

Unpacking literacy assessments in Aotearoa New Zealand schools: How can link practice with theory?

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Biographies

Alison Arrow is an Associate Professor in literacy at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand. Alison co-led a longitudinal intervention project examining the effectiveness of providing teachers with more targeted literacy teaching strategies for improving child literacy outcomes; this work has led to wider changes to literacy approaches in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her areas of research interests include teacher knowledge and professional development, early literacy development, reading and spelling development, reading comprehension, the use of digital technologies, and literacy difficulties.

Amanda Denston is a Senior Lecturer of Literacy at Massey University. She is interested in literacy development and its link with psychosocial development, especially in children experiencing difficulties in their literacy development. Amanda has worked extensively in schools with key partners.

ABSTRACT

To meet the needs of students, including those demonstrating literacy learning difficulties, schools and teachers must have assessments and interventions that can identify and meet the needs of those students. In Aotearoa New Zealand, teachers and schools use a wide range of assessments and interventions were used in schools, but assessments often fail to provide information about specific literacy difficulties and interventions often fail to meet the criteria for intervention (teacher-led, based on specific needs). The variability of interventions and assessments suggests that the identification of students with literacy learning difficulties and associated interventions lack consistency that affects the support provided to these students.

In this workshop, we will link research with practice. We will examining a variety of literacy assessments used in schools. We will explore these in terms of the research and theory on how children learn to read and make sense of text and in terms of response to intervention framework. We will discuss how these assessments can be better utilised within these frameworks.

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