How to use think alouds to improve students' reading comprehension - with Dr. Molly Ness

Triple R Teaching Podcast #197

Hello, this is Anna Geiger, creator of Reach All Readers and author of *Reach All Readers*. Welcome to our first episode of 2025! Today I'm welcoming Dr. Molly Ness, a literacy advocate, former university professor, author, and a whole lot more.

Today we zero in on comprehension, specifically how to do effective think alouds. Here we go!

Anna Geiger:

Welcome, Dr. Ness!

Molly Ness:

Thanks for having me!

Anna Geiger:

Could you introduce us to yourself, what your experience in education has looked like over the years, and what you're doing now?

Molly Ness:

Sure. I started my career as a classroom teacher, I did Teach for America out in Oakland, California, thinking I was just doing it on the way to law school as a resume builder. I always joke that now, almost 30 years later, I think my father has finally accepted that I am not going to law school!

I quickly realized public education and literacy really was the social justice issue I wanted to devote my life to, but I didn't know enough, so after teaching in the classroom in both Oakland and Los Angeles, I came back east and pursued a PhD in Reading Education at the University of Virginia.

My doctoral program was funded at the time by the Reading First legislation under No Child Left Behind. At the time, we called it scientifically based reading research or SBRR.

I quickly realized that comprehension was the area that interested me the most, as well as really translating research to classroom practice.

I took a position upon graduating at a school in New York City, at Fordham University's Graduate School of Education, and I spent 17 years there as a full-time professor, working with doctoral students and teaching pre-service teachers. I left about three years ago.

I've been doing a lot of work, both with nonprofits as well as some big curriculum companies, writing some more books and articles, and now really helping schools and districts translate what this whole science of reading is to actual classroom instruction.

Anna Geiger:

That's wonderful because that is something we are in dire need of. There are a lot of laws coming out and requirements of implementing certain programs, but then teachers are often left kind of scrambling, and then the science of reading is blamed because implementation went sour.

We can talk more at the end about what you're doing for schools, but we're going to dive today into one area of comprehension, think alouds. I think many of us are aware of what they are, but they're maybe not done as often as they could be for different reasons. Teachers maybe aren't sure how to prepare for them, aren't comfortable doing them, or aren't convinced of the value of them.

Let's start by talking about what think alouds are and what they are not.

Molly Ness:

Sure, so I specifically am talking about think alouds with regard to reading comprehension, but really a think aloud is a way to teach, explicitly model, through first-person narrative, with "I" language, a skill or a strategy.

Again, I'm talking about it with regard to comprehension, but we've all done think alouds without knowing maybe the term for them.

If you've taught a kindergartner to tie their shoelaces and you say, "First I'm going to make two bunny ears, and then push one through another," that's a think aloud, because what you're doing is you're taking a process which is natural to you, and you're using your first-person narrative language to model it and make explicit all of the things that you need to do.

When I talk about it with regard to comprehension, I'm talking about cracking open your head as a reader, as a proficient reader, and making those invisible processes visible to students through that first-person conversational narrative language.

When I was a doctoral student, we had a reading clinic that was probably my favorite part of my doctoral work, and I worked with one struggling reader for quite some time. I had all sorts of data telling me that his struggle was comprehension. I had all of the norm reference testing, and I had all of my observational data.

One day we were reading a text and I found myself asking him questions. I caught myself sort of thinking, "Why am I asking him questions? The purpose of these questions is to *assess* his comprehension. Well, I already know from all my data that comprehension is his weakness. My time with this kid is so precious, I want to *build* his comprehension."

The way that we build comprehension is through a think aloud, so I really started digging into the research around them - how to better prepare teachers to do think alouds with any text, any grade level, because they *are* so powerful, and moreover, students want them.

There's a great article by Black and colleagues in 2004, where they survey students and ask them, "What do you want more of from your teachers?"

Students say, "We want more of an explanation into your reading behaviors as a teacher."

That's what a think aloud is. It's this unpacking of this invisible process, so that not only are we building students' understanding of the text we are currently working with, but we're showing them the behaviors that they should emulate for their reading.

Anna Geiger:

In your book, *Think Big with Think Alouds*, you talk about things that are *not* think alouds. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Molly Ness:

Sure. Think alouds are not turn and talks. They are not when you're reading aloud from a text and you say, "Turn to your partner, what do you think is going to happen next?"

In no way am I saying that turn and talks are not useful. They're great for language comprehension, but they are not *modeling*. They're not modeling what we are doing to build comprehension.

Think alouds are also not asking students questions. Generally speaking, those questions, they assess kids' comprehension, but they don't *build* it.

Think alouds also are not impromptu. They don't sort of come to us as we're doing a read aloud, in the moment, knowing exactly what to say, what strategy, or what sentence starter to use.

This was a mistake that I made. I sort of thought that I'd be reading out loud and I would come to the perfect place to model my thinking.

When I worked with teachers, I really started to understand think alouds are really intentional and they require purposeful planning. It really requires knowing your text, knowing where to stop, knowing what sources of confusion are potentially there for students, and knowing what language is useful to unpack those potential comprehension breakdowns.

Anna Geiger:

I appreciate you talking about how questions assess comprehension, whereas think alouds model it.

It makes me think of if someone were teaching word reading and they just gave a child a list of words to read every day but never taught the phonics skills or practiced with blending to teach them to read those words. It's kind of the same thing, but we do that all the time.

I know that asking questions can be useful for retrieval practice and things like that, but actually teaching *how* to comprehend is very tricky. I think that some teachers are overwhelmed by the idea of think alouds, or I think many also think that it you're supposed to just do it as you go. I think that's what I used to think, and that may be what's keeping people because it's very hard to think on the fly like that.

I know you did a year of research on think alouds. What did you find about how much teachers are or are not doing them, and why they might hesitate to do them?

Molly Ness:

Well, there are a couple of things.

First of all, when I think about think alouds, one of my favorite articles is by Doug Fisher, Diane Lapp, and Maria Grant. It's called, "You Can Read This Text - I'll Show You How." I love that phrase, "I'll show you how," because that's what a think aloud is. It is literally taking that process and using our language to show students how to build their comprehension.

When I worked with teachers over the course of a year to really understand the frequency of their think alouds, I looked at where they were successful and where there were stumbling blocks.

I found that most of us typically don't do think alouds for a bunch of different reasons.

First of all, time. Obviously, our instructional time is so short.

When I think about that, I always think about how we prioritize what matters to us. If we have comprehension as a need, then we have to prioritize think alouds as a way to build comprehension.

Another obstacle I found was that teacher's manuals don't say so. Even as people are working with high quality instructional materials, they have questions written, but they don't necessarily have think alouds.

There's a significant gap between research and our instructional materials. There's usually about a 10-15 year lag between what research shows and it making its way to teacher's guides and such.

I'm really trying to sort of point out how easy they are to do and how powerful they are.

At first it is a little bit tricky to sort of rethink your language to get to those think alouds.

When I was learning the process, I struggled at first. Now I feel like I can like think aloud with the TV Guide or the food menu because it's so inherent to me.

I think those are some of the big obstacles.

The other thing that I also found is the comprehension strategies that teachers were using were sort of skimming the surface and were pretty narrow in their depth and breadth.

What I did was I had teachers work through some read alouds. They had to submit multiple read aloud lesson plans and sort of analyze their own language. A lot of the participants relied on sort of the tried but true strategies - making predictions, summarizing, those ones that sort of readily come to us. But rarely people modeled inferencing or synthesizing, and those are some of the more meaty, complex, often difficult strategies.

When people started recognizing, "Wow, I didn't realize I was always using this strategy and not using this one," we could sort of tailor our work to be more purposeful in that purview.

Anna Geiger:

Can you give an example of what a think aloud might sound like?

Molly Ness:

Sure. The real key to ask yourself if you are doing a think aloud or a turn and talk or a comprehension question is, are you using first-person narrative language? "I wonder…."

If you come to a place where you want to ask the text a question. You might say, "I wish the text would answer for me…" Or, "I'd like to ask the author…"

If you are modeling an inference, you might say something like, "From the text clues and what I know, I'm getting the sense that…"

If you are modeling the fact that you have purposeful approaches to recognize both when your comprehension derails and what you're doing to get it back on track, which I think is so, so powerful, you might say, "I'm noticing that I don't remember who this character is, so here's what I'm going to do to refresh my memory…"

Any of that first person use of "I," that's how you really know that you are doing a think aloud.

The other thing I like to do when I work with kids is I literally give kids a visual cue when the language that's coming out of my mouth is a think aloud, versus when it's the language in a book. I will say to kids, readers of all ages, kindergarten all the way up to secondary students, "Before I start this read aloud, I'm going to give you something to look for. Sometimes as I read my finger might be on the side of my head, and when my finger is on the side of my head, I'm thinking. I'm talking through the processes that are

going on inside of my head to make understanding or to make meaning. If you don't see my finger on my head, those are the words in the book."

Even with that, I've worked with kids who have literally said, "Whoa, all that stuff that you were talking through, *that's* what I'm supposed to be doing as I read?" They didn't understand that reading is a thinking process. That visual differentiation of the words in my head versus the words in the book is really powerful for students.

I've worked with elementary teachers who have taken Burger King crowns and literally made thinking caps. They put them on their head to differentiate - this is a think aloud, this is the text. Then they can share those with the students and say, "All right, now it's your turn to wear the thinking cap. Tell me what you're doing in your head to understand the text."

Anna Geiger:

You said earlier that a think aloud is basically when you're taking something that's very natural and automatic to you and breaking it down. I think that's what's hard for teachers because it's so automatic!

I think I read it in one of your articles or in your book about how you could practice this by working with a harder text, like a text that's challenging for you. Could you talk about that?

Molly Ness:

Yeah, I'm glad you brought that up because that's another, I think, big obstacle to why we don't incorporate think alouds.

Most of us as teachers are proficient readers. We love to read. We came to the classroom because we enjoy reading. It's hard to stand in our kids' shoes and identify those stumbling blocks to know where comprehension breakdowns happen so that we can then do the think alouds.

I like to intentionally choose frustration-level texts or a text that's really just lots of background knowledge. My brother as a doctor, and I've borrowed his medical textbooks. I might take tax manuals, legal cases, anything that's really dense.

Anna Geiger:

Sounds painful.

Molly Ness:

Absolutely! Then I will literally model it. I got to the point in my classroom where I did something called Stump the Chump, which was this game where kids would bring in a really tricky text, and they would give it to me and see if I could make meaning of it. It's really powerful for kids to sort of see that here are all the things that I do to build understanding of it, because we forget what it feels like.

If we're picking up Judy Blume's *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*, we don't inherently know, "Oh this is a part where my kids might need to make an inference, or this is a part where their comprehension breaks down."

When we intentionally work with difficult texts, we remind ourselves how it feels to be kids who are struggling with comprehension, and it's a powerful way to say, "Oh, okay, *that's* what the think aloud does. It unlocks that comprehension so I better access this text, and now I'm set up to better maneuver through whatever text I'm reading independently."

Anna Geiger:

What are some specific things that you have found yourself doing to make sense of those really complex texts that have informed your use of think alouds?

Molly Ness:

Yeah. With those difficult texts, a lot of our comprehension would break down even before I've read the first paragraph because of background knowledge.

If I'm reading my brother's medical textbook and it's about kidney function or what have you, I might stop and model for my kids. “Okay. I know nothing about the kidneys. I'm not a doctor, but I could do a Brain Pop or I could have AI explain what the purpose of a kidney is.”

I'm literally showing them how I'm intentionally approaching a text where I already know my comprehension is at a deficit because of background knowledge.

I am also going to sort of take some of those really dense sentences that have a lot of clauses, independent clauses, ambiguous pronouns, or are semantically complex, because they are places where our kids’ comprehension might stumble. I might like mark them up to show, “Okay, this actually refers to this part of the sentence,” or “They don't restate the pronoun here, but I know it's this because…”

That's also another area that our kids need help to really make sense, not just across individual words, but across cohesive texts where your knowledge has to continue across multiple phrases and semantic clauses and all of those things.

Anna Geiger:

I can see the value, especially for older kids, to see how even their teacher is stumped, at least initially, by some texts. No person can easily read every text out there.

What about when you're working with really young kids? The types of things you break down are going to be different. How might you compare think alouds in kindergarten versus middle school?

Molly Ness:

When I'm working with really young kids, I typically lean into asking questions. I want to be really clear here, I don't mean asking questions to my kids *about* the text. That's really a comprehension assessment.

Instead, I model that I, as a reader, am inquisitive. I have questions that the text may answer. Sometimes the text doesn't answer those questions, and I have to either read something else or go look for my answers in a different place.

The reason that I like using those generating questions with particularly young kids is that kids naturally are curious, especially our really young kids. There's a statistic that says something like the average four-year-old asks something like 288 questions a day.

Kids are coming to school asking questions. We all know that if you are a parent of a young child. But what we also know is that there's this natural decline of the questions that kids ask in school because teachers ask those questions. As teacher questions increase, kid questions decrease.

Well, I want my kids to know that asking questions is an important part of learning and reading. I'm going to continue to model those with little kids to say that your questions are really important and they're valuable and we want to continue those. That's certainly something that I do a little bit more of.

I also let the text itself sort of navigate which particular strategy. If I'm working with a middle school science class, they might have to do more synthesis in an informational text than they might have to do in a narrative text. I sort of align my strategies to say, what is the literacy demand of this particular text and what are the literacy needs of the students working with those texts?

Anna Geiger:

When a teacher is planning think alouds, what would you say should be the process as they're doing this for a read aloud they're planning to give?

Molly Ness:

For me, the process was just like at first when you had to write lesson plans way back in whatever certification or training or coursework you had to do. We were really, really explicit in our lesson planning.

Until I'm really fluent with the think aloud process, I explicitly write out my think aloud.

What I do is I go through the text and I identify all of the places that are potentially problematic where I might think aloud. I just sort of brainstorm, "Oh, here are all the places that are sort of juicy stopping points."

Then I go through the text again, and I say, "All right, I'm going to narrow it down." Because maybe in that first go around, I've over-identified. There are just too many stopping points, and there has to be sort of this delicate dance of how many times you're going to stop and do a think aloud versus the flow of doing that read aloud.

In the second step, I'm sort of narrowing down all of the places that I originally identified and saying here are the ones that are the biggest instructional value. I ask myself, "What do my kids get from this particular stopping point? How is it value added?" If I can't really answer how is it value added, then maybe it's not a place I really need to stop and do a think aloud.

Then the third step, I take out a stack of sticky notes and I literally write out my first-person narrative language, my think aloud. It's there for me when I'm reading. I've got it as a safety net. Then it also allows me to sort of trade books with the teacher down the hall who's planned a think aloud of another text.

Those first couple of times, yeah, they're time consuming. But once I've learned that process, that's the training wheels. Eventually I can take off the training wheels to get to the point where I'm just doing those think alouds more naturally and fluently and effortlessly. But you have to have gone through the background process to get to the point where it comes much more fluently to you.

Anna Geiger:

If a teacher is teaching kindergarten or first grade, would you recommend that they plan think alouds for most of their read alouds or all their read alouds? Obviously sometimes we just pull a book off the shelf just to enjoy it and that's perfectly fine. How do we use read alouds intentionally without, as some would say, taking over the read aloud?

Molly Ness:

Sure.

Anna Geiger:

Or keeping kids from enjoying the book?

Molly Ness:

First of all, I want to be clear that one of the things that people often are resistant about is when we do think alouds, it feels like it's pretty teacher dominated. It feels like a lot of teacher language. There are some good things with that, the explicit modeling, but there's also sort of this downside where students are not contributing. Maybe you're losing their attention, or you're not giving them language comprehension…

I want to be really clear; the think aloud can still happen *with* all of the other stuff. You can still do turn and talks. It's not an either/or; it's really a both/and.

What I typically do is I figure out where are the places that are potentially problematic in the text, and that's what helps me determine how many times I'm going to stop and what I'm going to say.

Also, those think alouds are like a 10-second burst. They're not me coming out and doing a mini lesson on why we make inferences. It's a quick, "I wish I could find out from the author…" and then I'm back to the flow of the text. They're not really detracting from the flow of the story because they are these short little bursts.

Then I can still also get student language interaction. Maybe I do a think aloud on page seven, and then we come to page 11 and it's a perfect time to say, "Turn to your neighbor and explain how the character might feel now," so that we're getting that language interaction as well.

Anna Geiger:

Thank you, that's super helpful.

You talked about how we tend to… When you were watching teachers do think alouds they often defaulted to some of the more basic strategies, I'm assuming like predicting, that's one that is easy to overdo. What would you say would be the things that teachers should really be thinking about? What strategies are really worth focusing on in think alouds?

Molly Ness:

Yeah, I spoke a little bit previously about monitoring and clarifying because we all, anybody who's in a classroom or has worked with kids, know that typically what kids do, if they come to a character name or they come to a term that they're not familiar with, what do they do? They keep reading.

We need to normalize struggle. By that I mean, if I had the experience where I'm reading my book group book and I come to a character name and I can't remember who it is, what do I do?

Well, I monitor and clarify. First of all, I'm metacognitive. I am aware that, "Whoa! I don't remember who this character is!" So I would think aloud to show that my comprehension is breaking down.

Then I would think aloud about what I'm going to do. Am I going to look up the character name? Am I going to flip back a couple of chapters?

I do monitoring and clarifying to not only normalize struggle, but also more importantly to talk about the intentionality of what we do as readers.

Then the other thing that I think is really important is synthesizing.

One of the strategies that was kind of a low-hanging fruit in my research was summarizing. We're pretty familiar with summarizing and main idea and those sorts of things.

Synthesizing I think is a more sophisticated way of getting to somewhat of the same stuff, but if a summarization is kind of stagnant and flat, a synthesis is ever-evolving. When you synthesize, you're revisiting your ideas and thinking through how they've changed or evolved over the course of a chapter or as a character changes. I think that's a strategy that doesn't naturally come to people and is really impactful.

One of the conversations that I'm hearing a lot is as schools are aligning towards high quality instructional materials, they're often reading truncated versions of text. They're not reading a text in its entirety. I think about that a lot because one of the things that we're missing out on is those opportunities to synthesize.

When you start a book and have an impression of a character, you then can continue to revisit that as the text unfolds. That's synthesizing! But when we're only reading truncated versions of books, we lose that opportunity.

Anna Geiger:

Yeah, interesting.

When I think about if I were doing a think aloud with eighth graders, it would be very easy for me to find parts to do a think aloud for because some of that text could be challenging, but it may be harder for the early grades. Do teachers kind of have to manufacture potential issues as they do their think aloud? For instance, saying, "I can't remember the name of this character," when you really can. Does that feel inauthentic, or how do you make that work?

Molly Ness:

Yeah, you do, particularly in the lower grades, there is a little bit of artificially showing, "Wow, I don't really remember this vocabulary word."

But again, even with our younger kids, most kids assume we as teachers never struggle, we understand everything. And so there is a little bit of showmanship and a little bit of artificially searching for places that are confusing.

Those places of confusion can be changing timelines. Many of us know the chapter book, *Holes*, and one of the big sources of confusion of that book is that it has multiple timelines. There's a story that happens with Stanley at the camp, and then there's a story that happens years and decades before. I would lean into that as an opportunity to model, "Okay, I have to keep in mind here the timeline change. We're back to the story that took place a long time ago."

It's not just vocabulary, it's not just background knowledge, it's all those other things that are potentially sources of confusion as well.

Anna Geiger:

That's a special book for me because it was the very first book I read aloud to my first class. I think it was brand new at the time, so there was no movie that they would have seen. It was very fun.

As we kind of get ready to close this out, we've talked about how important it is to model this, but of course the goal is that students make this their own. Can you talk about how this is their guided practice? How do we get kids to do this, and how can we kind of assess that they're doing this or observe it?

Molly Ness:

Yeah, absolutely, because this is a lot of teacher heavy lifting. If we think about the gradual release of responsibility, the I Do (I as the teacher model something), We Do, and then You Do, that's where I want to go with think aloud.

The think aloud is the I Do. It's me as the teacher modeling. I'm showing you this is what I'm doing to make meaning.

The next thing that I might do is a think along. This is the guided practice. This is where you as the kids, you as the students, you're going to be doing some of the work, but I'm there for help, I'm setting you up for success.

What I like to do for think alongs is I intentionally choose stopping points, and I tell you what strategy is a great fit, and I might even give you the language as a sentence starter. I would say, "All right, let's stop here. This is a great place to make an inference. Here's the sentence starter. From the text clues, I can conclude that..." Then you fill in the work.

That's the think along. I'm setting you up for success. I've done, as the teacher, the heavy lifting of figuring out what to say and what strategy and where to stop. But then I can set you off into a path of success and I can remove all those different levels of support as you get more comfortable.

Maybe I start with that really scaffolded. I've told you where to stop, I've told you what strategy, I've given you a sentence starter. Maybe as you're more fluent with it, I just tell you "Here's where you're stopping! This is a great place to make an inference," or synthesize, or what have you.

Eventually, we want to get to the think alone, and that's where kids are taking these strategies and applying them to whatever reading that they are doing.

In my school, I had the 15 minutes of drop everything and read or sustained silent reading. We all as teachers have that struggle of how do we know they're reading and how can they be more accountable beyond just that they read pages 8-14.

What I would have my kids do is in their books, I would give them a set of sticky notes and I would say that at the end of today's 15 minutes or whatever, I want you to have three think alouds that you've put in your book itself. In their reader's notebooks they had their sentence starters, so they were always there as a crutch. Then their reading was really holding them accountable for applying these strategies to the appropriate place.

Then when I would conference with them and find out about what they were reading, I got conversations that were more about their reading *behaviors* and not just a plot summary.

I remember being in the classroom with all my kids reading different books, and you try to get a measure of what they were understanding, and they would just tell you this happened next and then in this chapter... That's a plot summary, but I really want to know what you're doing as a reader.

And so what they would do is I would say, “All right John, when it's your turn I want you to bring your three best sticky notes, and we're going to talk about what you did and how that helped you as a reader.”

It shifted the conversations away from just synopsis or summary to actually here's how I know that you were applying these particular strategies.

Anna Geiger:

What would you say to a teacher who wants to get started doing this but maybe doesn't feel equipped or needs extra support?

Molly Ness:

Well, I've got lots of resources to help out. I have written many think aloud scripts with some popular books so that you can actually just borrow my language to see how it feels and see how your students respond.

I'm also very willing to share some of the research around think alouds, because I think as we figure out how to prioritize our instructional time on our very, very overcrowded plates, we have to understand the *why* behind things. Once we start to understand that with think alouds, you realize that you get a lot of bang for your buck. By that I mean it’s relevant to all grade levels, all content areas, and has really rigorous research behind it.

I'm happy to share some of that research so people understand the value of them because if you know the *why*, then you're more likely to adopt something.

I've also got some videos on my website which you can take a look at for people to sort of see, “Oh that's what she means! That's how it is, and that's how easy it is.” If you go to my website, drmollyness.com, there are lots of videos to see. We have a library of think alouds, and you can use them to share with each other.

In the video library, I always give the disclaimer that I've intentionally put up some videos where my think alouds were not the greatest. I get frustrated sometimes when we're working with teachers and teaching them something new, and we give them the best ever model and it kind of feels unattainable. It's a learning process to watch something and say, “I would have done this instead." Or, “I didn't think she did a good job here, here's how I would have handled it.”

Use those to group think and tweak and alter. I won't be there, so you're not going to hurt my feelings.

That video library, I think, is another great way to just get comfortable in trying it as well.

I also have a lot of sentence starters that are ready to go if anyone wants to reach out, or I'm happy to share them in show notes so that people can try them. I've done the work of generating them so you can have the benefit of taking them right away and applying them to whatever text you've got.

Anna Geiger:

That’s super helpful, especially the videos. I know people are really going to appreciate that.

I could also see how if teachers were working with other staff to write think alouds for a set of books that they want to read across their grade level, they could watch those videos together and then work together as a team to do those think alouds. Or they could bring their own think alouds together to a meeting and then share the work.

Thank you so much. This has been extremely helpful. I feel like I know a lot more about think alouds now, and I will be getting those resources from you to put in the show notes.

Can you tell us more about the work you're currently doing and any big projects on the horizon?

Molly Ness:

So my biggest project on the horizon is I'm finishing up a book for the Scholastic Science of Reading series. It is about orthographic mapping, and it is called, *Making Words Stick*.

Whenever I talk to somebody who's not a literacy geek like myself and they ask me what am I writing about, I always give them this kind of cool factoid that we as adult learners have a bank of about 50,000 words that we automatically recognize. You don't have to decode them; you just automatically recognize them.

Well, have you ever stopped to think about how did they get there? They got there through this process of orthographic mapping, which Linnea Ehri has been writing about for decades. For a long time, that research was sort of too complicated or siloed or just not really classroom ready and applicable.

In this book that I'm writing with Katie Pace-Miles from Brooklyn College, we are really trying to make a classroom application for orthographic mapping.

Anna Geiger:

That is very exciting! I love the work I hear from Katie Pace-Miles as well. She really puts it in everyday English. That's going to be really fun. Do you have a timeline for when it's coming out?

Molly Ness:

It will be out May of 2025, and Katie has been a blast to write with. It is really geared for grades K-5, so we talk about orthographic mapping all the way up through multisyllabic words with lots of morphology. It should be a fun one!

People keep asking me when it's ready for pre-order. I'm like, "We have to finish writing it first!"

Anna Geiger:

Oh, okay, you're still writing it. I can't wait to see it. I'll definitely be getting that one!

Molly Ness:

Yeah, it's been a really short turnaround for timeline, which is great, because that means that there's a need for it, and people are ready to take the ideas and apply them to classroom practice which is exactly what we're aiming for.

Anna Geiger:

Through your website, you offer support to schools, correct?

Molly Ness:

I do.

Anna Geiger:

So people could reach out to you through the links that I put in the show notes?

Molly Ness:

Absolutely, and I've been doing a fair amount of webinars and working with schools in different states who are really adopting work around the science of reading, so I'm happy to have those conversations and reach out.

The best advice I got as an initial teacher was teaching is about begging, borrowing, and stealing. If there are articles that people want that are behind academic paywalls, I always joke that I will happily violate copyright law and share them.

My sister is a copyright lawyer, so she's like… But research and knowledge need to be readily accessible to the people who need it, which is classroom teachers and school leaders.

Anna Geiger:

Well, thank you so much. This has been a very informative episode. I really appreciate it.

Molly Ness:

Thank you.

Anna Geiger:

You can find the show notes for today's episode at reachallreaders.com/episode197. Talk to you next time!

Closing:

That's all for this episode of Triple R Teaching. For more educational resources, visit Anna at her home base, reachallreaders.com, and join our teaching community. We look forward to helping you reflect, refine, and recharge on the next episode of Triple R Teaching.