RTI Toolkit: A Practical Guide for Schools

Students Who Struggle With the Common Core Standards in ELA: Strategies for Classroom Teachers

Jim Wright, Presenter
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Troy City Schools/Troy, NY

Jim Wright
364 Long Road Tully, NY 13159
Email: jim@jimwrightonline.com
Workshop materials available at: http://www.interventioncentral.org/troy
## Intervention & Related RTI Terms: Definitions

Educators who serve as interventionists should be able to define and distinguish among the terms core instruction, intervention, instructional adjustment, and modification. (In particular, interventionists should avoid using modifications as part of an RTI plan for a general education student, as they can be predicted to undermine the student's academic performance.) Here are definitions for these key terms.

- **Core Instruction.** Those instructional strategies that are used routinely with all students in a general-education setting are considered 'core instruction'. High-quality instruction is essential and forms the foundation of RTI academic support. NOTE: While it is important to verify that a struggling student receives good core instructional practices, those routine practices do not 'count' as individual student interventions.

- **Intervention.** An academic intervention is a strategy used to teach a new skill, build fluency in a skill, or encourage a child to apply an existing skill to new situations or settings. An intervention can be thought of as "a set of actions that, when taken, have demonstrated ability to change a fixed educational trajectory" (Methe & Riley-Tillman, 2008; p. 37). As an example of an academic intervention, the teacher may select question generation (Davey & McBride, 1986; Rosenshine, Meister & Chapman, 1996), a strategy in which the student is taught to locate or generate main idea sentences for each paragraph in a passage and record those 'gist' sentences for later review.

- **Instructional Adjustment (Accommodation).** An instructional adjustment (also known as an 'accommodation') is intended to help the student to fully access and participate in the general-education curriculum without changing the instructional content and without reducing the student's rate of learning (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005). An instructional adjustment is intended to remove barriers to learning while still expecting that students will master the same instructional content as their typical peers. An instructional adjustment for students who are slow readers, for example, may include having them supplement their silent reading of a novel by listening to the book on tape. An instructional adjustment for unmotivated students may include breaking larger assignments into smaller 'chunks' and providing students with performance feedback and praise for each completed 'chunk' of assigned work (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005).

- **Modification.** A modification changes the expectations of what a student is expected to know or do—typically by lowering the academic standards against which the student is to be evaluated. Examples of modifications are giving a student five math computation problems for practice instead of the 20 problems assigned to the rest of the class or letting the student consult course notes during a test when peers are not permitted to do so. Instructional modifications are essential elements on the Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans of many students with special needs. Modifications are generally not included on a general-education student’s RTI intervention plan, however, because the assumption is that the student can be successful in the curriculum with appropriate interventions and instructional adjustments alone. In fact, modifying the work of struggling general education students is likely to have a negative effect that works against the goals of RTI. Reducing academic expectations will result in these students falling further behind rather than closing the performance gap with peers.

### References


The Instructional Hierarchy: Linking Stages of Learning to Effective Instructional Techniques

When mastering new academic skills or strategies, the student learner typically advances through a predictable series of learning stages. At the start, a student is usually halting and uncertain as he or she tries to use the target skill. With teacher feedback and lots of practice, the student becomes more fluent, accurate, and confident in using the skill. It can be very useful to think of these phases of learning as a hierarchy (See chart below). The learning hierarchy (Haring, Lovitt, Eaton, & Hansen, 1978) has four stages: acquisition, fluency, generalization, and adaptation:

1. **Acquisition.** The student has begun to learn how to complete the target skill correctly but is not yet accurate or fluent in the skill. The goal in this phase is to improve accuracy.
2. **Fluency.** The student is able to complete the target skill accurately but works slowly. The goal of this phase is to increase the student’s speed of responding (fluency).
3. **Generalization.** The student is accurate and fluent in using the target skill but does not typically use it in different situations or settings. Or the student may confuse the target skill with ‘similar’ skills. The goal of this phase is to get the student to use the skill in the widest possible range of settings and situations, or to accurately discriminate between the target skill and ‘similar’ skills.
4. **Adaptation.** The student is accurate and fluent in using the skill. He or she also uses the skill in many situations or settings. However, the student is not yet able to modify or adapt the skill to fit novel task-demands or situations. Here the goal is for the student to be able to identify elements of previously learned skills that he or she can adapt to the new demands or situation.

When the teacher accurately identifies a student’s learning stage, the instructor can select instructional ideas that are more likely to be successful because these strategies match the student’s learning needs.

**Reference**
### Instructional Hierarchy: Matching Interventions to Student Learning Stage (Haring, et al., 1978)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Stage</th>
<th>Student ‘Look-Fors’…</th>
<th>What strategies are effective…</th>
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</table>
| **Acquisition:** | Is just beginning to learn skill  
- Not yet able to perform learning task reliably or with high level of accuracy | Teacher actively demonstrates target skill  
- Teacher uses ‘think-aloud’ strategy—especially for thinking skills that are otherwise covert  
- Student has models of correct performance to consult as needed (e.g., correctly completed math problems on board)  
- Student gets feedback about correct performance  
- Student receives praise, encouragement for effort |
| Exit Goal: The student can perform the skill accurately with little adult support. | **Fluency:** | Gives accurate responses to learning task  
- Performs learning task slowly, haltingly | Teacher structures learning activities to give student opportunity for active (observable) responding  
- Student has frequent opportunities to drill (direct repetition of target skill) and practice (blending target skill with other skills to solve problems)  
- Student gets feedback on fluency and accuracy of performance  
- Student receives praise, encouragement for increased fluency |
| Exit Goals: The student (a) has learned skill well enough to retain (b) has learned skill well enough to combine with other skills, (c) is as fluent as peers. | **Generalization:** | Is accurate and fluent in responding  
- May fail to apply skill to new situations, settings  
- May confuse target skill with similar skills (e.g., confusing ‘+’ and ‘x’ number operation signs) | Teacher structures academic tasks to require that the student use the target skill regularly in assignments.  
- Student receives encouragement, praise, reinforcers for using skill in new settings, situations  
- If student confuses target skill with similar skill(s), the student is given practice items that force him/her to correctly discriminate between similar skills  
- Teacher works with parents to identify tasks that the student can do outside of school to practice target skill  
- Student gets periodic opportunities to review, practice target skill to ensure maintenance |
| Exit Goals: The student (a) uses the skill across settings, situations; (b) does not confuse target skill with similar skills | **Adaptation:** | Is fluent and accurate in skill  
- Applies skill in novel situations, settings without prompting  
- Does not yet modify skill as needed to fit new situations (e.g., child says ‘Thank you’ in all situations, does not use modified, equivalent phrases such as “I appreciate your help.”) | Teacher helps student to articulate the ‘big ideas’ or core element(s) of target skill that the student can modify to face novel tasks, situations (e.g., fractions, ratios, and percentages link to the ‘big idea’ of the part in relation to the whole; ‘Thank you’ is part of a larger class of polite speech)  
- Train for adaptation: Student gets opportunities to practice the target skill with modest modifications in new situations, settings with encouragement, corrective feedback, praise, other reinforcers.  
- Encourage student to set own goals for adapting skill to new and challenging situations. |
Strategies to Promote: Reading Fluency

This form provides descriptions of the selected intervention, a listing of research articles supporting the intervention ideas, and space for teacher notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Intervention Strategies</th>
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<tr>
<td>❑ READING FLUENCY: ASSISTED CLOZE. Fluency is the goal of this reading intervention. Sessions last 10-15 minutes. The teacher selects a passage at the student's instructional level. The teacher reads aloud from the passage while the student follows along silently and tracks the place in the text with a finger. Intermittently, the teacher pauses and the student is expected to read aloud the next word in passage. Then the teacher continues reading. The process continues until the entire passage has been read. Then the student is directed to read the text aloud while the teacher follows along silently. Whenever the student commits a reading error or hesitates for 3 seconds or longer (whether during the assisted cloze or independent reading phase), the teacher stops the student, points to and says the error word, has the student read the word aloud correctly, has the student read the surrounding phrase that includes the error word, and then continues the current reading activity. Optionally, the teacher may then have the student read the passage again (repeated reading) up to two more times as the teacher continues to silently monitor and correct any errors or hesitations.</td>
<td>Ellis, W. A. (2009). The impact of C-PEP (choral reading, partner reading, echo reading, and performance of text) on third grade fluency and comprehension development. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Memphis. Homan, S. P., Klesius, J. P, &amp; Hite, C. (1993). Effects of repeated readings and nonrepetive strategies on students' fluency and comprehension. Journal of Educational Research, 87(2), 94-99.</td>
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<td>❑ READING FLUENCY: CHORAL READING. This simple strategy to build reading fluency can be used with individuals and groups of students. Sessions last 10-15 minutes. The teacher selects an engaging text at students' instructional or independent level. During choral reading sessions, the teacher or other fluent reader takes the role of 'lead reader', reading the passage aloud, while students also read aloud. Students are encouraged to read with expression.</td>
<td>Moskal, M. K., &amp; Blachowicz, C. (2006). Partnering for fluency. New York: Guilford Press.</td>
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<td>❑ READING FLUENCY: DUET READING. This strategy targets reading fluency. Sessions last for 10-15 minutes. The teacher selects an engaging text at the student's instructional or independent level. During duet reading, the teacher and student alternate reading aloud from the passage one word at a time, while the teacher tracks the place in the passage with an index finger. As the student grows more accomplished, the teacher can change the reading ratio to shift more responsibility to the student: for example, with the teacher reading one word aloud and then the student reading three words aloud in succession. As the student becomes more familiar with duet reading, the teacher can also direct the student to track the place in the text. Whenever the student commits a reading error or hesitates for 3 seconds or longer, the teacher stops the</td>
<td>Gallagher, T. M. (2008). The effects of a modified duet reading strategy on oral reading fluency. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Fluency Intervention</td>
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hesitates for 3 seconds or longer (during either unison or independent reading), the teacher stops the student, points to and says the error word, has the student read the word aloud correctly, has the student read the surrounding phrase that includes the error word, and resumes reading in unison. The teacher also praises the student for using the silent signal to read aloud independently and occasionally praises other aspects of the student's reading performance or effort.

| Reading Fluency: Repeated Reading. During 15-20 minute sessions, the student practices difficult words in isolation, reads the same passage several times to boost fluency, and tries to beat a previous fluency score. (1) Preparation: Before each session, the teacher selects a text within the student's instructional range long enough to occupy the student for more than a minute of reading aloud and makes teacher and student copies. The teacher locates five challenging words in the passage to practice. (2) Goal-Setting: The teacher shows the student the performance graph with his/her most recent repeated-reading score and encourages the student to beat that score; (3) Preview Challenging Words: The teacher introduces each of the passage challenge words: "This word is ___. What is this word?"; (4) Initial Read: The student is directed to read the passage aloud, to do his/her best reading, to start at the beginning of the passage [which the teacher points out] and to read until told to stop. Also, the student is told that--if stuck on a word--the teacher will supply it. While the student reads aloud, the teacher marks reading errors. At the end of one minute, the teacher says "Stop", marks the student's end-point in the text with a bracket, totals the number of words correctly read, plots that score on the student graph, and labels that graph data-point "1st reading". (5) Feedback and Error Correction: The teacher shows the student his/her graphed performance. The teacher then reviews student errors. Pointing to each error word, the teacher says, "This word is ___. What is this word?" and has the student repeat the correct word three times before moving to the next. (6) Modeling: The teacher directs the student to read aloud in unison with the teacher while using a finger to track the place in the text. The teacher takes the lead, reading the entire passage aloud at a pace slightly faster than that of the student. (6) Repeat Student Reads. The teacher has the student repeat steps 4 and 5 twice more, until the student has read the passage independently at least 3 times. If the student's fluency score on the final read exceeds that of the previous session, the teacher provides praise and perhaps incentives (e.g., sticker, points toward rewards). |


Strategies to Promote: Reading Comprehension

This form provides descriptions of the selected intervention, a listing of research articles supporting the intervention ideas, and space for teacher notes.

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<thead>
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<td>❑ READING COMPREHENSION: ACTIVATE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND DEVELOP QUESTIONS. In this two-part strategy, students first engage in an activity to activate their prior knowledge of a topic, then preview an informational passage on the same topic to generate questions. ACTIVATING PRIOR KNOWLEDGE: The teacher prepares a short series (e.g., 3-5) of general questions or prompts about the topic to be covered in the informational passage assigned for the day's reading (e.g., &quot;Today we are going to read about animals that live in and around the seashore. Describe animals that live around a beach.&quot;). Students are given a brief period (10-20 minutes) to write answers to these general questions based on their prior knowledge of, and experience with, the topic. DEVELOPING QUESTIONS: Students are next given a short amount of time (e.g. 3-5 minutes) to preview the informational passage assigned for that day's reading and glance over titles, figures, pictures, graphs, and other text structures appearing in the selection. Students then put the text aside and are told to write questions about the topic that they hope to have answered when they read the text. The teacher can collect these prior activation/question generation sheets as evidence of student use of this strategy.</td>
<td>Taboada, A., &amp; Guthrie, J. T. (2006). Contributions of student questioning and prior knowledge to construction of knowledge from reading information text. Journal of Literacy Research, 38(1), 1-35.</td>
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<td>❑ READING COMPREHENSION: CLASSWIDE INSTRUCTION: DEVELOP A BANK OF MULTIPLE PASSAGES FOR CHALLENGING CONCEPTS. Having several passages of differing reading levels can be a useful way to help more students grasp challenging content. The teacher notes which course concepts, cognitive strategies, or other information will likely present the greatest challenge to students. For these 'challenge' topics, the teacher selects alternative readings that present the same general information and review the same key vocabulary as the course text but that are more accessible to struggling readers (e.g., with selections written at an easier reading level or that use graphics to visually illustrate concepts). These alternative selections are organized into a bank. Students are encouraged to engage in wide reading by choosing selections from the bank as a means to better understand difficult material.</td>
<td>Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., &amp; Torgesen, J. (2008). Improving adolescent literacy: Effective classroom and intervention practices: A practice guide (NCEE #2008-4027). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <a href="http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc">http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc</a></td>
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<td>❑ READING COMPREHENSION: CLASSWIDE INSTRUCTION: PROVIDE MAIN-IDEA PRACTICE THROUGH PARTNER RETELL. This brief paired activity can be during lectures to facilitate promote students’ ability</td>
<td>Carnine, L., &amp; Carnine, D. (2004). The interaction of reading skills and science content knowledge when teaching struggling secondary.</td>
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</table>
to summarize passage main ideas. Students are paired off in class and are assigned a short information passage, which either one student reads aloud to the other or is read silently by each student. Next, one student is assigned the role of ‘reteller’ and the other appointed as ‘listener’. During a 1-2 minute discussion period, the reteller recounts the main idea to the listener, who can comment or ask questions. The teacher then pulls the class together and, with student input, summarizes the passage main idea and writes it on the board. Then the student pairs resume their work, with the reteller locating two key details from the reading that support the main idea and sharing these with the listener. At the end of the activity, the teacher does a spot check – randomly calling on one or more students in the listener role and asking them to recap what information was shared by the reteller.

- **READING COMPREHENSION: LINK PRONOUNS TO REFERENTS.** The student reinforces understanding of abstract text by replacing pronouns with their referent nouns during independent reading. (1) **PREPARING THE TEXT.** On a photocopy of the text, the student circles each pronoun, identifies that pronoun’s referent (i.e., the noun that it refers to), and writes next to the pronoun the name of its referent. For example, the student may add the referent to a pronoun in this sentence from a biology text: “The Cambrian Period is the first geological age that has large numbers of multi-celled organisms associated with it. [Cambrian Period]”. (2) **WHEN READING, SUBSTITUTE REFERENTS FOR PRONOUNS.** In each subsequent reading of the text, the student substitutes the referent for each pronoun.

- **READING COMPREHENSION: QUESTION GENERATION.** This strategy incorporates paragraph main ideas and note-cards to promote retention of textual information: (1) **LOCATE MAIN IDEAS.** For each paragraph in an assigned reading, the student either (a) highlights the main idea sentence or (b) highlights key details and uses them to write a ‘gist’ sentence. (2) **WRITE MAIN IDEAS ON NOTE-CARDS.** The student then writes the main idea of that paragraph on an index card. Cards are sequentially numbered to correspond with paragraphs in the passage. (3) **GENERATE REVIEW QUESTIONS.** On the other side of the card, the student writes a question whose answer is that paragraph’s main idea sentence. This stack of ‘main idea’ cards becomes a useful tool to review assigned readings.

- **READING COMPREHENSION: READING ACTIVELY THROUGH TEXT ANNOTATION.** Students are likely to increase their retention of information when they interact actively with their reading by jotting comments in the margin of the text. Using photocopies, the student is taught to engage in an ongoing ‘conversation’ with the writer by

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Recording a running series of brief comments in the margins of the text. The student may write annotations to record opinions about points raised by the writer, questions triggered by the reading, or unknown vocabulary words. The teacher can set specific student annotation goals (e.g., directing the student to complete and turn in a reading with a minimum of six annotations in the margins).

- **READING COMPREHENSION: READING-REFLECTION PAUSES:** This strategy is useful both for students who need to monitor their understanding as well as those who benefit from brief breaks when engaging in intensive reading as a means to build up endurance as attentive readers. The student decides on a reading interval (e.g., every four sentences; every 3 minutes; at the end of each paragraph). At the end of each interval, the student pauses briefly to recall the main points of the reading. If the student has questions or is uncertain about the content, the student rereads part or all of the section just read.


- **READING COMPREHENSION: RECIPROCAL TEACHING.** This cooperative-learning activity builds independent reading-comprehension skills while motivating students through regular (e.g., daily) peer interactions. Students meet in pairs, with reciprocal teaching sessions lasting 30-40 minutes. In advance of each session, students are given a challenging passage. Alternating roles at each session, one of the students assumes the ‘teacher’ role, taking the lead in guiding discussion through these six steps of the reciprocal tutoring model: The students (1) look over the passage and predict what it will cover; (2) discuss what they currently know (‘prior knowledge’) about the passage topic; (3) review the passage for words or phrases that are unclear and attempt to clarify their meaning; (4) review each paragraph in the passage and highlight its main idea; (5) review each paragraph again to summarize (either orally or in writing) its main idea and important details; and (6) develop questions about the passage and answer those questions from the text or their own knowledge and experience. Students practice these steps under teacher guidance until fluent. They also have the reciprocal teaching steps posted to refer to as needed.


- **READING COMPREHENSION: RESTRUCTURING PARAGRAPHS TO PUT MAIN IDEA FIRST.** This intervention draws attention to the main-idea sentence during independent reading. The student highlights or creates a main idea sentence for each paragraph in the assigned reading. When rereading each paragraph of the selection, the student (1) reads the main idea sentence or student-generated ‘gist’ sentence first (irrespective of where that sentence actually falls in the paragraph); (2) reads the remainder of the paragraph, and (3) reflects on how the main idea relates to the paragraph content.

### Academic Intervention Planner for Struggling Students: Checklist Maker

#### 1. RETAIN STORY DETAILS WITH TEXT PREVIEWING

**SCRIPT:***

The script opens with several statements and questions chosen to interest students in a discussion about the story topic or theme (e.g., "Today we are going to read about a boy who gets lost in the wilderness and must find his way home. Has anyone in this class ever been lost?"). The preview next includes a plot-summary up to the story climax—but does not give away the ending. As part of the summary, the preview describes the setting of the narrative and introduces the main characters. The preview also selects three to four difficult words appearing in the story and defines them. 

**PRESENTATION:***
The teacher uses the preview script as a framework for introducing the story. Optionally, students also receive a handout listing main characters and their descriptions and the difficult vocabulary terms and definitions.

**REFERENCES:**


#### 2. RETAIN TEXT INFORMATION WITH PARAPHRASING (RAP)

**OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED:*** Create an organizer sheet with spaces for the student to record the main idea and supporting details of multiple paragraphs to be used with the RAP strategy. RAP organizer forms can provide structure to the student and yield work products that the teacher can collect to verify that the student is using the strategy.

**REFERENCES:**


#### 3. RETAIN TEXT INFORMATION WITH SELF-QUESTIONING FROM TEXT TITLES

**REFERENCE:**

question "What were the main causes of the Civil War?"; (3) Read the passage; (4) Review the self-generated questions and—based on the reading—attempt to answer them.

**FIX-UP STRATEGIES:** The strategy sheet also directs the student to apply simple fix-up strategies if unable to answer a self-generated question: (1) Re-read that section of the passage; (2) Verify that you know all vocabulary terms in the passage—and look up the meaning of any unknown words; (3) examine the passage for other 'text structures' such as tables, graphs, maps, or captioned pictures that may help to answer the question; (4) write down remaining unanswered questions to review with the teacher or tutor.

To monitor use of this strategy, the teacher may direct the student to write down self-generated questions from reading assignments for the teacher’s review.

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<tr>
<th>❑ <strong>READING COMPREHENSION: SUMMARIZE READINGS.</strong> The act of summarizing longer readings can promote understanding and retention of content while the summarized text itself can be a useful study tool. The student is taught to condense assigned readings into condensed summaries—consisting of main ideas and essential details and stripped of superfluous content.</th>
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<tr>
<th>❑ <strong>READING COMPREHENSION: TEXT ENHANCEMENTS.</strong> Text enhancements can be used to tag important vocabulary terms, key ideas, or other reading content. If working with photocopied material, the student can use a highlighter to note key ideas or vocabulary. Another enhancement strategy is the 'lasso and rope' technique—using a pen or pencil to circle a vocabulary term and then drawing a line that connects that term to its underlined definition. If working from a textbook, the student can cut sticky notes into strips. These strips can be inserted in the book as pointers to text of interest. They can also be used as temporary labels—e.g., for writing a vocabulary term and its definition.</th>
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<th>❑ <strong>READING COMPREHENSION: VERBAL PROMPT WITH INCENTIVE.</strong> To boost student comprehension of a passage, use a verbal prompt before the reading paired with an incentive. Before the student begins reading a story or informational-text passage, the teacher says: &quot;Read this story/passage out loud. Try to remember as much as you can about the story/passage. Then I will have you retell the main points of the story/passage. If you remember enough of the reading, you will get a sticker [or other prize or incentive].&quot; If the student needs a reminder during the reading, the teacher says: &quot;Work on remembering as much of the reading as you can.&quot; At the end of the reading, the student is told to recount the main points of the passage and is awarded the promised incentive at the discretion of the teacher.</th>
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## Strategies to Promote: Spelling

This form provides descriptions of the selected intervention, a listing of research articles supporting the intervention ideas, and space for teacher notes.

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<thead>
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<tr>
<td>❑ SPELLING: ASSESSMENT: EVALUATE STUDENT GROWTH DAILY. Each day, before the student practices spelling words (whether alone, with a peer, or with an adult), the teacher administers a brief spelling pre-test. The daily pre-test contains any spelling words that the student is currently working on or that will be introduced during the day's session. (In addition, the daily pre-test should also contain a sampling of words previously learned as a maintenance check.) At the end of the student's practice period, the same spelling list is readministered to the student—with words presented in a different order—to formatively track spelling growth. Results are shared with the student.</td>
<td>Graham, S., &amp; Voth, V. P. (1990). Spelling instruction: Making modifications for students with learning disabilities. Academic Therapy, 25(4), 447-457.</td>
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<tr>
<td>❑ SPELLING: ASSESSMENT: GIVE PRE- AND POST-TESTS. Before assigning a spelling list, the teacher tests students' knowledge of words on the list by giving a non-graded spelling pre-test. Students then study the words they spelled incorrectly—narrowing the number of spelling items to be practiced. At the end of the study period, students are re-tested on the full spelling list and receive a grade.</td>
<td>Graham, S. (1999). Handwriting and spelling instruction for students with learning disabilities: A review. Learning Disability Quarterly, 22(2), 78-98.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❑ SPELLING: MOTIVATE ON-TASK BEHAVIOR THROUGH SELF-MONITORING. During spelling-review sessions, direct the student to keep track of the number of times that he or she practices a particular word (e.g., by putting a series of tally marks next to each word on the spelling list). Self-monitoring can increase the student's rate of on-task behavior and academic engagement.</td>
<td>Graham, S., &amp; Voth, V. P. (1990). Spelling instruction: Making modifications for students with learning disabilities. Academic Therapy, 25(4), 447-457.</td>
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<td>❑ SPELLING: PERSONALIZED DICTIONARY. As a writing aid, help the student to compile her or his own spelling dictionary made up of 'spelling demons' (common words that challenge any speller), as well as other words that the student commonly misspells. When writing and revising a writing assignment, the student consults the dictionary as needed. This dictionary should grow over time as the student encounters more advanced vocabulary and more demanding spelling lists.</td>
<td>Graham, S., &amp; Voth, V. P. (1990). Spelling instruction: Making modifications for students with learning disabilities. Academic Therapy, 25(4), 447-457.</td>
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<tr>
<td>❑ SPELLING: PRACTICE: ADD-A-WORD. The Add-a-Word program is well-suited for the student who needs a high rate of success and review to maintain spelling motivation. The student is given an initial list of 10 spelling words. For each word, the student applies the Cover-Copy-Compare (CCC) strategy: (1) The student looks the correctly spelled</td>
<td>Schermerhorn, P. K., &amp; McLaughlin, T. F. (1997): Effects of the Add-A-Word spelling program on test accuracy, grades, and retention of spelling words with fifth and sixth grade regular education students. Child &amp; Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spellings Practice</td>
<td>Reference</td>
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- The student is trained to practice spelling words using the following sequence: (1) The student says the word aloud; (2) The student writes the word and then says it again; (3) The student checks the word by consulting the spelling list and corrects the word if required; (4) The student traces the letters of the word while saying the word; (5) The student again writes the word from memory, checks the word, and corrects it if required. The student then moves to the next word on the spelling list and repeats the steps above.

- Rather than overwhelming the student with a large set of spelling words to be mastered all at once, introduce 3-4 new words per day for the student to practice from the larger list. Once all words from the master list have been introduced, continue to practice until the full list has been mastered.

- The student is trained to practice spelling words using the following sequence: (1) The student looks at a model of the correctly spelled word; (2) The student covers the model word(e.g., with an index card); (3) From memory, the student writes the spelling word; (4) The student uncovers the original model and compares it to the student response; (5) If incorrect, the student repeats steps 1-4 with the error word. If correct, the student goes to the next word on the spelling list and applies steps 1-4.

- To make the study of spelling words more engaging, the teacher can divide the class at random each...
| Week into two teams. Within each team, students are paired off. Each pair meets through the week (e.g., daily) for 10-minute sessions. During the first 5 minutes, one student takes the role of tutor. The tutor reads words from the weekly spelling list aloud to the other student/tutee, who writes the word down and at the same time calls out each letter of the word being written. If the tutee correctly spells the word, he or she is awarded 2 points. If the word is incorrect, the tutor reads the word and spells it correctly aloud; has the tutee successfully write the word three times; and then awards the tutee 1 point. At the end of 5 minutes, the pair reverses the roles of tutor and tutee and repeat the process. When finished, the pair reports its cumulative points to the teacher. Team totals are posted each day and added to the weekly team point totals. At the end of the week, students take the final spelling test and receive 3 points for each correct word. These spelling test points are also added to the team totals. At the end of the week, the class team with the most spelling points wins a certificate. |
| Learning Disability Quarterly, 22(2), 78-98. |

- **SPELLING: PRACTICE: HIGHLIGHT PHONEMIC ELEMENTS.** The teacher and student practice spelling words using the following sequence: (1) The teacher states the word aloud, then points to each letter and gives its name; (2) The student next states the word aloud, then points to each letter and gives its name; (3) The teacher shows a copy of the word to the student with the onset and rime displayed in different colors; (4) The teacher points first to the onset of the word and pronounces it, then points to the rime and pronounces it; (5) The student then points first to the onset and pronounces it, then points to the rime and pronounces it. **NOTE:** In a single-syllable word, the onset consists of the consonant(s) appearing at the front of the word, while the rime is the part of the word made up of its vowel and any consonants that follow the vowel. For example, in the word black, the onset is [bl-] and the rime is[–ack].

- **SPELLING: PRACTICE: OFFER CHOICE OF STRATEGIES.** Students can be offered several strategies for effective spelling practice and directed to select one or more to use independently or under teacher supervision. Strategies include (1) pronouncing a word slowly and clearly before writing it; (2) saying the letters aloud while writing them; (3) tracing the word as part of the practice sequence; (4) closing one's eyes and visualizing the letters that make up the word; and (5) circling the problem letters of a word misspelled by the student, studying them, and then studying the correct spelling of that word.

- **SPELLING: PRACTICE: REPEATED DRILL WITH SOUNDING OUT.** The teacher and student practice spelling words using the following sequence: (1) The teacher shows the student a flashcard with the spelling word and reads the word aloud; (2) The student reads the word aloud from the
A flashcard; (3) The teacher withdraws the flashcard; (4) The student writes the word from memory, saying the name of each letter while writing it; (5) The student reads aloud the word just written; (6) The teacher again shows the correct word model on the flashcard. If the student response is incorrect, the student corrects the spelling using the flashcard model. (7) Teacher and student repeat steps 1-6 twice.


SPELLING: PRACTICE: VISUALIZATION. The student is trained to practice spelling words using the following sequence: (1) The student looks at the target spelling word, reads it aloud, then covers the word (e.g., with an index card); (2) The student closes his or her eyes and pictures the word; (3) Still with eyes closed, the student silently names each letter in the word; (4) The student opens his or her eyes and writes the word; (5) The student uncovers the original model and checks the spelling of the student response. (6) If incorrect, the student repeats steps 1-5 with the current word. If correct, the student advances to the next word to repeat the process.


SPELLING: TRAIN SPELLING-WORD PREDICTION SKILLS. When students can accurately assess which words on a spelling list are likely to be the most difficult, they can better and more efficiently allocate study time. Whenever giving the student a spelling list, have the student review the new words and circle those that the student predicts he or she can spell correctly. In follow-up assessments, compare these initial predictions to actual performance as feedback about how accurately the student can predict success. Over time, the student should become more skilled in judging which spelling words will require the greatest study effort.


Strategies to Promote: Writing: Production

This form provides descriptions of the selected intervention, a listing of research articles supporting the intervention ideas, and space for teacher notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Intervention Strategies</th>
<th>Research Citations</th>
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<tr>
<td>WRITING: PRODUCTION: DRAWING AS A PRE-WRITING ACTIVITY. The teacher presents the student with a motivating writing topic and allocates a sufficient time (e.g., 30 minutes) for the student to produce a composition. During the writing period, the student is directed to first draw a picture about the topic and then to write a composition on the same topic.</td>
<td>Norris, E., Mokhtari, K., &amp; Reichard, C. (1998). Children's use of drawing as a pre-writing strategy. Journal of Research in Reading, 21(1), 69-74.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRITING: PRODUCTION: REGULAR WRITING WITH PROMPTS. The student engages in 20-minute writing</td>
<td>Harriman, N. E., &amp; Gajar, A.H. (1986). The effects of repeated writing and</td>
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</table>
sessions. Before each writing session the student briefly reviews the following prompts for writing mechanics—with an instructor or in peer pairs or groups—and has them available as a written checklist: (1) Use complete sentences. Each sentence should ‘sound complete’ and contain at least one subject and one verb. (2) Indent and punctuate. The first sentence of each new paragraph is indented. Each sentence in the passage has appropriate end-punctuation (period, question mark, exclamation point). Quotation marks are used to denote the exact words spoken by someone. (3) Capitalize. The initial letters of these words are capitalized: the first word in a sentence; the names of proper nouns. At the end of the session, the student uses the mechanics checklist to revise the writing sample before turning it in.

| WRITING: PRODUCTION: TIME-DRILLS AND GRAPHING. This intervention uses 5-minute writing drills with visual feedback (graphing) to improve the writing fluency of groups or the entire class. WRITING DRILL: The session opens with quick brainstorming or topic discussion to prime student writers. Then the teacher sets a timer and tells the students to write for five minutes. The teacher announces when there is one minute remaining in the session and tells students to stop writing when the timer sounds. The following rules are publicly posted and reviewed with students before writing sessions: (1) Write quickly in legible handwriting; (2) Cross out mistakes and continue writing; (3) Write for the full 5 minutes; (4) Refrain from talking or other distracting behavior; and (5) Do not request bathroom or drink breaks during the drill. SCORING: Students count up the number of words written and exchange their writing samples with a neighbor, who re-counts total words written to ensure accuracy. (The teacher resolves any scoring disagreements between students.) GRAPHING AND INCENTIVES: Each student updates a paper or computerized bar graph to include the current day’s writing total and cumulative weekly total. Students receive recognition (e.g., praise) for improved daily scores and earn incentives (e.g., 10 minutes free time) for improved weekly scores. The teacher also collects writing scores from all students on a daily basis, with rotating students updating a daily class chart. The teacher acknowledges daily class improvement and provides an incentive for weekly class improvements (e.g., special class game played at the end of the week). |

How To: Improve Student Self-Management Through Work-Planning Skills: Plan, Work, Evaluate, Adjust

It is no surprise to teachers that, when students have poor work-planning skills, their academic performance often suffers. Work-planning is the student's ability to inventory a collection of related sub-tasks to be done, set specific outcome goals that signify success on each sub-task, allocate time sufficient to carry out each sub-task, evaluate actual work performance, and make necessary adjustments in future work-planning as needed (Martin, Mithaug, Cox, Peterson, Van Dycke & Cash, 2003). When students are deficient as work planners, the negative impact can be seen on in-class and homework assignments as well as on longer-term projects such as research papers. Teachers can develop students' work-planning skills by training them in a simple but effective sequence: to plan upcoming work, complete the work, evaluate their work performance, and adjust their future work plans based on experience (Martin et al., 2003).

The vehicle for teachers to train students to develop strong work-planning skills is through conferencing: the teacher and student meet for a pre-work planning conference and then meet again after the work is completed at a self-evaluation conference. NOTE: The Student Independent Work: Planning Tool that appears later in this document is a graphic organizer that can be used to structure and record these 2-part teacher-student conferences.

Phase 1: Work-Planning Conference

Before the student begins the assigned academic work, the teacher meets with the student to develop the work plan. (While the teacher often initially assumes a guiding role in the work-planning conference, the instructor gradually transfers responsibility for developing the plan to the student as that student's capacity for planning grows.)

There are 3 sections in the work-planning conference: (1) inventory the sub-tasks to be done, (2) assign an estimated time for completion, and (3) set a performance goal for each item on the task list:

1. **Inventory the sub-tasks to be done.** The student describes each academic task in clear and specific terms (e.g., "Complete first 10 problems on page 48 of math book", "write an outline from notes for history essay"). For this part of the work plan, the teacher may need to model for the student how to divide larger global assignments into component tasks.

2. **Assign an estimated time for completion.** The student decides how much time should be reserved to complete each task (e.g., For a math workbook assignment: "20 minutes" or "11:20 to 11:40"). Because students with limited planning skills can make unrealistic time projections for task completion, the teacher may need to provide additional guidance and modeling in time estimation during the first few planning sessions.

3. **Set a performance goal.** The student sets a performance goal to be achieved for each sub-task. Performance goals are dependent on the student and may reference the amount, accuracy, and/or qualitative ratings of the work: (e.g., for a reading assignment: "To read at least 5 pages from assigned text, and to take notes of the content"; for a math assignment: "At least 80% of problems correct"; for a writing assignment: "Rating of 4 or higher on class writing rubric"). The teacher can assist the student to set specific, achievable goals based on that student's current abilities and classroom curriculum expectations.
Phase 2: Self-Evaluation Conference

When the work has been completed, the teacher and student meet again to evaluate the student's performance. There are 2 sections to this conference: (1) Compare the student's actual performance to the original student goal; and (2) adjust future expectations and performance in light of the experience gained from the recently completed work.

1. **Compare the student's actual performance to the original student goal.** For each sub-task on the plan, the student compares his or her actual work performance to the original performance goal and notes whether the goal was achieved. In addition to noting whether the performance goal was attained, the student evaluates whether the sub-task was completed within the time allocated.

2. **Adjust future expectations and performance.** For each sub-task that the student failed to reach the performance goal within the time allocated, the student reflects on the experience and decides what adjustments to make on future assignments. For example, a student reviewing a homework work-plan who discovers that she reserved insufficient time to complete math word problems may state that, in future, she should allocate at least 30 minutes for similar sub-tasks. Or a student who exceeds his performance goal of no more than 4 misspellings in a writing assignment may decide in future to keep a dictionary handy to check the spelling of questionable words before turning in writing assignments.

References

# Student Independent Work: Planning Tool

**Student:** ________________________________  **Teacher/Staff Member:** __________________________  **Date:** ___/___/___

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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Sub-Task:</strong> Describe each assignment sub-task to be completed.</td>
<td><strong>Time Allocated:</strong> Estimate the time required for this task. E.g., &quot;20 mins&quot;; &quot;11:20-11:40&quot;</td>
<td><strong>Performance Goal:</strong> Write your goal for the amount, accuracy, and/or quality of work to be completed.</td>
<td><strong>Actual Performance:</strong> After the assignment, record the amount, accuracy, and/or quality of the work actually completed.</td>
<td><strong>Goal Met?</strong> Did you achieve the goal within the time allocated?</td>
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**Adjustment:** Find any 'NO' responses in the **Goal Met?** column. In the space below, write the number of that goal and your plan to improve on that goal next time.

Number of Goal Not Met & Action Plan to Fix: ____________________________________________________________

Number of Goal Not Met & Action Plan to Fix: ____________________________________________________________

Number of Goal Not Met & Action Plan to Fix: ____________________________________________________________