

Humans inherently understand patterns, an ability that makes language possible. Indeed, phonemic patterns (speech) form the basis of language, making us naturally ear-centered. Yet how easily we forget the only reason writing exists: to represent the phonemes constituting spoken words. The result of our collective memory lapse? Standard reading methods are primarily eye-centered. This forces an unnatural system on students and too often creates confusion and uncertainty.

Since language is first acquired orally, we instinctively rely on speech as the gateway to written language, making ear-centered reading the most natural approach. Being ear-centered is a hallmark of the Modelli Method and sets it apart from other reading programs.

But doesn't phonics use the ear? Yes, to some extent but not enough. Phonics remains heavily eye-centered. Witness its "sight words". Yet an analysis of sight words reveals consistent phonetic patterns that make rote memorization unnecessary. The Modelli Method teaches students that words consist of letter patterns, whose sole purpose is to represent phonemes. When students learn to look for these letter/phoneme correspondences, reading becomes much easier.

The Modelli Method goes beyond phonics because it is fully phonetic, which phonics is not. The Modelli Method teaches students to use their ears first and their eyes second. Being grounded in letter/sound correspondences, they understand that the letter patterns in words are just a mirror of speech, the form of language they are most comfortable with, especially beginning readers.

Of course, many scoff at the idea of English being phonetic. They point instead to German, Spanish, and Italian as beacons of phonetic virtue and view English as a linguistic ne'er-do-well. Such critics equate quantity with quality, arbitrarily believing fewer phonetic patterns means better.

In reality, the only significant difference between the phonetic nature of the Big Three and English is the greater number of patterns in English. If that is acknowledged, English registers well into the 90th percentile of phonetic consistency. Modelli taps this highly phonetic aspect of English as no other reading system does.

You may wonder if the Modelli Method has been tested. Rest assured it is not a theory. It has withstood trial by fire through years of use in the classroom and tutoring. In both settings it has proven successful, serving the needs of all students, from remedial through enrichment.

The Modelli Method helps home school students, whether beginning or advanced, become exceptional readers. To that end, we offer home educators professional training so they may learn and use this outstanding reading method.