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**Being Able to Read Is the Superpower!**

By Nancy Chapel Eberhardt

At a time when the media frequently reports on the latest super moon, superfood, or super hero, an article in the popular press about Richard Branson caught my eye. In the article, Branson refers to his dyslexia as his *superpower*. He and many other successful people with dyslexia have attributed their struggle to learn to read with sparking their entrepreneurial spirit and creative thinking. But the reality is that a minority of people with dyslexia never experience the level of success that Branson and others have. The outcome for too many with reading difficulties is undereducation, under or unemployment, and an unfulfilled life.

For the vast majority of struggling readers, many of whom are described in the October 2022 issue of *Perspectives on Language and Literacy* (*Perspectives*, Vol. 48, No. 2) as the underserved students of historically marginalized groups, the inability to read is far from an advantage. The theme editors of this issue, Nicole Patton Terry, Astrid Pohl Zuckerman, and Peggy McCardle, state that “reading achievement in school is tied to systems that exist beyond classroom instruction.” While we know a great deal about teaching how to read, the editors note that we don’t know how to use legislative actions to achieve the desired outcome. Whether we are addressing the disproportionality in special education, inequitable implementation of evidence-based practices, or ineffective use of existing systems such as Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), we need to direct our collective efforts to improving our use of these important legislative actions.

If you are member of IDA, you can access this issue of *Perspectives* at [portal.dyslexia.org](https://portal.dyslexiaida.org/) (select “Publications” from the “Member Resources” menu after you log in) to deepen your awareness and knowledge about the steps we can take to bring about meaningful, intentional, and strategic action to create systems for equitable reading achievement. If you are not a member of IDA, please consider [joining IDA today](https://portal.dyslexiaida.org/) to read the most current issues of *Perspectives* and access useful resources, such as “[Free, Publicly Available Resources to Learn More about Issues Related to Equitable Implementation of Evidence Based Practices, Programs, and Policies](https://app.box.com/s/w5tv167wbmla11mswdz10rz44b65x3r7).”

For the majority of those individuals who are poor readers, learning to read will be their superpower. Let’s join forces to empower all students by teaching them to read.

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Description automatically generated***Nancy Chapel Eberhardt*** *is currently an educational consultant and author. She has experience as a special education teacher, administrator, and professional development provider. Nancy contributed as author and co-author to the development of the literacy intervention curriculum LANGUAGE!  More recently she collaborated with Margie Gillis to develop the Literacy How Professional Learning Series. Nancy is the co-author of Sortegories 3.0, a web-based app that provides practice with decoding, vocabulary, and syntax to improve decoding, reading comprehension, and fluency. She serves as a member of IDA’s Perspectives and the Examiner editorial boards.*