This talk aims to answer the key question of how children learned to read in late imperial China (framed broadly as the Song through Qing dynasties, ca. 960-1911 CE). Drawing on a wide range of primary sources, Dr. Li Yu investigates the main pedagogical procedures (i.e. memorization, vocalization, punctuation, textual explication, and character recognition) used to train children, mainly boys and sometimes girls, to acquire literacy skills. She argues that prior to the late seventeenth century, aural-oral memorization and vocalization dominated the descriptive and prescriptive discourses on the history of reading pedagogy. However, teachers of later periods discovered the importance of introducing the visual aspect of characters into the reading curriculum. During the nineteenth century, evidential scholars and philologists further developed the pedagogical method by relying on knowledge gained from the field of paleography. Modern scholars of the twentieth century continue to seek inspirations from the reading pedagogy of late imperial China and some of the techniques are well and alive even today. The talk ends with a brief discussion of the implication of this research for literacy education in general in any language.