

## ABOUT THE PRESENTATION:

Reading is about recognizing meaning on a printed page. Lexical morphemes are the smallest units of meaning. Phonological awareness provides an essential steppingstone to reading, whereas morphological awareness is critical for achieving advanced reading mastery—the ability to recognize meaning on a printed page quickly and efficiently.

In this talk, co-presenters, Dr. Ioulia Kovelman, a neuroscientist and dyslexia researcher, and Dr. Rebecca Tolson, a structured literacy/dyslexia specialist, will join forces to offer cutting-edge science on Morphological Awareness skills: what these are, how they develop, the brain-bases of morphology and how it contributes to both word reading and reading comprehension in typically-developing readers and children with dyslexia. Together, they will offer research, education, and policy-based perspectives on best practices in supporting children's literacy skills as well as literacy success for all learners.

## WHAT'S IN A WORD? A BRAIN-BEHAVIOR PERSPECTIVE ON WORD READING & DYSLEXIA

**Ioulia Kovelman, Ph.D.**



**Rebecca Tolson, Ph.D., CALT-QI**

### Objectives:

1. Participants will be informed on the latest discoveries in the science of reading and dyslexia, focusing on morphological awareness and its role in helping children recognize meaning on a printed page.
2. Participants will learn about the neuroscience and brain-based perspectives on literacy and dyslexia.
3. Participants will learn about education and intervention-based perspectives on literacy and dyslexia.

## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS:

**Dr. Ioulia Kovelman** is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan. Dr. Kovelman focuses on child language and literacy development in children who speak English and other languages. As a developmental cognitive neuroscientist, Dr. Kovelman takes a brain-behavior approach to studying children's language and literacy using a child-friendly functional Near Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS) neuroimaging method. These studies include research with typically developing readers and at-risk learners such as those with dyslexia and developmental language disorders (DLD). In her current research, Dr. Kovelman focuses on children learning to speak and read in English, Spanish, and Chinese. Through this work, she addresses the universal, language-specific, and bilingual influences on child reading development and dyslexia.

To learn more about Dr. Kovelman's work, please visit the [Language & Literacy Lab](#) website and her [NCBI](#) bibliography.

**Rebecca Tolson** has a Ph.D. in Elementary Education from the University of Akron and is a Certified Dyslexia Therapist through the International Dyslexia Association. She began her career in education as a fifth-grade teacher and later transitioned to teaching both children and adults with learning disabilities. She specializes in using Structured Literacy techniques as an intervention for dyslexia and dysgraphia. Tolson teaches as an adjunct professor for Walsh University in the Masters of Dyslexia Therapy program and serves as chair of the Ohio Dyslexia Committee. She has worked for over a decade on state policies for individuals with dyslexia.