



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, February 13, 2025

What's Next in the Science of Reading: Dr. Mark Seidenberg and Dr. Maryellen MacDonald in Conversation with Emily Hanford at Planet Word

Washington, D.C. — On Saturday, March 1, **Planet Word** will host *Eyes on Reading: What's Next in the Science of Reading*, a timely discussion that challenges conventional wisdom on literacy instruction. The event features Dr. Mark Seidenberg and Dr. Maryellen MacDonald, renowned cognitive scientists whose work has reshaped our understanding of how people learn to read.

Seidenberg, author of *Language at the Speed of Sight*, has been a leading voice in the push for evidence-based reading instruction. He argues that our current approach to teaching reading puts many children at risk of failure, disproportionately affects lower-income students, and even stifles the potential of those who could become highly skilled readers. His research has helped fuel the movement known as the Science of Reading, but he and MacDonald are concerned that some of the research is being misunderstood as legislators pass laws and schools adopt new curriculum.

As leading experts in language and reading development, as well as husband and wife, they bring a unique partnership to cognitive science, offering fresh perspectives on translating reading research into effective educational practices. In conversation with award-winning journalist and Planet Word's Journalist in Residence, Emily Hanford, they'll examine the successes and shortcomings of current reading instruction and discuss how to bridge the gap between research and classroom practice to meet the diverse needs of all learners. The program will conclude with an audience Q&A, allowing attendees to engage directly with these influential thinkers and examine how scientific discoveries can support literacy for all.

"The science of reading has reshaped how we understand literacy instruction, but there's still work to do in ensuring that research is applied effectively in classrooms," said Hanford. "This discussion is

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an opportunity to examine what's next — how we take what we've learned and use it to better support teachers and students.”

This event is part of Planet Word's ongoing *Eyes on Reading* series, which highlights critical conversations about literacy, language, and education.

Tickets are \$15 and can be reserved here: <https://planetwordmuseum.org/events/eyes-on-reading-whats-next-in-the-science-of-reading/>. Space is limited.

Event Details:

9:00 – 9:45 a.m. — Pastry reception (Planet Word Lobby)

10:00 a.m. — Program begins (Friedman Family Auditorium)

This program is presented with support from the Ibis Group. To arrange for coverage, contact press@planetwordmuseum.org.

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Planet Word is the only museum in the country dedicated to renewing and inspiring a love of words and language. Located in the historic Franklin School on the corner of 13th and K Streets in downtown D.C., Planet Word opened in 2020 as a new kind of interactive and self-guided museum. Using the museum's state-of-the-art technology, visitors determine their experience through their own words and choices. Planet Word is a bold and imaginative response to the life-long importance of literacy and to the challenge of growing a love of language. As a private, non-governmental museum, Planet Word is free for visitors and supported primarily by the generosity of donors.