What Makes an Expert Reading Teacher?

Hi, I'm Dana Harbert, and I am the head of the reading department at Eagle Hill School.

I think the most important qualifications in this work are being flexible and being knowledgeable. When you have many different ways of approaching a reading difficulty and working with a student, that can only help the student become more successful.

Rather than saying, “We use this approach” or “We use that system,” I think it’s more important to recognize that a system might work well for some students but not for others. An approach like the Orton-Gillingham approach is different because the teacher is the one setting up and creating the lessons for the student. That’s what really helps students make progress. Each day’s lesson targets the specific areas where the student needs to grow.