Multiple Tiers of Instruction and Intervention: What it will take to Leave No Child Behind in Reading

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“Current difficulties in reading largely originate from rising demands for literacy, not from declining absolute levels of literacy”
Rising needs for high levels of literacy in our society demand that schools break the mold of past performance—**we clearly must do better than has ever been done before for all students.**
Long term trend results for the National Assessment of Educational Progress

- No difference
- Slight long term improvement - No recent difference
- Recent improvement is largest in 30 years
If you could have one wish focused on helping the nation’s schools teach more students to 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 themselves to learning to read.
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.

Percentile Ranks

Standard Scores
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

Percentile Ranks

Standard Scores
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

Diversity in talent and preparation

Diversity of educational response

interventions
What are the key ingredients at the classroom and school level needed to prevent reading difficulties in young children?
Evidence from one school that we can do substantially better than ever before

School Characteristics:

70% Free and Reduced Lunch (going up each year)
65% minority (mostly African-American)

Elements of Curriculum Change:

Movement to a more balanced reading curriculum beginning in 1994-1995 school year (incomplete implementation) for K-2
Improved implementation in 1995-1996

Implementation in Fall of 1996 of screening and more intensive small group instruction for at-risk students
Hartsfield Elementary Progress over five years

Proportion falling below the 25th percentile in word reading ability at the end of first grade

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Average Percentile for entire grade (n=105):

- 1995: 48.9
- 1996: 55.2
- 1997: 61.4
- 1998: 73.5
- 1999: 81.7

Screening at beginning of first grade, with extra instruction for those in bottom 30-40%
Proportion falling below the 25th Percentile

1995: 31.8
1996: 20.4
1997: 10.9
1998: 6.7
1999: 3.7

Average Percentile:
1995: 48.9
1996: 55.2
1997: 61.4
1998: 73.5
1999: 81.7

Proportion falling below the 25th Percentile

1996: 14.5
1997: 9.0
1998: 5.4
1999: 2.4

Average Percentile:
1996: 58.2
1997: 67.1
1998: 74.1
1999: 81.5

Hartsfield Elementary Progress over five years
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
- Clearer and more detailed explanations
- More systematic instructional sequences
- More extensive opportunities for guided practice
- More opportunities for error correction and feedback
The continuum of instructional power within the RF model for preventing reading failure

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
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

Since the majority of students in RF schools are at risk, the first level of intervention is spending more time and improving quality of initial instruction-everyone gets this – 120 minute block is an 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

- Sept
- Dec
- Feb
- May

Values:
- Sept: 96
- Dec: 80
- Feb: 64
- May: 48

The graph shows an upward trend from September to May, indicating progress over time.
Tier II interventions

Tier II is small-group instruction in addition to the time allotted for core reading instruction.

Tier II should involve a significant increase in power over what is available within Tier 1.
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...
Growth in Word Reading Ability

October | January | May

National Percentile

25th | 50th | 75th
Growth in Correct Words Per Minute on First Grade Level Passages

Comprehension on SAT9 = 50th percentile
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”
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.
Where can you learn more about evidence-based programs?

The Florida Center for Reading Research provides objective evaluations of core, supplemental, and intervention programs

www.fcrr.org
FCRR Reports

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
What about interventions for older struggling readers?
Primary Characteristics of Struggling Readers in Middle and High School

They are almost always less fluent readers—sight word vocabularies many thousands of words smaller than average readers.

Usually less accurate readers—inadequate strategies for reading unfamiliar words.

Usually know the meanings of fewer words.

Usually have less conceptual knowledge.

Are almost always less skilled in using strategies to enhance comprehension or repair it when it breaks down.
District level efforts to Improve reading skills in middle and high school

1. Intensify our efforts to prevent reading difficulties in the first place
2. Be sure we have powerful remedial programs in place in 4th and 5th grade

   The best long-term strategy is to prevent word-level problems before middle school

3. Offer a continuum of intensity in reading instruction while also improving the contribution of content area teachers to growth of children’s ability to think about what they read.
Improving reading skills in middle and high school

1. Schedule a **three hour block** every day for students with reading skills more than two years below grade level with word level difficulties

   - **Word level skills** - accuracy and fluency
   - **Strategy instruction and engagement in thinking about text**
   - Both embedded and systematic vocabulary instruction
   - Lots of guided, supported practice in reading
What can we reasonably expect from effective interventions with older students who are seriously behind:

We can expect to have a relatively strong effect on their reading accuracy.

We can expect a relatively strong effect on reading comprehension in situations where the passages are not too long, or there are not significant time constraints.

We should not expect a dramatic effect on relative fluency over the short-term.
Improving reading skills in middle and high school

1. Schedule a 90 minute block every day for other students reading below grade level

   Word level skills- fluency

   Strategy instruction and engagement in thinking about text

   Both embedded and systematic vocabulary instruction

   Lots of guided, supported practice in reading
The Content Literacy Continuum

http://smarttogether.org/clc/index.html

1. Intensive remedial work for students with serious reading difficulties

2. More powerful instruction in the content areas so that all children learn essential content—even poor readers

3. Embedded instruction in strategies for learning and performance—content teachers
Teaching students how to think about what they read

“Questioning the Author”

Done with whole classes or in small groups

Done by every subject matter teacher or by specialists

Done consistently throughout the year, not necessarily every day or throughout the entire lesson
The basic purpose of Questioning the Author is to make public the **processes** of comprehension.

**Essential features:**

1. It treats text as the product of a fallible author, as “someone’s ideas written down.”
Dr. Isabel Beck introducing Questioning...
The basic purpose of Questioning the Author is to make public the processes of comprehension.

**Essential features:**

1. It treats text as the product of a fallible author, as “someone’s ideas written down.”

2. It deals with text through general teacher-posed questions such as “What is the author trying to say?” or “What do you think the author means by that?”
The role of queries in Questioning the Author
A comprehensive literacy solution for middle and high school

1. Remember that the thinking and knowledge demands for literacy increase every year

   Content area teachers must teach content more powerfully, and they must help students think about text more effectively

2. Remember the most struggling readers are far behind their peers in many areas

   Remedial teachers must teach them basic reading skills as intensively and skillfully as you can manage
A very recent report on “what works” with middle and high schools students.

Contains a 15 point research-based “action plan” for middle and high schools.

Download at: http://www.all4ed.org/publications/ReadingNext/ReadingNext.pdf
A final concluding thought....

Because of the large diversity among children in their talent and preparation for learning to read...leaving no child behind is an enormous challenge...

It will require powerful professional development for teachers, school reorganization, careful assessments, and a relentless intervention focus on the individual needs of every child...

But, its not the most difficult thing we could be faced with...
Consider this task for example...
Thank You

www.fcrr.org

Science of reading section