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AUTHOR(S): Melissa Himfar

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Christiane Wood	*Christiane Wood*	Oct 1, 2020
COMMITTEE CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE

Erika Daniels	*Erika Daniels*	Oct 2, 2020
COMMITTEE MEMBER	SIGNATURE	DATE

COMMITTEE MEMBER	SIGNATURE	DATE

COMMITTEE MEMBER	SIGNATURE	DATE

A Reading Intervention Menu: "If a Student…Then…"

Melissa Himfar

School of Education, California State University San Marcos

Masters of Arts: Reading, Language, and Literacy Program

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A READING INTERVENTION MENU

Abstract

The purpose of this project was to create a menu of research-based interventions in an "If a student…then…" format. The project addressed the problem of using research-based interventions within the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework. The intervention menu lists common learning challenges that students have on one side of a chart and outlines briefly possible intervention strategies and classroom adaptations on the other side. Also, sample templates for creating small-group instruction tailored to a specific need and a six-week planning template are provided to assist teachers with mapping out their instruction and with parent-teacher meetings. This project is significant because the format of the intervention menu is student-centered instead of curriculum-centered.

KEYWORDS: reading intervention, literacy challenges, small-group literacy instruction, literacy strategies, phonics-based strategies, whole language-based strategies, balanced literacy

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Chapter 1: Definition of the Problem

In 2004 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004) was revised to allow for a new method to target at-risk students called "Response to Intervention" (RTI). According to the RTI Action Network: A Program of the National Center for Learning Disabilities (n. d), RTI is a multi-tiered framework that identifies struggling students and provides focused literacy intervention. The first tier of RTI is provided by the grade level teacher to deliver reading instruction to all students in the classroom. The second tier of RTI targets students with low scores on screening measures or weak progress from regular classroom instruction. Tier 2 interventions are typically delivered by a reading intervention teacher. The intervention teacher directs supplemental small-group reading instruction on foundational reading skills. In tier 3, more intensive interventions are administered to students also by an intervention teacher. Students are placed in tier 3 because they were not showing growth after a reasonable amount of time in tier 2. Consequently, if students are still not making adequate progress, then a special education service evaluation is conducted.

Aside from the various tiers of instruction and ongoing assessment, RTI also calls for the use of research-based instruction. As a reading intervention teacher for grades 1-5, I do not typically look at what the research says about particular interventions. I pull strategies from a variety of resources that connect to an area of need based on assessment data. Additionally, this brings a few questions to my mind: What is considered research-based instruction? How do I know if my instruction has been research-based? What are the most successful research-based interventions for struggling readers? According to Moats (2020), a national literacy expert from High Five Literacy and Academic Coaching explain, a division exists between the instruction teachers are delivering and research-driven methods. The full implementation of RTI is essential

for the framework to bring positive student outcomes. However, problems such as "…teachers are limited in their knowledge of research-based interventions…" (Shores, 2009, p. 22) diminish the effectiveness of the RTI framework.

Currently, I work at a Title 1 charter school that includes grades K-12. The elementary school serves 288 students. The location of the school is in a rural, residential area made up of a diverse community 54.3% white, 32.4% Hispanic, 4.2% African American, 3.8% Asian, and 5.3% other. At my school, students move from tier 2 if they are not demonstrating enough progress to a student study team meeting seeking parental consent for special education testing. Tier 3 is skipped entirely and in some instances, students are found not to qualify for special education after being assessed. These students that do not qualify for special education and are not responding to small-group interventions in tier 2 need something different than what they are receiving. According to Campsen (2013), a national mentor for the RTI Action Network explains that if educators pick and choose certain pieces of the response to intervention framework, the highest positive outcomes for student proficiency and academic achievement will not occur.

Purpose of Project

According to a 2013 survey by the International Reading Association on the implementation of RTI, it was noted: "…intervention services are being provided by people who do not necessarily have sufficient time and/or the expertise needed to plan and deliver effective early literacy intervention" (Scanlon, p.7). When I plan tier 2 instruction it can be time-consuming, as I am evaluating assessment data and matching weak areas to specific interventions. Another component within RTI is the parent involvement aspect. In my practice, it is essential to explain clearly what interventions are being used, why they were chosen, what progress has been made, and how a parent can help their child at home. Additionally, an example

of a small-group goal-setting document and a six-week planning template is provided. These templates can help a teacher create a roadmap for a student's learning and assist with parent meetings.

After reviewing scholarly research about how students learn to read, phonics-based interventions show some positive results in a few studies. For example, research conducted by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) found "…growth in word-reading skills is strongly enhanced by systematic phonics instruction when compared to non-phonics instruction…" (Teaching Children to Read, 2000, p. 94). Additionally, research on phonics was highly critiqued by followers of the whole language approach to reading. For example, many research studies examined by Bowers (2020) pointed out flaws and limitations in studies supporting a phonics-based approach. One limitation of a study by The National Reading Panel (2000) and Ehri et al. (2003) pointed out by Bowers (2020) was that:

> …systematic phonics did not help children labeled "low achieving" poor readers ($d = 0.15$, not significant). These were children above first grade who were below average readers and whose cognitive level was below average or not assessed. By contrast, children labeled "reading disabled" who were below grade level in reading but at least average cognitively and were above first grade in most cases did benefit (d = 0.32). Of course, additional research may show that systematic phonics does benefit low achieving poor readers (the NRP only included eight comparison groups in this condition), but there is no evidence for this from the NRP meta-analysis (p. 686).

The conflict between phonics-based and whole language approaches complicates the research findings because there is not a simple answer or a specific intervention that will work with every

child. The balanced approach to reading was a compromise because it is a mix of both approaches.

In my practice, I use more of a whole language approach to reading and less of the phonics-based approach. In my teacher preparation program, I felt the whole language approach was also emphasized more than the phonics-based approach. I think, it is important to be flexible and have interventions from both sides, as students respond differently. At my school, classroom teachers delivering tier 1 instruction, also seem to use a greater amount of whole language instruction than phonics-based approaches. The English Language Arts curriculum used at my school embeds phonics, but it stresses more whole language.

The purpose of this project was to create a menu of research-based interventions in an "If a student…then…" format. Various common challenges that students have are recorded on one side of a chart and the other side itemizes possible intervention strategies and classroom adaptations in response to those challenges. Moreover, a collection of interventions is presented with a brief explanation of what the strategy is. Also, sample templates for creating small-group instruction tailored to a specific need and a six-week planning template are provided to assist teachers with mapping out their instruction and with parent-teacher meetings.

The research-based menu includes strategies from both a phonics-based and whole language approach; though I tend to want to decrease my use of the three cueing systems model. Wren (n. d.) from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory makes a strong case for an alternative model that proposes semantics and syntax do not make a major contribution to the recognition of words, but alternatively are essential for comprehension. He references a phenomenon called the Stroop Effect, which demonstrates that even when we deliberately attempt to pass over words, we cannot avoid decoding them (Wren, n. d.). He explains word

decoding is automatic and fast and guessing and predicting words is a slower and less accurate way of reading. I agree with his stance. Additionally, he argues that the attention needs to move to a student's individual learning needs discovered through ongoing, diagnostic assessment. I wholeheartedly agree with his position. As a reading intervention teacher, it is crucial to accurately review assessment data and match appropriate intervention strategies that target a student's needs.

Significance of this Project

A menu of interventions in an "If a student…then…." format, will allow teachers in grades 1-5 to match strategies to student needs in an organized way. Additionally, teachers will have access to a variety of strategies that target the same need, so if a student is not responding to a strategy, another strategy can be used instead. For example, if a teacher is teaching how to find key details in a story and underlining the details using question words who, what, where, why, when, and how as prompting is not helping a student, then maybe the teacher may try using question word cards. A student would select one question word card to focus on one part of a story while reading or being read to. This approach will make a stronger impact on a student because the learning needs of a student is the focus instead of a particular curriculum. Teachers must assess and determine student learning needs. Then, teachers can address those areas with a variety of strategies, as every student learns differently. The menu of interventions presents five or more strategies for the following areas: phonological awareness, decoding, comprehension, and fluency. Additionally, some sample templates to document interventions used and their progress are provided to aid teachers with documentation.

A READING INTERVENTION MENU

Preview Literature

The main question that guided this literature review was, what makes the greatest difference in helping struggling students learn to read? The following themes emerged from the literature:

1. Different approaches for word identification (Moats, 2010; Moats & Tolman, 2009)

2. Teaching students, not programs (Allington, 2002; International Reading Association, 2002, as cited in Bond & Dykstra, 1967/1997)

3. Code-based interventions (Chall, 1967; Teaching Children to Read, 2000, as cited in Durkin; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Reutzel & Cooter, 1988; Snow et al., 1998)

4. The importance of educators (International Reading Association, 2019; Tolman, 2017)

The first theme targeting word identification reviewed how each approach to reading examines this area, which is frequently problematic for struggling readers. The Three Cueing Systems and Four Processing Systems are compared and contrasted in The Challenge of Learning to Read (Moats & Tolman, 2009). The next theme focused on instruction that needs to be tailored to the student, instead of a one-size-fits-all approach. Additionally, even when using research, a teacher needs to consider how are the students in the study similar to the student that they are teaching (International Reading Association, 2002, as cited in Bond & Dykstra, 1967/1997). The third theme concerning code-based interventions brings awareness to what some research supports. It also reveals that there are no simple answers in delivering reading instruction (Teaching Children to Read, 2000, as cited in Durkin, 1981; Reutzel & Cooter, 1988). The final theme positions the teacher as a vital element in helping struggling

readers close the gap rather than a particular program or strategy. "Teacher expertise makes all the difference" (Tolman, 2017, p. 23).

Preview Methodology

I created a menu of interventions in an "If a student…then…" format that includes interventions from both a phonics-based and whole language approach to reading. Teachers who may have a stronger background in one approach will have access to other interventions that they might not have used otherwise. The goal of this menu is for teachers to choose interventions that their student will most likely respond to, instead of having teachers just use interventions that are most familiar to them. Another goal of this menu is to help teachers find a variety of strategies that match learning challenges.

Definitions

Whole Language Approach – Based on constructivist learning theory, "top-down approach." Teachers prepare a print-rich environment for students and combine the 4 domains of literacy (speaking, listening, reading, writing) with an emphasis on the meaning of texts over the sounds of letters. Instruction in phonics is one part of the whole language method.

Phonics-Based Approach – "Bottom-up approach" also referred to as code-based reading instruction that teaches sound-symbol correspondences.

Balanced Approach – Compromise between the above approaches and teaches these 5 areas: phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension.

Summary

RTI is a framework that focuses on a process. Its goal is to help at-risk students with additional support in foundational skills. RTI advocates for teachers to use research and evidence-based interventions. The following literature review will help teachers understand what

are research and evidence-based interventions. Themes involve the differences in phonics-based and whole language approaches to teaching reading, what some research supports, the focus on the student instead of a program, and how a teacher's knowledge is the driving factor in closing the learning gap rather than using a specific intervention. This intervention menu will help teachers choose intervention strategies in response to specific learning challenges.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The International Literacy Association (2019) asserts that current research supports a balanced approach for literacy. A balanced approach teaches these five areas: phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension. It tends to be a compromise between the phonics-based and whole language approaches. When a reading approach is backed by research, does this mean that it will work with every student? I would argue no because every student is different. When reviewing research, it is important to consider how similar are the students in the study to the students a teacher is instructing. The emphasis on using a particular reading approach over another is misplaced. Educators must be responsive to a student's learning needs and be flexible with using a variety of approaches. After a review of the literature, I identified four themes. The four themes are:

1. Different systems for word identification (Moats, 2010; Moats & Tolman, 2009)

2. Teaching students, not programs (Allington, 2002; International Reading Association, 2002, as cited in Bond & Dykstra, 1967/1997)

3. Code-based interventions (Chall, 1967; Teaching Children to Read, 2000, as cited in Durkin; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Reutzel & Cooter, 1988; Snow et al., 1998)

4. The importance of educators (International Reading Association, 2019; Tolman,
    2017)

These themes relate to the reason why I created a menu of interventions organized in an
"If a student…then…" format. I arranged it this way because it emphasizes the importance of
being student-centered and allows teachers to locate a variety of interventions that connect to a
specific need. Since there is not a particular program or teaching practice that is most effective,
teachers need to be able to use strategies that include both whole language and phonics-based
approaches. Wren (2003) explains the whole language approach emphasizes comprehension and
love for the process of reading authentic and associated texts. However, the phonics-based
approach places more emphasis on reading accuracy and uses more rules about how words are
spelled. The phonics-based method is considered a "bottom-top" approach and whole language is
considered a "top-bottom approach."

Also, teachers need to be flexible in their approach and ready to switch a strategy if a
student is not responding well to it, as all students have unique needs and learning styles.
According to the International Reading Association (2002), "There is no instructional program or
method that is effective in teaching all children to read" (p. 3).

Different Systems for Word Identification

Reading development is centered around these components: phonemic awareness,
phonics, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and writing. According to Moats (2010) a former
teacher, psychologist, and researcher, she believes that unlike oral language, reading is not
natural, but rather complex. She stated, "Our brains are not as fully evolved for processing
written language as they are for processing spoken language, and therefore, learning to read and
write is more challenging than learning to speak" (Moats, 2010, p. 7). Moats & Tolman (2009)

highlight how places in the brain engage in reading which relates to four processing systems that aid in word recognition. The four processing systems are the phonological processor, context processor, meaning processor, and orthographic processor. This model contrasts with the "Three Cueing Systems" model that most teachers are familiar with from doing running records. This model proposes 3 systems to decode words, graphophonic system, semantic system, and syntactic system. I typically use this model when I ask a student who is not sure of a word when reading, "Does it sound right, does it look right, and does it make sense?"

Figure 1

Three Cueing Systems and Four Processing Systems
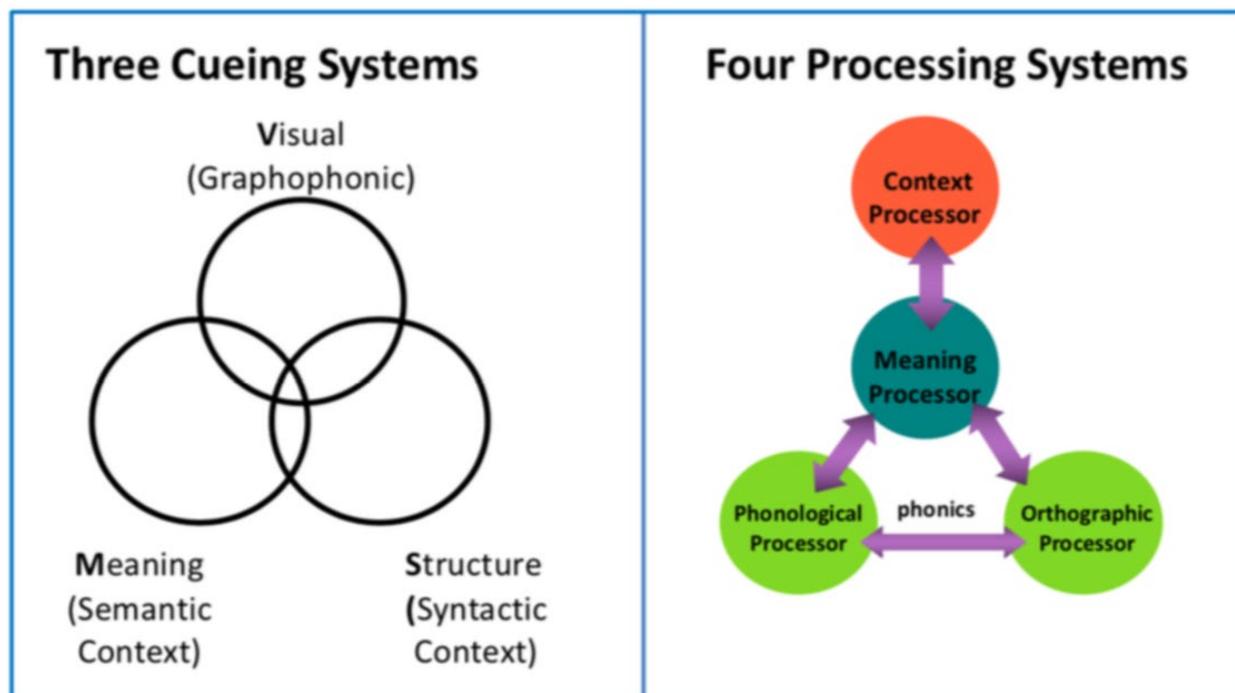
As noted in figure 1, the Four Processing Systems Model differs from the latter in that it is connected to parts of the brain. For example, the phonological processor is located in the back of the frontal lobe, the orthographic processor is located in the lower back part of the brain, and the middle area is where the two processing systems communicate to foster word recognition.

Another way it differs is because the phonological processor is not combined with the

orthographic processor. This means "…we teach speech sounds and print patterns and then teach

them how the two are linked. Accurately read words are then associated with meaning and

placed in context" (Moats & Tolman, 2009, p. 39). In the three cueing systems model the

phonological and the orthographic processing systems are joined together and placed in the

graphophonic system.

Tolman (2018), an international literacy consultant used the four processing systems

model and created the Tolman Hourglass Figure.

Figure 2

Tolman Hourglass Figure

As outlined in figure 2, this model starts with the phonological processor at the top of the

hourglass, knowledge of the alphabetic principle in the middle, and the orthographic processor is

at the lower end of the hourglass. The phonological processor is further broken down into early,

basic, and advanced skills. For example, early skills include syllables, alliteration, and

onset/rime. Basic skills focus on segmenting and blending. Advanced skills include delete, substitute, and reverse. After a student demonstrates an awareness of individual phonemes, then sounds are mapped into graphemes and then the orthographic processor begins. The orthographic processor is broken down into the following skills, digraphs, trigraphs, vowel teams, blends, word families, syllables, morphemes, and etymology. This model provides a good outline of the necessary skills in developing phonological awareness.

Teaching Students Not Programs

According to the International Reading Association (2002), evidence-based reading instruction means that there is a program or method that has a "record of success" (p. 4). When teachers research data on teaching methods, they need to also "examine the generalizability, or fit of the evidence" (p. 5). This means they need to know if their students are similar to the students in the study, to get a comparable outcome. Unfortunately, there is no simple answer in how to teach reading to struggling students. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work for all students and just using one approach such as the three cueing systems is not effective for all students.

According to Allington (2002), teaching needs to be responsive to the student. "Time and again, research has confirmed that regardless of the quality of a program, resource, or strategy, it is the teacher and learning situation that makes the difference" (International Reading Association, 2002, as cited in Bond & Dykstra, 1967/1997, p. 3). When teachers know both reading approaches, they can blend aspects from the two and create more of a balanced reading program. For example, if using the three cueing systems is not effective with a particular student, then a different approach may be necessary or more repetition with the initial method is needed. Teachers constantly need to use student data and learning profiles to make sound instructional

decisions that will best meet the needs of the child. Allington (2002) believes 'good teaching' is the most researched-based. "Are we creating schools in which every year every teacher becomes more expert?" (Allington, 2002, p.747). Allington raises a good point regarding growth in knowledge and professional development opportunities.

Code-Based Interventions

In a large-scale, US federally funded research review by Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998), highlighted the benefits of using a phonics-based approach. "...phonological structure of spoken words appears to be necessary for the child to discover the alphabetic principle that print represents the sounds of the language." (p. 57). This supports literary experts Moats and Tolman's views regarding the use of the four processing systems and the Tolman Hourglass model. First Grade Studies, a program by Bond and Dykstra "...pointed to a consistent advantage for code-emphasis approaches while indicating that one single simple method was not superior for all children and teachers" (Snow et al., 1998, p. 173). This supports a balanced approach to reading and the need to draw from a variety of methods that will be effective for the student.

Jeanne S. Chall (1967) also found "consistent advantages for programs that included phonics, as measured by outcomes on word recognition, spelling, vocabulary, and reading comprehension at least through the third grade" (as cited in Snow et al., 1998, p. 173). Additionally, she noted that this approach made one of the greatest differences for children from lower socio-economic backgrounds and students with lower abilities entering first grade. A systematic phonics approach would be important for teachers to have in their collection of strategies.

Another large scale, US federally funded research review was conducted by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000). This study found the following:

…growth in word-reading skills is strongly enhanced by systematic phonics instruction

when compared to non-phonics instruction for …1st graders as well as for older

struggling readers. Growth in reading comprehension is also boosted by systematic

phonics instruction for younger students... It is important to evaluate children's reading

competence in many ways, not only by their phonics skills but also by their interest in

books and their ability to understand information that is read to them. By emphasizing all

of the processes that contribute to growth in reading, teachers will have the best chance of

making every child a reader. (Teaching Children to Read, 2000, p. 94).

Spending time using phonics-based methods can bring positive outcomes for some

students, however, phonics is not a complete reading program. For example, other areas such as

vocabulary, comprehension, building motivation, and interest in reading are also ingredients

needed for an effective reading program. This research panel also concluded that guided oral

reading and repeated reading were effective ways to teach fluency. Additionally, vocabulary was

found to be "one of the most important areas within comprehension and should not be neglected"

(p. 4-9). Repeated reading was reported to help with vocabulary probably due to multiple

experiences with new words. It was also noted that comprehension strategies tend to be

"assigned" instead of "employing the effective instruction modeling and transactional processes

that research supports" (Teaching Children to Read, 2000, p.4-48, as cited in Durkin, 1981;

Reutzel & Cooter, 1988).

The Importance of Educators

In reviewing the research to uncover research-based interventions for struggling students,

I am understanding that it is more about teacher knowledge in how to help the student, then on a

specific strategy that is supposed to work because of a study. To provide appropriate lessons,

teachers need to have a flexible assortment of instructional strategies (International Literacy

Association, 2019, p. 4). Strategies from whole language and phonics-based approaches can be

beneficial for different students. As a reading intervention teacher, I need to use a variety of

assessments to inform my instruction and take into consideration the learning profile and

attitudes a student has toward reading. My instructional plan needs to target not only the weak

areas but needs to be tailored to the best way the student will learn. My intervention menu will

not only help myself but other 1-5 classroom teachers as well. It emphasizes the need to be

student-centered rather than curriculum-centered and helps educators be flexible and willing to

switch a strategy to help students be successful literacy learners.

Chapter 3: Methodology

My quest to uncover research-based intervention strategies for use within the response to

invention (RTI) framework did not yield many results. The scholarly research review highlighted

the different systems for word identification that the phonics-based and whole language

approaches support. The phonics-based approach focuses more on reading accuracy and the

whole language approach focuses more on comprehension and the appreciation of reading. When

the "reading wars" could not be resolved, a balanced approach to literacy emerged. This

approach seems to take the best parts out of the two opposing approaches and acts as a

compromise.

Although some scholarly research studies support the use of phonics-based methods, it is

important to always be student-centered. Student-centered means the focus is on the learners'

needs and not on a particular approach or curriculum. This relates to another theme about

teaching students not programs. Instruction needs to be customized to a student's learning needs

and these needs are revealed through assessments. Conversely, instruction that is planned out

months in advance is curriculum-centered. Teachers need to be flexible and versed in all reading approaches, as well as be able to use different strategies. The purpose of the intervention menu is to help teachers be student-centered and flexible. The format is arranged in a way that places the students' needs first and matches them to a variety of strategies. The final theme regarding the importance of educators ties in with the significance of being responsive to the learner. The teacher makes the difference, not the curriculum.

Design

I created an intervention menu of strategies that focus on phonological awareness, decoding, comprehension, and fluency. It is organized by potential learning challenges on one side and a variety of interventions or classroom adaptations on the other side of a chart. I arranged it in this "If a student…then…" format because it emphasizes a student's needs. I used resources that focus on the phonics-based and whole language approaches. I included at least five strategies for each area, so teachers can be flexible and responsive to what will be most impactful for a student. A description for each strategy was intentionally made brief, as more details can be found accessing the resources it was adapted from. This intervention menu will help teachers be student-centered, flexible, and responsive. Additionally, a template for setting an instructional goal for small-group learning and a six-week planning sheet are provided as examples of ways to document instruction.

Intended Audience and Setting

Classroom teachers and reading intervention teachers delivering tier 2 or tier 3 small-group instruction will find the intervention menu useful.

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Instruments

I compiled existing intervention strategies into an "If a student…then…" format in a word document, so teachers can match common learning challenges to strategies or classroom adaptations. Allington (2002) emphasized that for instruction to be most effective, it needs to be responsive to the learner, rather than using a curriculum that is scripted. This intervention menu will help teachers focus on student learning needs, instead of using a specific curriculum. Teachers need to be flexible in their approach and take into account how a student will learn best and what their unique needs are. The one-size-fits-all approach does not work and this intervention menu will help teachers continue to be student-centered. Research by Connor and colleagues (2013) longitudinal studies revealed that when students are instructed in a one-size-fits-all approach, students can fall even further behind than their same-age counterparts.

Procedures and Evaluation of the Process

I created this product so teachers can focus on student needs and have a variety of strategies that match them. One objective of this menu is to help teachers remain flexible in their approach and the second goal is to highlight the importance of being responsive to a student. Connor and colleagues (2013) longitudinal studies also revealed that when interventions are continued when they are no longer needed, some students can still fall behind. This further supports how important it is to make the learning needs of a student the primary focus when delivering instruction.

The effectiveness of this product is evaluated by how a teacher uses the intervention menu responsively and flexibly. Teachers need to closely monitor student needs through ongoing assessments and let the results drive their instruction, rather than a specific curriculum. Additionally, if an intervention is not working for a student after a reasonable amount of time, a

different approach may yield a better outcome. The International Literacy Association (ILA) (2019) pointed out that a flexible array of instructional methods is needed to be effective. Teachers need to be open-minded to students who learn differently. For example, a lesson with embedded phonics may be enough for some students to be able to decode short vowel words (CVC) and not enough instruction for others. The ILA (2019) further explains that experienced teachers adjust their teaching based on what a student's current knowledge is and what they still need to learn.

Summary

My journey to find research-based intervention strategies for use in the RTI framework did not end the way I thought it would. Overall, the research studies were inconsistent and even if there was more consistency with student outcomes, a teacher would still need to ask themselves how similar is my student to the student in the research study. Unfortunately, there is not a universal intervention that is going to work for every student. Teachers need to focus on the needs of the learner that is in front of them, rather than a specific curriculum. The purpose of the intervention menu was to create a tool that would help teachers be responsive and flexible to their student needs.

Chapter 4: Project

According to the International Literacy Association (2019), "…researchers such as Frank Vellutino and Donna Scanlon have shown that instruction that is targeted to the specific needs of individual students can significantly reduce the incidence of reading difficulties" (p.3). Unfortunately, there is no magic roadmap for learning how to read and the research shows this. Instruction ought to address student needs and cannot be planned out months in advance, each lesson must address what the student needs are.

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        This intervention menu is to be used by a teacher after a student has been assessed and the results have been analyzed. For example, if a grade 3 teacher has been using the three cueing systems for teaching word solving and the student has not demonstrated proficiency in this area, then another intervention should be selected, maybe a phonics-based approach. A phonics-based intervention such as teaching morphology, spelling patterns, and syllables can be found in this intervention menu. Another aspect of this tool is a small-group goal setting and a six-week planning template. Teachers can document the interventions that they have tried and record their results. This can be especially helpful when attending meetings with parents and school administration.

Figure 3

"If a Student…Then…" Reading Intervention Menu

IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
Struggles with **phonological awareness** skills in the following areas… ――――――― *Syllables *Rhyme *Alliteration *Onset/rime *Phoneme Blending *Phoneme Segmentation *Phoneme deletion, substitution, and reversal	Syllable Blending Activity: Silly Sally speaks very slowly. What word is Silly Sally saying? Examples: Ta-ble, hos-pi-tal, tan-ger-ine Syllable Deletion Activity: Break long words into parts and leave a part out. If I say toothpaste and then leave off tooth, then what's left? That's right: paste. Let's try some more. Syllable Counting Activity: Choose a word and then tap the syllables as you say the word. Alliteration Activity: Read aloud books with words that have the same sound at the start. Example, Silly Sally. Initial Sound Matching Activity: Use student names and have them stand or sit together if their name starts with the same sound as someone else's name. Example: Tanya and Timmy. Onset-Rime Division Activity: Words are said in parts. Teacher says the whole word and student divides it into two parts. Example: c-ar and shi-ip. Rhyme Judgement Activity: Read aloud poem with rhyming words.

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	Rhyme Matching Activity: Students match rhyming words. Rhyme Production Activity: Teacher says three words that rhyme and sound alike at the end. Student says one more word that rhymes. It can be a silly word. Example: hinky, pinky, slinky. Phoneme Blending Tapping Activity: Start by tapping the sounds in a word. Place a marker in an Elkonin box to map each sound. Then use a finger to blend the sounds. Phoneme Blending Final Sound Matching Activity: Teacher says two words. Student repeats the last sound if they match. Example: Moon, pen /n/. Blending Phonemes Activity: Teacher says a name sound by sound. Students stand up, if they hear their name. Example: /s/ /a/ /m/ Sam. Phoneme Segmentation, Say it and Move it Activity: Teacher says a word and then says it sound by sound and moves counters into boxes. Use gradual release strategy. Phoneme deletion Activity: Initial Sound – Say peas without the /p/. Final Sound – Say sheet without the /t/. Initial Blend – Say stop without the /s/. Final Blend – Say wild without the /d/. Initial and Final Sound Substitution Activity: Let's see if we can make some new words by changing just one sound. If I change /b/ in bat to /r/, then what new word do I have? (rat) Middle Vowel Substitution Activity: Teacher moves the same-colored chips to show the segmentation of the word. As the vowel is changed, show which chip is changing. Make new words by changing the vowel sound. Sound Chaining Activity: Teacher uses colored blocks to show what sound has changed in each new word in the chain. Example: Day, date, dot, pot.

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	<u>Phoneme Sound Reversal Activity:</u> Student says the last sound first and the first sound last: Example: zone (nose), church (church), pose (soap).
	<u>Syllable Tracking Activity:</u> Repeat and say the accented syllable loudest: Example: Dynasty, dynastic, atom, atomic, democrat, democracy.
	<u>Pig Latin Activity:</u> Make a sentence by removing the first consonant from each word, putting the consonant at the end of the word and adding the vowel ay to it. (Ello-hay, y-may, ame-nay, is-ay, teve-say. Hello, my name is Steve.)
IF A STUDENT…	**THEN… (try some of the following)**
struggles with **decoding** skills in the following areas… _____ * b/d confusion *Spelling patterns *Morphology *Syllables	<u>b/d confusion using a multisensory approach</u>: Explain that your lips begin /b/ looking like a closed straight line. Then they pop open as you pronounce the sound /b/. Writing the letter b, does the same thing, by beginning with a straight line, then making a circle similar to popping open your mouth. This connects phonology to orthography. <u>Morphology Activities:</u> Listen for suffixes, prefixes, or base words. Example: Put your thumb up if the word I say means more than one of something bunches, windows, snack, parties, picture, sailing, coats. Combine single words into compounds and use them to label pictures. Remove inflections and simple suffixes from the base words. Example: Fighting = fight + ing Sort past tense and/or plural words by the sound of their ending. Categorize inflected words by meaning. Categorize words by form: compound words, contractions, and others. Combine base words, prefixes, and suffixes and use the new words. Teach about schwa to set a foundation for teaching about syllable shift in derived word forms and for syllable tracking. Establish awareness of the syllables, phonemes, and morphemes in the word.

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	Identify prefixes, roots, and suffixes.
	Define affixed words.
	Practice word building with one root or combining form.
	Complete words in a cloze passage. Example: Fill in the missing blanks with either able or ible.
	Teach syllable types and differences of spoken versus written: To chunk unfamiliar words accurately and quickly. 6 Types of syllables in English orthography. Examples: Closed, open, consonant –le, vowel team dipthong, vowel –r controlled, and magic /e/.
	Principles of Syllable Division for Reading Longer Words
	Two consonants between two vowels: Usually we divide between two adjacent consonants. The first syllable will be closed (with a short vowel). Example, pen-ny.
	One consonant between two vowels: First try dividing before the consonant. This makes the first vowel long and the syllable open. Example, po-ny.
	If the word is not recognized, try dividing after the consonant. This makes the first vowel short and syllable closed. Example, drag-on Consonant blends usually stick together, don't separate digraphs. Example, e-ther
	Model 4 ways to read words – phonemic decoding, analogizing, creating mental orthographic images, using contextual clues.
	Additional Resources: See Words their Way curriculum
IF A STUDENT…	**THEN… (try some of the following)**
struggles with **comprehension** skills in the following areas… _____ *Reading for details	**Read for details using both literal and inferential understanding.** Prompting Cards Activity: Copy and cut out question word flashcards Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? Ask students to describe one thing that they did at recess, use the flashcards for prompting.

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
*Theme and summarization *Narrative Elements *Vocabulary *Text Structure *Point of view and author's purpose *Diverse text formats and media *Evaluate arguments in a text *Comparing and contrasting multiple texts	Detail Scramble Activity: Mix up detail cards and give them to students. Have students put details into categories of who, what, where, when, and how.
	Details Pop Up Activity: Teacher hands out prompting cards and reads a book to students. Students "pop-up" when they hear their prompting card being discussed in the text.
	Coding Details Activity: Read a story out loud and have students identify who, what, where, when, why, and how in the story by instructing them to attach their sticky note beside that location.
	Story Cards Activity: Place prompting cards face down. A student selects one card and uses the card to focus on one part while reading the story or the teacher can also read to the student.
	Marking Details Activity: Students underline who, what, where, why, when, and how in a copy of a story.
	Text Tie-Ins Activity: After reading a text to students, ask them the focus questions. Students write evidence from text on a sentence strip and their answer on another strip. Link and discuss.
	Text Cutouts Activity: Students can cut out pieces of text that relate to each question card. Build a Story Activity: In cooperative group of 6 students, each person takes one type of detail (who, what, where, when, why, how) and builds part of a group story.
	Every Little Detail Counts Activity: Students write an original story including all narrative elements. Students can then exchange papers to see if they can find the answers to the focus questions (who, what, where, when, why, how).
	Theme/Main Idea and Summarization
	Main Idea Bags Activity: Teacher brings in a bag that contains items connected to a book about to be read to them. Take out each item from the bag and challenge students to guess what the book may be about (don't show the book). As students make predictions, use appropriate language to teach the concept of main idea and details. Then read the

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	book and ask how the items in the bag helped them prepare for the book. Main Idea Clues Activity: Draw student attention to the title of a book and have students make predictions. Students can look at front cover illustrations and ask if it confirms or changes their predictions. Do picture walk with students and have them make predictions. Read the book and ask them to confirm their predictions based on clues. Raise Your Hand for Main Idea! Activity: Relate main idea and supporting details to a picture of a handprint. Students outline their hand. Teacher reads a text and students write a supporting detail on each finger. After the reading, students determine the main idea based on their supporting details. Life Lessons Activity: Discuss rules that students follow at home and at school. Ask why we have those rules. What lessons do we learn from these rules? Relate the rules to lessons learned when people did not follow those rules. Relate lessons to authors and books. Secret Message Activity: Select a story that was read to students. Discuss the problem and solution of the story. Ask students what lesson they learned from the solution to the problem. Fabled Lessons Activity: Discuss what lesson the character learns from the problem. Picture Cards Activity: Students can sequence the parts in a story and retell the story using the cards. Tag! You're It! Activity: In groups of three, students will have a card (beginning, middle, or end), the student listens to their part of the story (after text is read) then retell to group members. Retelling Frames Activity: Highlight beginning, middle, and end. Tailor the activity to student needs. Sequence Chain Activity: Read aloud to students. Students listen for major events in the story. Students write each event on sentence strips. **Narrative Elements and Sequence of Events**

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	<u>All About Me Activity:</u> Ask students to tell a story about their own lives. Focus on patterns that emerge (characters, setting, events). <u>No Words Needed Activity:</u> Using wordless picture books, ask students to identify narrative elements. <u>3…2…1…The Stage is Yours! Activity:</u> Students guess what narrative element is being acted out (characters, settings, events). <u>Story Bags Activity:</u> Teacher reads a story to students. Students work in groups and are assigned a different narrative element. Students need to find an object that relates to their narrative element. <u>Storyboard Activity:</u> Teacher can read to students and students use a storyboard template as a scaffold for key narrative elements. <u>Show Me the Details! Activity:</u> After students listen to a story, they will draw what the main character looks like based on what they heard. Use other elements too. <u>If I Were in Your Shoes Activity:</u> After reading a story with students, point out an event or challenge from the text and ask how they would have responded. Discuss how the character responded and compare/contrast the two. <u>Character Traits Word Bank Activity:</u> Provide a list of character traits. Go through the vocabulary and relate words to their lives and experiences, use real-world situations. Introduce a story and ask students to identify one word from their list that describes the character. <u>The Power of Motivation Activity:</u> Use the character bridge reproducible to explain that a character's traits create motivation to act. Readers can predict the characters' actions in a story. <u>Action…Reaction Activity:</u> Provide a guided retelling of a story to students. Students think what the actions of a character are and what happens based on those actions (cause and effect). **Vocabulary in Context** <u>Graphic Cues Activity:</u> Using picture clues to help students understand unknown words.

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	Syntactic Cues Activity: Choose several sentences from a book and write them on a sentence strip. Cut it into individual phrases and mix up the pieces. Pragmatic Cues Activity: Point out common features in a variety of genres. Feelings Collage Activity: Students cut out pictures that show feelings and they write each feeling. Students read their story and identify words or phrases that match the feelings in the collage. Sensory Words Activity: Review 5 senses and brainstorm words that appeal to the senses. Read a story and students identify when they hear a reference to a particular sense. Active Alliterative Activity: Share tongue twisters and students create their tongue twister around their name. Reflect on alliteration. Rhyming Partners Activity: Each student has a rhyming word card and students have to go around and find a student with a word that rhymes with their word. You Can Say That Again Activity: Students use Wikki Stix to underline repetitions in text and discuss why the author repeated them. Idiomatic Match-Up Game Activity: Using idiom cards, students take turns matching the idiom with its literal meaning. **Text Structure** Book Sort Activity: Sort/classify books into three categories and discuss (storybooks, poetry, and information). Fiction Versus Nonfiction Activity: Introduce fiction and nonfiction. Complete a guided nonfiction writing activity highlighting what has happened in school. Then complete a guided writing activity in which students list what they wish had happened in school that day. Story Pictures Activity: Introduce narrative structure using beginning, middle, and end. Discuss what happens in each part.

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	Where the Action Is Activity: Read text with students. Ask students what happened and use a graphic organizer to keep track of events.
	Tell Me a Story Activity: Students write their own story with a beginning, middle, and end. They highlight how the action would start (beginning) and how it will conclude (ending).
	Puzzle Pieces Activity: Teach students about the parts of stories, dramas, and poems. Show samples of each and create cards for each text type.
	Literary Scavenger Hunt Activity: Students locate as many examples that they can find of 3 different text types (stories, poems, drama).
	Build-a-Poem Activity: Give students a set of stanzas. They read each stanza and write down one sentence that summarizes it in the space below the stanza. Then they number the stanzas in order they believe make the most sense.
	Drama Rewind Activity: Uses a reader's theater script. Read the last scene first and discuss what happens in the scene. Guide students in making predictions about what must have happened previously in the play.
	Point of View and Author's Purpose
	You Be the Author Activity: Discuss what an author does and how anyone who has a story to tell can be an author. Brainstorm topics with students and use guided writing to create a story.
	You Be the Illustrator Activity: Introduce what an illustrator does. This can be a continuation of the author's activity. Each student can draw a picture of something that happened in the story.
	Everyone Can Tell a Story Activity: After a shared event, ask several students to tell what just happened. As they recount their stories, ask them who is talking and draw their attention to how the stories differ from one person to the next. Relate to stories.
	Look Who's Talking! Activity: Read a story to students. Students hold up pictures of who is talking (author, characters).

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	POV with Dialogue Activity: Discuss what point of view is. Provide examples. Read a selection of texts, using different voices that show feelings and thoughts add to the story. Introduce reader's theater script and ask students to take a role and practice how his or her character's voice might sound. Then students can write their own story, using dialogue.
	Who Am I? Activity: After reading to students. Write one line of dialogue on a sentence strip for each student. Give students time to practice reading their dialogue in the voice they imagine the character would use.
	Character Masks Activity: Students create a mask for a character in the story using textual details.
	Narrator POV Activity: Using wordless picture books, students write a story that matches the illustrations in the book. Then the students become narrators and read their text. Contrast how different narrators bring different points of view to the story.
	Character Sketch Activity: Students write a brief character sketch in which they describe the main character. They share with a partner and look for text evidence to support their sketch. Emphasize readers need to separate their point of view from that of the story.
	It's All in the Eye of the Beholder Activity: Retell a story from the point of view of different characters.
	Diverse Text Formats and Media
	Moment by Moment Action Activity: Read aloud a text and stop and ask students to close eyes and picture what is happening in the story at that moment. Then have students create drawings that depict what they heard.
	Time Freeze Activity: Do a picture walk before reading text. At each picture, stop and talk about what is shown. Read the story and students give a thumbs-up if they hear something that refers to what is happening in the picture.
	Story Clues Activity: Use a chart with headings of illustrations, text, and what do we know as a scaffold to guide students in understanding that pictures and words work together to provide clues about the text.

IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	Match Up Activity: After reading a story, ask students to draw a picture of a different aspect of the text using details. Who Needs Words? Activity: Using a wordless picture book, encourage students to tell the story they see unfolding. Stop 'n' Go Activity: Read a story and stop throughout the story. When you do, you will say "Stop." Ask students to find the part of the picture that you just described and then say "Go." Treasure Hunt Activity: After reading a story (narrative text), tell students something about the story and have them find it in the text (both in words and pictures). Text and Pix Activity: Give students sentence strips and a text with the words covered with sticky notes. Instruct students to read the sentence strips and match them to the appropriate illustrations. Text + Illustrations = Meaning Activity: After reading a text with students, instruct them to look at the illustrations on each page and then at the words on the page. Students use Wikki Stix to underline words or phrases that talk about what they see in the illustrations. Mood Elements Activity: Read a book and then direct attention of students to the illustrations and guide them through the features of mood expressed in a chart (color, body of language, facial expressions, patterns, background). **Evaluate Arguments in Nonfiction Texts** That's Why Activity: Students answer questions about themselves and explain reasons for their responses. Because the Author Said So Activity: Read a text to students and stop at certain places. Ask students why the author states something. Just Because Activity: Model the word 'because' and use a diagram to show that the words after 'because' typically explain the reasons the author gives about an idea or an event.

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	Reading TPR Activity: Review the signal word 'because.' Students hold up a card every time they hear the word 'because' (teacher reads a story). Students can hold one finger up if they hear a single reason, then another finger if they hear a second reason. Why Do You Say That? Activity: Students practice giving reasons for rules (real-life connection). You Decide Activity: Students practice giving reasons for their ideas. Musical Text Activity: Students write about a topic using a text structure from a chart (main idea, sequence, compare/contrast, cause and effect). Compare and Contrast Signposts Activity: Teach signal words for compare and contrast. Then students find signal words in a text. Cause and Effect Signposts Activity: Teach signal words for cause and effect. Then students find signal words in a text. Sequencing Signposts Activity: Teach signal words for sequencing. Have students share how to do something in a sequential process. Students use signal words to explain the natural order for each step. **Comparing and Contrasting Multiple Texts** Puppet Adventures Activity: Read the text with students. Give each student a paper lunch bag to create a puppet. One side will be a character from the story and the other will be the setting. Students share their puppets and story. Discussion is structured towards similarities and differences among the puppet adventures that students share. Story Drop Activity: Read two stories with students. Students draw on one side of paper, a character from the 1st story, and then on the other side a character from the other story. Discuss how characters are the same and different. Students do the same with the setting and plot. Double Take Activity: Read each text and ask students what differences they see between the two books. Focus on visual elements first then written text.

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IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	Character Hat Activity: Students create a character hat and then discuss characters' similarities and differences. Cinderella Scrapbook Activity: Reading different versions of a fairytale and noting similarities and differences. Action…Take Two! Activity: Read a folk tale with students, then analyze text. Show students a video version of the story. Chart similarities and differences.
IF A STUDENT…	**THEN… (try some of the following)**
struggles with fluency skills in the following areas… *Reads letter by letter *Reads word by word *Reads slowly, but comprehends	Model Fluent reading. Help students see words as wholes, using word sorts, word walls, alphabet books, or a personal dictionary. Help students see word patterns; onset/rime and structural analysis. **Repeated oral reading performance activities** Reader's Theatre: Select a script. Assign parts to students. Gather the group together and give everyone a chance to review their parts. Provide definitions if there are any unknown words. Go through the script together, pointing out different places where people can mark their scripts for expression because of certain words or because of punctuation marks. Assign people to practice their parts by reading each line three times with the appropriate expression. Echo Reading: The teacher orally reads the first line of the text in a poem or play and the student then reads the same line, modeling the teacher's example. The purpose of echo reading in this context is to model intonation and phrasing for students who have difficulties with prosody. Radio Reading: Have small groups of students work together. Prepare sections of a chapter to be read either chorally or individually. Ask students to read their portion as many times as needed to develop expression and fluency. More proficient students might read parts of the chapter solo. Ask one student to be the announcer and read the opening and closing parts of the story or chapter.

IF A STUDENT…	THEN… (try some of the following)
	Read around: Ask students to choose a favorite poem, narrative text, or song with lyrics. Have students rehearse the passage until they can read it fluently. Students then read the passage aloud to a peer, a small group, or the entire class. Talking for Two: Short plays for two students provide motivating practice that takes less time than preparing for a complete Reader's Theatre

Figure 4

Intervention Goal Setting Template

Date Created:

Instructional Focus of the group:	
Diagnostic Measure Used:	
Intervention Goal:	Scholars will be able to by
Meeting Days:	M T W TH F Hrs./week
Progress Monitoring Measure:	
Frequency of Administration:	

Student Diagnostic Data

Student Name: Diagnostic Data:	Student Name: Diagnostic Data:	Student Name: Diagnostic Data:

Trends:

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Figure 5

Six Week Planning Template

Week of:	Week of:	Week of:
Intervention:	Intervention:	Intervention:
Notes:	Notes:	Notes:
Activities:	Activities:	Activities:
Progress Monitoring:	Progress Monitoring:	Progress Monitoring:
Week of:	Week of:	Week of:
Intervention:	Intervention:	Intervention:
Notes:	Notes:	Notes:
Activities:	Activities:	Activities:
Progress Monitoring:	Progress Monitoring:	Progress Monitoring:

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The need to use research-based interventions within the RTI framework to cultivate the greatest possible impact on student outcomes is confusing when the research is largely inconclusive. Even though some research favors using a phonics-based approach, just teaching phonics is not a complete literacy program. Furthermore, students are all different and cannot be given a one-size-fits-all intervention. Likewise, the generalizability of any study needs to be taken into account when evaluating if a strategy or method should be used. Unfortunately, the scholarly research did not shed light on using a particular intervention with a proven track

record. The purpose of this project was to create a menu of research-based interventions in an

"If a student…then…" format. The first goal of this project was to help teachers stay student-

centered and focus on customizing learning activities to fit the needs of students, as opposed to

emphasizing a certain strategy or curriculum without a student's needs in mind. The second goal

was to highlight the importance of being flexible with interventions and the final goal was for

teachers to remain responsive to students' needs.

Lessons Learned from the Process

According to the International Literacy Association (2019) to provide favorable

instruction, teachers need to have a flexible assortment of strategies. The intervention menu

includes strategies from both groups; phonics-based and whole language. Teachers can use either

word identification model with students; three cueing systems or four processing systems when

using the menu. Additionally, the ILA (2019) points out "…researchers such as Frank Vellutino

and Donna Scanlon have shown that instruction that is targeted to the specific needs of

individual students can significantly reduce the incidence of reading difficulties" (p.3). The

intervention menu emphasizes student needs first, then a variety of strategies follow that can

address those learning challenges. This format helps teachers stay student-centered, rather than

curriculum-centered. I learned how important it is to be flexible in my approach and confirmed

my initial ideas about instructing students based on what they need.

Wren from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (2003) contends that the

attention needs to move to a student's individual learning needs discovered through ongoing,

diagnostic assessment. Teachers need to be competent in analyzing and interpreting assessment

data because the information will determine what instruction needs to be given. This is a crucial

step to take before using the intervention menu. The intention behind the intervention menu is to

put student needs first and interventions second. If assessment data is not examined carefully, then students may not get all their learning needs met. This confirmed my original feelings about the significance of gathering and understanding assessment data.

"Time and again, research has confirmed that regardless of the quality of a program, resource, or strategy, it is the teacher and learning situation that makes the difference" (International Reading Association, 2002, as cited in Bond & Dykstra, 1967/1997, p. 3). Once more the skill-set of a teacher is key in respect of being responsive to what a student needs. During my research, I got off track and was looking for an intervention that had a proven record of success. Even if there was such an intervention, I do not believe it would work with every student. Moreover, the International Reading Association (2002) stated, "There is no instructional program or method that is effective in teaching all children to read" (p. 3). I learned that the primary focus is not on interventions or a curriculum, but rather on student needs and their learning profile.

Recommendations for Implementation

Educators will find the intervention menu useful because it is student-centered. This is important because it matches student learning challenges to a variety of interventions, rather than just listing interventions without reference to a student's needs. Support staff that delivers small-group instruction and classroom teachers in grades 1-5 will find the intervention menu practical.

A teacher could use the intervention menu if they have examined assessment data and determined what instruction a student needs. Next, the teacher could select a few interventions that correlate to the students learning challenges. If the teacher has a few students with the same need, then a small-group could be formed. The intervention goal setting template could be used to document an instructional focus for the group, the diagnostic measure used, the intervention

goal, frequency of meetings, a progress monitoring measure, and the frequency of the administration of them. Also, a chart for each student in the group with space to fill out diagnostic data and look for trends can be found on this template. This part of the document can assist teachers when trying to form small-groups.

Another template that can be found is a six-week planning form. This form will help teachers map out their instruction, so they can backward plan. Backward planning is about having the end goal in mind. It is important to know the ending point of instruction and set instructional goals. When using the six-week template, it is essential to remember that even if you have a plan for instruction it is probably going to change depending on the students you teach. A plan should never eliminate the need for being responsive and flexible in the delivery of instruction.

Limitations

Additional literacy interventions could always be added to the menu. If teachers would like more details about each activity, they need to seek the source it was adapted from. Additionally, assessment and progress monitoring examples could be added to this menu. Teachers may not know how to select the right assessment tool in terms of what information they want to learn about the student. The assessment and analyzing data stage is critical for teachers to understand. This step guides a teacher's process in customizing learning experiences for their students.

Future Directions

Future researchers may research what strong reading instruction looks like. The research could be focused on teachers and what they do, instead of on a particular method.

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Conclusion

A few central ideas from this chapter include:

1. The emphasis placed on a student's needs is well served, as opposed to a specific instructional method.

2. Teachers need to be flexible with their plans and open to using a wide array of strategies.

It is important to know your students; their starting point, where you would like to end with instruction, and their learning profile. These facets contribute to responsive teaching and use a student-centered model. Allington (2005) advocates for the use of better assessment tools and also points out that no research favors one commercial core reading program over a locally created one. Furthermore, he agrees that the emphasis should be placed on the struggling student and the need for access to expert literacy teachers, rather than on programs.

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