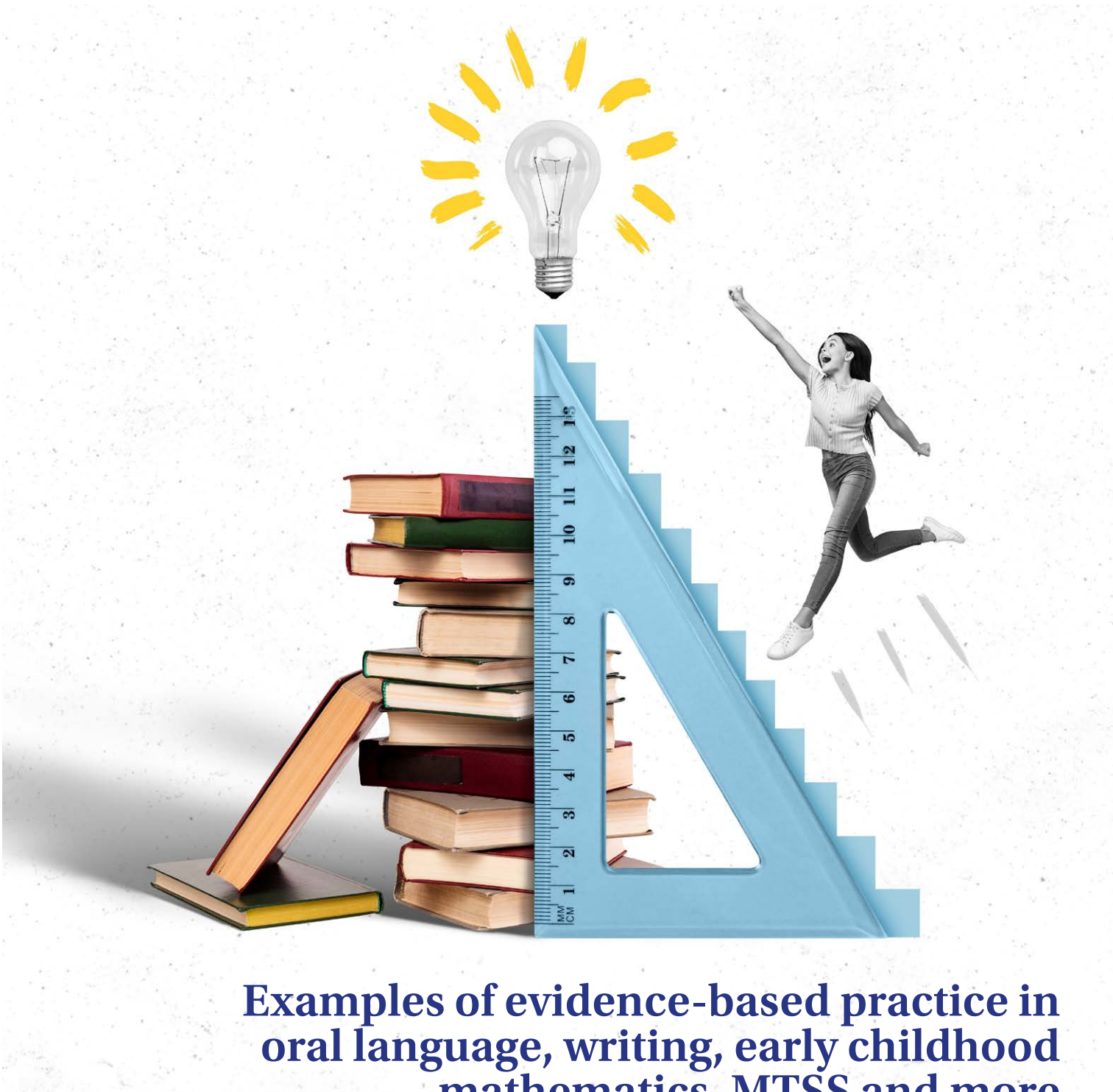


Bulletin



Examples of evidence-based practice in oral language, writing, early childhood mathematics, MTSS and more

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LDA MISSION

Learning Difficulties Australia is an association of teachers and other professionals dedicated to assisting students with learning difficulties through effective teaching practices based on scientific research, both in the classroom and through individualised instruction.

THE BULLETIN

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From the President

Geoffrey Ongley

As we wrap up FY2024, and look toward FY2025, I am seeing a bright future for LDA. We currently have more interest than ever before in what we have to offer; with over 900 members this year (our highest to date). I want to thank all of our members for being part of the association and supporting its important work.

Our continued growth is truly a reflection on all the work that has been put in from our presenters, volunteers (such as our council members) and staff alike. Thank you for supporting and being part of LDA. Together, we are changing the lives of many children and look forward to doing more as we grow.

You may not be aware but next year is a big one for LDA. . . it will be our 60th anniversary year! How incredible is that? The planning for a celebratory event has already begun, and I hope to share more on this with our members later in the year as the plans solidify.

Now, in support of holding a larger event next year, we have decided to reduce our spending on this year's AGM by holding it as 'online-only', in order to best position us for 2025. We look forward to seeing you both online at our AGM this year to have your say on various important matters, and also we hope to see you at our larger event in 2025. We can't wait!

In other news, our team continues to tirelessly execute on the vision of ensuring it is well understood that learning difficulties is the business of every teacher. We remain here to help ensure teachers have what they need to give their students the best chance

of success in their lives, by providing quality resources and information to our members, and continue to look for more ways to do so.

On this front, we currently have a focus on offering "more for members", and part of this is the development of a catalogue of self-paced PL and other curated resources that is included with student, standard and consultant membership. We look forward to you having a list of exclusive and curated free PL; all in one place for you to access, on the LDA website.

While we talk about PL, I would like to thank Dawn Grant-Skiba, Laura Glisson, Peta Collins, Louise Selby and Hema Desai for creating, organising and sharing such engaging PL with us over the last few months. I'm excited by the plans Hema has ahead for us in FY2025 and think you will be too. There's a few courses coming up that you're not going to want to miss out on!

Finally, if you love LDA and are wondering how you might be able to contribute, we are always looking for keen individuals to help out. At the moment we would love some help curating articles, and engaging to support authors with editing and review support for the LDA Bulletin. We are also interested in folks who would like to put together a book, article or resource review that may be of interest to LDA members, or contribute an article to share your thoughts and insights with our community. If you have a keen interest in these activities

and would like to contribute, please send an email to our Bulletin editor Laura Glisson at bulletin.editor@ldaustralia.org, expressing

your interest, including the topics or focus areas you are particularly passionate about.

Your involvement, as a member, volunteer, speaker, staff member or article contributor is crucial to our success, and we appreciate your continued support and dedication. Thank you!

Geoffrey Ongley
President, LDA

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Geoffrey Ongley is the Co-founder, Director and CEO of Training 24/7, as well as the CEO of Get Reading Right. Educationally, he has completed a Bachelor of Computer Science, Master of Business Administration (Finance), and a Graduate Certificate in Professional Legal Studies.



2024 AGM SAVE THE DATE

15

DAY

10

MONTH

24

YEAR

The 2024 Learning Difficulties Australia AGM has been scheduled, please save the date. The AGM will take place via zoom at 8pm.

In this issue of the Bulletin...

Laura Glisson, Editor, LDA Bulletin

I am pleased to bring you the second edition of the Bulletin for 2024 entitled 'Elevating education: Examples of evidence-based practice in oral language, writing, early childhood mathematics, MTSS and more'. This edition includes 13 fantastic articles written by classroom teachers, school leaders, researchers and speech pathologists. A wide range of topics are covered from writing assessment and intervention, to read-alouds and oral language, mathematics in the early years, supporting ADHD in the classroom, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for literacy. There is sure to be something for all of our readers!

Firstly, we hear from a team of researchers from the Language and Literacy in Young People research group in Perth (<https://languageandliteracyinyoungpeople.com>) about the impact of language and literacy difficulties on the mental health of children and young people. In this article, Associate Professor Suze Leitão and colleagues describe a series of research projects investigating the prevalence of language difficulties in secondary schools with Flexible Learning Programs and co-designing intervention supports for these students. Additional projects include evaluating intervention programs designed to support coping and self-esteem in upper-primary children with reading difficulties, as well as providing training to psychology, general medicine

and psychiatry students and clinicians on the intersection of language, literacy and mental health. Importantly, the team describe a current Australia-wide Medical Research Future Fund research project aiming to investigate the language, literacy and socioemotional wellbeing of year 6 students as they prepare for transition into secondary. A critical study in the Australian education landscape!

The second piece is 'Solving the ADHD puzzle: Unveiling little-known strategies for classroom success' by Andrew Hayes, ADHD coach and teacher. Hayes artfully describes the challenges faced by teachers when trying to support students with ADHD in their classrooms. Framed within Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (2011), Hayes describes the impact that high cognitive load can have on students with ADHD, followed by 12 practical strategies to best support these students in your classroom.

Our feature article of this edition is 'Facilitating language comprehension through Read Alouds' by Dr Molly Ness. Here, Ness describes the benefits of interactive read alouds, and presents strategies and routines for building background knowledge, teaching complex vocabulary, and building comprehension through read alouds. Packed full of practical ideas for educators, this piece is a must-read for all classroom teachers.

Of equal interest, is a research article by Dr Tessa Weadman, titled 'Reading to or reading with? Using a shared book reading approach to support students' oral language and early literacy skills'. In this article, Weadman introduces us to 'The Emergent Literacy and Language Early Childhood Checklist for Teachers (ELLECCT)'. The ELLECCT is a free, shared book-reading observational tool from Weadman's PhD, which can be used to support early childhood and

primary teachers to hone their practice. In this article, Weadman presents critical components of the ELLECCT, and describes the importance of strategies related to dialogic reading, vocabulary promotion, responsiveness, print knowledge, and paralinguistic and nonverbal skills.



Next, we have an article titled, 'Theme-based learning: Improving children's oral language skills' from Rosemary Simpson, educational consultant and ex-principal of 20 years at North East Language Development Centre in Perth. Here, Simpson discusses the importance of high-quality, evidence-based and robust oral language instruction, including the use of a thematic approach. Simpson makes the case for a well-designed theme with purposeful and explicit instruction such as semantic mapping, targeted vocabulary teaching, and syntax and oral narrative activities, alongside meaningful play-based experiences to support the development of schema and rich knowledge in young learners.

'Mathematics in early childhood education?' is the next article, written by Dr Elien Vanluydt and Dr Nore Wijns, two speech pathologists and researchers in the area of mathematics. Here Vanluydt and Wijns draw on their 'Wis & Co' research project, and present evidence-based, practical and intentional strategies to support the development of proportional reasoning and repeated patterning in preschool children.

Following this, Jessica Colleu Terradas brings us two articles - 'Exploring global perspectives: Insights from my Churchill Fellowship about literacy assessment

practices within a MTSS approach' and 'No more students falling through the cracks: Adopt universal screening'. These exceptional pieces summarise some of Colleu Terradas' findings from her recent Churchill Fellowship. Read these for practical ideas and recommendations, alongside case-based examples of effective MTSS in action from the US and UK.

The theme of MTSS is wrapped up by Adam Inder from the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO), in his piece 'MTSS to support secondary students: New resources for leaders and teachers'. This article reminds us of the importance of MTSS, before summarising a suite of excellent resources published by AERO to support leaders and teachers in their implementation of MTSS at a whole school level.

Next, we have three articles on writing assessment, by Dahmen Higgs, Jeanette Breen, and Jenny Baker. Spanning the use of technology to support with formative assessment, to the comparison of typing and handwriting in correlation to NAPLAN data and comparative judgement, and to utilising close analysis of pre-, during and post-instruction writing samples, these three articles are a must read if you're looking to enhance your approach to assessing writing.

To finish, we have '10 tips for supporting written expression in school-aged students' from speech pathologist, Sara Chong. Packed full of practical ideas, this article is a fantastic example of a clinician applying research findings into their practice.

A sincere thanks to our contributors for this issue. We appreciate you so generously sharing your knowledge and expertise with our readers. If you are interested in contributing to a future edition of the Bulletin, please get in touch at bulletin.editor@ldaaustralia.org.

Laura Glisson, Editor, LDA Bulletin

Laura is a Certified Practising Speech Pathologist (Speech Pathology Australia) with over 14 years experience working with school-aged children and young people with speech, language and literacy difficulties. Laura works as the Co-director and Co-founder of Tracks to Literacy, where she provides professional learning to educators and clinicians on oral language and literacy instruction, intervention and assessment. Laura also works clinically

with upper primary and secondary-aged students with language, literacy and associated mental health difficulties, and is a Clinical Coordinator and lecturer in the Curtin School of Allied Health at Curtin University in Perth.

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