

EZC Reader



Meet Sharon Cannon, third grade teacher and creator of the innovative EZC Reader highlighting reading aide designed to help children read with ease. We interviewed Sharon, a 27 year teaching veteran, to find out more about her EZC Reader, and how she believes her invention can help your students.

Q: How did you hit on the idea of creating the EZC Reader?

A: My son is dyslexic. He is truly a textbook case, and watching him grow and learn has provided me great insight into what it must be like to struggle to learn to read. I can now see, hear, and think as a child with a reading disability. Consequently, I constantly look for tools children can use to support the reading process. The EZC Reader was born out of my desire to help my son and other children like him who struggle to read.

Q: Before EZC Reader, what other tools did you use to help focus children on print?

A: In the past I had students place bookmarks below text to help guide their reading. This prevented them from jumping vertically from line to line, but did not really guide their left-to-right visual tracking. Nor did it help their eyes to focus on the words. I knew dyslexic readers could better focus if a large sheet of transparent colored material was placed over a full page of text. I decided to combine the two devices by attaching an edge of transparent material to the top of a bookmark and the EZC Reader was born.

Q: How exactly does the EZC Reader work?

A: It's really quite simple! A reader places the EZC Reader on page so that the yellow plastic edge is "highlighting" the line of print the child is trying to read. While reading, the child moves the EZC Reader through the lines of print from left to right, and top-to-bottom. The plastic edge acts as a "highlighter," preventing the reader's eyes from jumping vertically from line to line and from skipping or "floating over" words. With increased visual focus on the print, fluency increases and comprehension improves.

Q: What kind of success have you had with students who use the EZC Reader?

A: I've lots of success stories, but one that stands out involves a little girl I tutored one summer. By age seven this child had failed many reading tests. Some experts recommended she be placed in Special Education. But, as soon as we began working together with the EZC Reader, I noticed improvements. In fact, in recent testing, she has shown an increase of thirteen months in her reading level. In addition, she has been on her school honor roll the entire year. I realize the EZC Reader is not solely responsible for these improvements, but, since using the EZC Reader, this child's levels of motivation, confidence, and skill have soared.

Q: When is it best to begin students using the EZC Reader?

A: I would recommend introducing the EZC Reader to children as early as Kindergarten, or as soon as a child is beginning to attend to print in books.

Q: What kind of reader benefits from using the EZC Reader?

A: Any reader can benefit from using the EZC Reader, especially those with visual tracking difficulties, or those whom have difficulty staying focused on the task at hand.

Q: How will I know if the EZC Reader is helping? What kind of results can I expect?

A: You will know if the EZC Reader is working if the child more easily focuses on what he or she is reading. Users should begin reducing the amount of omissions, skips, and jumps as they read. Reading should become more fluent and, as a result, comprehension will improve. Of course, the timing of these changes will vary with every child depending on the severity of their disability, prior experiences with reading and print matter, the age of the child, and level of motivation.

Q: Do students mind using the EZC Reader?

A: My students are begging for them. They can't wait to have their own. In fact, the EZC Reader is so popular with my students that their younger siblings are each asking for one.

Q: Is it best to use the EZC Reader with one student at a time, or can it be used with small or large groups?

A: I recommend teachers introduce the EZC Reader to individual children. Then, when all the students have had some experience reading one-on-one with the tool, teachers can work it into small groups sessions, and finally use it with the entire class.

Q: Is there any other way students can use their EZC Readers?

A: Every day it seems I find more and more ways to use the EZC Reader. It is especially helpful when working with graphs, charts, and grid systems. It can be used with any lesson involving tracking print from left to right. We recently had a mileage grid in our Social Studies book. The EZC Reader made the task of reading the grid a breeze! I recommend using it to read multiplication and addition charts, too. My students have even discovered that the EZC Reader's transparent edge is useful in eliminating sun glare, so reading during outdoor recess is now common practice at our school!