Linda Neese, and now Julie Cordell—Dr. Weiser established an internal audit process that strengthens CLD's ability to ensure financial accuracy, transparency, and good governance. This process has been welcomed and embraced by our executive leadership. This process developed by Dr. Weiser will continue to be used for many years to come.

I am especially grateful for Dr. Weiser's mentorship during the transition. She

- mentored me in learning CLD's financial policies, procedures, and accounts;
- led the summer 2025 audit while I shadowed her throughout the process; and
- collaborated with me on the transition from our former Edward Jones financial advisor to our new advisor.

Her guidance has been invaluable to ensuring continuity and stability in CLD's fiscal operations.

Committee Activities This Year

At the 2025 CLD Conference in Salt Lake City, I had the opportunity to meet with current members of the Finance Committee in person. We reviewed the organization's financial status, discussed committee priorities, and planned for our work in the coming year. The committee will meet again this spring to continue supporting CLD's financial health and planning.

Interested in Joining the Finance Committee?

We welcome new members who have an interest in financial stewardship or a desire to support CLD in this important capacity. If you would like to learn more or get involved, please contact me at shanklandrk@appstate.edu.

Rebecca K. Shankland
Treasurer, Council for Learning Disabilities

Applications Open for LD Forum Editor

CLD is seeking applications for the position of editor of *LD Forum*, its official newsletter. This position is designed for early editors to gain experience in the publication of *LD Forum*, as well as being an active participant on the Affiliated Partners Committee working with veteran editors of *Intervention in School and Clinic* and *Learning Disability Quarterly*. Preference will be given to applicants with some experience, but early in the role of editor.

The role of the editor involves preparing the newsletter content in a timely manner, which should: (a) inform the membership about business of the international organization and state chapters, and (b) offer brief articles related to the LD field.

Applicants must be a member of CLD and maintain membership during the term as editor.

Editor Responsibilities:

1. Commit to finish the 3-year appointment that officially begins July 1, 2026.
2. Annually prepare 5 issues of *LD Forum* (February, April, June, August, and December).
3. Assist with recruiting and selecting an Assistant Editor and serve as a mentor for that person.

4. Based on previous schedules for disseminating CLD business, confer with the CLD Executive Committee and the CLD committee chairs regarding possible content.
5. Coordinate the Review Board, arrange for the peer review of articles submitted for consideration, and work with potential authors through the revision process.
6. Plan, assemble, and edit information to be included in each issue.
7. Send each issue to the Hammill Institute on Disabilities for typesetting on a preset schedule.
8. Participate on the Affiliated Partners Committee and as a non-voting member of the Board of Trustees, providing status reports as requested.
9. Contribute to the mission of CLD by contributing to continuous improvement of *LD Forum* to meet the needs of our membership.

Interested parties should submit a letter of interest that includes your qualifications for the position, a description of your plan for *LD Forum*, and a brief vita to Kathleen Pfannenstiel, Affiliated Partners chair, at kpfannenstiel@air.org by March 1, 2026.

Learning Disability Quarterly Update

Learning Disability Quarterly (LDQ) is a peer-reviewed academic journal that focuses on research and practice related to learning disabilities (LD). It publishes original studies, reviews, and practical applications aimed at advancing understanding and effective support for individuals with learning disabilities. The journal serves educators, researchers, and practitioners by providing valuable insights into current trends and evidence-based strategies in the field

of LD. Currently, we are working on a special series on artificial intelligence (AI) to examine its role in supporting students with LD, which will be published later in 2026. Also, we have a special series in professional development and LD, as well as adolescent literacy coming later this year.

Diane P. Bryant
Editor, *Learning Disability Quarterly*

Diversity Statement

The Council for Learning Disabilities is committed to celebrating and enriching the field of special education through its diversity. As a group, we pursue the best practices, research, and policies that exemplify enhancing the lives of individuals with learning disabilities, including those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As a diverse group of professionals in the field of special education, we believe that this work cannot be completed in a silo, but rather, it must be embedded within every part of what we do. As an organization, we are committed to welcoming, understanding, learning about, and honoring individual diversity.

Research to Practice

A Collaborative Approach to Supporting the Written Expression Needs of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities

Prepared by Apryl L. Poch, PhD and Jill K. Kumke, CCC-SLP, EdD,
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Decades of research have identified effective strategies for improving the written expression skills of students with specific learning disabilities (SLD; Datchuk et al., 2020; Gillespie & Graham, 2014; Kokkali & Antoniou, 2024), yet translating these evidence-based practices into daily classroom instruction remains a persistent challenge. For students with SLD, written expression difficulties often reflect underlying linguistic and cognitive weaknesses that require coordinated, comprehensive intervention. Both the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration as essential for addressing these needs. Within frameworks such as multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) and individualized education programs (IEPs), speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and special education teachers are uniquely positioned to integrate language, literacy, and writing instruction. This paper bridges research and practice by highlighting evidence-based strategies for written expression intervention, presenting collaborative models between SLPs and special educators, and offering practical tools to support effective implementation in school settings.

Written Expression Needs of Students with Learning Disabilities

Students with SLD often present with needs in several areas of literacy, including written expression. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM-5) defines *Specific Learning Disorder – written language* as a disorder characterized by difficulties in writing skills—including spelling, grammar, organization, and clarity—that are unexpected based on cognitive abilities and provided instruction (American Psychiatric Association, 2022).

Indeed, research suggests that students with SLD evidence greater challenges in written expression compared to non-disabled peers, including in the areas of writing quantity and quality, organization, vocabulary, sentence fluency, grammatical and spelling conventions, handwriting, use of genre elements, and motivation and self-efficacy (Graham et al., 2017; Troia, 2021). These students lack the strategic awareness of typically achieving writers, may fail to fully understand the expectations of a writing assignment and the planning required to complete it, struggle with text production skills (e.g., sentence fluency and variety, handwriting, spelling, and grammar/syntax), and subsequently engage in

a process known as ‘knowledge telling,’ where they write everything they know about a topic without regard to planning, organization, structure, and clarity (Gillespie & Graham, 2014; Graham et al., 2017; Santangelo, 2014).

Moreover, writing development is closely linked to both oral language and reading (Kokkali & Antoniou, 2024; Shanahan, 2019), as all three modalities are grounded in shared linguistic (e.g., phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, vocabulary), cognitive (e.g., automatic retrieval of letter names and sounds), and executive functions (e.g., working memory, self-regulatory behaviors). This interdependence underscores the importance of integrated language and literacy instruction for students with SLD as it builds bridges for communication by enhancing the ability to communicate and write, supporting cognitive and language development, and fostering academic and post-secondary success, all while building confidence and independence (Archibald, 2017; ASHA, n.d.; Shanahan, 2019).

Supporting the Written Expression Needs of Students with SLD in the Classroom

Supporting students with SLD in written expression involves a combination of structured teaching, targeted interventions, and interprofessional collaboration. Interprofessional collaboration between special educators and SLPs is essential for addressing the complex written expression needs of students with SLD. This partnership enables the co-development of integrated and functional IEP goals that reflect shared priorities in both language and literacy domains. By working together to assess, plan, and implement evidence-based interventions, professionals can create cohesive strategies that target foundational language skills (e.g., morphology, syntax, vocabulary) alongside writing process elements such as planning, organization, and revision.

To further enhance access and engagement, teams can incorporate assistive technology solutions—such as speech-to-text tools—to support students with transcription difficulties and text-to-speech software to aid in self-editing and revision. These tools not only reduce the cognitive load during writing tasks but also promote greater independence and active participation in the writing process (Matre & Cameron, 2022). When used within a collaborative framework, technology becomes a bridge, enabling students to demonstrate their

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knowledge more effectively while receiving targeted support from both educators and speech–language pathologists.

Evidence-Based Instruction

Writing is a linguistic process that requires the development of skills across language domains. Evidence-based practices for supporting writing instruction for students with SLD largely focus on the use of explicit and systematic instruction, strategy instruction (e.g., Self-Regulated Strategy Development [SRSD] model), and scaffolding writing over time (Gillespie & Graham, 2014). Direct instruction needs to be explicit and systematic following a logical, developmental progression

around core dimensions of writing, including spelling, handwriting, grammar, sentence structure, generative processes for writing extended text (e.g. composition skills), and motivation. Instruction needs to target specific strategies that are designed around student planning, organizing, writing, revising, and editing compositions. Therefore, effective writing instruction should integrate targeted language activities that are developmentally appropriate, linguistically explicit, and cognitively supportive. The following figure outlines evidence-informed activities that support written expression through the five key language domains, with suggestions tailored to different school-age levels (early elementary, upper elementary, middle school, and high school).

Phonology

Phonological awareness supports early writing by enabling students to map sounds to letters (i.e., phoneme-grapheme correspondence), a critical foundation for encoding and spelling.

Early Elementary

- Use Elkonin Boxes (sound boxes) with counters or chips to segment individual phonemes in spoken words.
 - > Engage in phoneme manipulation tasks (e.g., substitution, deletion of sounds) using letter tiles to build metalinguistic awareness of sound structures.

Upper Elementary

- Incorporate dictation of nonsense words to reinforce phoneme-grapheme mapping without reliance on sight word memory.
 - > Use spelling games focused on identifying and categorizing syllable types (e.g., open, closed, vowel-consonant-e) to build decoding and encoding fluency.

Morphology

Morphological awareness enhances students' ability to decode multisyllabic words, spell with accuracy, and construct more complex written sentences.

Early Elementary

- Use hands-on manipulatives to build and break apart simple words using common prefixes and suffixes (e.g. *un-*, *-ing*, *-ed*).
 - > Introduce affix meanings in context to support early spelling and vocabulary development.

Upper Elementary

- Use hands-on manipulatives to build and break apart simple words using common affixes, roots, and base words.
 - > Create morphological maps or graphic organizers for common root words (e.g., *struct*, *act*), helping students connect form, meaning, and use across multiple derived words.
 - > Introduce compound word building and affix manipulation in short writing activities.

Middle School +

- Implement word-building games using Greek and Latin word parts (prefixes, root, suffixes) to facilitate development of domain-specific vocabulary.
 - > Integrate academic writing tasks that prompt students to apply targeted Greek and Latin morphemes (e.g., *bio-*, *-ology*, *-ism*, *-tion*, *-ment*) to construct and use domain-specific vocabulary. During revision, provide guided feedback emphasizing morphological awareness and encouraging students to refine word precision and sophistication in their writing.
 - Bio (life); -ology (study of) = Biology = “study of life”

Syntax

Syntactic knowledge supports the generation of grammatically correct and cohesive sentences, facilitating more structured and coherent written texts.

Early Elementary

- Use sentence unscrambling tasks to help students recognize sentence structure.
 - > Employ graphic organizers or sentence starters and stems (e.g., *Who? What? Where?*) to expand simple sentences and scaffold syntactic growth.

(continued on page 11)

Middle Elementary

- Introduce sentence combining and expansion exercises to help students vary sentence length and structure.
 - > Use mentor sentences from read-aloud texts to model effective sentence construction.
 - > Use kernel sentences (e.g., simple base sentences that can be expanded or joined together) to combine sentences by focusing on key details and the use of coordinating conjunctions (i.e., *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*).
 - Example kernel sentences: *The dog ran. The dog is brown.*

Middle School

- Facilitate interactive sentence transformation (e.g. changing active to passive voice) and expansion tasks using authentic mentor texts.
 - > Emphasize embedded clauses and transitional phrases to increase sentence complexity in expository and narrative writing.
 - > Use sentence combining to build complex and compound-complex sentences.

High School

- Facilitate interactive sentence transformation and expansion tasks to address writer’s craft (e.g., tone, mood).
 - > Teach style-based sentence variation in argumentative and analytical writing to improve tone and rhetorical effectiveness.
 - > Conduct grammar-focused editing workshops addressing clause types, punctuation, and rhetorical coherence.

Semantics

Semantic knowledge—depth and breadth of word meaning—enhances idea development, elaboration, and word choice in writing.

Early Elementary

- Provide instructional supports to vary vocabulary use.
 - > Use semantic webs and picture dictionaries to support vocabulary development and thematic writing.
 - > Encourage students to maintain vocabulary journals with illustrations and usage examples.

Upper Elementary

- Provide instructional supports to vary vocabulary use.
 - > Engage students in word substitution activities (e.g., replacing “tired” words with precise verbs and adjectives, replacing repetitive word [e.g., “said” when writing dialogue]).
 - > Teach context clue strategies to infer and apply new vocabulary in written paragraphs.

Middle School +

- Use advanced vocabulary with intention to enhance voice and clarity in academic and personal writing.
 - > Incorporate revising for word choice in narrative and expository writing to enhance clarity, tone, and engagement.
 - > Guide students in creating domain-specific vocabulary banks tied to content-area writing (e.g., science reports, historical narratives).

Pragmatics and Discourse

Pragmatic skills at the discourse level are essential for organizing ideas, considering audience, and producing coherent, purposeful texts.

Early Elementary

- Enhance ability to express ideas and maintain topic and order in writing tasks.
 - > Use picture sequencing followed by oral and written retells to introduce story structure.
 - > Provide visual story prompts for composing short narratives with a clear beginning, middle, and end.

Upper Elementary

- Strengthen discourse level skills to organize thoughts, consider the audience, and write with clarity.
 - > Use graphic organizers (e.g., story mountain, compare-contrast charts) to structure narrative and expository writing.
 - > Use SRSD strategies to structure narrative and expository writing.
 - > Support perspective-taking in writing (e.g., “*How would a dog describe a trip to the vet?*”) to build audience awareness.

Middle School +

- Apply strategies to plan, structure, and revise writing with a clear sense of purpose and audience.
 - > Scaffold writing (e.g., through SRSD strategies) with organizers for narrative, argumentative, and explanatory genres.
 - > Introduce multi-perspective writing tasks to enhance voice and purpose.

High School

- Apply strategies to plan, structure, and revise writing with a clear sense of purpose and audience.
 - > Assign tasks that require students to write for authentic audiences and varied purposes (e.g., letters, blog posts, policy briefs).
 - > Implement peer review and guided revision based on rhetorical intent and audience expectations.

(Research to Practice, continued from page 11)

Locating Evidence-Based Resources for Supporting the Writing Needs of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities

A variety of electronic and digital resources are currently available to support educators in enhancing students' written

expression needs. These resources can be valuable for all stakeholders—including educators (general and special educators), related service providers (SLPs), families, and caregivers—in supporting students' writing growth across settings. The table below highlights several evidence-based electronic resources which provide guidance and interactive support to strengthen students' writing skills and overall language proficiency.

(continued on page 13)

Table 1. Evidence-based Electronic Resources

Name of Source	Link to Source	Description of What the Source Provides	Recommended Audience
Evidence-based Practices for Writing Instruction	https://www.readingrockets.org/resources/resource-library/evidence-based-practices-writing-instruction	An electronic document produced by the CEEDAR Center that provides 10 evidence-based practice components.	General and special educators, SLPs
Teaching Elementary Students to be Effective Writers	https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide/17	A practice guide created by the What Works Clearinghouse that provides four recommendations for improving elementary students' writing alongside recommendations for implementation. (Grades 1–5)	General and special educators, SLPs
Teaching Secondary Students to be Effective Writers	https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide/22	A practice guide created by the What Works Clearinghouse that provides four recommendations for improving secondary students' writing alongside recommendations for implementation. (Grades 6–12)	General and special educators, SLPs
ASHA Practice Portal – Written Language Disorders	www.asha.org/PracticePortal/ClinicalTopics/WrittenLanguage-Disorders/	An electronic resource providing resources centered around written language disorders.	SLPs
Iowa Reading Research Center	https://irrc.education.uiowa.edu/	Online website for a literacy center housed at the University of Iowa that provides access to free resources and professional learning materials. Electronic tools for teaching handwriting and cursive are also available (i.e., Literacy LIFTER and CLIFTER).	General and special educators, SLPs, families, and caregivers
SRSD Online	https://srsdonline.org/	A website developed to support use of the SRSD model that includes a set of mnemonic strategies for advancing writing instruction.	General and special educators
Think SRSD	https://thinkrsrd.com/	A website providing professional development and free instructional resources for using SRSD.	General and special educators
National Center on Improving Literacy	https://www.improvingliteracy.org/	A comprehensive national resource center funded by the U.S. Department of Education that is dedicated to advancing evidence-based teaching methods for students with literacy-related disabilities.	General and special educators, SLPs

Conclusion

Intentionally supporting the written expression needs of students with SLD is critical to promoting their overall language proficiency and academic success, as it underpins broader language development across listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Working collaboratively across service providers (e.g., special educators and SLPs) has the potential to maximize written expression supports to facilitate growth across language domains.

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Have a Question About Research?

Do you have a question about research that you would like to have answered by an experienced CLD researcher? Drop us an email at AskACLDResearcher@cldinternational.org, and we'll do our best to find answers for you. We welcome questions related to theory, methodology, and logistics, including the challenges of conducting research in schools. Your questions can be specific and technical, related to your

own project, or more generally seeking advice as you begin your career as a researcher. Once we receive your question, we will provide a response or connect you with someone who has expertise in that area. Additionally, we will prepare a quarterly summary of common questions and answers that will be published on our website and here in *LD Forum*.

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Mission Statement: The Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD), an international organization composed of professionals who represent diverse disciplines, is committed to enhancing the education and quality of life for individuals with learning disabilities across the life span. CLD accomplishes this by promoting and disseminating evidence-based research and practices related to the education of individuals with learn-

ing disabilities. In addition, CLD fosters (a) collaboration among professionals; (b) development of leaders in the field; and (c) advocacy for policies that support individuals with learning disabilities at local, state, and national levels.

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