

# RTI/MTSS: A 'Recalibration' for Educators

*Jim Wright*

*[www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org)*



**INTERVENTION  
CENTRAL**

Handout



*RT/MTSS Classroom Teacher Toolkit*

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## The Teacher as Classroom First-Responder: Resources

Jim Wright, Presenter

2 September 2021  
Edgemont UFSD  
Scarsdale, NY

Email: [jimw13159@gmail.com](mailto:jimw13159@gmail.com)

Workshop Materials: <http://www.interventioncentral.org/edgemont>

Classroom Support Plan Writer: <https://interventioncentral-vue.firebaseio.com/>

Workshop PPTs and handout available at:

<http://www.interventioncentral.org/edgemont>


# Workshop Agenda



 *MTSS for Academics.* What is MTSS and what are the Tiers of intervention for academic support?

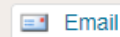
The PowerPoint deck can be downloaded from:  
*<http://www.interventioncentral.org/edgemont>*



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## The Teacher as 'First Responder': RTI/MTSS & Struggling Learners



On W 14 April 2021, Jim Wright presented a training for RCS CSD middle and high school staff on the topic **The Teacher as 'First Responder': RTI/MTSS & Struggling Learners**. Here are resources from that training:

- PowerPoint: *The Middle/High School Teacher as 'First Responder': RTI/MTSS & Struggling Learners: PART 1*

## About Jim Wright



Jim Wright is a presenter, trainer and author on topics that cover the essentials and beyond of Response to Intervention and Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

He has worked for 17 years in public education as a school psychologist and school administrator. Jim has published *"The RTI Toolkit: A Practical Guide for Schools"* and is the creator of the [InterventionCentral.org](http://InterventionCentral.org) website.

# Thoughts Before We Begin...

- Today's workshop provides a general 'refresher' in RTI/MTSS as part of your district's efforts to revamp RTI/MTSS across the grade levels.
- Nothing changes in your current classroom practice based on today's training.
- RTI/MTSS is about providing support to at-risk learners, so it is not a 'new thing' for **elementary** or **secondary** schools. You've been doing it all along.



Motivated  
& At Grade  
Level

Deficient Skills  
in Reading  
Comprehension

'Learned  
Helplessness'

Limited  
'Academic  
Survival  
Skills'



*RTI/MTSS for  
Academics: An  
Introduction.* What does  
the RTI/MTSS model  
look like?



### RTI vs. MTSS: What is the Difference?

Many schools use the terms Response to intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) interchangeably. However, there is a difference.

- RTI usually refers to a school's academic support system only.
- MTSS is more expansive, describing the systems set up in a school to provide coordinated support for both academic and behavioral/social-emotional needs.
- However, RTI and MTSS are similar in that each offers several levels of intervention support, uses data to identify students requiring services, and employs research-based strategies to help at-risk learners.

## MTSS: ACADEMICS

### **Tier 3: High-Risk Students: 5%**

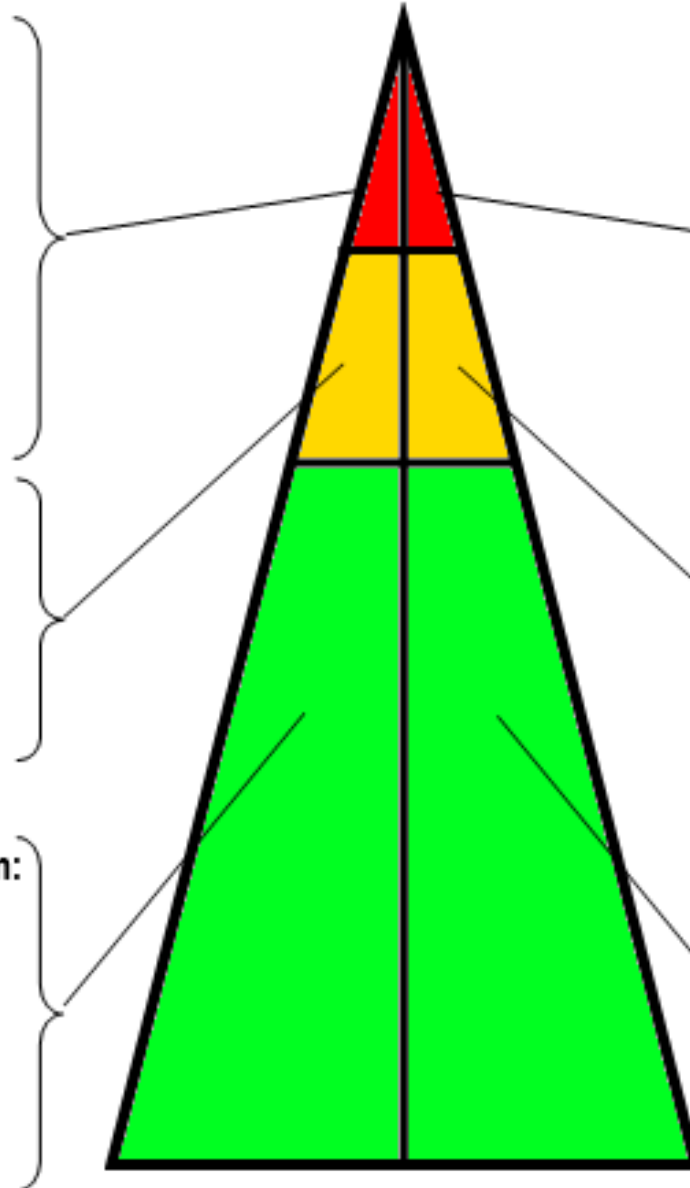
- Diagnostic assessment of academic problems
- RTI Team Meetings
- Customized/intensive academic intervention plan
- Daily progress-monitoring

### **Tier 2: At-Risk Students: 15%**

- Small-group interventions to address off-grade-level academic deficits
- Regular progress-monitoring

### **Tier 1: Universal: Core Instruction: 80%**

- Effective group instruction
- Universal academic screening
- Academic interventions for struggling students



## MTSS: BEHAVIOR

### **Tier 3: High-Risk Students: 5%**

- Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs)
- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs)
- Wrap-around RTI Team meetings
- Daily progress-monitoring

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- Universal behavior screening

# Continuum of RTI: Across Grade Levels



Elementary School



Middle School




High School



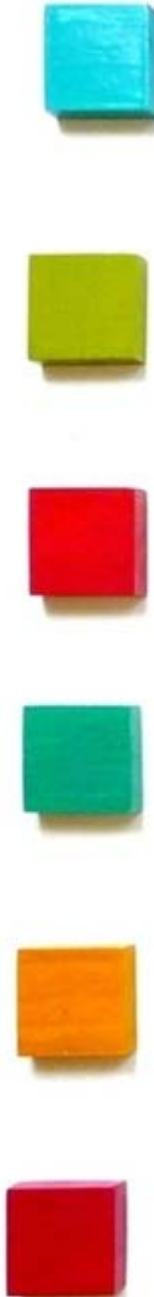
# Struggling Students: Unique Challenges...

Struggling learners may:

- have significant deficits in basic academic skills
- lack higher-level problem-solving strategies and concepts
- present with issues of school motivation
- show social/emotional concerns that interfere with academics
- have difficulty with attendance
- be in a process of disengaging from learning even as adults in school expect that those students will move toward being 'self-managing' learners...



*Pivot Points.* What are key classroom competencies that ANY student needs for school success?



## The Struggling Student in a General-Education

### Setting: Pivot Points

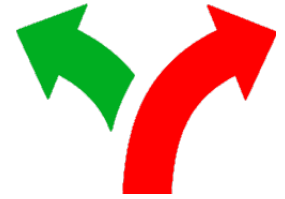


**Directions.** The student competencies in the table below represent 'pivot points'—opportunities for educators to support the at-risk student to 'pivot' them toward school success. Number in descending order the 5 competencies that you believe pose the greatest challenge for students in your classroom or school to attain.

Ranking	Student Competency
	A. <b>Basic Academic Skills.</b> The student has sufficient mastery of basic academic skills (e.g., reading fluency) to complete classwork.
	B. <b>Academic Survival Skills.</b> The student possesses the academic survival skills (e.g., homework skills, time management, organization) necessary to manage their learning.
	C. <b>Work Completion.</b> The student independently completes in-class work and homework.
	D. <b>Transitions.</b> The student flexibly adapts to changing academic routines and behavioral expectations across activities and settings (e.g., content-area classes; specials).
	E. <b>Attentional Focus.</b> The student has a grade- or age-appropriate ability to focus attention in large and small groups and when working independently.
	F. <b>Emotional Control.</b> The student manages emotions across settings, responding appropriately to setbacks and frustrations.
	G. <b>Peer Interactions.</b> The student collaborates productively and has positive social interactions with peers.
	H. <b>Self-Efficacy.</b> The student possesses a positive view of their academic abilities, believing that increased effort paired with effective work practices will result in improved outcomes ('growth mindset').
	I. <b>Self-Understanding.</b> The student can articulate their relative patterns of strength and weakness in academic skills, general conduct, and social-emotional functioning.
	J. <b>Self-Advocacy.</b> The student advocates for their needs and negotiates effectively with adults.

Handout  
p. 5

# The Struggling Student in a General-Education Setting: Pivot Points



Successful students must be able to juggle many competencies simultaneously as they negotiate complex classroom demands.

The following slides present 10 such pivot points that include competencies in academics, behavior, self-management, and motivation.

Teachers can play an important role in supporting the struggling student by identifying potentially weak pivot points and assisting the learner to attain them.



# Pivot Points: Strengthening the Student Skillset

Basic academic skills

Emotional control

Academic  
'survival skills'

Peer interactions

Work completion

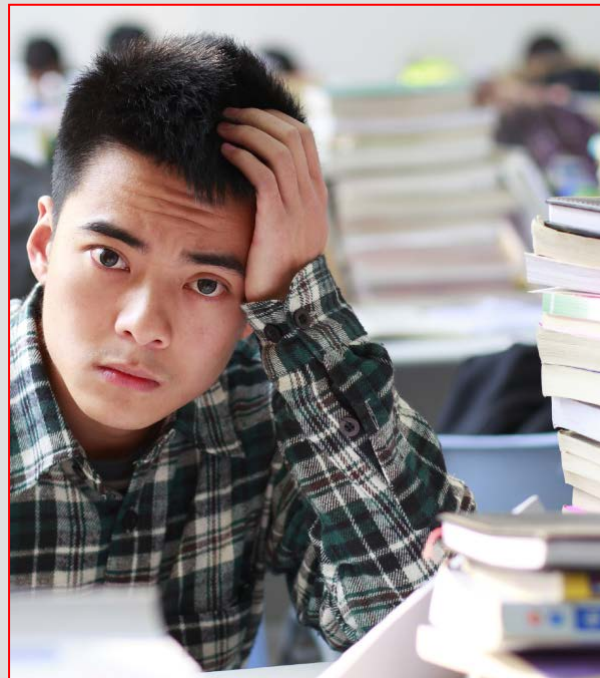
Self-efficacy

Transitions

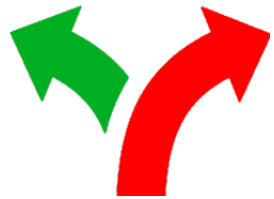
Self-understanding

Attentional focus

Self-advocacy



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



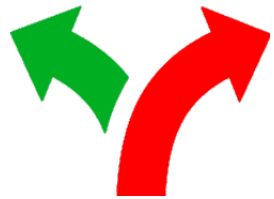
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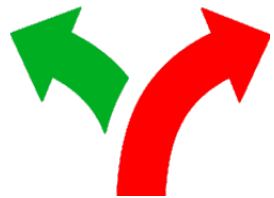
2. **Academic Survival Skills.** The student possesses the academic survival skills (e.g. homework skills, time management, organization) necessary to manage their learning.



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



3. **Work Completion.** The student independently completes in-class work and homework.



4. **Transitions.** The student flexibly adapts to changing academic routines and behavioral expectations across activities and settings (e.g., content-area classes; specials).



## Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



5. **Attentional Focus.** The student has a grade- or age-appropriate ability to focus attention in large and small groups and when working independently.



6. **Emotional Control.** The student manages emotions across settings, responding appropriately to setbacks and frustrations.



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



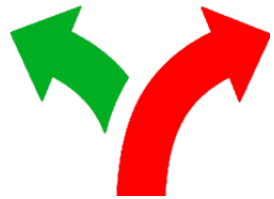
7. **Peer Interactions.** The student collaborates productively and has positive social interactions with peers.



8. **Self-Efficacy.** The student possesses a positive view of their academic abilities, believing that increased effort paired with effective work practices will result in improved outcomes ('growth mindset').



# Pivot Points: The Struggling Student in a General Education Setting



9. **Self-Understanding.** The student can articulate their relative patterns of strength and weakness in academic skills, general conduct, and social-emotional functioning.



10. **Self-Advocacy.** The student advocates for their needs and negotiates effectively with adults.



## The Struggling Student in a General-Education

### Setting: Pivot Points



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Handout  
p. 5: This  
resource  
can help the  
teacher to  
identify a  
student's  
most  
prominent  
'roadblocks'  
to school  
success.



## *MTSS for Academics.*

What are the 3 tiers of student MTSS support for academics, and how are they connected?





## MTSS: ACADEMICS

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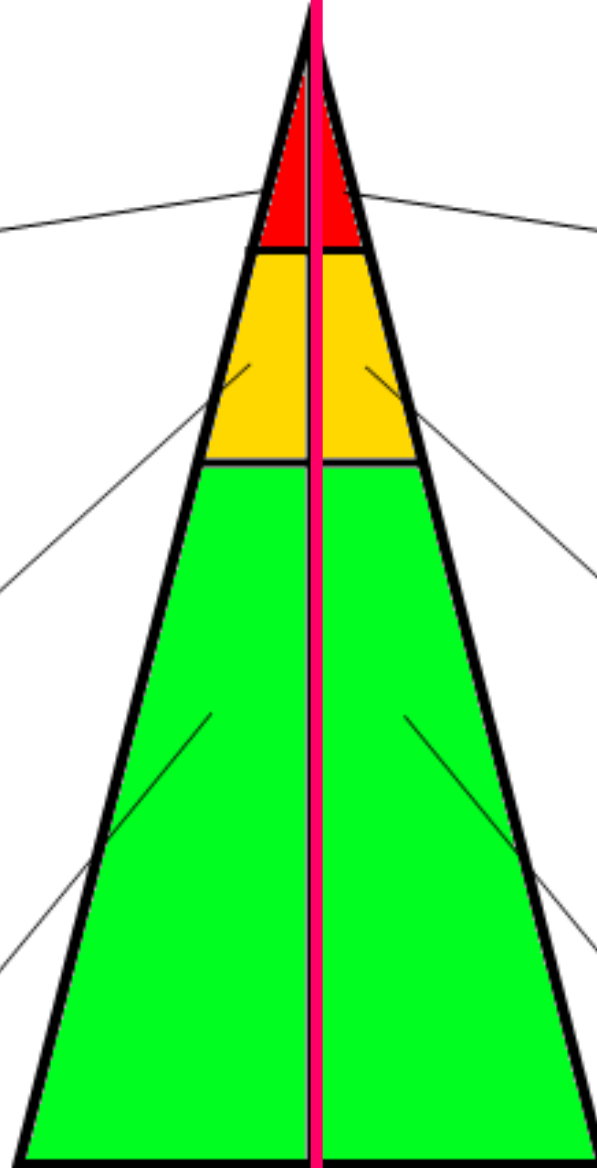
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## MTSS: BEHAVIOR

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# RTI: Decision Points and Quality Indicators

The next sections of this presentation summarize RTI at each intervention tier as:

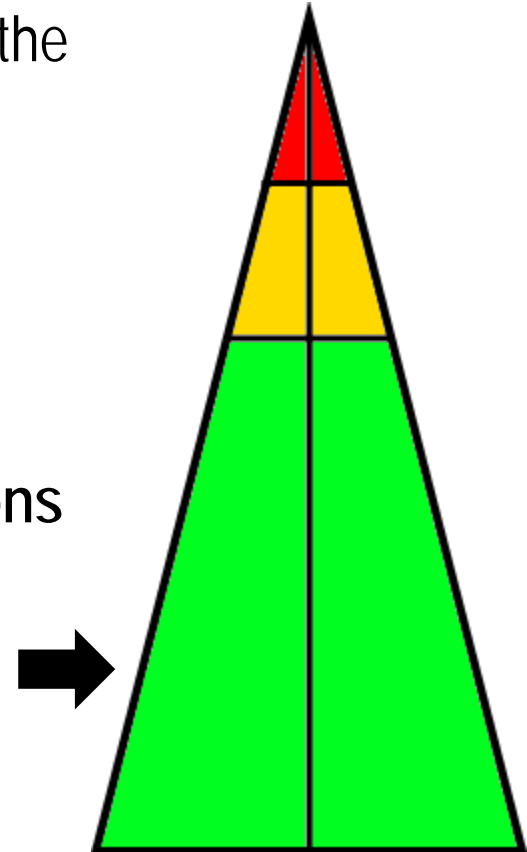
- 'Decision points': People looking at data, talking about individual student needs, deciding what intervention supports those students need, designing intervention plans for those students.
- 'Quality indicators': The elements that must be in place to ensure quality interventions.

# MTSS: Tier 1: Whole-Group Instruction

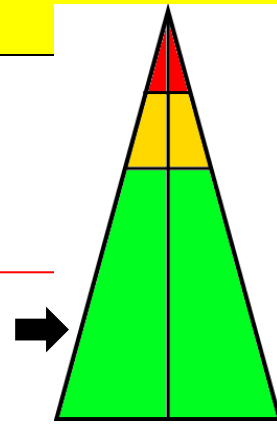
- Strong core instructional practices are the **foundation** of MTSS. They underlie and strengthen **classroom instruction**.

When teachers are able successfully to teach across the **full range** of classroom ability levels, individualized **interventions** may not be needed.

Strong instruction includes making optimal use of **instructional time**, integrating **direct-instruction elements** into lessons, and providing **accommodations & supports** as appropriate.



# Tier 1: Core Instruction. The teacher's whole-group instruction...



...incorporates essential elements of **explicit and systematic instruction** into lessons.



...uses strategies to promote **student engagement**.



...includes **frequent assessment** to gauge student mastery in real time.

...provides **differentiated instruction** matched to student needs.



# The Challenge of Learning Differences...

Students often bring learning differences to their general-education classrooms that significantly impact their success.



Learning  
Problems

Attention



Behavior

Language  
Issues



One positive step is to have an efficient toolkit of research-based instructional strategies appropriate for the entire class.

# MTSS: Tier 1: Core Instruction: **Direct Instruction**

Teachers can strengthen their lessons by incorporating into them elements of direct instruction.

Handout: pp. 2-3

## How To: Implement Strong Core Instruction

Teacher:  Date:  Class/Lesson:

The checklist below summarizes the essential elements of a supported-instruction approach. When preparing lesson plans, instructors can use this resource as a 'pre-flight' checklist to make sure that their lessons reach the widest range of diverse learners.

1. Increase Access to Instruction	
Instructional Element	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Instructional Match.</b> Lesson content is appropriately matched to students' abilities (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Content Review at Lesson Start.</b> The lesson opens with a brief review of concepts or material that have previously been presented. (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008, Rosenshine, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Preview of Lesson Goal(s).</b> At the start of instruction, the goals of the current day's lesson are shared (Rosenhine, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chunking of New Material.</b> The teacher breaks new material into small, manageable increments, 'chunks', or steps (Rosenhine, 2008).	

2. Provided 'Scaffolding' Support	
Instructional Element	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Detailed Explanations &amp; Instructions.</b> Throughout the lesson, the teacher provides adequate explanations and detailed instructions for all concepts and materials being taught (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Think-Alouds/Talk-Alouds.</b> When presenting cognitive strategies that cannot be observed directly, the teacher describes those strategies for students. Verbal explanations include 'talk-alouds' (e.g., the teacher describes and explains each step of a cognitive strategy) and 'think-alouds' (e.g., the teacher applies a cognitive strategy to a particular problem or task and verbalizes the steps in applying the strategy) (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008, Rosenshine, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Work Models.</b> The teacher makes exemplars of academic work (e.g., essays, completed math word problems) available to students for use as models (Rosenhine, 2008).	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Active Engagement.</b> The teacher ensures that the lesson engages the student in 'active accurate responding' (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005) often enough to capture student attention and to optimize learning.	

# How to: Implement Strong Core Instruction

- 1. Access to Instruction**
- Instructional Match
  - Content Review at Lesson Start
  - Preview of Lesson Goal(s)
  - Chunking of New Material

- 2. 'Scaffolding' Support**
- Detailed Explanations & Instructions
  - Talk Alouds/Think Alouds
  - Work Models
  - Active Engagement
  - Collaborative Assignments
  - Checks for Understanding

- 2. 'Scaffolding' Support (Cont.)**
- Group Responding
  - High Rate of Student Success
  - Brisk Rate of Instruction
  - Fix-Up Strategies

- 3. Timely Performance Feedback**
- Regular Feedback
  - Step-by-Step Checklists

- 4. Opportunities for Review/ Practice**
- Spacing of Practice Throughout Lesson
  - Guided Practice
  - Support for Independent Practice
  - Distributed Practice

# How To Implement Strong Core Instruction

## *Increase Access to Instruction*

1. **Instructional Match.** Lesson content is appropriately matched to students' abilities (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008).
2. **Content Review at Lesson Start.** The lesson opens with a brief review of concepts or material that have previously been presented. (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008, Rosenshine, 2008).



# How To Implement Strong Core Instruction

## *Increase Access to Instruction*

3. **Preview of Lesson Goal(s).** At the start of instruction, the goals of the current day's lesson are shared (Rosenshine, 2008).
4. **Chunking of New Material.** The teacher breaks new material into small, manageable increments, 'chunks', or steps (Rosenshine, 2008).

# How to: Implement Strong Core Instruction

## 1. Access to Instruction

Instructional Match

Co  
 Pre  
**Activity: Strong Direct Instruction**

Ch  
1. Review this list of elements of direct instruction.

De  
2. Select ONE that for you is a relative STRENGTH.

Wo

Active Engagement

Collaborative Assignments

Checks for Understanding

## 2. 'Scaffolding' Support (Cont.)

Group Responding

High Rate of Student Success

Brisk Rate of Instruction

Fix-Up Strategies

**Timely Performance Feedback**

Regular Feedback

Step-by-Step Checklists

**Opportunities for Review/ Practice**

Spacing of Practice Throughout Lesson

Guided Practice

Support for Independent Practice

Distributed Practice

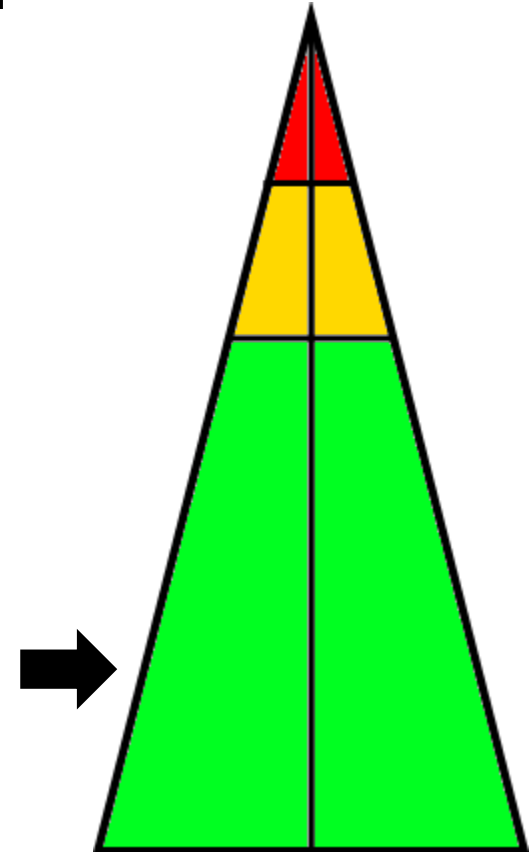


# MTSS: Tier 1: Classroom Intervention

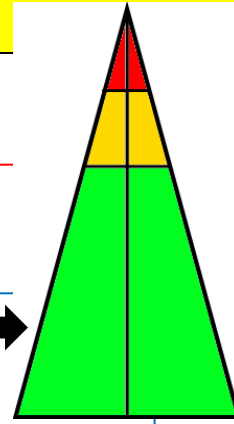
- Teachers sometimes need to put academic interventions in place for **'red flag' students**. These are students whose **academic delays** or **difficulties** require a **sustained remediation plan** that will last at least several weeks.

Tier 1 interventions take place in the **classroom**, typically **during core instruction**.

Tier 1 interventions are often modest in scope but can still have strong **positive outcomes**. They follow the full MTSS **problem-solving approach**--adapted to the realities of a busy classroom environment.



# Tier 1: Classroom Intervention. The teacher...



...has access to a bank of academic intervention ideas and data-collection methods accessible by all staff.



...uses standardized form(s) to record classroom interventions.



...defines the student's presenting academic problem(s) in clear and specific terms.



...selects method(s) to monitor student progress, setting a goal and collecting baseline data.



...chooses appropriate academic intervention(s) supported by research.

# RTI Files...

Case 1: Neda: Grade 4:  
Math-Fact Fluency



Case 2: Tomás: Grade 7:  
Reading Comprehension



# RTI Files: Case 1

Neda

Grade 4

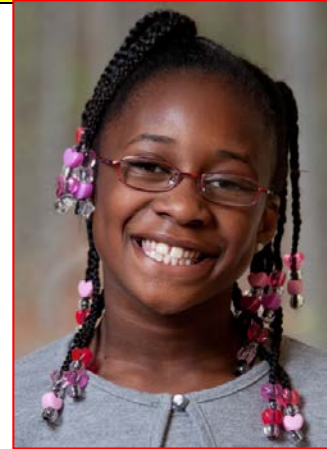
*Problem:* Limited  
math-fact fluency

*Intervention:*  
Cover-Copy-  
Compare



# RTI Files: Case 1

- **Problem:** Neda is slow in solving basic multiplication facts.
- **Intervention:** Neda's math teacher, Ms. Tanger, decides to use **Cover-Copy-Compare (CCC)**, a student-directed strategy that relies on short-term memory retrieval to memorize math facts. The student will use CCC during daily deskwork.



## Cover-Copy-Compare: Math Facts

In this intervention to promote acquisition of math facts, the student is given a sheet with the math facts with answers. The student looks at each math model, covers the model briefly and copies it from memory, then compares the copied version to the original correct model (Skinner, McLaughlin & Logan, 1997).



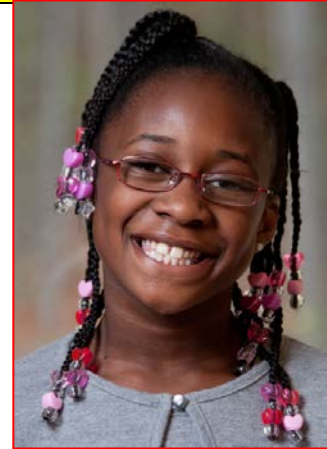
Cover-Copy-  
Compare Math  
Fact Student  
Worksheet

Math Facts	Student Response
1. $9 \times 7 = 63$	1a. $9 \times 7 = 63$
	1b.
2. $9 \times 2 = 18$	2a.
	2b.
3. $9 \times 4 = 36$	3a.
	3b.
4. $9 \times 1 = 9$	4a.
	4b.
5. $9 \times 9 = 81$	5a.
	5b.
6. $9 \times 6 = 54$	6a.
	6b.
7. $9 \times 3 = 27$	7a.
	7b.
8. $9 \times 5 = 45$	8a.
	8b.
9. $9 \times 10 = 90$	9a.
	9b.
10. $9 \times 8 = 72$	10a.
	10b.

# RTI Files: Case 1

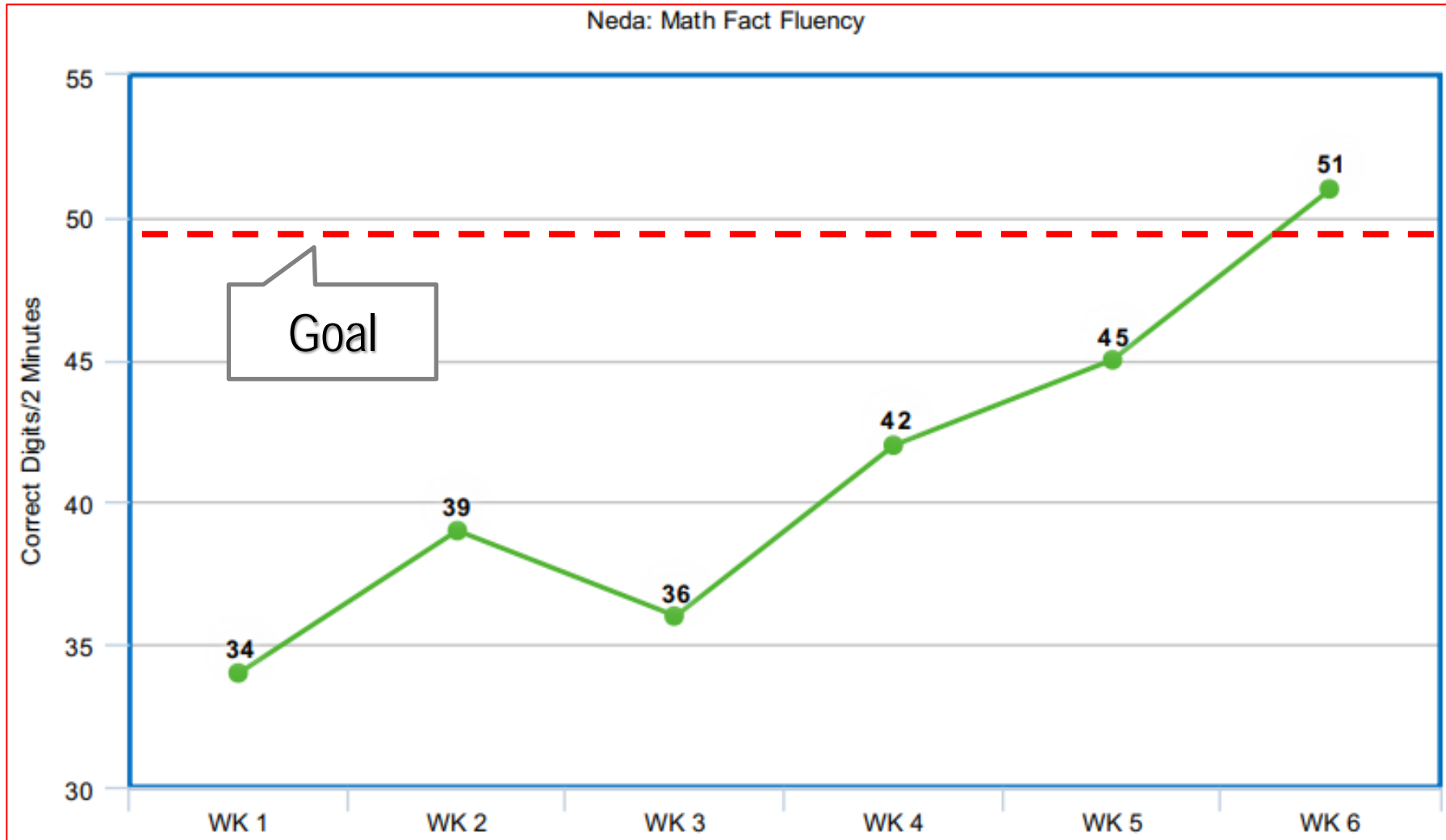
- **Progress-Monitoring:** Ms. Tanger will assess Neda's math-fact fluency once per week with a timed (2-minute) worksheet of randomly selected basic multiplication facts. The sheet will be scored for number of correct digits.

At **baseline**, Neda scores 28 correct digits/2 minutes. According to Grade 4 benchmark norms, the **outcome goal** after 6 weeks is for Neda to score at least 49 correct digits/2 minutes.



# RTI Files: Case 1

Neda: Grade 4: Math-Fact Fluency



# RTI Files: Case 1: Take-Away

- **Cover-Copy-Compare** is an example of an intervention that is simple to use and to supervise.
- Schools can use a wide range of personnel to deliver interventions: classroom teachers, support staff (including teacher assistants/aides, adult volunteers, and cross-age (older) peer tutors—even parents!
- Interventions like Cover-Copy-Compare are perfect for non-instructional personnel to administer or oversee.

# RTI Files: Case 2

Tomás

Grade 7

*Problem:* Reading  
comprehension

*Intervention:* Read-  
Ask-Paraphrase



# RTI Files: Case 2

- **Problem:** When Tomás reads assigned informational passages independently, he does not always retain the key ideas.
- **Intervention:** His Social Studies instructor, Mr. Garber, decides to teach Tomás to use **Read-Ask-Paraphrase (RAP)**, a self-managed reading comprehension strategy. The student will then use RAP on all assigned readings.



### Reading Comprehension: Self-Management Strategies

- RETAIN TEXT INFORMATION WITH PARAPHRASING (RAP). The student is trained to use a 3-step cognitive strategy when reading each paragraph of an informational-text passage: (1) READ the paragraph; (2) ASK oneself what the main idea of the paragraph is and what two key details support that main idea; (3) PARAPHRASE the main idea and two supporting details into one's own words. This 3-step strategy is easily memorized using the acronym RAP (read-ask-paraphrase). OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED: Create an organizer sheet with spaces for the student to record main idea and supporting details of multiple paragraphs—to be used with the RAP strategy—to be used as an organizer and verifiable work product.

# Read-Ask-Paraphrase (RAP) Sheet

Name:  Date:  Title/Pages of Reading:

Student Directions: For each paragraph from your assigned reading, (1) READ the paragraph; (2) ASK yourself what the main idea of the paragraph is and what two key details support that main idea; (3) PARAPHRASE the main idea and two supporting details in your own words and write them in the blank provided.

Read-Ask-Paraphrase:  
STEPS:

- 1. Read:** Read the paragraph closely.
- 2. Ask:** What is the main idea and 2 supporting details?
- 3. Paraphrase:** Write key idea and details in your own words.

Page)

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

Paragraph 4

Paragraph 5



# RTI Files: Case 2

- **Progress-Monitoring:** Mr. Garber already assesses class-wide comprehension of assigned readings once per week with a brief bell-ringer quiz (5-item: short-answer).

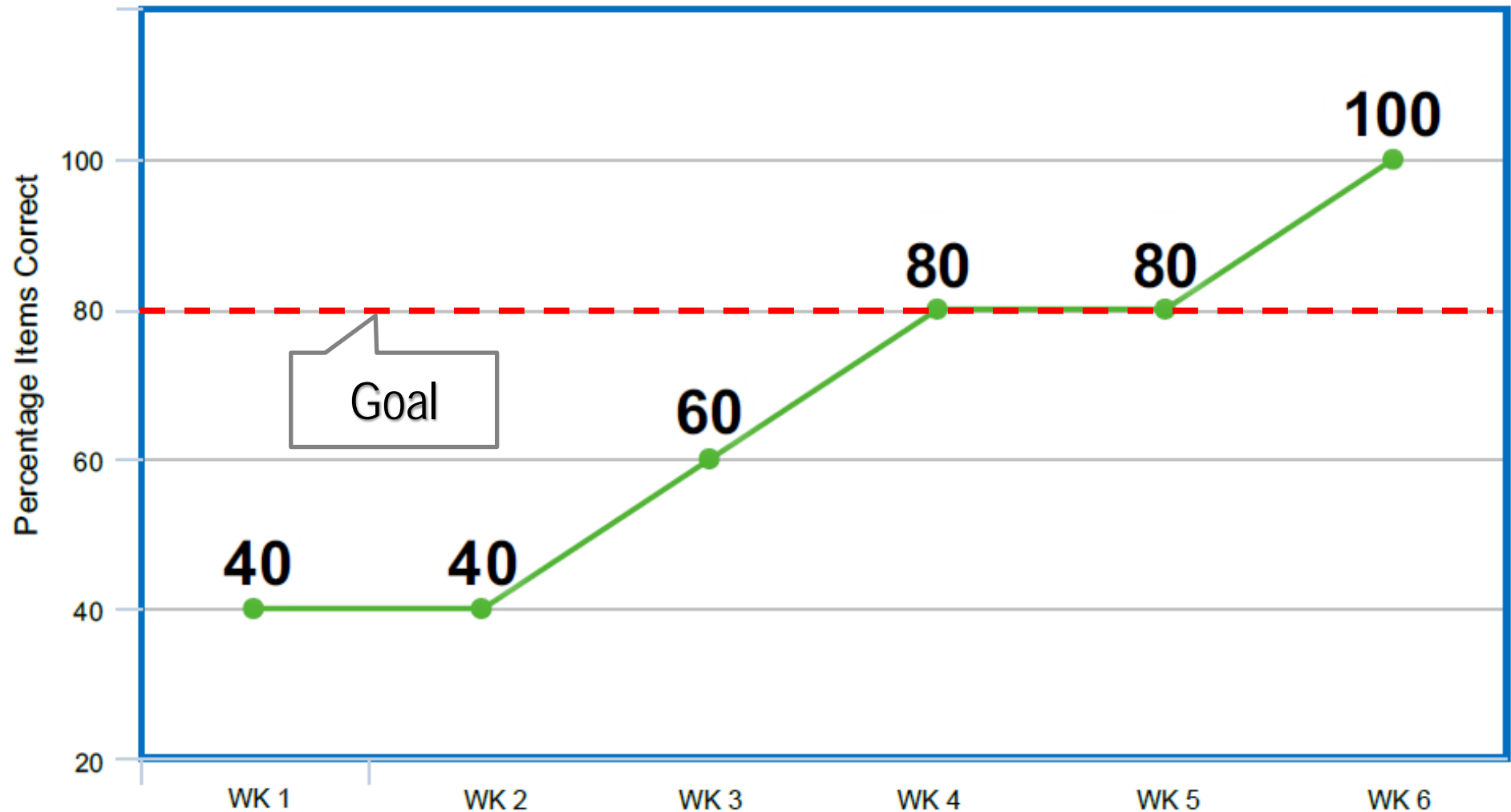


At **baseline**, Tomás is earning quiz grades averaging 40 percent (2 of 5 correct). The **outcome goal** in 6 weeks is for Tomás to earn quiz grades of 80 percent or higher.

# RTI Files: Case 2

Tomás: Grade 7: Read-Ask-Paraphrase

Tomás: Bell-Ringer Quiz Grades



# RTI Files: Case 2: Take-Away

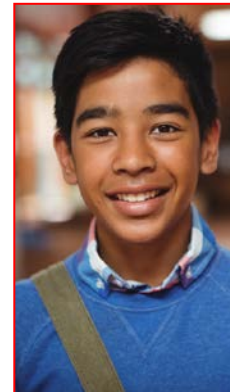
- With many middle- and high-school classroom academic interventions (such as **Read-Ask-Paraphrase**), the student is the interventionist and the teacher is the coach.
- That is, students are encouraged to become self-managing learners, mastering and using effective strategies on their own.

# RTI Files...

Case 1: Neda: Grade 4:  
Math-Fact Fluency



Case 2: Tomás: Grade 7:  
Reading Comprehension



# Teacher Problem-Solving: Just a Part of the Job...

Instructors regularly engage in problem-solving efforts, such as:

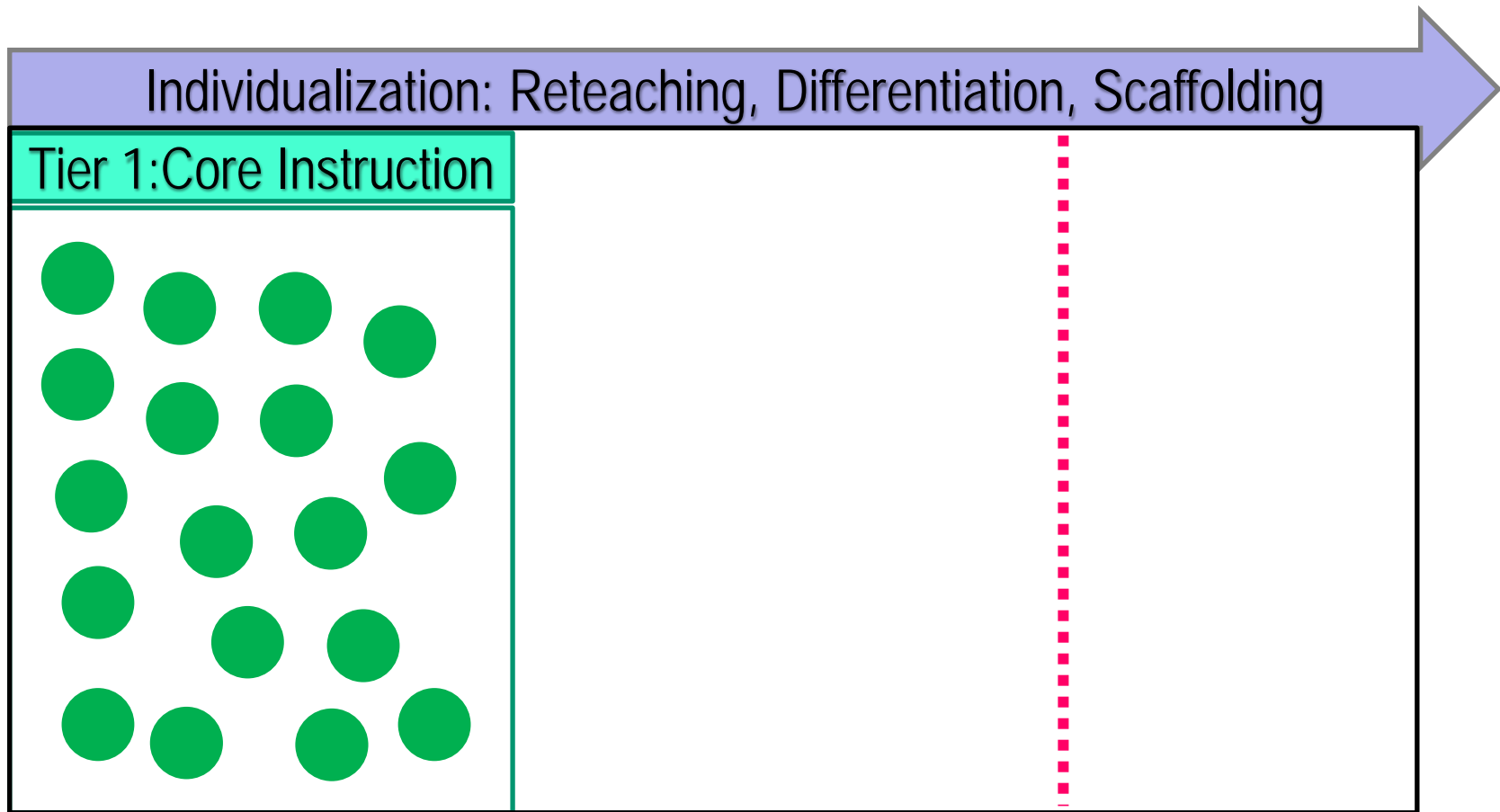
- searching the Internet for ideas to help a struggling learner.
- pulling a student aside to identify deficits in knowledge or skills and reteach instructional content as needed.
- conferencing with a student to develop an action-plan to improve academic performance.
- brainstorming with members of your instructional team or department for ideas to support a student.
- meeting with a consultant (school psychologist; reading or math teacher, etc.) for intervention suggestions.
- scheduling student-parent conferences to enlist home and school to boost academic performance or address behaviors.

### Teacher Problem-Solving: All the Work, Little Credit...

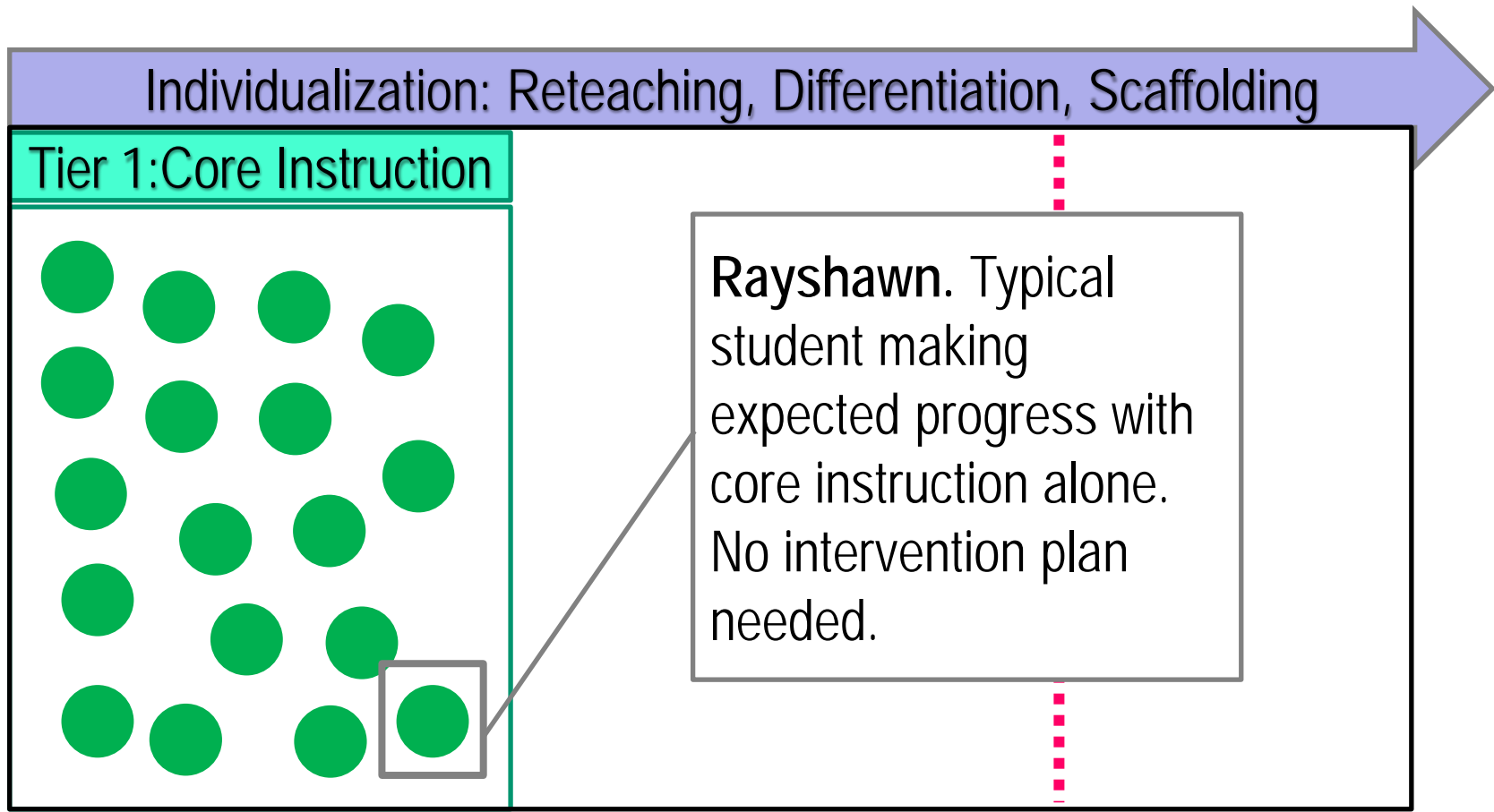
In this era of accountability, classroom intervention efforts are not acknowledged unless they are documented: *"Teachers are already doing 90% of the work. But they are often getting zero credit."*

RTI/MTSS provides a structure and toolkit for teachers to record and share classroom intervention plans. With little or no extra time, instructors can get full credit for their problem-solving work.

# The Individualization Continuum: When Should Classroom Intervention Efforts Be Documented?

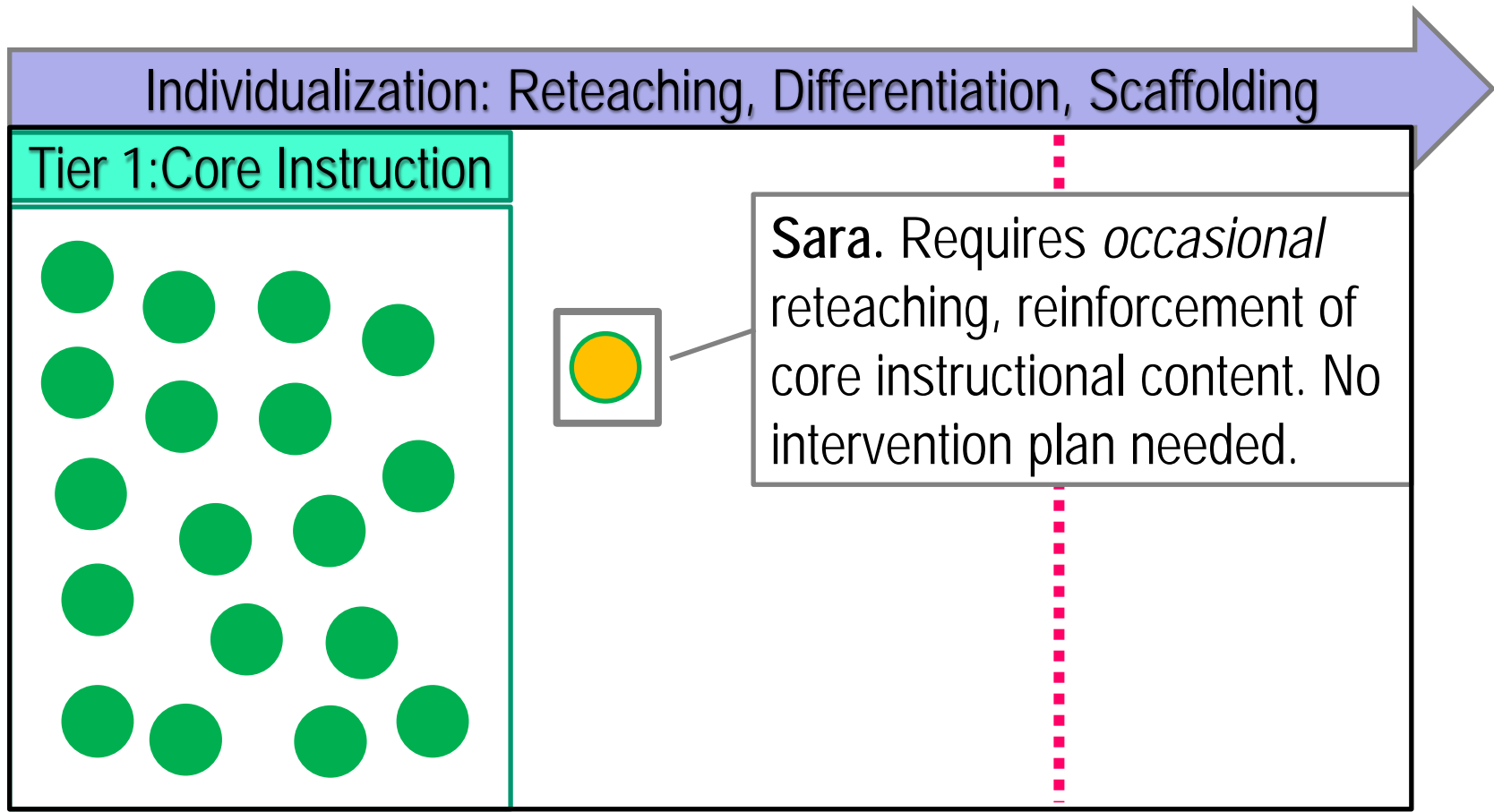


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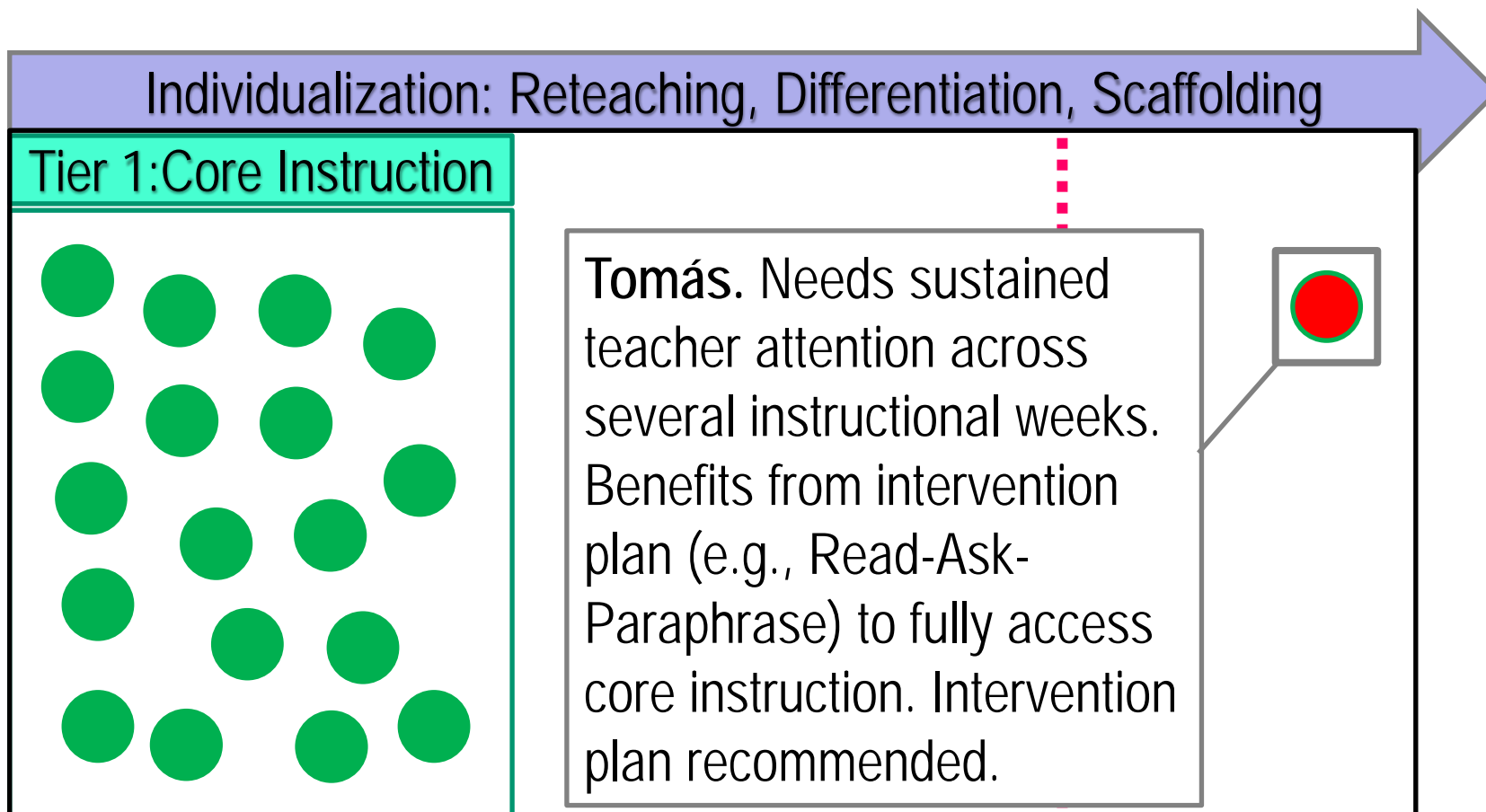




# The Individualization Continuum: When Should Classroom Intervention Efforts Be Documented?



# The Individualization Continuum: When Should Classroom Intervention Efforts Be Documented?



## RTI/MTSS Classroom Support Plan: 'Message in a Bottle': Who might benefit?

**Colleagues.** Your intervention efforts can be read by your fellow teachers and future educators

**Parents & Student.** You can make the creation of the Classroom Support Plan the focus of student and parent conferences.



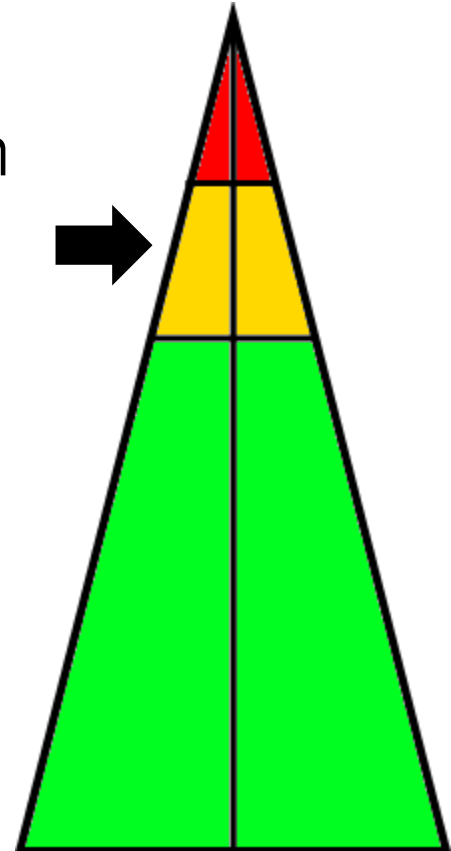
**RTI/MTSS Problem-Solving Team.** Your classroom intervention plan helps the team to make better recommendations.

**Special Education Eligibility Team.** Evidence of a classroom intervention plan is often a requirement when attempting to diagnose a learning disability or other IEP condition.

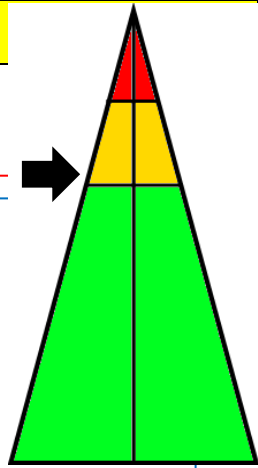
# MTSS: Tier 2: Supplemental Intervention (AIS)

- When students have **moderate academic delays** that cannot be addressed by classroom support alone, they are placed in **Tier 2** (supplemental) intervention. About **10-15%** of students may qualify for Tier 2 services.

Tier 2 academic interventions are typically delivered in **small-group** format. Students are recruited for Tier 2 services based upon data. Enrollment in these intervention groups is **dynamic**. At several points during the school year, students' progress is **evaluated**. Those who have made progress sufficient to no longer need supplemental help are **exited** from Tier 2 services, while new students at-risk for academic failure are **recruited**.

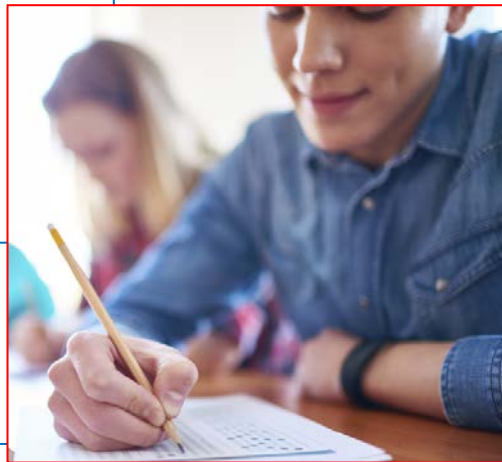


## Tier 2: Supplemental Intervention. At Tier 2,...



...students enter and exit Tier 2 services based primarily on objective academic data (e.g., school-wide screening tool(s): 20-25th% or below).

...interventions are documented in writing before Tier 2 services begin, and Tier 2 plans are archived electronically for easy access.



...the interventionist employs academic programs or practices supported by research.

...the interventionist collects progress-monitoring data at least twice per month to monitor the success of the intervention.

...interventions seek to fix any academic deficits that interfere with classroom success.

# What is an Example of a High-Quality Tier 2/3 Reading Intervention?: HELPS ([www.helpsprogram.org](http://www.helpsprogram.org))

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- HELPS (Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies) is a free tutoring program that targets student reading fluency skills.

Developed by Dr. John Begeny of North Carolina State University, the program is an evidence-based intervention package that includes several intervention elements in a 15-minute 1:1 tutorial session.



# HELPS Reading Fluency Program

www.helpsprogram.org  
LINK AVAILABLE ON  
CONFERENCE WEB PAGE

## One-on-One Program Is Now Available!

Learn more about this program, such as which educators have used the program successfully, which students should benefit most from the program, and how educators can obtain the program and training for free.

READ MORE

## Strengths of One-on-One Program

- Evidence-based and scientifically-validated
- Requires no more than 10-12 minutes per day, 2-3 days per week
- Has been successfully used with students of all different reading levels
- Can be easily integrated as part of a school's Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model

READ MORE

## Importance of Reading Fluency

An extensive amount of reading research has confirmed that reading fluency is important for all students' reading development.

However, instructional strategies designed to improve students' reading fluency are often missing from students' core reading curriculum.

READ MORE

## Other HELPS Programs

At the present time, all materials for the HELPS One-on-One Program are available for use.

However, additional HELPS Programs are currently being developed, such as programs for small groups and Spanish-speaking students.

READ MORE

## The HELPS Education Fund

The HELPS Education Fund is the non-profit foundation that is used to support teachers' free access to the HELPS Program materials.

This Fund is also used to support students' overall educational success, particularly for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Through the HELPS Education Fund, teachers and schools can apply to receive free educational services related to reading instruction. Teachers and schools can also apply for free educational materials beyond the free, downloadable materials offered from this website.

The HELPS Education Fund is financially supported in two ways. First, rather than downloading the HELPS Program materials for free from this website, teachers or schools can opt to purchase a set of pre-assembled, professionally developed HELPS Program materials (for only \$45 per set). Second, individuals or organizations can make tax-deductible donations directly to the Fund. 100% of proceeds from purchased HELPS materials and 100% of donations to The HELPS Education Fund are used to improve educational outcomes for students.

READ MORE

## RELATED LINKS

- AIMSweb
- Big Ideas in Beginning Reading
- Doing What Works
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- Easy CBI
- The Education Trust
- Evidence Based Intervention Network
- Florida Center for Reading Research
- Intervention Central
- National Center for Education Statistics
- National Center on Response to Intervention

## UPDATES

### Program Updates

Posted on July 6, 2010

- Thousands of educators are using HELPS
- Sharing HELPS with other educators is easy

### Research Updates

Posted on July 6, 2010

- Recent journal publication about HELPS
- Pilot studies of small-group HELPS Program

### Website Updates

Posted on July 6, 2010

- HELPS website improves in several ways

# HELPS: Tier 2 Reading-Fluency Program



**Step 1**  
Verbal Cueing Procedure and Expectations



# Evaluating the Quality of Tier 2/3 Reading Interventions/Programs: Example: HELPS Program

Q: Does HELPS provide remediation in specific, clearly defined academic skills?

A: Yes. HELPS sessions include these research-based elements that target reading fluency:

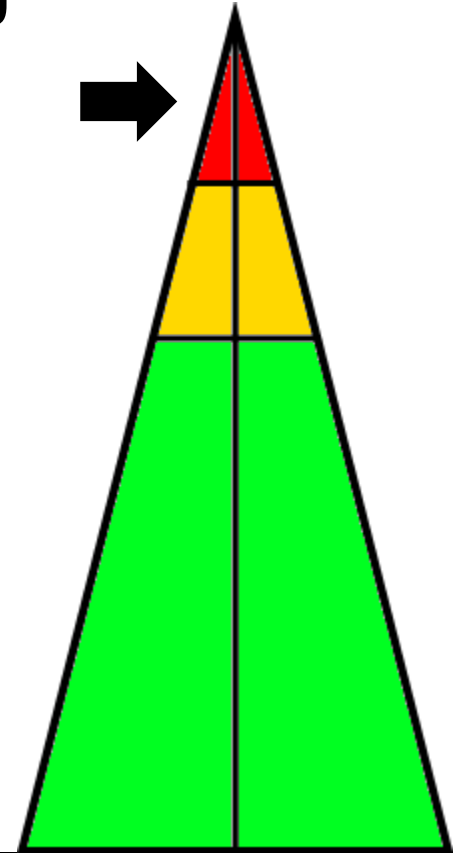
- adult modeling of fluent reading.
- repeated reading of passages by the student.
- phrase-drill error correction.
- verbal cueing and retell check to encourage student reading comprehension.
- reward procedures to engage and encourage the student reader.

# MTSS: Tier 3: Intensive Intervention

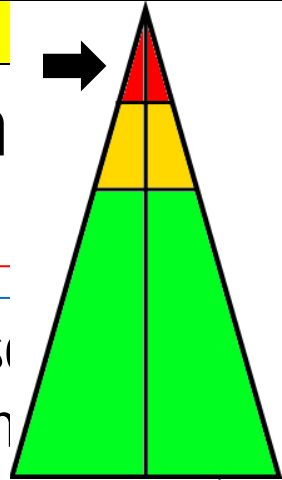
- Students with substantial academic (and/or behavioral) deficits who do not respond to lesser interventions may need a Tier 3 intervention. In a typical school, **1-5% of students** may need Tier 3 support in a given year. The **MTSS Problem-Solving Team** designs and implements the Tier 3 intervention plan.

The Team identifies the most important blockers to student success and develops a customized **intervention plan** to address those concerns.

Tier 3 stands apart from lesser Tiers because of the **intensity of intervention** and **customized, problem-solving focus**.



# Tier 3: Intensive Intervention. The MTSS Problem Solving Team...



...meets on referred students within 1-2 weeks of initial referral.

...follows a standardized problem-solving meeting format, with defined meeting and steps.



...produces a written record of RTI /MTSS Team meeting discussion, including a customized intervention plan.

...routinely schedules follow-up meetings 6-8 instructional weeks after the initial meeting to evaluate intervention outcomes.

...expects that providers of Tier 3 interventions will collect data at least weekly to monitor student progress.

### Tier 3 Interventions Are Developed With Assistance from the School's MTSS (Problem-Solving) Team



#### Effective MTSS Teams:

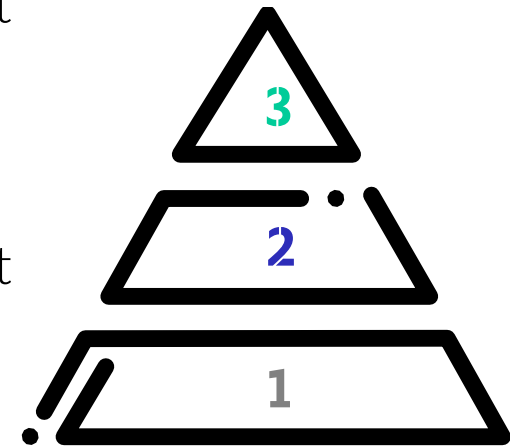
- Are multi-disciplinary and include classroom teachers among their members
- Follow a structured 'problem-solving' model
- Use data to analyze the academic or behavioral problem and match the student to effective, evidence-based interventions
- Develop a detailed research-based intervention plan to help staff with implementation
- Support teachers as needed to ensure success in carrying out the intervention ('intervention integrity')

# RTI/MTSS Continuum of Services: Tiers 1-3

**Tier 3: Intensive Intervention (1-5%).** Students who failed to respond to lesser interventions are reviewed by the RTI/MTSS problem-solving team and receive an individualized intervention plan. Groups are capped at 3 students and meet daily for at least 30 minutes.

**Tier 2: Strategic Intervention (10-15%).** Students receive small-group intervention (group size of 5-7) at least 3 times weekly for 30 minutes. The focus is on finding and fixing off-grade-level skill gaps.

**Tier 1: Classroom Instruction (100%).** The teacher provides strong core instruction, differentiates as needed for individual students.



# MTSS for Academics: FAQs...

- Why is our district changing its MTSS model? Aren't we already doing a good job supporting our at-risk learners?
- How will changes in MTSS in our schools affect the classroom teacher's role?
- When students get Tier 2 services, do they also need Tier 1 (classroom) interventions? If so, why?
- How can a teacher manage all of the students in their class that might need a Tier 1 intervention?
- How does a teacher know if the teaching practices they use with an MTSS student are 'research-based'?



# Strategies to **Promote** Positive Student-Teacher Relationships

## Motivating Through Personal Connection

### Try These Ideas to Improve the Student-Teacher Relationship:

- *Maintaining a High Rate of Positive Interactions.* Teachers promote a positive relationship with any student by maintaining a ratio of at least **three** positive teacher-student interactions (e.g., greeting, positive conversation, high-five) for every negative (disciplinary) interaction (e.g., reprimand) (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002).



## Motivating Through Personal Connection

### Try These Ideas to Improve the Student-Teacher Relationship:

- *Emphasizing the Positive in Teacher Requests* (Braithwaite, 2001). The teacher avoids using negative phrasing (e.g., "If you don't return to your seat, I can't help you with your assignment") when making a request of a student. Instead, the teacher request is stated in positive terms (e.g., "I will be over to help you on the assignment just as soon as you return to your seat"). When a request has a positive 'spin', that teacher is less likely to trigger a power struggle and more likely to gain student compliance.

## Motivating Through Personal Connection

### Try These Ideas to Improve the Student-Teacher Relationship:

- *Greeting Students at the Classroom Door.* A personalized greeting at the start of a class period can boost class levels of academic engagement (Allday & Pakurar, 2007) and promote personal connections with students.

The teacher spends a few seconds greeting each student by name at the classroom door at the beginning of class.

## Motivating Through Personal Connection

### Try These Ideas to Improve the Student-Teacher Relationship:

- *Two by Ten: Positively Structuring Teacher-Student Interactions* (Mendler, 2000). The teacher selects a student with whom that instructor wants to build a more positive relationship. The instructor makes a commitment to spend 2 minutes per day for ten consecutive days engaging the student in a positive conversation about topics of interest to that student. NOTE: During those two-minute daily conversations, the teacher maintains a positive tone and avoids talking about the student's problem behaviors or poor academic performance.

# Motivating Through Personal Connection

## Try These Ideas to Improve the Student-Teacher Relationship:

- *Pre-Session Attention* (Wood, Kisinger, Brosh, Fisher & Muharib, 2018). For students who appear to interrupt instruction to seek adult attention, give the student a dose (e.g., 2 minutes) of positive individual attention just before instruction begins.

This pre-session attention can reduce that student's immediate attention-seeking behaviors.

## 5 Teacher Questions about MTSS and the Classroom...

- Why is our district changing its MTSS model? Aren't we already doing a good job supporting our at-risk learners?
- How will changes in MTSS in our schools affect the classroom teacher's role?
- When students get Tier 2 services, do they also need Tier 1 (classroom) interventions? If so, why?
- How can a teacher manage all of the students in their class that might need a Tier 1 intervention?
- How does a teacher know if the teaching practices they use with an MTSS student are 'research-based'?