

The Reading Innovation DNA

The **7** Secrets in Making 2-1/2 to
6-Year Old Boys Read in Just
30 Days or Less Thru Play...

...that Help Parents Build Young Boys' Self-Confidence
and Boost Their Self-Esteem



alterra
TRAINING

Disclaimer

The strategies stated herein are based on a compendium of several researches conducted in reading education including the landmark study of the National Reading Panel in 2000 and the author's case study research of struggling readers in 2015 submitted to the Ateneo De Manila University.

These "7 secrets" are also derived from the author's Reading Certification Course from Read America, Orlando, Florida and her own experiences as a Reading Coach of regular students and those with "dyslexia".

The author does NOT claim to solely own all the strategies stated herein.

You are allowed to copy and use them with your child or in planning your curriculum in order for you to make your child or your young students read faster in the most effective way possible.

However, your level of success in attaining the results depends on a lot of factors including a paradigm shift and a "growth mindset", proper training, and the time and effort you devote in using these strategies.



Introduction

Please allow me to introduce myself before I reveal to you the 7 secrets on how to make young boys read in just 30 days or less.

I am Lorna B. Yan, known to my reading students as Teacher Bee. I have been in the education sector for more than 20 years. My experiences as a teacher and a school leader are all in the basic education setting.

I am also a mother of two, the youngest of which is the inspiration of most of the things I do about reading. He had delayed speech and struggled in learning to read.

Desperate for not finding a reading program that allowed my son to enjoy learning to read in a more physical, experiential, and highly active setting, I started my own. To have a full grasp of what and how to teach, I first earned a certification from Read America, USA.

To fast track the reading process, I used the result of the meta-analysis conducted by the National Reading Panel in 2000 as the basis of the content of the program.

Recognizing the lack of "boy-friendly" environment in teaching boys to read, I used the latest Neuroscience research in developing strategies to address the unique needs of boys in learning to read.

After teaching my son successfully, I taught the children of a few relatives and neighbors for free. Then, I started a modest reading center where most students were boys, especially those who had difficulty.



I conducted an evaluation study of the program and presented it as my graduate thesis at Ateneo De Manila University. I called the program Alterra, coming from the word ALTER, in my desire to innovate how reading is taught.

That thesis and reading program became a source of inspiration. It was recognized by the International Economics Development Research Center (IEDRC) of Hongkong in December 2016. I also won an award when I presented the research at the 2017 International Conference on Learning and Teaching (ICLT) in South Korea. My work was also published at the 2018 International Journal of Learning and Teaching (IJLT) in China which paved the way for a presentation at Edutech Asia in Singapore in 2019.

I am **NOT** showing you these accomplishments to brag or to tell you how good we are.

I just want to show you real proof that an innovation like the Alterra Play-to-Read in 30 Days works with children, especially boys. I am not talking about a THEORY but results.

When I tell parents and teachers alike that 2-1/2 to 6 year-old kids can read in 30 days or less, most would look at me in disbelief.

Julius Jayvin Ilagan, one of my participants in my Reading Innovation DNA class, could not contain his excitement in what he discovered: ***“...so dynamic and fresh! I always had this "Aha" moment. The reading process actually blew my mind!”***

Maria Luisa Dazo, owner of Infant Jesus Montessori Center, also commented: ***“It is possible to teach reading in 30 days. I like the innovation.”***

Now, it is your turn to discover the secrets. In this FREE ebook, I will share with you the 7 reading innovation heavyweights that allowed us to help kids read efficiently.

Reading Innovation Secret #1

No Letter Names

The first common mistake parents make when teaching beginning reading to young kids is that they teach the alphabet.

You know that very familiar song- *ey, bee, see, dee, ee, ef, gee...*?

How can you forget? I am sure you sang that to your own child, too. Other than teaching kids to identify the basic colors and numbers 1 to 10, parents teach the alphabet and ask their children to recognize the name of each.

And well-meaning parents would clap their hands in glee when their kids would be able to name these letters!

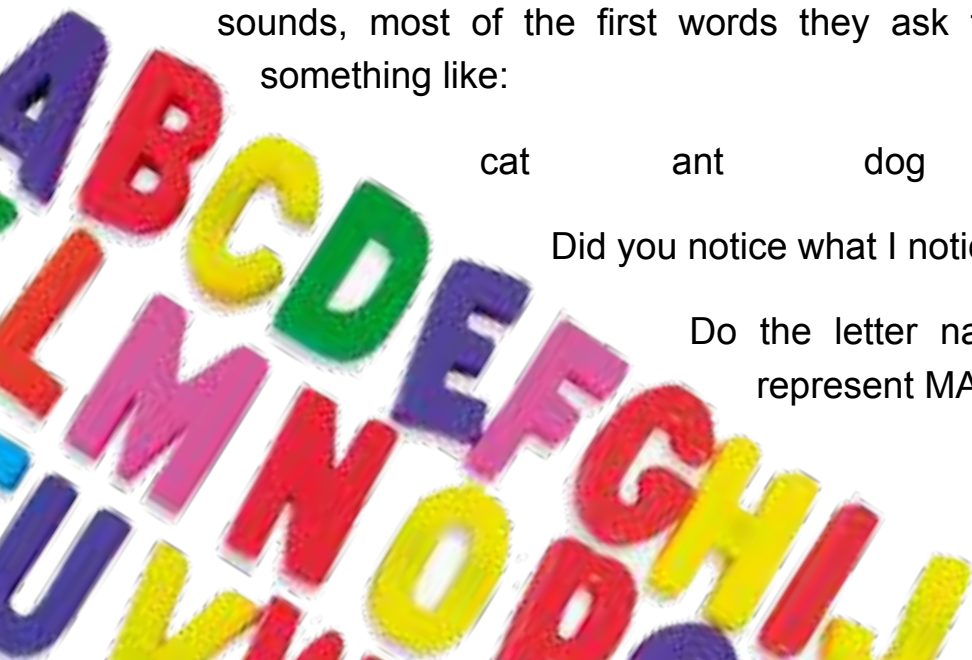
So when the kids get to school, the confusion begins! The teacher also picks up the *ey, bee, see...* song and would sing it repeatedly or have children listen to a played music.

Then, the beginning reading teacher tackles up phonemic awareness, print awareness among others, as expected. But when the kids begin to blend sounds, most of the first words they ask the kids to read would be something like:

cat ant dog bed

Did you notice what I noticed?

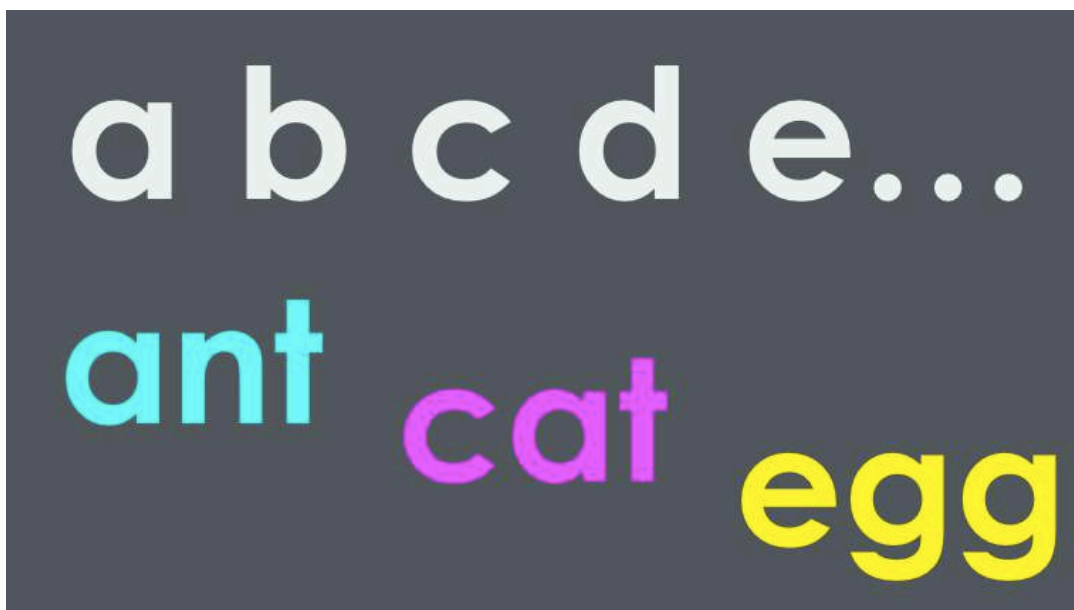
Do the letter names and the sound each represent MATCH?



We say /see/ for the letter c but we read it as /k/ in cat.

Did we ever realize that this MISMATCH confuses young kids?

Such a waste of time for beginning reading instruction!



“Well, that was how I learned reading! I also sang the ey, bee, see... song.”

I am sure that is what is in your head right now.

Well, we are talking about strategies for reading in 30 days or less, right?
So the key for us as parents is to eliminate the non-essentials.

Research has repeatedly emphasized: Phonemes and not letter names are the basis of the English code!

Reading Innovation Secret #2

Teach Phonemes Only — No Other Sound Units

It is worth repeating: Phonemes are the basis of the English code!

Not letter names!

Just the sounds! The phonemes!

Why?

We do not need rocket science to understand it.

Egyptian and Sumerian scholars designed the FIRST full-fledged writing systems. Any name, any word, or any word yet to come could be immediately assigned the appropriate symbols representing the sounds of the word.

We call that phonology! And the Egyptian writing system is known as hieroglyphics.

To make the long story short, this means that writing is an invention. And individual differences in learning to use this invention are hard to ignore.

Therefore, one of the major culprits in a laborious and long-winding beginning reading instruction is the nature of the **invented** written code itself.

“Are you out of your mind?” I could almost hear you! :)

Remember, my friend: **English is an opaque language.** Filipino is even easier to read than English! Haven't you noticed?

Richard Lederer has even said that English is crazy. "*You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of the language,*" he emphasized.

So what has focusing on phonemes got to do with all of these?

Please wait! Can you try reading the following first?



Confusing, right?

It is the confusing invented written code or letter representations that made you hesitate.

That's how opaque language like English operates. It is confusing and difficult to read. Therefore, early reading should begin with the most basic of all, the phonemes, without other sound units.

And here is the key: **Initially, focus on the phonemes with one-to-one letter-sound correspondence. When the kids have already achieved mastery on that level, move to the advance code immediately.**

Reading Innovation Secret #3

Do Not Start with Letter a

And who said we have to teach beginning reading starting with letter a?

*Why not start with letter **p** or **m** or **s**?*

Parents are perplexed when I throw these questions.

To be honest, I do not know the answer either.

Somebody handed this down to us and not too many people question it.

The only thing I know is that research tells us that there are letters of the English language that are most commonly used by beginning readers.

So why focus on non-essential letters when you can focus with those that matter first?

Google what those letters are and use them in your beginning reading instruction.

I know this sounds so controversial but when you are doing an innovation, **you have to think differently in a different way**, most especially if you want to make reading faster and more efficient and create a lasting impact among young children.



Reading Innovation Secret #4

Always Integrate Writing... Without Writing!

One of the most common mistakes beginning reading teachers make is to disregard the importance of teaching “beginning” writing when teaching beginning reading.

Again, research has repeatedly emphasized: Print orientation is next to phonemic awareness!

We are talking about order of importance of essential skills!

Therefore, we must teach print awareness, which is needed in helping young kids recognize how the letters look like and how they are written. This reinforces the teaching of phonemes.

Here’s the problem: At 3 or 4 years of age, the students have not fully developed their grasp and their fine motor skills. We all know that!

That means, legibility should be the least of our concern. **So when you integrate writing, use kinesthetic thrills.** This strategy is already enough for young kids.

That’s integrating writing without necessarily writing **on a piece of paper!**

As I would always say, why teach a child to cross the road if he can not even walk?



Reading Innovation Secret #5

Stop Coloring an Apple for Letter a

...And that includes all the pictures associated with each letter.

Again, if we are to streamline the beginning reading process, what has coloring got to do with reading?

If you think I am saying that coloring is not important at all, then you are missing my point.

I have not found any research that supports this activity to improve reading.

In fact, this is never found in the prototype of a successful beginning reading program as outlined by the National Reading Panel (NRP).

Well, teachers would say that this is part of print awareness.

And I would always say, are we better than the result of a landmark study conducted by NRP? The NRP meta-analysis included 1,072 studies on reading instruction carried out over the past 30 years alone.

Until today, no other reading research counters what NRP found as effective reading instruction.

If you insist that coloring is needed, that goes to say that the way you teach beginning reading is not totally researched-based.

So sorry to say that!

I am not surprised though. Many of what NRP has found go against established theories.



Reading Innovation Secret #6

No Sight Words...

...until such time that the young kids have already mastered a few phonemes and they are now ready to put words together to come up with a complete idea.

Remember, decoding is not equal to reading! There must be comprehension and the sight words do help in this respect.

Warning: The sight words should only be those of high frequency. **And they must be real sight words!** Those words that no matter what you do, phonics can not handle them.

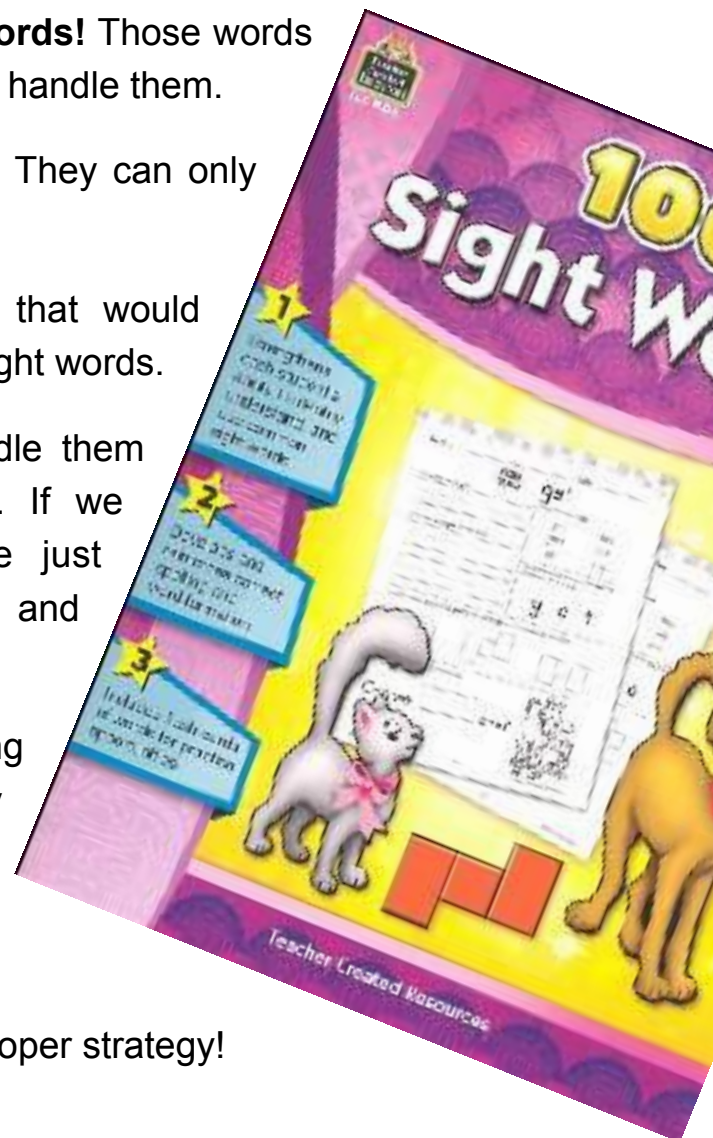
Take the words **the** and **they** for example. They can only be taught in an explicit and systematic way.

Until today, there are reading programs that would include **out, in, get, go, and, or down** as sight words.

Why do that? Young kids can easily handle them using sound-based pedagogy in reading. If we consider them as sight words, we are just teaching the students how to recognize and memorize words.

If done this way, the kids are simply missing the strategy on how to read words they have not seen before. And again, this is one of the reasons why some students struggle in reading.

They memorize and have not learned the proper strategy!



Reading Innovation Secret #7

Use the Boy Magnet Formula

We have discussed at great length the nature of the code.

Now, let's focus on your boy, the recipient of all of these strategies.

You have to embed the "boy magnet formula" in all the strategies.

You have to make reading in ways that speak to your boy, and to feature reading that appeals to him.

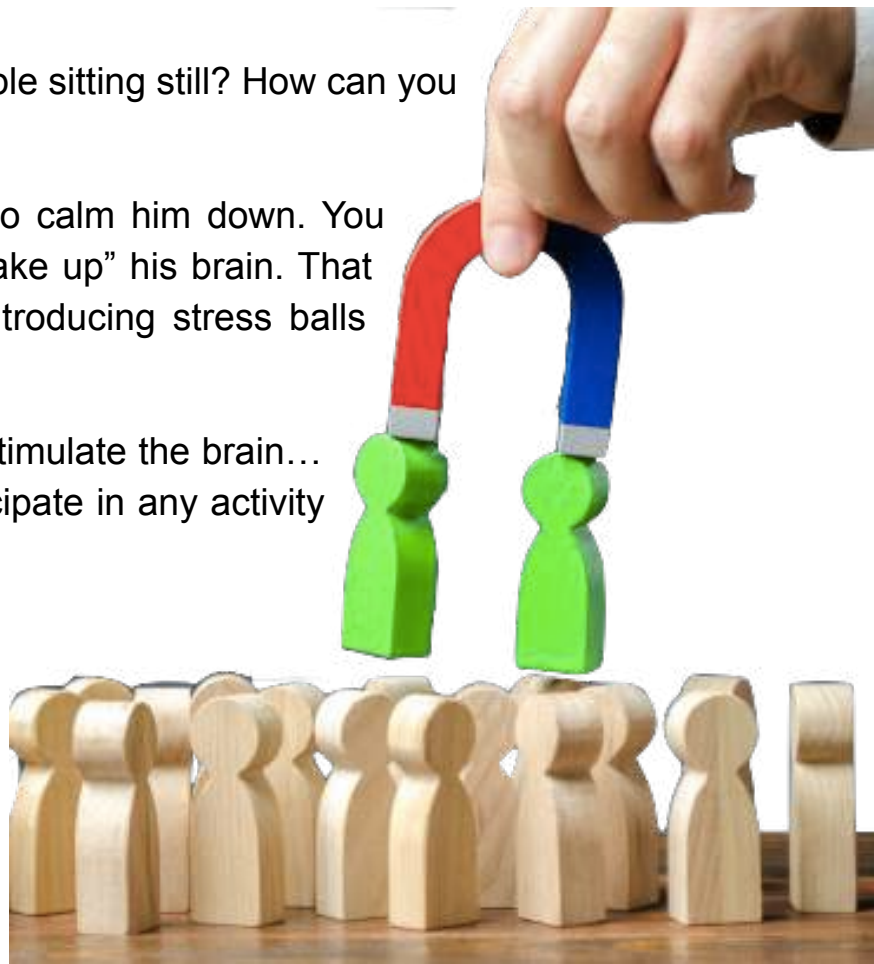
Boys are experiential and structured thinkers. They learn best by doing.

Reading should not require boys to sit still and be quiet. They should be welcomed to stand or sit or curl up under their desks, or jump up and down if they like.

How about if your child has a trouble sitting still? How can you teach him to read?

You do not give him a sedative to calm him down. You give him a strong stimulant to "wake up" his brain. That stimulant can be as simple as introducing stress balls while learning.

A stress ball has been shown to stimulate the brain... and makes a boy excited to participate in any activity at hand.



This was the single most effective strategy I used with my son, a struggling reader, and other boys we taught.

You have to “magnet” your child and make the reading process a breeze. Your kid should not even know that he is learning to read simply because he is having a blast.

Neuroscience supports this! **We have to teach the brain to read using neuroscience research.**

You see, boys are wired to move.

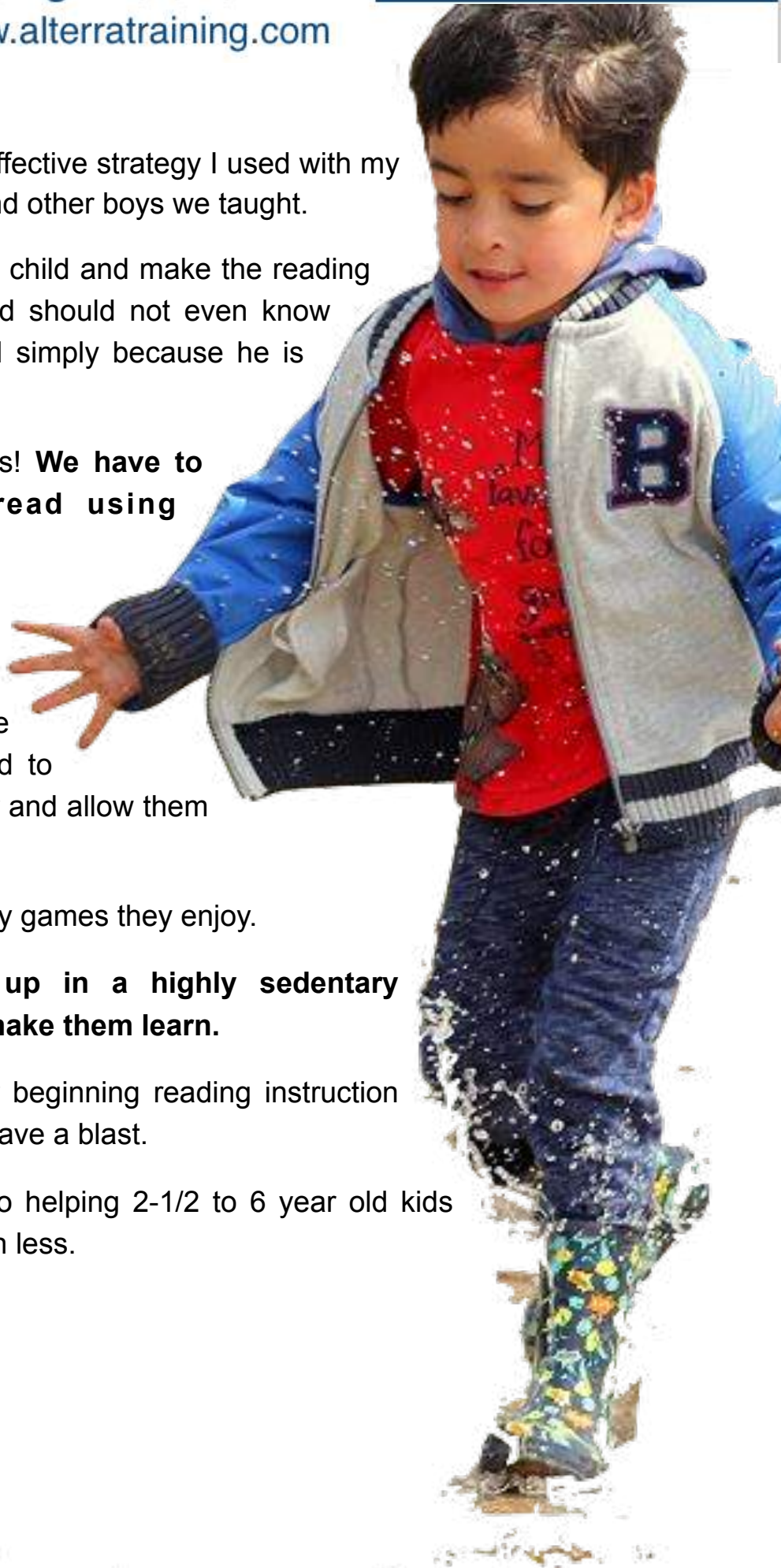
They need to work off some of their energy. They need to wiggle, to move, to wonder and allow them to be themselves.

They need to be free to play games they enjoy.

Keeping them cooped up in a highly sedentary reading activity will not make them learn.

Mix this ingredient in your beginning reading instruction and you yourself will also have a blast.

You will be on your way to helping 2-1/2 to 6 year old kids read in just 30 days or even less.



Final Considerations

Now, how do these 7 secrets fit together in building your boy's self-confidence and boosting his self-esteem?

Let us first look at 4 realities that parents of boys are facing in this generation.

1. Children are spending way too much time in front of screens. For younger children, ages 2 to 5, the recommended screen time limit is one hour per day. But more and more parents are resorting to device applications not only for play but also in teaching their kids to read at an early age. **Sedentary lifestyle** has become the norm.

This is not good news most especially to boys who are wired to move.

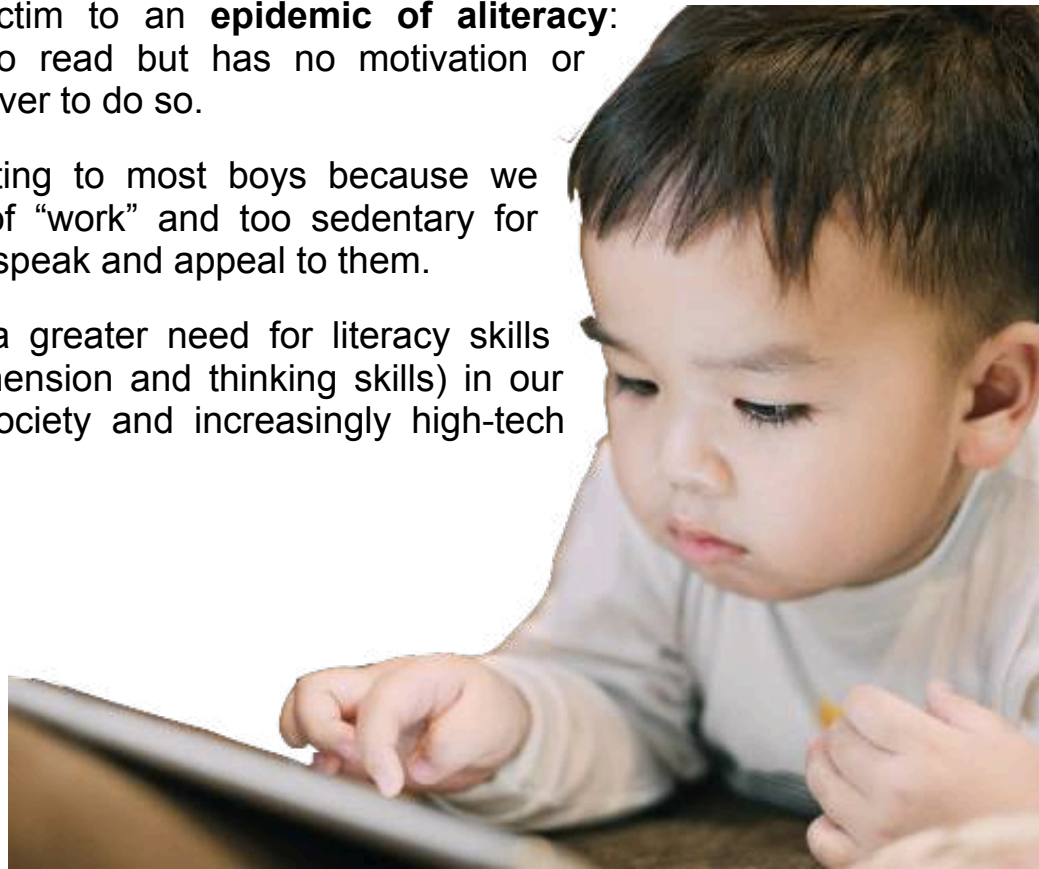
The American Heart Association is urging parents to drastically cut the hours their kids are allowed to use their phones, computers, tablets, and video games.

2. It is now generally accepted that, on average, boys do not read as much or as well as girls. This disparity shows up again and again, at all levels and at all geographies.

Boys are falling victim to an **epidemic of aliteracy**: having the ability to read but has no motivation or compulsion whatsoever to do so.

Reading is not interesting to most boys because we made reading a kind of "work" and too sedentary for them; reading does not speak and appeal to them.

The thing is, there is a greater need for literacy skills (which include comprehension and thinking skills) in our increasingly complex society and increasingly high-tech economy.



3. There is an **explosion in the diagnosis of attention-deficit / hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**. This apparent epidemic is hitting boys hard. In fact, research tells us that nineteen out of twenty ADHD cases are male.

As part of boys' biological and physiological make up, they are more physical. They fidget, move, jump, and run around a lot.

The problem in regular schools is, we force children to sit for blocks of time and expect them to concentrate. Then, we punish them when they act out physically.

We have, in effect, made being a boy a learning disability.

That is not to say that ADHD does not exist. My point is, much of boys' behavior that we call pathological is just natural. There is no reason we as a society have to define that behavior as wrong.

4. Teaching kids to learn to read in 2 to 3 years, the old-fashioned way that is still followed in most schools, is such a **long wait and a waste of time... and money**.

The kids, most especially young boys, are bored simply because of the laborious way of reading that does not speak to the physicality that they normally crave.



So, what do all these mean to your young boy?

It all boils down to a strong literacy foundation, one that makes kids eager to learn and develop a lifelong love of reading and learning — a key to children's successful future.

There is a need for an alternative and progressive reading program that allows young boys to wiggle, to move, and to resort to physical activities to address kids' holistic wellness... to feature reading that appeals to them.

Imagine the effect of being an early and confident reader on your boy's ego.

He will have the opportunity to relate with his peers on a more confident level as he is recognized for his superior accomplishment.

Your boy needs this positive self-image in his journey towards success.

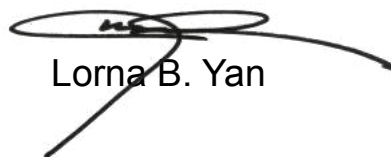
But first and foremost, **your boy needs you!**

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You do not need a special degree or qualification. You only need to be a mother or a father of a young boy!

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To Your Boy's Success,


Lorna B. Yan



FREE Online Webinar Reveals...

**“How to Teach Your Active Boy to Read
in Just 30 Days or Less
...Without Losing Your Mind”**



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About the Author

Lorna B. Yan a.k.a “Teacher Bee” is the creator of Alterra Play-to-Read in 30 Days Program. She started the program when her son struggled to read. She took an online course by "Read America", which was based in Orlando, Florida. However, her son wouldn't pay attention to the sessions until she changed her methods. She did crazy activities to make learning to read more fun for her son. From then on, she wrote different reading strategies and activities to teach other children. The Alterra program was born.

Her mission is to equip parents and fellow teachers with the proper knowledge and skills in order to create a lasting impact among young children.

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