



Simon S.I.O. is based on the extensive research done by **Ted Hasselbring, Ed.D** and **Laura Goin M.Ed.**, and the classroom tested Simon Sounds It Out. Ted and Laura's research facilitated the creation of the Peabody Learning Lab while at Vanderbilt University. Much of the approach used in Simon S.I.O. is a direct result of the Peabody Learning Lab.

Motivation for Study

Ted and Laura's research began in 1993. It was further spurred by the 1994 NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) findings that 40% of fourth-grade students failed to attain the basic level of reading. Isolating skill deficits and developing effective intervention strategies for middle school students, especially in high-risk, urban schools, became even more paramount as reading scores continued to plummet. Ted and Laura targeted middle school "as it is through reading and using a complicated series of skills that most learning in middle and high school is expected to occur." (Fairhurst and Pumfrey, 1992). In other words, it is at this age that students are transitioned from "learning to read" to "reading to learn."

Two Problematic Areas

Ted and Laura's early research and the research of others, led them to the conclusion that students who are not reading by middle school have two significant problems with respect to reading:

- Inability to decode fluently
- Inability to create mental models from text

Fluency and decoding skills are crucial to both word and sentence comprehension. The goal is automaticity—the ability to retrieve information from long-term memory without having to "think" about it. Information is stored more readily under the following conditions:

- It makes sense
- It has meaning

The assignment of sense and meaning to new learning can occur only if the learner has adequate time to process and reprocess it. This continual reprocessing is called "rehearsal" and is critical to moving information from working memory to long-term memory. Varying the approach to storing and retrieving information most successfully embeds new information into long-term memory and reduces the working memory load, freeing the brain to accept new information.

