



Q&A from *Developing Strong Readers: Proven Practices for Tier 2 Intervention*

We unfortunately were unable to answer all of the questions that were submitted during the webinar's live Q&A period so have compiled written responses to those questions we did not respond to.

- 1. Can you give a definition for "connected text" so educators share a common definition?**
Connected text refers to words that are linked, as in sentences and paragraphs versus words in a list. Reading connected text requires greater skill than reading words in isolation.
- 2. Do you have Tier 3 intervention programs available for middle school students?** [*The Third Quest*](#) by Ancora Publishing and [*SIPPS*](#) (*Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words*) from Center for the Collaborative Classroom are both designed for use with striving readers. *The Third Quest* is specifically for middle and high school students while *SIPPS* is a K–12 program. CORE partners with both Ancora Publishing and Center for the Collaborative Classroom to provide implementation support for these programs.
- 3. Is there any information about when Tier 2 intervention is taking place during the school day?** Tier 2 instruction is in addition to, and does not replace Tier 1. There are two common models for scheduling Tier 2 intervention. The first is to schedule "What I need (WIN)" time for all students. In this model, a period of time each day is dedicated to providing the reading instruction that each student needs. For some students, this will be additional reading support. For others, it may be acceleration. The classroom teachers work with specialists who push in to group students and provide the appropriate instruction during this time. The second model is to have an interventionist schedule Tier 2 reading groups throughout the day, pulling one group of students at a time and then moving to the next.
- 4. What are your thoughts on the Fountas and Pinnell assessments in elementary schools? Also, what are your thoughts about the Reading Inventory which is a computer based assessment?** There are several features that are important to consider when choosing an assessment. An assessment should: 1.) answer critical questions of interest (e.g., Who is at-risk? What skills should I teach? Is this student making progress?); 2.) meet industry standards for reliability and validity; 3.) be efficient in order to minimize time taken away from instruction; and 4.) produce data that is easy to understand and use.
- 5. What is the general percentage for a student to be considered at mastery on a skill? 80%?** When collecting data on student responses for review material, there should be a high

expectation for mastery (e.g., 97–98% mastery). In a well-designed instructional program, you should also anticipate about 80% mastery on new material.

6. **What tiered strategies might you suggest for a high school MTSS model?** Given their rigorous and robust schedule, intervention beyond the core instruction in an 8-period day is challenging. What innovative ideas can you share for high school programs? We have the data, just need ideas for high school. One high school example is to implement a “reading period” instead of “study hall” for every student. Screen all students three times a year, and for those students who are not reading on grade level, their reading period can include instruction focusing on the skills they need help with. Students who are on grade level can use the reading period to work on writing skills.
7. **Can guided reading have a place in Tier 2 Intervention if phonological and phonemic awareness is being taught/addressed?** The instruction provided at Tier 2 should: a.) focus on critical foundational skills, b.) include explicit modeling, c.) follow a logical scope and sequence, d.) provide students with multiple opportunities to respond, and e.) provide students with immediate feedback on their learning. Guided reading practices typically do not include all of these components, meaning they are not the best choice for Tier 2 interventions.
8. **Can you say something about the intensity and perseverance that may be required for positive outcomes for struggling readers?** Progress monitoring is vital to understand if your intervention is intensive enough to result in student improvement. Be sure to bring a problem-solving lens to your data analysis. If your current approach isn’t working, consider what you can change. Is the frequency (times per week) or duration (number of minutes) of intervention adequate? Do the instructional materials target the appropriate skills based on student need? Conduct regular observations to ensure that the program is being implemented with fidelity and that students have enough opportunities for practice with feedback. Students should have the opportunity to respond multiple times throughout the lesson, spaced over time, and using various activities. When learning words, typical learners may need up to 12 practice opportunities, while students at risk may require up to 25 opportunities (Lemoine, Levy, & Hutchison, 1993).
9. **Are some of these strategies applicable to middle/high school students?** Yes, the same assessment and instructional practices apply students of any age who need help learning to read.
10. **As the discrepancy between our higher and lower scoring students becomes greater, how do we best address our Tier 1 classrooms?** First, ensure that your Tier 1 reading materials are designed to meet the needs of all learners, including multilingual students and students with disabilities. You should have access to supplemental support and recommendations within your Tier 1 program to differentiate instruction in small groups to meet a wide range of student needs. Secondly, make sure that you are using high-leverage practices in Tier 1 and Tier 2, including explicit instruction and ensuring multiple opportunities for practice and feedback. Finally, ensure access to grade-level text through buddy reading, audiobooks, or text-to-speech that enable students to continue to build their academic vocabulary and participate in their grade-level comprehension and analysis tasks.

11. **Can you address spelling?** Our district has directed us to give a “U” on the report card if students are behind. Spelling is best taught when it is incorporated with phonic skills. For example, if the students are learning short vowel sounds in consonant-vowel-consonant words like cat, him, etc. then the spelling words should follow the same patterns. Including both writing, (i.e., spelling) and reading (i.e., phonics) provides the student with multiple opportunities to learn the skill to mastery.
12. **Do you recommend using normative measures for progress monitoring, or can you solely use formative measures?** The measures used for progress monitoring should have multiple equivalent forms that can be given frequently. The measures should be sensitive to student growth, and be reliable and valid. The most common form of progress monitoring are assessments known as curriculum-based measures (CBM) because they include these characteristics.