Provincial Outreach
Program for the Early Years
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Using Universal Screening Data to Inform Instruction

Effective Tier 1 Instruction and Differentiated Small-Group Teaching

Presenters:

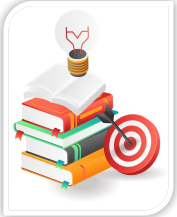
Calico Clark and Marianne Vande Pol

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that our work takes place on the traditional and unceded territories of the Indigenous Peoples of British Columbia, home to 198 distinct Nations. Across Canada, we also recognize the 46 treaties and agreements that reflect ongoing relationships with the land.

We are grateful to the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples for their care and teachings about the Earth.
This acknowledgment reminds us of our responsibilities to these relationships and the ancestral lands where we live, work, and learn.

Learning Objectives

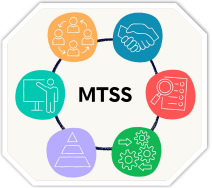


- Use Universal Screening Data to identify student strengths & needs.
- Use data to refine whole-class teaching.
- Differentiate with Small-Group Instruction – Group students & target support.

MTSS Decision Making Framework

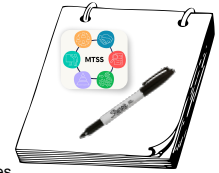
A framework for systematically and empirically approaching reading problems within a school system, and identifying solutions:

- Poses **key questions** to be asked when trying to solve reading-related problems
- Creates a **common language** among teachers and administrators for making **instructional decisions** about instruction and intervention at individual student, small group, classroom, school and district levels.

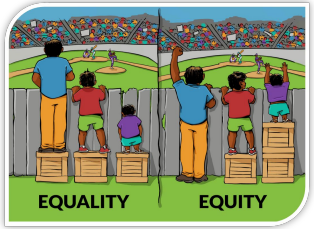


MTSS - Multi-Tiered System of Supports

1. Leadership – all levels
2. Effective Teaming Structures
3. Universal Screener
4. Data Analysis System
5. Collaborative Problem-Solving Model
6. Evidence Based Instructional Practices
7. A Tiered Delivery System to Support the Needs of All Students



Equality versus Equity



Equality/Equity/Liberation image is a collaboration between Center for Story-based Strategy & Interaction Institute for Social Change.

Equity and Small Group Instruction

Adapted from Equality/Equity/Liberation image is a collaboration between Center for Story-based Strategy & Interaction Institute for Social Change.

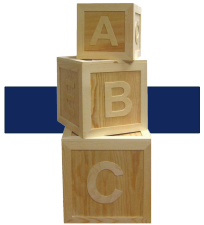
… and it all starts with the ABC METHOD

ABC Method…

Assess

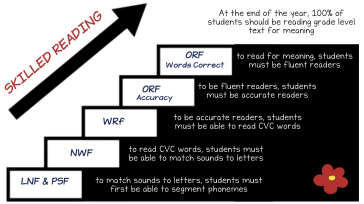
Be efficient

Cut the fluff and teach the stuff



Step
1
ASSESS

Universal Screeners - Road to Skilled Reading



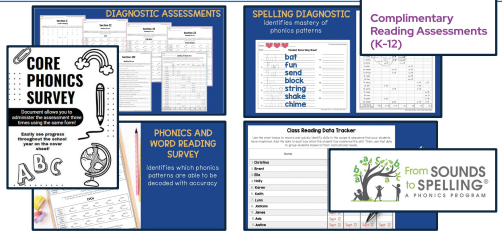
Utilize Data to Form Small Groups

Start with UNIVERSAL SCREENERS

Give DIAGNOSTICS to anyone below benchmarks on universal measure

Use DATA to form SMALL GROUPS of like needs

Diagnostic Assessments



RGR
READ GREAT READING

About RGR

Complimentary Reading Assessments (K-12)

Core Phonics Survey
Lead in Literacy
Really Great Reading
From Sounds to Spelling

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Analyzing Data: CLASS – 1 Grade 1- MOY

Student	LNF		PSF		NWF			WRC		WRF		ORF					Composite	
	Score	Status	Score	Status	CLS	Status		Status		Score	Status	Words Correct	Status	Errors	Accuracy	Status	Score	Status
Benchmark Goals	47		48		42			14		27		31			87%		389	
Student 1	27	Intensive	2	Intensive	31	Intensive		1	Intensive	5	Intensive	2	Intensive	10	17%	Intensive	312	Intensive
Student 2	28	Intensive	41	Strategic	56	Intensive		10	Strategic	15	Intensive	8	Intensive	6	58%	Intensive	369	Intensive
Student 3	32	Intensive	47	Core*	36	Intensive		12	Strategic	8	Intensive	5	Intensive	7	42%	Intensive	369	Intensive
Student 4	40	Core	73	Core*	42	Strategic		14	Core	15	Intensive	5	Intensive	7	42%	Intensive	379	Strategic
Student 5	41	Intensive	58	Core	40	Strategic		11	Strategic	11	Strategic	11	Strategic	2	81%	Strategic	379	Strategic
Student 6	47	Intensive	48	Core	47	Strategic		13	Core	19	Core	14	Strategic	6	70%	Strategic	393	Strategic
Student 7	11	Strategic	68	Core*	44	Strategic		14	Core	16	Strategic	13	Strategic	2	88%	Core	393	Strategic
Student 8	48	Intensive	84	Core*	53	Core		18	Core	16	Strategic	15	Strategic	3	81%	Strategic	397	Strategic
Student 9	58	Core	18	Intensive	59	Core		16	Core	18	Core	14	Strategic	1	93%	Core	399	Core
Student 10	50	Strategic	47	Core*	59	Core		19	Core	16	Strategic	15	Strategic	2	88%	Core	395	Core
Student 11	60	Core	59	Core*	71	Core		23	Core	15	Strategic	10	Strategic	6	63%	Strategic	394	Core
Student 12	60	Core	69	Core*	66	Core		17	Core	18	Core	23	Core	7	77%	Strategic	396	Core
Student 13	15	Strategic	59	Core*	63	Core		19	Core	22	Core	28	Core	3	90%	Core	399	Core
Student 14	69	Core	84	Core*	59	Core		18	Core	27	Core	36	Core	2	95%	Core	408	Core
Student 15	50	Intensive	63	Core*	75	Core		22	Core	31	Core	32	Core	3	91%	Core	408	Core
Student 16	56	Strategic	48	Core	50	Strategic		18	Core	43	Core*	42	Core*	4	94%	Core	414	Core
Student 17	56	Strategic	57	Core*	76	Core		22	Core	58	Core*	56	Core	3	95%	Core	428	Core*
Student 18	46	Intensive	84	Core*	77	Core		23	Core	65	Core*	45	Core*	2	97%	Core	428	Core*
Student 19	83	Core	44	Core	96	Core*		29	Core*	79	Core*	134	Core*	3	98%	Core	488	Core*
Mean	45.8		58.1		56.3			14.8		35.6		38.8		4.1	76.7%		396.4	

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Problem Solving: System

Step I: Problem Definition (What is the problem?)

Based on screening data, is our core program sufficient for most students at our grade level (80% or more above grade level expectations/benchmark goals)?

- Review and analyze current screening data. Record percentages below

	Current Screening
% At or Above Expectation/Benchmark	11/19 = 58%
% Below Expectation/Benchmarks	5/19 = 26%
% Well Below Expectation/ Benchmark	3/19 = 16%

What red flags indicate that a problem exists?

- 42% of the students in this grade do not meet the minimum level of the established benchmark.

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Analyzing Universal Screening Data - COMPOSITE DATA

All students reach grade- level, but what it takes to get them there varies in intensity.

100% of children on track

Tier 3 — Intensive, Few Students — **16 %** reach goals through Tier 1 + Tier 2 and/or Tier 3

Tier 2 — Targeted, Some Students — **26 %** reach goals through Tier 1 + Tier 2

Tier 1 — Universal, All Students — **58%** reach goals through Tier 1 only

Problem Solving: System

Step 2: Problem Analysis (Why is it happening?)

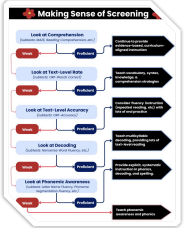
a) Determine the common priority skill Use data to prioritize which foundational reading skill is currently the most important common instructional need For most students (circle one)

Skill	Phonological Awareness		Phonics – NWF			ORF	ORF	Reading Comprehension
Measure	LNF	PSF	CLS	WRC	WRF	Words Read Correct	Accuracy	Maze
% Below Benchmark	68%	16%	42%	21%	47%	58%	47%	
	13 -- 19	3 -- 19	8 -- 19	4 -- 19	9 -- 19	11 -- 19	9 -- 19	

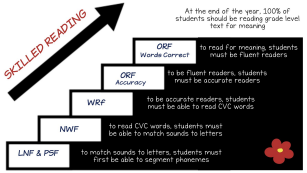
What red flags indicate that a problem exists?

68 % of the students in this grade do not meet the minimum level of the established benchmark for Letter Name Fluency.

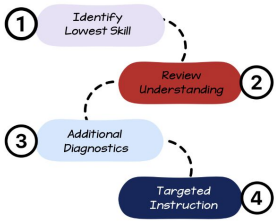
Connection to Foundational Skills Instruction



Road to Skilled Reading



Planning and Development



1. Match each student's benchmark scores to the lowest skill progression.

2. Review your understanding of what skills they have and what areas of reading they are working to master.

3. Identify need for additional Diagnostics to provide more specific information.

4. Use the evidence-based instructional practices to target instruction.

Analyzing Data: CLASS 1- Grade 1- MOY

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Student 4	71	Core+	62	Strategic	14	Core	13	Intensive	5	Intensive	7	62%	Intensive		379	Strategic
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Student 6	48	Core	67	Strategic	13	Core	19	Core	14	Strategic	8	78%	Strategic		383	Strategic
Student 7	66	Core+	44	Strategic	14	Core	16	Strategic	15	Strategic	2	88%	Core		383	Strategic
Student 8	64	Core+	55	Core	16	Core	16	Strategic	15	Strategic	3	83%	Strategic		387	Strategic
Student 9	56	Intensive	59	Core	16	Core	18	Core	14	Strategic	1	93%	Core		389	Core
Student 10	67	Core+	59	Core	19	Core	16	Strategic	15	Strategic	2	88%	Core		391	Core
Student 11	59	Core+	75	Core	23	Core	15	Strategic	19	Strategic	4	65%	Strategic		394	Core
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Student 17	57	Core+	78	Core	22	Core	58	Core+	58	Core	3	95%	Core		428	Core+
Student 18	44	Core+	77	Core	25	Core	45	Core+	45	Core+	2	97%	Core		428	Core+
Student 19	44	Core	96	Core+	29	Core+	79	Core+	114	Core+	3	98%	Core		468	Core+
Mean	55.1		56.5		14.8		25.9		28.8		4.2	76.7%			396.4	

Possible Patterns – MOY- Grade 1

Grade	Group	Reading Comp			Word Recognition					Focus of Small Group Instruction Add Student Names in Space Below
						NWF		Phonemic Awareness		
		Maze	ORF WRC	ORF ACC %	WRF	WRC	CLS	PSF	LNF	
1	1			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Reading comprehension, reading Fluency, decoding
	2				✓	✓	✓	✓		Reading Fluency
	3					✓	✓	✓		Decoding beyond CVC
	4						✓	✓		Blending letter sounds
	5							Warning		Letter sound and blending, Check LNF

Adapted from Stephanie Stollar Consulting LLC- 2021

Grade 1 - MOY- WIN Groups (What I Need)

Group 1 Extending	Group 2 Reading fluency	Group 3 Decoding beyond CVC	Group 4 Blending letter sounds	Urgent Need Group 5
ORF-ACC% ORF-WC WRF NWF- WRC NWF-CLS PSF	WRF NWF- WRC NWF-CLS PSF	NWF- WRC NWF-CLS PSF	NWF-CLS PSF	
Student 12 Student 13 Student 14 Student 15 *Student 16 (check NWF) Student 17 Student 18 Student 19	Student 9 (PSF)	Student 8 Student 10 Student 11	Student 4 (CLS) Student 6 (CLS) Student 7 (CLS)	Student 1 Student 2 Student 3 Student 5
Reading comprehension Reading fluency Decoding				Letter sound and blending; Check PSF

Turning Results Into Action

★58% of Class need – Letter Sounds and Names – (Multiple letters and sounds a week)

Group 1
- Reading comprehension
- Reading fluency
- Decoding

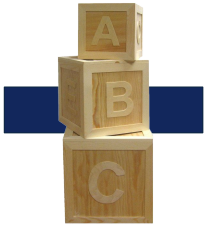
Group 2 and 3
- Decoding & Encoding beyond CVC
- Fluency

Group 4
- Blending letter sounds

****Group 5 ***
Urgent may need extra adult(s) for added Tier 2 and 3.

Support During
- Tier 1
- Small Group (2 or 3X a week)

Support During
- Tier 1
- Small Group (5X a week)
- Pullout - Tier 3



Step 2
Be Efficient

A Structured Literacy 90-Minute Literacy Block

Instruction:	Focus Skills:
Explicit/Systematic Phonics Instruction 30 min	• Phonemic Awareness • Decoding • Encoding • Phonology • Fluency
Small Group Instruction 30 min *What I Need* (WIN)	• Phonemic Awareness • Decoding • Encoding • Word Study • Fluency • Writing
Whole Class Language Comprehension 30 min	• Teacher-Led Read Aloud • Build Background Knowledge • Comprehension Strategies • Build Vocabulary

Whole Class

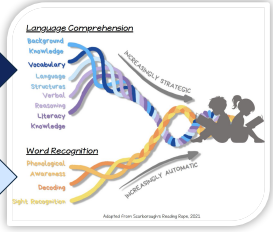
Small Group Instruction

Whole Class Language Comprehension

Instruction Develops Both Strands of the Reading Rope

Whole Group

Whole Goup
Small Group



Scarborough's Reading Rope, 2021

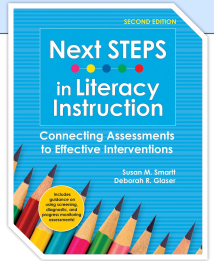
Every Minute Matters: Maximizing Learning

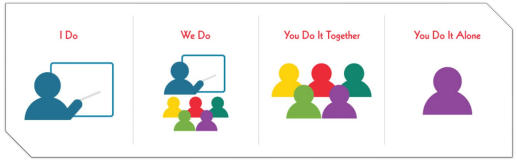
📌 **Goal:** To find *small pockets* of time during the day to do a quick check, review or a practice with a couple of students.

Specific students are pulled for intensive support in phonics fluency, high-frequency words, and phonemic awareness

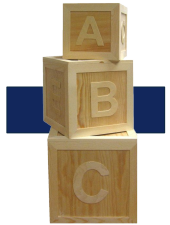
- Soft Start
- Centers
- Independent Reading

"Consistent instructional routines help us to plan quickly and effectively!"





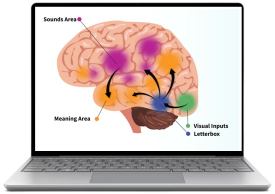
Explicitly teach, model, and practice all new procedures!



Step 3

Cut the fluff… teach the stuff

Align with the research findings in the field of reading science.



"Informed teachers are our best insurance against reading failure. While programs are very helpful tools, programs don't teach, teachers do."

-Dr. Louisa Moats

LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) - Louisa Moats, 2019

Structured Literacy - How We Teach

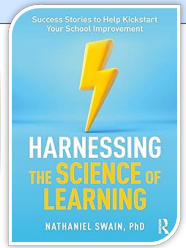
- Explicit
- Systematic
- Sequential
- Cumulative
- Diagnostic & Responsive

Science of Learning

"Don't just watch to see if learning happens."

"MAKE SURE IT DOES!"

Swain, 2025, p. 73



Even the Playing Field

Novice vs Experts

Novice	Experts
• Lack expertise • Exhaust working memory quickly leading to cognitive overload • Benefit from fully guided instruction	• Have a well organized and elaborate schema • Lots of relevant knowledge • Benefit from less guided instruction

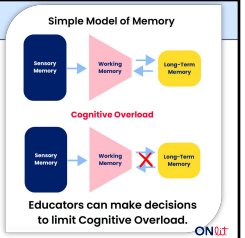
"Fully guided instructional approaches can ensure **ALL** students can make progress towards expertise in their learning."

Swain, 2025, p. 55

ONLit

Science of Learning

- Our senses filter out much of the information around us
- Some goes to our working memory
- With effort, the learner can move information from working memory to long-term memory for later retrieval



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THE CHANGE TO LONG TERM MEMORY = LEARNING

Instructional Hierarchy

Acquisition → **Fluency** → **Adaptation and Generalization**

Students are inaccurate with limited proficiency with the target skill.	**Students** perform a skill accurately, but slowly and laboriously. They are not automatic.	**Students** are accurate and automatic, and beginning to use the skill in new contexts.
Educators respond with explicit and systematic instruction with immediate feedback and guided practice.	**Educators** respond with the intensity and practice needed to reach automaticity. This might involve timed practice with goal setting and feedback.	**Educators** respond with feedback on application, cues for generalization, varied tasks, and fading adult support.

Nail it - Fail it

As teachers, we can limit
COGNITIVE OVERLOAD

Do	Avoid
Instruction and tasks match the instructional hierarchy	Fluency practice during acquisition stage
Instructional Routines	Different tasks daily
Clear and consistent expectations	Unpredictable or inconsistent expectations
Simple, clutter-free environment and presentations.	Decorations or digital elements that are not relevant to learning goal.
Concise explanations	Long, unclear lectures
Sequence of small steps	Complex, big steps
Lots of practice opportunities to chunk and automate knowledge and skills	No or not enough practice, no mastery
Adaptive Teaching	Rigid instruction
Plan for learning and attention	Plan for engagement and fun

Importance of Instructional Routines

Benefits
- Prevent *Cognitive Overload*
- Maximize learning time
- Create safety
- Reduce teacher workload

Essentials
- Explicitly taught, modeled, practiced, and reinforced
- Acquisition and Fluency Stages
- Predictable
- Consistent
- Efficient

Routines are the building blocks of classroom culture.
Bennett, 2020

It is the **dose** and **intensity** of the intervention, not the instructional approach, that changes as students access supports from Tier 1, 2, and into 3.

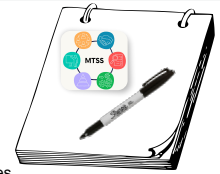
Tier 1
instruction is the first "dose" of teaching and should be effective for the greatest number of children

Tier 2
instruction targets small groups who continue to show difficulty despite strong Tier 1 instruction.

Tier 3
instruction offers more specialized intervention, for those who do not make sufficient progress in Tier 2

MTSS - Multi-Tiered System of Supports - Round Robin

1. Leadership – all levels
2. Effective Teaming Structures
3. Universal Screener
4. Data Analysis System
5. Collaborative Problem-Solving Model
6. Evidence Based Instructional Practices
7. A Tiered Delivery System to Support the Needs of All Students



Phonics Block – 30 minutes

Suggested Schedule for a 2-Day Lesson

Step	Time
Day 1	
Step 1: Phonemic Awareness	2 minutes
Step 2: Visual Drill	3 minutes
Step 3: Auditory Drill	5 minutes
Step 4: Blending Drill	5 minutes
Step 5: New Concept	15 minutes
Day 2	
Step 5: New Concept (review)	3 minutes
Step 6: Word Work	6 minutes
Step 7: Irregular Words	6 minutes
Step 8: Connected Text	15 minutes

"Phonics helps students gain access to words, which in turn helps them gain access to meaning.

And that is the point of reading…

to comprehend the information,
to learn something new,
to enjoy escaping into the world of a story."

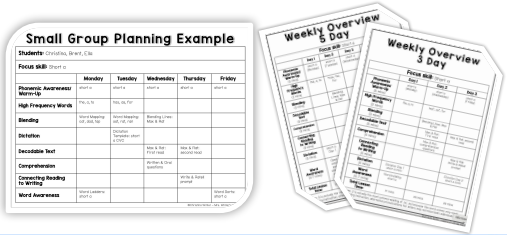
-Wiley Blevins

A Fresh Look at Phonics - Blevins, 2016
UFLI - Teacher's Manual, 2022

Whole Group Phonics Split Grade - 30 Min

Group	Activity	Led By	Location
Grade 1	Phonics Lesson - Program	Classroom Teacher	Carpet Space
Grade 2	Phonics Lesson: Program	Resource Teacher	Table Area
Support	Transition, materials, routine	CEA	Both Spaces

Small Group Instruction – 30 minutes



Lead in Literacy - Christina Winter

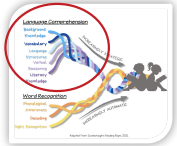
Whole Class –30 minutes (Cross Curricular)

Vocabulary, Background Knowledge & Comprehension

- **Read Aloud/Shared Reading (fiction & non-fiction):**
Be intentional with vocabulary instruction
Examine text structure

- **Tie to Social Studies and Science units:**
Build vocabulary and background knowledge

- **Comprehension:**
Summarizing: try paragraph shrinking
Monitoring Comprehension
Asking and Answering questions
Text Structure



Grade 1 - MOY- WIN Groups (What I Need)

Group 1 Extending	Group 2 Reading fluency	Group 3 Decoding beyond CVC	Group 4 Blending letter sounds	Urgent Need Group 5
ORF-ACC% ORF-WC WRF NWF- WRC NWF-CLS PSF	WRF NWF- WRC NWF-CLS PSF	NWF- WRC NWF-CLS PSF	NWF-CLS PSF	
Student 12 Student 13 Student 14 Student 15 *Student 16 (check NWF) Student 17 Student 18 Student 19	Student 9 (PSF)	Student 8 Student 10 Student 11	Student 4 (CLS) Student 6 (CLS) Student 7 (CLS)	Student 1 Student 2 Student 3 Student 5
Reading comprehension Reading fluency Decoding				Letter sound and blending; Check PSF

Small Group Rotations - SAMPLE

	Rotation 1	Rotation 2	Teacher
Monday	Group 2/3	Group 4	Group 5
Tuesday	Group 1(split)	Group 1 (split)	Group 5
Wednesday	Group 2/3	Group 4	Group 5
Thursday	Group 1 (split)	Group 1 (split)	Group 5
Friday	Group 2/3	Group 4	Group 5

Group 1 – 2 days a week

Group 2/3 – 3 days a week

Group 4 – 3 days a week

Group 5 – 5 days a week

Groups are fluid and change often as children meet their benchmark!

Grouping Flexible Service Delivery

10 students - Urgent
Letter Sound/Blending/PSF
Teacher 1 and 2
EA 1

14 Students
Reading Fluency
Teacher 5
EA 4

Space 1 | Space 2
Space 3 | Space 4

15 Students
Decoding Beyond CVC
Teacher 3 and 4
EA 2 and 3

8 Students - Extending
Reading Comprehension
Teacher 6

47 Students, 3 classroom teachers, 1 Learning Resource Teacher, ESL Teacher, 1 Admin, 4 EAs

Grouping Flexible Service Delivery

Group	Activity	Led By	Notes
1	Adapted Phonics Lesson Plan	Classroom Teacher	Letter sound and blending; Check PSF
2	Adapted Phonics Lesson Plan	Resource Teacher	Blending letter sounds
3	Adapted Phonics Lesson Plan	Admin	Decoding beyond CVC
4	Adapted Phonics Lesson Plan	Alternated	Reading comprehension, fluency, & decoding

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Monday	Teacher	Resource	Admin	CEA/Independent
Tuesday	Teacher	Resource	CEA/Independent	Admin
Wednesday	Teacher	CEA/Independent	Admin	Resource
Thursday	CEA/Independent	Resource	Admin	Teacher
Friday	Teacher	Resource	Admin	Independent

Turn and Talk

Things to think about:

- Split Grade
- Adults to Support Literacy
- Time/Blocks
- Space

What might your organization look like

- wish list
- settle for

What are the Other Kids Doing? - Literacy Centers

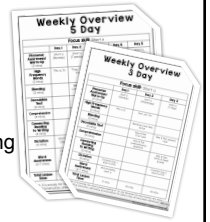
Non Negotiables

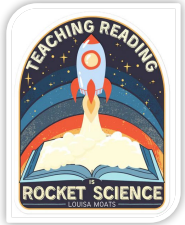
- Connected to prior instruction
- Students are familiar with and have practiced the game or activity
- Able to practice with accuracy
- Visual Routine or System to communicate and organize
- Timer

Small Group Instruction – Reminder

High Impact Routines for Small Group

- Phonemic Awareness
- High Frequency Words
- Blending
- Decodable Text
- Comprehension
- Connecting Reading and Writing
- Dictation
- Word Awareness





"Researchers now estimate that 95 percent of all children can be taught to read by the end of first grade when provided with high quality, evidence-aligned instruction."

-Dr. Louisa Moats

Sources

Books

A Fresh Look at Phonics - Blevins, 2016

7 Mighty Moves - Kemeny, 2023

Next Steps in Literacy Instruction – Smart & Glaser, 2024

LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling) - Louisa Moats, 2019

Explicit Instruction - Anita Archer, 2011

Harnessing the Science of Learning - Nathaniel Swain, 2025

Resources

Stephanie Stollar Consulting LLC- 2021

Scarborough's Reading Rope- 2021

Online Resource Links

Equality/Equity/Liberation - Center for Story-based Strategy & Interaction Institute for Social Change.

Lead in Literacy - Christina Winter
Core Phonics Survey

Really Great Reading
From Sounds to Spelling

ONLit
Teaching Reading Is Rocket Science, 2020

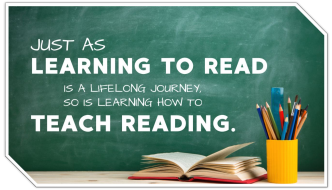
Videos

Using Multisensory Methods in Phonics Instruction: Sand Trays - 7 Mighty Moves

Using Multisensory Methods in Phonics Instruction - 7 Mighty Moves

Kindergarten Chaos, 2022, Tik Tok

UFLI Kindergarten Small Group Instruction - Youtube
Alignment Across MTSS Tiers: Stephanie Stollar - Youtube



Thank you for your dedication and passion!
Your hard work inspires and makes a lasting impact!

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