



## INTRODUCTION

As I have spoken with people around the country, I have discovered a pervasive belief: English spelling is inconsistent, illogical, and, for some, impossible. This apparent “flaw” with English has caused deep frustration not only within our schools—public, private, and home—but through all levels of society. We have professionals who cannot spell, parents who cannot answer their children’s questions, and employers who are despairing at the low literacy rates of the workforce.

Language, both spoken and written, is the foundation of all academics and the medium by which we conduct business, science, politics, and relationships. Without a firm grasp of our language, we sever the Achilles tendon of our society and of the individuals within it.

The United States currently has one of the lowest literacy rates in the developed world. According to the Nation’s Report Card, 34% of fourth graders cannot read, and 68% are below proficient.<sup>1</sup> An astounding 68% of eighth graders test below grade level in reading.<sup>2</sup> These statistics continue on through the adult population; fully 48% of adults are not proficient in reading.<sup>3</sup>

This is at a time in history when the economy demands more highly skilled workers each year, and competition in highly trained fields such as science and engineering is exploding worldwide. Not only do we need to increase literacy rates to stay competitive in a world economy, but illiteracy and remedial education cost our nation \$536 billion each year<sup>4</sup> and are primary factors in both crime and poverty.<sup>5</sup> Teaching reading so that everyone succeeds is vital to the health of our society and our economy.

The information contained in *Uncovering the Logic of English* is not new. You may be surprised to learn that, with some variations, the spelling rules and