

Visit With the Utays

December 2009

School Psychology and Education Specialists



Dr. **Joe Utay**, Director of Counseling and Evaluation Services for Total Learning Centers and former professor for Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Department of Counseling, is a graduate of University of Pittsburgh, a school psychologist, marriage and family therapist, author, national speaker, and father.

Dr. **Carol Utay** is Executive Director of Total Learning Centers. She is also a graduate of University of Pittsburgh and an expert in learning and special education. "Dr. Carol" has experience as a principal, Orton-Gillingham reading therapist, teacher, consultant, national speaker, professor, author, and mother. She is a national Athena Award winner for community service.

Study Shows Reading Comprehension Programs Don't Work

Based on our thirty-five years of helping students reach their goals, and a recent study by the U.S. Dept. of Education, four programs to improve reading comprehension are useless! 6,350 students used Project CRISS, ReadAbout, Read for Real, or Reading for Knowledge. None were found to improve comprehension.

Why? Few students have problems **only** with reading comprehension. For example, if you can't read the words as **skillfully or quickly as expected**, comprehension is weakened. Also, according to the National Association of School Psychologists, "Reading decoding, reading comprehension, math reasoning, and written expression all depend heavily on the **adequate functioning of working memory**."

So, what should parents do? First find out **the REAL underlying problems causing the reading comprehension problem** in order to then most efficiently improve it.

- 72% of reading comprehension problems are caused by inaccurate reading of individual words (phonics) which also causes slower reading rate. (When **we improve these children's ability to accurately and fluently read words**, reading comprehension improves.)
- 11% of reading comprehension problems are caused by poor working memory. (When **we help these children improve working memory**, reading comprehension improves.)
- 8% of reading comprehension problems are caused by inattention. (When **we improve children's attention**, reading comprehension improves.)
- 5% of reading comprehension problems are caused by language and vocabulary issues. (When **we help these children improve language and vocabulary**, reading comprehension improves.)
- 3% of reading comprehension problems are caused by anxiety about reading performance. (When **we help these children gain control over anxiety**, reading comprehension improves.)

- 1% of reading comprehension problems are caused by vision issues. (When **we refer these children for help from a pediatric vision specialist**, reading comprehension improves.)

Why Bring Your Child to Total Learning Centers?

- In-depth evaluation discovers your child's strengths and needs and the **real reason your child is having trouble with reading**.
- Our reading programs are research based and work. We use solid, scientific research and education industry best practices. Consistent with the findings of the [National Reading Panel](#), **your child will master phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension, depending on needs**. If your child needs improvement in attention, memory, thinking speed, or anxiety, state of the art programs are available.
- Total Learning Centers offer Orton-Gillingham programs – powerful for anyone and **THE choice for children with dyslexia**.
- To meet the needs of busy families like yours, **scheduling is flexible and we make every hour count for your child**.

Not sure exactly what your child needs? To discuss your child's specific situation and need for efficient successful ways to improve reading comprehension – crucial for students throughout their school career – call Total Learning Centers at (724) 940-1090. If easier, email us at success@TotalLearningCenter.com. Follow Dr. Carol Utay on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/carolutay>.

Total Learning Centers was voted AGAIN Best Tutoring and Best SAT Prep by Nickelodeon's Parent Picks.

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