

5 Minutes with ReadWorks

This podcast episode is 5 Minutes with ReadWorks. Susanne Nobles, the Chief Academic Officer at ReadWorks, joined us to discuss how ReadWorks serves students and educators. Susanne shared about some of the current resources they have available, as well as upcoming webinars that people can participate in to learn more.

To learn more check out their website readworks.org!

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Transcript of the podcast episode:

Gabrielle: Welcome to the Educating All Learners Alliance podcast and our ‘5 Minutes With’ series. My name is Gabrielle Oates and today we’re sharing 5 minutes with ReadWorks and I’m joined by Susanne Nobles who is the Chief Academic Officer at ReadWorks. So welcome Susanne.

Susanne: Thank you so much for having me. I’m excited to share a little bit about ReadWorks.

Gabrielle: We’d love to jump right in in these 5 minutes and hear a bit about what your organization does, how you support all learners, and some of the upcoming work that you’re doing.

Susanne: Yeah, absolutely. So first and foremost ReadWorks is a non profit and so our mission is supporting the growth of successful and joyful readers. We do that by supporting the educators working with those readers. So we provide K12 educators, for free, the largest and highest quality library of fiction and literary passages in the country. Along with these, we have reading comprehension and vocabulary supports, texts dependent questions, teacher guidance and more. Most importantly everything we provide is based on the science of reading and so we’re working all the time to ever improve those supports to help teachers with the best practices to support their students.

Gabrielle: This is a great resource. Are there any particular strategies that ReadWorks takes to support all learners?

Susanne: Yes, we are very focused on that and we're excited to be a part of the Educating All Learners Alliance for that reason. As a non profit with the mission of supporting students all over the nation, we want to be able to support all of them and so what we try to do is offer a lot of differentiation and a lot of possibilities for teachers who know their students, to then use and support them. So, first and foremost ReadWorks content makes it easy to differentiate. We offer thousands of reading passages at all different grade levels K through 12. And whether you're printing or assigning to a digital class, you can assign an individual student a passage and they do not see the grade. So that's the first way educators tell us all the time that they so appreciate that it's a complex engaging passage that the student can read at the right level for them at that time. And as I said, you can assign, all the way to an individual student, even in a digital class. You could assign 30 different passages to your 30 different students if you want to differentiate it that far.

Gabrielle: To go a little bit further, in terms of the teacher's impact, what impact do they have on their students' use of those digital support tools? And I know you've recently done some research into this, so what were some of those results?

Susanne: Thank you for asking about that, because we were really pleased with the results of this research. We partnered with the Learner Variability project at Digital Promise, another EALA partner. And so we partnered with them to investigate the effectiveness of all these digital tools in supporting learners. The Digital Promise research team observed some significant findings. The first and foremost for teachers is that they had the most significant effect on whether students used the digital tools that we offer. That's the biggest lesson, is that we need to make sure teachers know they exist, so the teachers can guide their students to use them. The research also showed that greater use of ReadWorks was related to growth on standardized reading tests. What that meant, when you dug more into those findings, was that students engaged with more challenging reading passages when they used our digital support tools. So it's really critical for the teachers to be aware of them, get their students using them, because it helps the students challenge themselves. The big takeaway from that is that introducing ReadWorks digital support tools might be one of the easiest steps teachers can take to encourage students to reach more challenging texts.

Gabrielle: Those are great findings and I hope people find these useful. Now, are there any upcoming webinars, like you mentioned, that people could tune into or refer to, to learn more?

Susanne: Yes, absolutely. We have one coming up on January 26th, 2021 which will focus on all of our differentiation tools. It's only 30 minutes and I go quickly and get it all covered, so registering

for that live and you'll also get the recording and resources. At the same time we have on demand webinars for hybrid and remote learning and our differentiation tools that are on our webinar page, right on our website.

Gabrielle: Alright, well thank you. Be sure to check out readworks.org for more information there. Also to learn more about Educating All Learners Alliance go to educatingalllearners.org, subscribe to our YouTube channel, and follow us on Twitter [@educateall_org](https://twitter.com/educateall_org). Until next time, this is the Educating All Learners Alliance podcast!