According to the U.S. Department of Education, more than 60% of K-12 school children are reading below the level of proficiency necessary for the brain-work of reading to be transparent to the mind-work of learning at the grade level they are in.

According to the latest National Assessment of Adult Literacy report (NAAL), over 90 million (4 out of 10) U.S. adults are living lives socially and economically disadvantaged due to poor reading skills. Adults with low levels of literacy are significantly more likely to live in poverty, engage in crime and other forms of social pathology, and to live unhealthy, and even shorter lives.

David Boulton: ... our children’s futures are all but fated...by how well they learn to read.

Dr. Grover (Russ) Whitehurst: Yes, that’s true, ... in our society, as it is structured, the inability to be fluent consigns children to failure in school and adults to the lowest strata of job and life opportunities.

Dr. Sally E. Shaywitz, professor of Pediatric Neurology at Yale University, author of "Overcoming Dyslexia":

David Boulton: ...[It’s not just] dyslexics or people that are struggling on the more severe side of this, ... reading improficiency and its psychological and cognitive processing challenges and consequences, reaches to the extent that, according to national statistics, sixty-plus percent of all twelfth graders are below proficient.

Dr. Sally Shaywitz: That’s right. It’s believable. At first blush it seems, oh, how can that be? But it is.

David Boulton: If you look at all the things (US) kids born today are at risk for, the possibility of ... cognitive, neurological, psychological developmental issues, or even abuse, all the things we put stats on... if you add them together ... the risk of having their lives harmed because they didn't make it to reading proficiency is bigger than all the other things combined.

Nancy Hennessy, M.Ed., president of the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) 2003-2005:

Nancy Hennessy: It's huge. That's a really interesting perspective ... when you begin to talk about all these different factors that play in, it really is a startling and very different way of looking at this and realizing how much more significant the problem is.

All quotes from COTC interviews, see: [http://www.childrenofthecode.org](http://www.childrenofthecode.org)
David Boulton: I’ve come to view reading as the interface between what’s natural in human learning and what’s artificial. It’s a virtual reality.

Dr. Timothy Shanahan: I think that’s a lovely description of it. It really is a virtual reality, it is a matrix.

Dr. Charles Perfetti, Professor of Psychology & Linguistics and the Sr. Scientist and Project Director of the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh.

David Boulton: Reading is a code instructed and informed language simulation system that’s feeding into downstream comprehension processes. And if that first part is working right then the second part is very similar to comprehending spoken language.

Dr. Charles Perfetti: Yes, I think that’s a fundamentally correct way to understand it.

Dr. Louisa Cook Moats: That’s a wonderful thesis and it’s just so refreshing to hear you articulate that because I guess I’m in total agreement with it. I have not really heard people articulate it as clearly as you have.

Dr. Timothy Shanahan, Chair of the National Early Literacy Panel, Past-President International Reading Association, Member of the National Reading Panel.

Dr. Louisa Moats, V.P., International Dyslexia Association, specialist in the implementation of school-wide interventions for improving literacy.