

# DOINGWHATWORKS



Presentation

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

## Systematic Teaching in Tiers 2 and 3

December 2009

Topic: Response to Intervention in Primary Grade Reading  
Practice: Systematic Skill Instruction

### Highlights

- Desirable characteristics of Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction, including frequency and duration of intervention and group size
- Focus on limited number of foundational skills in interventions
- Double-dosing strategy for students in Tier 3
- Explicit instruction characteristics, including scaffolding, corrective feedback, and extensive practice
- Teaching to 90% mastery for students in Tier 3

## Full Transcript

### Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to the overview on Systematic Teaching in Tiers 2 and 3.

### Slide 2: Understanding Rtl

Response to Intervention (Rtl) is a system of timely detection and prevention to support students who are potentially at risk. The goal is to assist them before they fall behind. In Rtl, instructional services are organized as tiers, with Tier 1 representing high-quality core instruction for all students. Tier 2 supplements the Tier 1 core with small-group instruction for students who need more help with foundational skills. Tier 3 usually entails one-on-one tutoring on a few targeted skills for students who have not progressed after a reasonable amount of time in Tier 2 interventions and require more intensive assistance.

### Slide 3: The need for explicit instruction

Students placed in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions need additional instruction. This instruction is intensified by focusing on foundational reading skills, carefully customizing the frequency and duration (or dosage) of instruction, and organizing instruction so that it is systematic and explicit.

### Slide 4: Match instruction to needs

Although some recommendations for increasing instructional intensity may be specific to Tier 2 or Tier 3, distinctions between the tiers are not clear-cut. Educators should think of the tiers as a continuum, varying resource allocation to match learning needs as they evolve and change.

### Slide 5: Focus on foundational reading skills

Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions focus on foundational reading skills, which include phonemic awareness, decoding, comprehension, and fluency.

Tier 2 instructional sessions focus on up to three of these skills and are used with students who score below the benchmark cut point.

Tier 3 concentrates on a smaller set of targeted reading skills for at-risk students, including those who show minimal progress after reasonable time spent in Tier 2 small-group instruction.

#### Slide 6: Grade-level skill focus

Regardless of tier, the reading skills focused on should reflect the appropriate developmental expectations for each grade level. For example, in kindergarten, phonemic segmentation is critical; in first grade, the primary focus is on phonics and comprehension; while in second grade, more difficult phonics skills, such as digraphs and diphthongs, and fluency with connected text become a priority.

#### Slide 7: Ensure adequate “dosage”

In both Tier 2 and Tier 3, it is critical that students receive an adequate amount, or dosage, of instruction. This dosage can be intensified by reducing the size of student groups and increasing the frequency and duration of instruction.

#### Slide 8: Group size

Reducing the number of students in learning groups provides them more opportunities to practice new skills and respond to what they are learning. Tier 2 provides instruction to small groups of three to four students, while Tier 3 offers even more intensity through daily one-on-one tutoring.

#### Slide 9: Tier 2 sessions

In Tier 2, students typically receive instruction three to five times a week with sessions ranging from 20 to 40 minutes in kindergarten to 40 to 50 minutes for grade 2, depending on actual student needs. This should continue for at least five weeks to discern which students may need further intervention.

Tier 2 small-group sessions can be held in the classroom during independent work, learning center, or reading block times or during times that do not conflict with other critical content areas.

#### Slide 10: Tier 3 sessions

Tier 3 provides students with multiple, extended intervention sessions. On average, students should receive an additional 75 minutes of instruction per week. It may be necessary to use time typically allocated to social studies or science for this extra instruction.

#### Slide 11: “Double dosing”

Instruction can also be intensified by implementing a “double dose” of reading time. This does not refer to simply having twice as much reading instruction, however, as this has not been proven to be effective. Rather, it refers to breaking a lesson into two 15-minute sessions. In the first session, the teacher introduces skills and then reteaches them with added practice during the second session.

#### Slide 12: Provide systematic and explicit instruction

When selecting intervention programs, administrators should take care to ensure compatibility with their school’s current core reading program. Even more important than compatibility, however, is ensuring that selected programs provide systematic and explicit instruction focused on high-priority reading skills.

Systematic instruction builds skills gradually—first introducing them in isolation and then integrating them with other skills. Explicit instruction provides more teacher-student interaction, including frequent opportunities for student practice and feedback.

#### Slide 13: Scaffolded instruction

Students with intensive reading needs require substantial supports during the initial stages of learning. One form of support involves scaffolding instruction when introducing concepts and skills. Teachers can begin with the easiest tasks and carefully progress to more difficult ones as students demonstrate facility.

#### Slide 14: Tier 3 systematic instruction

Tier 3 interventions have their own set of tools and strategies, such as diagnostic reading assessments that identify which specific skills most need to be addressed. Based on this data, a mix of systematic instructional strategies is used to meet each student’s individual needs. These include adjusting lesson pace and sequence, providing practice and feedback, and teaching to mastery.

#### Slide 15: Provide practice

Research suggests that students receiving Tier 3 interventions might require 10 to 30 times as many opportunities to practice as their peers. These practice sessions need to involve immediate prescriptive feedback and error correction. By correcting student errors when they first occur, it is less likely that errors will become internalized and therefore repeated. Using computer aids and one-on-one instruction are proven ways for teachers to maximize practice.

Slide 16: Teach to mastery

Students receiving Tier 3 interventions need to demonstrate mastery of a reading skill or strategy by maintaining a sustained 90 percent or higher criterion of correct responses before moving on to a new challenge. Teachers will need to keep notes or records about how students perform on different reading tasks to ensure that students advance when they are ready.