

MTSS example of intensifying intervention

Problem Identification

AB is a beginning second grade student who is not responding to the supplemental tier of support, although the majority of the group is benefitting from the intervention.

The individual problem-solving team collects and gathers data:

Kindergarten: DIBELS Next & TRC - BOY = core & proficient; MOY= strategic and below; and EOY = strategic and proficient. No intervention during Kindergarten but Foundations used in core Word Study as well as work on phonemic awareness.

Grade 1: DIBELS Next and TRC - BOY = intensive & proficient; MOY = intensive & below; EOY= strategic & below.

Core: Foundations continued in grade 1 and teacher noted that AB rarely met the mastery criteria for the skills taught. This was attributed to her inattention. Because of weaknesses in basic phonemic awareness and word reading skills, AB placed in supplemental intervention. Intervention was carried out during a daily 45 minute block of time where all children are grouped according to skill deficits and the focus of instruction was word study and comprehension delivered through a double dose of Foundations and Read Alouds. Over the summer AB received 1:1 tutoring focused on basic reading skills.

Grade 2: DIBELS Next & TRC – BOY = intensive and far below.

Core: Foundations taught as word study.

Analyze the Problem

The individual problem-solving team needs additional information as they continue the search for effective instruction for AB.

Diagnostic assessment:

Strengths: understands alphabetic principle; knows sounds for single consonants, consonant digraphs and single vowels; can segment cvc words and identify beginning, middle and ending sounds within words.

Weaknesses: has not mastered advanced phonemic awareness skills (analyzing and manipulating sounds within complex words); has not learned letter-sound associations for vowel patterns and common spelling patterns (e.g., is confused by –ng and –nk). Word identification skills are below the 1st percentile for her grade and decoding (5th percentile) and spelling (3rd percentile) are also deficient.

AB to be placed in intensive support and several options are being considered for intervention (Orton Gillingham, Hill, Spire, Great Leaps) which will continue for four weeks and then be evaluated for effectiveness.

Plan Implementation

Recommendations for intensifying instruction: Rather than introduce another reading program, use Foundations as the basis for instruction in phonemic awareness, decoding and spelling and make instruction more intensive. One of the strengths of the Foundations program is the cueing system which AB has been introduced to. In addition, she has shown understanding of key strategies taught in Foundations (e.g., sound tapping). However, AB must be taught the skills in the Foundations sequence to mastery rather than allowing her to simply progress through the curriculum. This will require re-teaching skills in the level 1 Foundations program in a setting that allows for more intensive and direct instruction including: reducing the teacher-pupil ratio; placing students with similar skill levels together; slowing the pace of instruction; spending more time in direct instruction and providing time each day in guided practice. Supplement the Foundations program in the following ways: in addition to the key words for cues to letter-sound associations use picture cues and gestures as additional cues and practice till the link is automatic between the letter/s and sounds.

In addition to the small group instruction, AB will require additional small group or 1:1 instruction that focuses on re-teaching, review and practice of the skills taught. A critical difficulty for AB is automatic recognition of words. The only way to develop automatic recognition (whether for words with regular spelling patterns or for “tricky” words) is to provide more frequent practice. The Foundations *fluency materials* are a good starting point for this practice. In addition, for AB, practice should be *supported* with the use of cues and by reformatting the word lists to present words in groups with the same pattern (word family) and slowing introducing words of different patterns. Teach AB the concept of onset and rime which will reinforce her ability to recognize patterns (word families) within words. Another critical aspect of practice for AB involves the use of *decodable readers*. These are books which are written to provide multiple exposures to words with the patterns that have been taught. The Foundations program does not contain sufficient numbers of these books so this area will have to be supplemented. Fluency practice should always include work on comprehension to make sure that the student does not lose sight of the ultimate goal of reading. I also recommend one or two additional short periods (5 to 10 minutes) of targeted practice (based on work done with the intervention teacher but this can be done by other adults).

All word study instruction whether in core, supplemental and intensive support should be carefully coordinated so that AB is being taught the same skills and strategies in all settings. For example, her spelling lists should be determined by the intervention teacher. Carefully designed practice should be done at school as well as at home when possible.

Evaluate the Plan

The team will develop a calendar to meet and review student progress monitoring data according to the NC MTSS progress monitoring guidelines. The team will also review implementation data by examining coaching session notes and teacher interviews.

R. Felton

November 27, 2016.