The alphabetic principle and beyond…

surveying the landscape

Edited by ROBYN COX, SUSAN FEEZ & LORRAINE BEVERIDGE

The genesis of the idea for The alphabetic principle and beyond… can be found in the current prioritising of the alphabetic principle in the teaching of early reading and in discussions about how teachers might better understand varying perspectives in order to inform their practice. The editors committed to providing teachers with the latest research-based and evidence-based pedagogical practice while at the same time translating these big ideas.

“We were also very aware that diverse views on the place of teaching and learning about the alphabetic principle in the early years have generated a variety of teaching approaches amid intense debate. Claims about the value of specific approaches are often expressed in very strong terms, while evidence supporting each claim is regularly contested. Nevertheless, as we set out on our journey to bring this book to readers, we were unprepared for how intensely these different views continue to be debated, although it has become clear to us that all contributors to this debate share the same goal of providing teachers with the best and most up-to-date evidence to inform their pedagogical stance and practice. In this book, we survey a wide range of perspectives and approaches to teaching and learning about the alphabetic principle in order to help teachers navigate this challenging terrain more confidently.” (Preface)

Part 1 Surveying the landscape

1 Reading: an essential activity in our society (R.Cox, S.Feez & L.Beveridge)
2 The alphabetic principle: an orientation (S.Feez)
3 What kind of knowledge can we use? Scoping an adequate program for literacy education (P.Freebody)

Part 2 Exploring the terrain

4 Systematic and explicit phonics instruction: A scientific, evidence-based approach to teaching the alphabetic principle (J.Buckingham, R.Wheldall & K. Wheldall)
5 The role of spoken interaction (R. Cox)
6 The alphabetic principle in early literacy education (L.Arthur & M.Hertzberg)
7 Learning to be literate: An orthographic journey with young students (L.Anderson, A.Whiting, P.Bowers, and G.Venable)
8 Scaffolding alphabetic knowledge when teaching and learning about texts (B. Parkin & H.Harper)
9 Learning to ‘look at’ and ‘write’ the letters of the alphabet (N. M.Mackenzie)

Part 3 Finding our way

10 Teaching the alphabetic principle: some tentative steps forward (R.Cox, S.Feez & L. Beveridge)