Triple R Teaching

Hello, it's Anna Geiger from Reach All Readers, and in today's episode, I got to speak

incredible bio, but one thing she's especially interested in these days is spelling.

We talk a lot about the foundations for English spelling, and then we get into the power of a spelling inventory. We'll be talking about that, and we'll also learn more about PaTTAN, which is the organization she works for, and which offers a wonderful free conference every two years. This year's conference is coming up. Enjoy our conversation!

Anna Geiger: Welcome, Dr. Kastner!

Pam Kastner: Thank you, Anna! It's such an honor to be here.

Anna Geiger: People that are familiar with the science of reading have heard of your legendary Wakelets, the Pam Kastner Wakelets, and you have so many resources in there that you've curated for teachers and people that want to learn more about the science of reading.

I know that there's much more to you than your Wakelets. You have a long history of being an educator. Can you walk us through how you became a teacher and what you're doing now?

Pam Kastner: Sure. Like many educators, our journey probably began in the elementary classroom with an amazing teacher or another teacher on the road to our education. Mine really began in second grade with Ms. Swanson. She was absolutely just an amazing teacher, and I have always wanted to be a teacher ever since I was a little girl.

I was very fortunate, I think, when your passion and your life's work come together.

When I became a formal teacher, when I wasn't, like many people do, teaching my teddy bears and what have you, I was mainly a kindergarten teacher for about 18 years and loved every single moment of that. It still is the highlight of my life truly to watch little ones unlock the code and learn to read. It was very empowering to see kids do that and to see how they felt about becoming readers.

While I was in public schools, I was also a reading specialist and I was a district data coordinator. In that process, I became also a Distinguished Educator for the state of Pennsylvania. Distinguished Educators were educators with experience who would go into and support schools that were at risk. Mainly, they were former superintendents or curriculum directors, and I was one of only two teachers that were selected in the state for that. It was quite an honor a number of years ago, to serve in that role and also to learn from the colleagues that I had the opportunity to learn from. It was an incredible experience.

I was granted a leave of absence for three years, so there I was. I left home and was working across the state with groups of Distinguished Educators doing reviews and then embedded in a school district for nearly two years to support them as they moved forward to improving literacy outcomes for kids.

I returned to the school district, but the state pulled me back in, and I was asked to interview potential other Distinguished Educators and ended up doing that beside the executive director of PaTTAN.

PaTTAN is the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network. PaTTAN is the professional development arm for the Bureau of Special Education, the Department of Education in Pennsylvania. I serve as a state lead for literacy in that initiative. Certainly we support initiatives across deaf, hard of hearing, autism, math, you name it, soup to nuts. I've been there almost, which is hard to believe, 15 years, and I've been the state lead for seven years now. Again, that has gone really, really quickly.

I was talking to you earlier about my six grandkids. In addition to my obsession with my family, my life really is revolved around my family and literacy. It truly never really feels like work.

I also have the honor of serving as the president of The Reading League Pennsylvania and am on their editorial board.

I have the great honor as well to be an adjunct professor at the Mount St. Joseph

University in the doctoral program and the master's program and the reading science program.

In addition, I do do some consulting across the country as well.

I'm busy, but it's a life of purpose, and I think that's what we all hope that we have. I feel very, very, very fortunate to be a part of this literacy community, which is so supportive. It's big, but it's also very small.

Anna Geiger: So I know in all the study and the things that you research and share with others, the thing you're very interested in right now is spelling. This is the culmination to our spelling series, and we're going to talk specifically today about spelling assessment and how to help that guide instruction.

First let's lay the foundation a bit, in case someone has not heard the other episodes in this series, and start by just talking a little bit about the complexity of English spelling.

Let's start by defining morphophonemic, which is how we describe English spelling. Some people think English spelling is crazy because we don't have a one-to-one match for every sound, but English isn't supposed to work that way. Can you talk to us about what morphophonemic means?

Pam Kastner: Yeah, I love that word actually. It's such a rich word. It's like being word conscious, right? It's so good to have that word in your mouth.

In the simplest terms, it means that our written language, our English orthography, our spelling, is based on both meaningful units and speech sound units, so both of those are contributing to how we spell.

But what's so rich and robust about our language and makes it so logical and predictable really is also the marrying of speech sounds and meaning. If you look at the term morphophonemic and we break it into its morphemes, it's unlocking not only how we will pronounce it but also what it means, which I think is so wonderful about our language being so rich. It's "morpho," meaning form or structure, those meaningful units. Of course, "phon," meaning those individual speech sounds. Then the "ic," the suffix, is telling us it's an adjective that's describing how those things are related.

It's a perfect word to describe our English orthography because it unlocks it right there when you know about the speech sounds and the morphemes. So, for me, that's morphophonemic.

Anna Geiger: What would you say would be the different factors that influence English spelling?

Pam Kastner: Well, throughout this podcast, I'm going to refer back to a number of researchers whose shoulders we all stand on. For example, Dr. Moats has been long interested in spelling and doing research on spelling. Rebecca Treiman would be another researcher, I would always look to her research. Suzanne Carreker's research as well, and Virginia Berninger's.

When I think about spelling and why it's logical, it's not crazy. We think about the influence of basically five principles. Again, if you're a LETRS trainer, these would not be unusual to you.

For example, language of origin. What's so wonderful about our language is our written language represents the influences, over time, of other languages. So depending on, in some cases, where the word originated from and maybe how it's changed some, how it's been adopted through other languages, will influence how we spell and/or how we pronounce it.

Just in terms of quick examples, going back to morphophonemic, I know from the PH spelling and the /f/ that there's a Greek origin to those words. I'm not calling it mor-/p/-ophonemic because I know the influence of Greek there is going to indicate the pronunciation and the PH is going to be a /f/. So it's a signal to me, its origin.

Another example that's used often is the spelling CH. If the word comes from Anglo-Saxon, we're going to pronounce it with a /ch/, like church. If it has a French influence, like chef, we're going to have the /sh/. Then back to our Greek friends, if it has a Greek origin, it's going to be pronounced /k/ like chlorophyll.

So it's not crazy, and I think that's what makes it so rich and wonderful to talk about our language. Kids absolutely love hearing and being these word detectives, figuring out, "Oh, that's why." I love hearing them say, "Oh, I know why. That's because it's a Greek word. That's why I pronounce it that way."

So language of origin will have an influence, for sure.

Then, of course, we map speech to print. That's why the alphabet was created, to represent language permanently.

Back to that morphophonemic. If we think about the map between phonemes and graphemes, especially when we're spelling, and then the reciprocal from graphemes to phonemes when we're reading, this relationship between speech sounds and the graphemes, the phonemes, the individual speech sounds, and the graphemes, which are the letters or letter groups that represent those phonemes. We spell in that way too.

Position matters, where in a word the sound falls. For example, today it's raining in Pennsylvania. My long A, because it's in the middle of a syllable, is going to be spelled with an AI. If it was at the beginning of the syllable, it would be an AI as well.

But if I'm hoping for a ray of sunshine today, that long A is going to be spelled with an AY because of its position. The position matters.

I think that's so important, again, to share all this richness with students so that they understand it as well and it makes sense to them.

Of course, back to our word morphophonemic and the meaningful units. We spell by meaning as well. We always spell by meaning, but those combining forms of meanings, how we're adding them, become more complex as we go up the grade levels.

We want to be helping kids from the very beginning. From kindergarten I was teaching my students, if it was "cat" and then we had the /s/, yes, I want you to be able to decode it and pronounce it, but also know that S has meaning. Both of those morphemes have meaning, but that S represents more than one.

We want to start that right from the beginning. Showing kids, basically, maybe I wouldn't be using the word morphophonemic or maybe I would, because if kids can learn Tyrannosaurus Rex, they can learn morphophonemic.

Our language is morphophonemic, and we spell by both meaning and sound, and so, meaning, morphology is really critically important.

Word study beyond basic phonics is really critical for both decoding and encoding spelling.

I think I got that all except orthographic conventions. Scribes, many years ago when we were moving from spoken language to written language, put some constraints on letters. I think probably everybody, well I'll just speak for myself, but when I learned why is it "give" and "love" and "have," because no English word ends in V. I was like, "Oh my gosh!"

We have these conventions, and it's also influenced the syllable types.

So yeah, those five principles really. Again, I refer back to, of course, Dr. Moats' work in "Speech to Print" and in LETRS, where those are highlighted as well. It's not my research, it's certainly others.

Anna Geiger: I like the way you talked about how we can tell our students, even if we choose or not choose to use the word morphophonemic, but when they're spelling, to tell them sometimes we spell for sound and sometimes we spell for meaning. This ED at the end, even though it says "jumped," we're going to use an ED because that means that it already happened.

I never really thought about explicitly saying that to kids, but that makes a lot of sense. Even in the early grades, you can do that.

Pam Kastner: Yeah, and you make a perfect example there and one I use often in training with teachers and with students, is that morphemes have stable spellings. They are pointing to meaning.

Thinking about writing, if I'm a student and I'm thinking about something that happened in the past, I know I need to use the ED spelling for that morpheme. ED is a perfect example of our morphophonemic language and ones I use often as well - wanted, landed.

I think those are perfect examples of morphophonemic. The morphemes remain a stable spelling. The ED is pointing us in the direction that it's happened in the past. These words are showing us how sound and meaning are working together to influence it.

The thing is, and I'll speak for myself and I think many others, we didn't necessarily learn about our own language in our graduate work or undergraduate work, so we cannot teach what we do not know, right? The more we know as an educator about our language, the better we can teach our students.

Anna Geiger: At the end, I'll make sure to get some references for you for places teachers can learn about that. Because like you said, there just usually isn't room made for this in teacher training.

We've touched on this in the past, again, but I think we can never define them enough for people who are new to this. It took me a while to grasp all of them. Let's define phonology, orthography, and morphology, and we might as well do etymology as well.

Pam Kastner: Okay, so phonology is the speech sound systems of a language. It is how we can sequence and combine phonemes within a language. If we're thinking specifically phonology, it's a study of that. Right?

Anna Geiger: Okay.

Pam Kastner: So in our language, there is always a little bit of discussion around how many phonemes are in our language, but the general consensus is there are 44 phonemes in our English language, and they can be represented in orthography more than 250 ways. That's what makes our language so complex and rich.

An orthography is how a written system is represented, the language is represented, in written language. Back to our morphemes, "ortho" meaning straight, and "graph" meaning writing, so it's correct or straight writing. It's how the speech sounds are correctly written in language.

We know, especially with our long vowels, there are often many ways we can spell them, but we have a correct way we spell them in our language, and so that's orthography. We think about orthography and spelling pretty much synonymously, encoding.

Morphology, again, is back to those meaningful units within a language.

Etymology is where did the word originate from?

All of these are influencing how we spell. We need to teach all lenses of language.

We didn't mention semantics here, meaning. We didn't mention syntax, the part of speech.

The more a student knows about a word, how it's spoken, how it's written, what its meaningful parts are, where it came from, its part of speech, its meaning, it's bonding all these things together. That's why we never want to teach in isolation. All these things are interdependent and integrated.

The more a student knows about a word and its language lenses, the more accurately and quickly they will access it for both reading and for spelling. Language is literacy and literacy is language. I don't know who said that, but give them credit, whoever you are out there, because it truly is that they're reciprocal. Literacy rests on language, so we want to be teaching all those language systems, and of course, we want to be teaching them in a structured literacy way.

Anna Geiger: We have talked about how it's important for teachers to have an understanding of each of these, and of course, it's going to grow. It's not like, okay, now I know everything there is to know about one of these areas. Particularly with morphology, you're never going to be done learning morphology.

Pam Kastner: No.

Anna Geiger: There's an ending to learning spelling patterns, mostly, although there are still some things that you might still be learning. But when teachers understand all

these areas, then they can help their students understand why we spell something a certain way versus telling them to memorize spelling. That's really what it's all about, right?

Pam Kastner: Right, versus saying, "I don't know why it's spelled that way. English is crazy."

Anna Geiger: Yeah.

Let's move into spelling assessment. When teachers really have an understanding of phonology, orthography, morphology, or at least a baseline understanding, they can look at an assessment and see what types of errors students are making and where to go next. Let's walk through that.

First of all, could you define qualitative spelling inventory?

Pam Kastner: Yes, so a qualitative spelling inventory is a list of spelling items that rank from least complex to most complex, like CVC's to derivational suffixes at the end, in a very intentional way where you're sampling a student's knowledge of that phonics pattern.

A word example is given, I say the word, then you say the word, I want that word in your mouth. I provide a sentence to nest it into meaning. Then basically, I just stop talking and the students spell. It's a very, very, very powerful tool that I think is severely underutilized across the country.

Dr. Moats I believe has said this, I'm pretty sure it's her who said spelling is visible language. It's language written down. It's telling me what students know about language around that particular pattern, that phonics pattern, that encoding pattern I've asked kids to spell.

It doesn't take long to administer, maybe 10 minutes. It can be done whole group. You want to make sure kids aren't copying from each other. All you need is paper and a pencil without an eraser. You want to have that first attempt, to be aware of that, or they could use a pen.

The power really is in the analysis. I always say when you're collecting data, you want to be doing something with it.

For the schools I have the honor of working with in Pennsylvania and across the country, I strongly recommend that they do a spelling inventory with every single student when they do their typical universal screening. It takes about 10 minutes, and it's going to give you an added lens.

It's a way to sample students' understanding of language through phonology, orthography, and meaning, because you're offering that through a sentence.

Then analyze that, look for error patterns, so that it can form your instruction intervention. It could be at the individual student level, it could be in small groups, it could be whole group, and it could give you information back about your whole system, about your curriculum, and/or your instruction. So it's a very, very powerful tool.

The one I default to, of course, is Dr. Moats' LETRS survey. It is copyrighted. If you're a LETRS trainer, certainly, you have access to that. The Words Their Way Developmental Spelling Inventory is another spelling inventory that I've used with schools. The Words Their Way program is not explicit, not systematic, however, the spelling inventory is fine. That one is free and follows very similar...

When you look at a spelling inventory that follows that scope and sequence from least complex to most. Yes, those would be two examples.

Anna Geiger: So let's go back a minute. Let's say I'm a first grade teacher and I'm doing DIBELS or I'm doing Acadience three times a year, would you say also that each of those times that I'm pulling students individually to do those assessments, I would just do one spelling inventory to the whole class so that it's just done in ten minutes altogether?

Pam Kastner: You would do one spelling inventory, yeah. One spelling inventory with whole class. It's a whole class administration. The administration is really very brief. It's not very long.

There's so much power in the analysis, especially if you have the honor of being a

coach or a consultant or a reading specialist working with a group, or if you're a teacher working in your own team. When you're analyzing them with knowledge, it's so powerful, especially when you're looking for trends in your classroom and across classrooms.

We've uncovered lots of things by looking at spelling inventories, from individual, to classroom, to grade level in the school, that are informing our next steps.

It is language written down. If you can spell a word, you can read a word, but the encoding is going to show me what you know about language, and it's permanent. I can look at it later or I can use it to inform me where the reading is in the moment.

It's such a powerful tool that I think is so underutilized and can result in really deep professional learning for educators around language, but also, most importantly, changes in instruction that have better outcomes for kids because that's why we all get up in the morning, right?

Anna Geiger: Yeah, so I'm thinking about if you're giving the spelling inventory and you're telling your students, "This is just for me to see how much you know about spelling. Just do your very best. I'm not going to grade it. If you try something and you don't like it, just draw a line through it so I can still read it, and write your final spelling, because I want to see all the things that are happening in your brain."

I had not thought about that before, about having them not erase, but that's a really good point.

I can see a teacher looking at those and saying, "Okay, I already know what I'm doing in my whole class or small group phonics and dictation. How do the results of my spelling inventory carry over to what I'm already doing? How do I connect them?"

Pam Kastner: They 100% do! You can put these spelling inventories out in an array and evaluate, "Okay, who's got some strengths here with language and who doesn't?" You can tell immediately what they need.

Let me give you an example from the lens of way up here. So the school was moving towards the science of reading and engaged in practices that were related to that, and they had purchased programs that were related to that as well.

When we looked at their spelling inventory results across the grades, we started seeing this pattern over and over and over again. Kids were spelling phonetically but not with the correct graphemes. They were representing each of the phoneme sounds in sequence, which we want, of course, with a grapheme. But oftentimes, especially with the long vowels, they were using a letter name to represent a letter sound, and that's not unusual. So goat was G-O-T and stone was S-T-O-N.

What it told us when we looked at their scope and sequence is that they were doing a good job with the phonemes. Kids were able to segment and understand that we have to represent a phoneme with a grapheme.

However, it's pretty apparent that either the curriculum that they were using and/or the instruction was not happening, or not happening enough with practice, in order for kids to store those spellings for this word in memory.

When you keep seeing that pattern over and over and over again, all right, that's a curriculum instructional issue that's happening at that grade level. If it was happening in one classroom, we'd say, okay, what's happening here? What's the makeup of the kids this year? That happens every year where we have different students.

Also, if I see a pattern of kids making errors on something that's been taught and many in my classroom are having that error, will I waste my precious time teaching that in small group? Yes or no? I would say to them, no. This is something that needs to be retaught effectively and practiced, don't miss that practice step there, in whole group.

Or if these kids are having problems with digraphs, yet I've taught that, then it's a small group. I'm going to pull them for direct instruction here.

It's visible. I don't have to think, what do I need to do? It's right there staring me in the face, and it can inform school, grade level, classroom, small groups, and the individual level. It's one of the most powerful tools out there I think that's not being used.

I seriously have been obsessed with them a little bit because I just think there's so much power in that analysis. Also, having those conversations with teachers, analyzing them with teachers, is a very rich, robust professional learning experience.

Anna Geiger: When you talk about system-wise, you're looking and you're seeing, like you said, across the grade level, that they're not spelling long vowels. They're just using a single vowel. So that informs your Tier 1 instruction. We need a meeting to talk about what we can do to improve this. I understand that.

Pam Kastner: You can ask the teachers, "What do you think is happening?" Ask them because they know, right? Yeah.

Anna Geiger: Where I have a few questions more is when it comes all the way down to the individual student. Let's say I have a group of students. I may be differentiating my foundational skills and I've got a group that's doing long vowel teams, but I have a child who can read that really well, but then it looks like... Say we're pretty far in the long vowels, but they're still mixing up AI/AY, which I'm seeing on the assessment. How do I handle that?

Pam Kastner: It always goes back to explicitly teaching that and then practicing that.

It might mean reading lists of words that have the AI/AY pattern, minimal pairs, so that we're really making them pay attention.

It would influence the decodable text that I would select. Maybe they can read it and you've seen them read it, but they need repeated practice. It's back to shared statistical, right? They need lots of opportunities to see it, read it, and spell it so that it forms that high-quality lexical representation, that mental orthographic image, that's stored in memory for that word, for how we're spelling the long A in that particular word.

So we want direct explicit instruction, practice through word chaining, word lists, decodable texts, of course, dictation.

If I was dictating, if I was saying, "Rain," I would remind the student, "Where do you hear that long A sound? Oh, it's in the middle of a syllable! How do we spell that? Right! We're going to spell it with an AI." Because I would've previously taught that positional, so I'm linking my dictation to that. That's how I would start with that student.

Anna Geiger: So often spelling lags behind reading, right?

Pam Kastner: Yes.

Anna Geiger: So let's say I'm doing my small groups and I'm teaching IGH or whatever else, and then they're spelling that in our dictation, but there are some earlier skills they're missing, but only one is missing them. Practically speaking, how do I fit in that instruction, I guess?

Pam Kastner: Well, I think that's always the million-dollar question, but we can't... These skills are essential. I'm sure you've heard the term, Swiss cheese kids, right? They've got these holes. We have to go back and teach that.

If it's an individual student in a small group, it might be a group of one, or pull in another student who is skilled at that so the student isn't feeling so isolated. But you have to go back and teach those things. They will show up later, and especially when they start getting into multisyllabic words.

We want them to have very high-quality lexical representations of these words, to have them stored in memory.

I think we've all... I've done this, maybe you have, I don't know. Where you spell a word and you write it down and then you look at it and go, "That doesn't look right"? Right?

I always think that's so cool when that happens because it's like it's not jiving with the stored memory you have for it, and you're looking at it and you know that something's not right here.

We want kids having these strong lexical representations so that they can use them in reading and spelling, because we know that people judge your writing by your spelling. If you are not spelling accurately on a job application, it's going to impact you.

Spelling does have an impact on your life. It's going to help our reading and it's going to help our writing, so why aren't we doing it?

Anna Geiger: Yes, for sure.

I'm going to summarize some of the things we talked about.

We initially talked about the complexity of the English language, morphology, orthography, phonology, etymology, and why it's important for teachers to find a way to keep learning about that so they can communicate that to their students so that their students understand that there's reasons for how we spell certain words.

When we give a qualitative spelling inventory, maybe three times a year, and we compare scores across the school and the grade level, we can see if our Tier 1 instruction is working for spelling. If not, we need to figure out some holes.

Would you say that it would make sense to follow up with a diagnostic after?

Pam Kastner: Yes. In some cases, yes, especially when some of the spelling that you can see... Really, that's what I love about it. You can look at a spelling inventory that's very discrepant and you can know right away that we need to do a phonics screener, we need to do a phonemic awareness assessment, we need to do spelling.... Where are they? Can they spell out their names? Because maybe they're that far back. Maybe they're not even there yet.

So, yes, it's a tool that can be used in so many ways. It can be used summatively to look at, at the end of the year, how did we do? You can see the progression, which is so cool because it's visible language.

It can be a formative tool because it's informing Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3.

Certainly, diagnostically, it's pointing us in the direction of finding out they may be in their pre-alphabetic phase of Ehri's Phases of Word-Reading, if they're representing the first sound and the last sound, but we don't see any internal. Then we know we need to focus on segmenting, for sure, to make sure they can segment. Then we need to focus on phoneme-grapheme mapping.

It's like right staring in front of me what I need to do as a teacher. How often does that happen? So many times we're trying to... It's like a puzzle, it's a mystery. We're trying to figure it out. Not with spelling. It's right there in front of you, what you need to do.

Anna Geiger: Also, it's a good reminder to teachers that just because you may have taught it, not all the students have mastered it. You have to reteach in some cases.

Then also, I think this power of a spelling inventory is really important for third grade and up. I know when I started teaching I taught third, fourth, and fifth grade in a combination classroom, and I did not know... I knew very, very little about English spelling. I was a good speller, but I never really thought about why words were spelled that way, so when I had students who were in third grade but spelling a word with A-consonant-E instead of a vowel team, I didn't even know where to go. I just kept ploddng along thinking, "Well, we'll have our weekly spelling lists."

We can realize for those older grades that you've got to tackle this, because it's not going to get better without explicit, focused instruction for that particular child, however you decide to do it. Even if you say that 10 minutes a day I'm reserving for working with kids who need this. Sometimes they just need to be told; it may have never been explained to them.

Pam Kastner: Yeah, I think we all have the experience of kids saying when you're working with them, "Why didn't anyone teach me this before?" I think we've all experienced that.

Anna Geiger: So the inventory can help us see where the holes are and help us make a plan.

Pam Kastner: Yes, for sure. Without a doubt it can help you make a plan.

Certainly, if you're having a walk-to-learn or during your WIN time, that's what many people call it, What I Need time, we can share students and work on those skills. Then everyone gets what they need, because certainly, if they're great spellers and great at decoding, we want to extend their learning too. We want to make sure that we're growing all kids.

Anna Geiger: Yes, so we talked about how teachers really need to educate themselves on this. What are some favorite resources that you have for teachers that you recommend? We have your Wakelet. We do have that.

Pam Kastner: Yeah, no doubt. No doubt. I wasn't going to talk about me. Certainly, Louisa Moats' "Speech to Print" is seminal text. "Unlocking Literacy" from Marcia Henry is an outstanding book. "The Logic of English" from Denise Eide and "Beginning to Spell" from Rebecca Treiman are both good. I have Lyn Stone's "Spelling for Life." Louise Spear-Swerling has a great book on structured literacy, and Louisa did a chapter in that on spelling, but also the other language systems. Actually, PaTTAN did a book study of that, so I'll give a little plug there. That's recorded and curated.

Those are pretty much some default ones if you want to start your spelling journey. I love David Crystal's "Spell It Out" for figuring out why words are spelled the way they are, and "The ABC's of Spelling and All Their Tricks," that reference book. I have a whole bunch downstairs, but these are ones that I run to.

Certainly, I look at research. I was just reading research again last night, and it was confirming how when a student has a strong lexical representation, there's evidence that it increases their reading speed, and we know we want them to be fluent so that we can focus on the meaning.

There's ample research out there, and has been for decades, about the importance of spelling as a linguistic skill that can benefit, again, all those language systems. We're not teaching in isolation. But it seems to be... In this new age, it seems to be old. It's not. It's a part of everything. It really should be taught.

Anna Geiger: Yes. Well thank you so much.

Before we go, I just want to give you a minute or two to talk about PaTTAN's literacy conference. I don't know if that's what you call it.

Pam Kastner: Yeah, that's so nice of you.

Anna Geiger: I've always been so impressed by the videos that you guys put out on YouTube, and I think it's free, right?

Pam Kastner: It is free. Yes, it is free. It's coming up, and we have over 80 presenters again. The registration's going to be up February 28th on www.pattan.net. There will be lots of banners there to point you in the right direction.

It's held every two years and is absolutely 100% free for anyone in the entire world. You do have to have a PaTTAN account. You have to do that, but again, creating the account is free.

We're really, really honored that our keynote speakers this year are Holly Lane, Kareem Weaver, and Dr. Anita Archer has always been a big part. She's always the end note because everyone knows she's a master teacher and a consummate professional. She truly does look at every single presentation and then synthesizes those and summarizes our symposium. It's a wonderful mix of who's who. It really is.

Anna Geiger: I know!

Pam Kastner: We've got the who's who of the literacy world, the heavy hitters, but also lots of practitioners, because of course, we always want to be rested on the foundation of evidence and research and keep current with that. We also have to translate that evidence, and we need to hear voices from the teachers who are doing it every day, translating that into practice.

When I was a kindergarten teacher, and I still really consider myself a kindergarten teacher, I wanted to hear from other kindergarten teachers. Like, how are you doing that? Tell me. I want to see it. Teacher voices are so essential to this process, and we honor those at PaTTAN, along with the researchers.

Anna Geiger: Well thank you so much for all the things that you have done and continue to do for teachers everywhere.

Pam Kastner: It's my honor and pleasure. Thank you so much for this time. It's good to be with you.

Anna Geiger: After I pressed stop, Pam and I realized that we had not given the dates for the upcoming PaTTAN conference, so that will be June 11th-13th, 2024. If you're

listening to this episode after that date, be sure to check PaTTAN's YouTube channel, where they have recordings of previous symposiums.

I also want to say that, in this episode, we talked very high-level about the power of a spelling inventory, but if you'd like to know more specifics about how to really dial into the results and know exactly what you need to teach, I would check out a presentation that Dr. Kastner co-shared; it's called Spelling: Visible Language to Inform Instruction and Intervention. It's about an hour long, and it's on YouTube. I'll link to that in the show notes for today's episode.

Speaking of show notes, you can find them at reachallreaders.com/episode155. Talk

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

episode of Triple R Teaching.