Supporting Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers

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Florida Center for Reading Research

Coach's Literacy Conference, August, 2005
If you could have one wish focused on helping more of your students become proficient readers, what would it be?

- Greater funding?
- Greater parental support?
- Better prepared teachers?
- Better prepared principals?
- More hours in the day?
- Fewer hours in the day?
- Better physical facilities?
- Higher pay for teachers, principals, and coaches?

How about less diversity among our students in their talent and preparation for learning to read?
The problem of diversity in talent and preparation for learning to read

A central problem in reading instruction arises, not from the *absolute* level of children’s preparation for learning to read, but from the *diversity* in their levels of preparation

(Olson, 1998)
What are the most important ways children are diverse—when it comes to learning to read?

1. They are diverse in their talent and their preparation for learning to read words accurately and fluently

2. They are diverse in their oral language knowledge and abilities—vocabulary and world knowledge

3. They are diverse in their abilities to manage their learning behaviors and their motivation to apply them selves to learning to read
Reading is a multifaceted skill, gradually acquired over years of instruction and practice.
Diversity exemplified in the lives of three children

Differences in talent and preparation for learning to read words
Talent and preparation for learning to read words varies enormously among young children.

Children can be strong in this talent-like my grandson Andrew.
Talent and preparation for learning to read words varies enormously among young children. Children can be moderately weak in this talent-like David.
David
Talent and preparation for learning to read words varies enormously among young children. Serious difficulties probably require special interventions and a lot of extra support—like Alexis.
Alexis....
The challenge of diversity in talent and preparation for learning to read

Diversity in talent and preparation

Diversity of educational response
The challenge of diversity in talent and preparation for learning to read
What are the primary areas most likely to need intervention to prevent reading difficulties?

1. Interventions to improve phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, phonemic decoding, and reading fluency

2. Interventions to improve vocabulary, background knowledge, thinking/reasoning, and active comprehension strategies

3. Interventions to help students become more engaged in learning and do more reading with materials at the right level and within an accountability framework
The circular relationship between skill and motivation in reading

If we want children to learn to read well, we must find a way to induce them to read lots.

If we want to induce children to read lots, we must teach them to read well.

Marilyn Jager Adams
A moment on motivation…

Detailed studies of effective teachers document that they are powerful motivators:

“Basically, we found that engaging primary-grades teachers do something every minute of every hour of every school day to motivate their students, using every conceivable motivational mechanism to do so---from praising specific accomplishments to reminding students how well they perform when they try to encouraging constructive possible selves (e.g., imagining themselves going to college)." Pressley, 2004
A moment on motivation...

Detailed studies of effective teachers document that they are powerful motivators:

“Less engaging teachers actually do much to undermine student motivation, including, for example, establishing a negative tone in the class, placing great emphasis on extrinsic rewards, calling attention to weak performances by students, providing ineffective or unclear feedback, and fostering competition among students. Engaging teachers never teach in ways that undermine students’ motivation.” Pressley, 2004
What are the key ingredients at the classroom and school level needed to prevent reading difficulties in young children?
A model for preventing reading failure in grades K-3: The big Ideas

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom

2. Conduct timely and valid assessments of reading growth to identify struggling readers

3. Provide more intensive interventions to “catch up” the struggling readers

The prevention of reading difficulties is a school-level challenge
The **continuum of instructional power** within the model for preventing reading failure

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and **reach** of instruction in every K-3 classroom

   If lots of students in the school are at risk, the **first level of intervention** is spending **more time** and **improving quality** of initial instruction—everyone gets this—

   - 90 minute block is an intervention
   - 120 minute block is a stronger intervention

The **intervention continuum** begins with differentiated instruction offered by the classroom teacher during the 90 minute block
A common structure for the uninterrupted reading instructional block

Initial, systematic, explicit instruction in essential skills and knowledge – 30-60 minutes

To the extent time for this is increased, and instruction is more powerful, it is an “intervention for the whole group”

Differentiated instruction in small groups targeted to the needs of individual students – 60-90 minutes

This is the beginning of intervention continuum (time and focus and power) based on individual student need
Classroom organization should be related to teaching objectives
Classroom Organization: Learning Centers for differentiated groups

- **Teacher-Led Center**
  - Small group instruction
    - Teaching “on purpose”
    - Careful observation of individual students
    - Addresses particular individual needs
    - Opportunities for responsive scaffolding

- **Student Centers**
  - Academically engaged
  - Accountability
  - Group, Pair, Cooperative, Individual
Differentiated instruction in small groups
Classroom Organization: Learning Centers for differentiated groups

Points of vulnerability with this system

Students waste time at independent learning centers because they are not engaged and centers are not focused and leveled properly.
Effective independent student learning activities...
Classroom Organization: Learning Centers for differentiated groups

Points of vulnerability with this system

Students waste time at independent learning centers because they are not engaged and centers are not focused and leveled properly.

Behavior management issues interfere with teacher-led small group instruction.

Small group instruction is not really differentiated (time, frequency, focus) by student need.
Screening or Progress monitoring assessment

Correct words per minute

- September: 32
- December: 32
- February: 48
- May: 64

Graph showing an upward trend from September to May.
Tier II is almost always given in small groups

Tier II should always increase the intensity of instruction
Many children are already behind in vocabulary and print knowledge when they enter school.

To achieve grade level standards by third grade, poor children acquire print related knowledge and vocabulary words at a faster rate than their middle class peers in grades K-3.

The most direct way to increase learning rate is by increasing the number of positive, or successful, instructional interactions (pii) per school day.
What is a Positive Instructional Interaction (Pii)

Teacher explains a concept clearly at the right level, and the child is actually attending-processing the information.

Teacher models a correct response and the child attends to the model.

Teacher corrects students error in a way that increases the chance for the student to respond correctly the next time.

Teacher reinforces a correct response in way that increases probability child will respond correctly on future occasions.
The Logic of Instructional Intensity

Many children are already behind in vocabulary and print knowledge when they enter school.

To achieve grade level standards by third grade, poor children acquire print related knowledge and vocabulary words at a faster rate than their middle class peers in grades K-3.

The most direct way to increase learning rate is by increasing the number of positive, or successful, instructional interactions (pii) per school day.

There are a variety of ways to increase the number of positive instructional interactions per school day.
Tier II is almost always given in small groups.

Tier II should always increase the intensity of instruction.

Tier II must be precisely targeted at the right level on student’s most critical learning needs.

Tier II must increase the explicitness of instruction.
Explicit Instruction

• Nothing is left to chance; all skills are taught directly.

• Student practice activities are carefully guided with “instructive” error correction

• Practice activities are carefully engineered to produce mastery

• Development of critical skills is carefully monitored—instruction is focused on mastery.
An Example of an Effective Intervention
Design of Study

1. Most “at risk” first graders from five elementary school—PPVT above 70

2. Instruction provided in 45 min. sessions every day from October through May in groups of 3 or 5 by experienced teachers or well-trained paraprofessionals

3. Used a structured (scripted) reading program that contained instruction and practice in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and comprehension

4. Used a number of methods to achieve fidelity of implementation
   - 3 days of initial training
   - Weekly supervisory visits
   - Monthly inservice (3 hours)
Work on phonemic awareness
Blending sounds into words
Directly building sight recognition of high utility words
Comprehension-story grammar...
Two types of scaffolding....
Programmatic Scaffolding

Instructional sequences organized so that students have the knowledge and skills they need to respond before they are asked to respond.

Micro level within lessons
- Modeling of correct responses
- Complete and clear explanations

Embedded in the instructional sequence
- Oral blending skills before blending printed words
- Awareness of phonemes before learning how they are represented in print
- Grapheme-phoneme knowledge before decoding
Responsive Scaffolding

Teacher follows an error with a question or comment that directs the child to do the thinking necessary to correct the response – a Pii

On video
Teacher notices error – stretches word “slim”

Asks question—what’s the last sound you hear in slim?

Child responds -- /m/

Teacher asks, pointing to spelling, “does that match?”
Two types of scaffolding…. 
Helping a student pay attention to all the letters in a word

Responsive Scaffolding

Word reading error – “let’s check this word. Can you read it for me?"

Child reads “side”.

Teacher says, “you’re right that the word begins with the /s/ sound. What letter do you see coming right after the s in this word?”

Child says “l”

Teacher says, “what sound does “l” make?”

Child says “/l/”

Teacher says, “if you say the /l/ sound right after /s/ in this word, what word does that make?”
Growth in Correct Words Per Minute on First Grade Level Passages

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
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<th>Feb</th>
<th>Mar</th>
<th>Apr</th>
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Comprehension on SAT9 = 50th percentile
Tier II interventions across the grade levels

Kindergarten – 20 minutes, small group, push in

First grade – 30-45 minutes, small group, push in or additional instruction outside the block
One important way to enhance the power of instruction during the 90 minute block is to have some of the small group instruction provided by another teacher or paraprofessional.
Tier II interventions across the grade levels

Kindergarten – 20 minutes, small group, push in

First grade – 30-45 minutes, small group, push in or additional instruction outside the block

2-3 grades – 30-45 minutes, small group, push in plus another 30-45 minutes outside of reading block

or

2nd and 3rd Grade – a different core, smaller class for 90 minutes—”walk and read”
Four Second Grade Classes
Intervention teacher

Orderly movement between classes
Possible schedule for a 90 minute intervention class in 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} grade

2 teachers -- 30 minute rotations

Group of 5 – decoding and fluency- low, mid, hi

Group of 5 – fluency, comp, vocab – low, mid, hi

Group of 5 – technology-learning center
How can immediate, intensive interventions be scheduled and delivered?

1. Delivered by regular classroom teacher during the “uninterrupted reading period”

2. Delivered by additional resource personnel during the “uninterrupted reading period”, or at other times during day

3. Delivered by classroom and resource personnel during after school or before school programs

4. Delivered by well-trained and supervised paraprofessionals during the “uninterrupted reading period” or other times

5. Delivered by computers throughout the day
Screening or Progress monitoring assessment

Correct words per minute

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Correct Words</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>96</td>
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</table>
Tier III is intensive, strategic, instruction specifically designed and customized small-group or 1:1 reading instruction that is extended beyond the time allocated for Tier I and Tier II.
Three Tiers or Multiple Tiers?

Ways that instruction must be made more powerful for students “at-risk” for reading difficulties.

More powerful instruction involves:

- More instructional time
- Smaller instructional groups
- More precisely targeted at right level
- Clearer and more detailed explanations
- More systematic instructional sequences
- More extensive opportunities for guided practice
- More opportunities for error correction and feedback
After strong classroom instruction is in place, 8 keys to a strong prevention system for K-3 students

1. Strong motivation and belief on the part of teachers and school leaders to teach all children to read
We can teach even “high risk” children to read
“soft bigotry of low expectations”
### Examples from Reading First—Intervention effectiveness indicator in Kindergarten

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of students who began the year “at risk” but ended at “grade level”</th>
<th>Year 1 (03-04)</th>
<th>Year 2 (04-05)</th>
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<td>45%</td>
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#### Top ten schools for intervention effectiveness in K

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<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>FR/Lunch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ivey Lane Elementary</td>
<td>Orange</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Edge Acad.</td>
<td>Volusia</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinecrest Elementary</td>
<td>Collier</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastside Elementary</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berkley Elementary</td>
<td>Polk</td>
<td>88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hilliard Elementary</td>
<td>Nassau</td>
<td>86</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highlands Elementary</td>
<td>Collier</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carver Elementary</td>
<td>Duval</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauderdale Manor</td>
<td>Broward</td>
<td>84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alta Vista</td>
<td>Polk</td>
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Examples from Reading First—Intervention effectiveness indicator in First Grade

<table>
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<th>Percent of students who began the year “at risk” but ended at “grade level”</th>
<th>Year 1 (03-04)</th>
<th>Year 2 (04-05)</th>
</tr>
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<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Top ten schools for intervention effectiveness in 1st Reading Edge Acad.**

| Reading Edge Acad. | Volusia | 100 | 53 |
| Ivey Lane Elementary | Orange | 69 | 95 |
| Melrose Elementary | Putnam | 60 | 68 |
| Orangewood | Lee | 53 | 56 |
| Malone School | Jackson | 53 | 70 |
| Carrabelle High | Franklin | 50 | 65 |
| Chattahoochee | Gadsden | 50 | 88 |
| Bond Elementary | Leon | 50 | 100 |
| Allamanda Elementary | Palm Beach | 50 | 47 |
| South Ward | Pinellas | 50 | 68 |
Examples from Reading First—Intervention effectiveness indicator in 2nd Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of students who began the year “at risk” but ended at “grade level”</th>
<th>Year 1 (03-04)</th>
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<td>6%</td>
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Top ten schools for intervention effectiveness in 2nd grade

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<th>School Name</th>
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<th>FR/Lunch</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampton Elementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ivey Lane Elementary</td>
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<td>Malone School</td>
<td>Jackson</td>
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<td>Brooker Elementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Gem Elementary</td>
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<td>Zellwood Elementary</td>
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<td>Trapnell Elementary</td>
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<td>Greenway Elementary</td>
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<td>Poplar Springs High</td>
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<td>Reynolds Lane</td>
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### Examples from Reading First—Intervention effectiveness indicator in 3rd Grade

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<td>14%</td>
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<table>
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<th>Top ten schools for intervention effectiveness in 3rd grade</th>
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<td>Brooker Elementary</td>
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<td>John Ford Elementary</td>
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<td>Freedom Elementary</td>
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<td>Joseph Littles</td>
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<td>Ivey Lane Elementary</td>
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<td>Cambridge Elementary</td>
<td>Brevard</td>
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<td>Benoist Farms</td>
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<td>Foster Elementary</td>
<td>Hillsborough</td>
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After strong classroom instruction is in place, 8 keys to a strong prevention system for K-3 students

1. Strong motivation and belief the part of teachers and school leaders to teach all children to read

2. A reliable system for identifying students who need intensive interventions in order to make normal progress in learning to read

3. A reliable system for monitoring the effectiveness of interventions

4. Regular team meetings and leadership to enforce and enable the use of data to adjust interventions as needed.
Eight keys to a strong prevention system for K-3 students (cont.)

5. Regular adjustments to interventions based on student progress. The most frequent adjustments should involve group size and time (intensity), but may also involve a change of teacher or program.

6. Enough personnel to provide the interventions with sufficient intensity (small group size and daily, uninterrupted intervention sessions)

7. Programs and materials to guide the interventions that are consistent with scientifically based research in reading

8. Training, support, and monitoring to insure that intervention programs are implemented with high fidelity and quality.
How to choose evidence based programs to guide instruction

Why choose a well-developed intervention “program” to guide instruction?

- It acts as a scaffold for good teaching behaviors
- It provides a well-organized scope and sequence
- It has coordinated and aligned practice materials and activities
- It should help with proper pacing and movement of instruction
What kinds of programs might be helpful to us?

**Kindergarten**
- PA, letter knowledge into phonics
- Vocabulary and oral language

**First Grade**
- PA, letter knowledge, into phonics
- Vocabulary and oral language

**Second and Third Grade**
- Phonics and fluency
- Vocabulary, comprehension strategies
Florida Center for Reading Research

The Science of Reading Reporting Network

FCRR Reports
Assessment
About FCRR
For Parents
Resources
PIRT

A Florida State University Center
The Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) has established a review process for analyzing reading curricula and materials available for use in Florida. Please read the reports carefully. We have organized them such that a single report may be located under more than one category. You may also view an alphabetical listing or a summary table of FCRR Reports.

A Reader's Guide to FCRR Reports

This important one page document describes the purpose, content, and process of FCRR Reports.

Tier 3 Intervention Programs

Florida students who have been retained two times in third grade (Tier 3) are in need of instruction that is more intensive, more explicit, more systematic, and more motivating than instruction they have previously received. This section provides lists of programs that have been reviewed by FCRR and considered appropriate to be implemented with these students.

Frequently Asked Questions About FCRR Reports

This section contains a list of frequently asked questions and answers concerning FCRR Reports.
Important Note: FCRR reports are prepared in response to requests from teachers and other school personnel for review of specific materials. The reports are intended to be informational and factual. We hope that these reports will be helpful to teachers, principals, and district personnel in their choice of materials for use in the classroom. Whether or not a product has been reviewed does not constitute endorsement or lack of endorsement by the FCRR.

Core Reading Programs
A Comprehensive Reading Program is intended to be the initial instructional tool used to guide high quality instruction in K-3 classrooms.

Supplemental and Intervention Programs
These materials are intended for flexible use as part of differentiated instruction or as interventions that meet student learning needs in specific areas (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension). Most students can benefit from the extra practice provided by Supplemental Programs. Other students will need an Intervention Program that guides more intensive instruction.

Technology-Based Programs
Programs that use technology to support instruction.

Programs that may be Implemented by Tutors or Mentors
These materials may be appropriate for Volunteers (Tutors or Mentors) to implement. It is important to note that training and supervision are critical components for successful student outcomes.

Intervention and Remedial Programs for Students Above Third Grade
These materials can be used to guide instruction for students who are
Supplemental and Intervention Programs

- Academy of Reading
- Accelerated Literacy Learning (A.L.L.)
- Accelerated Reader
- Classworks
- Compass Learning Odyssey Reading
- Corrective Reading
- Destination Reading
- Early Success
- Earbics
- Elements of Reading, Vocabulary
- Essential Learning Systems
- Failure Free Reading
- Fast Forward Language
- FOCUS Reading and Language Program
- Fundations
- Funnix Reading Programs
- Great Leaps
- Harcourt Trophies First Grade Intervention Kit
- Headsprout Early Reading
- HOSTS
- Kaleidoscope
- Language!
- Language First!
- Language for Learning
- Language for Thinking
<table>
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<td>2, 3, 5</td>
<td>2-12+</td>
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<td>ScoLingo Reading Assistant</td>
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<td>2-5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spalding Writing Road to Reading</td>
<td>2, 5</td>
<td>K-8</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spell Read P.A.T.</td>
<td>2, 4, 5</td>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Success For All</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>K-3</td>
<td>+++</td>
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A summary: the most essential ideas

Interventions **must** increase the intensity of instruction
- More time
- Smaller groups

Interventions **must** be targeted at critical skills at the right level
- Initial and ongoing assessments

Interventions **must** be skillfully delivered
- At risk students require clear explanations, systematic practice, and effective error correction

Interventions **must** be coordinated at the school level
- Principal and coach must be involved because school resources must be used where most needed
Something to remember when faced with a difficult task...

The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.

*Michelangelo*
Questions/
Discussion