

Since speech has always existed while writing and reading are inventions, we can draw two conclusions:

1. Speech is natural; therefore, it does not have to be taught.
2. Reading is not natural; therefore, it has to be taught.

Speech is natural.

Speaking and listening come naturally to us. Babies learn to speak by listening. Unless there is a physical disability, most children learn to talk by absorbing and repeating speech sounds in their environment.



Speech is natural, but reading is not.

Speaking is natural, but reading is not. Why? Remember that reading is an invention. We don't have to teach children how to speak, but we must teach them how to read. Our brains have had to catch up with reading by developing new systems and pathways for translating printed symbols back into spoken words. The brain has had to learn how to read.

So, the most crucial question is, "How has the brain learned to read?" Why is this question so important? It is essential because if we understand how the brain has learned to read, we will understand how to use that same method to teach children how to read. We want our children to learn to read the same way the brain has learned to read. We want to work with the brain and not against it. Our brains have adapted to reading by creating internal systems to process printed words; therefore, we must teach children how to take advantage of those neural networks to read efficiently and effectively.

