

## Response to Intervention (RTI) Strategies

- Use differentiation strategies to vary how content is introduced to students, how information is processed by students, and how students demonstrate learned content
- Determine the importance of addressing students' learning styles in the effective delivery of instruction and interventions
- Use students' learning strengths as a means to teach identified skills in targeted academic areas
- Provide academic and/or behavioral strategies that match the appropriate tier of instruction
- Use research-based strategies to improve the learning potential of students
- Provide small-group instruction as an essential element to increase higher-level learning and student motivation
- Use multiple assessments to determine the educational needs and to monitor the progress of students
- Use assessment strategies to measure the growth in student performance and revise and/or adjust instruction/interventions
- Use wait-time to improve and increase student responses
- Identify the role of the teacher/leader in grouping for instruction
- Build a quality classroom learning environment
- Recognize and apply the implementation steps that occur at each level of tiered instruction
- Implement suggested instructional strategies to ensure high quality instruction occurs in the general education setting
- Use the visual representation of the RtI model as a framework for understanding the delivery of multi-tiered instruction in the academic and behavioral domains

# Tier 1

The Response to Intervention approach provides increasing levels of interventions to address academic and/or behavioral concerns. A teacher must understand and become familiar with what is offered at each tier of instruction. This knowledge helps a teacher know the responsibilities required throughout the process and recognize that a multi-tiered delivery model of instruction offers all students opportunities to be successful. The following provides an overview of Tier-1 Core Instruction/Universal Interventions.

## Core Instruction/Universal Interventions

- Core curriculum must be effective for 80-85% of all students on a campus (1)
- Universal assessments are administered to determine which students need additional or different instruction (2)
- Group interventions are implemented for all students through high-quality instruction on a proactive basis (3)
- Decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and school-wide strategies are made by being responsive to the performance of students and their needs (4)
- Universal or Tier-1 interventions are academic and behavioral strategies that are routinely used when a student is experiencing difficulty with core instruction (5)
- Universal interventions can vary from campus to campus (6)

## Tier-1 Implementation Steps

- Implement school-wide academic and school-wide discipline plans (7)
- Employ research-based instruction (8)
- Differentiate instruction and interventions to meet the needs of individual learners, to offer the appropriate level of challenge for each learner, and to provide the necessary supports to help all students reach their learning goals (9)
- Use multiple intelligences of the student's learning style to facilitate effective learning when a student is having difficulty grasping concepts (10)
- Provide interventions for visual learners with demonstrations, pictures, graphics, and written key words to support text information (11)
- Support auditory learners with interventions that include oral discussions, oral presentations, group collaboration, or other oral delivery methods (12)
- Engage the tactile/kinesthetic learners in interventions that utilize hands-on activities, movement or rhythmic experiences, and alternate between passive and active activities (13)
- Give choices in the ways students demonstrate knowledge by considering the learning styles of the students (e.g., illustrations, taped summaries or reports, role playing) (14)
- Show differentiation in grouping in the core curriculum by using a variety of grouping formats to instruct students (15)
- Change method of core instruction delivery to address skill deficits if necessary (16)

- Provide at-risk students, identified through universal screening, with enhanced opportunities to learn, including, but not limited to, additional time (17)
- Study student data to determine why a student is struggling and provide that student with appropriate and additional instruction or help (18)
- Collaborate with the parent to develop an intervention plan that addresses specific learning needs of the student (19)
- Match instructional and intervention strategies to students' strengths and targeted deficit areas (e.g., feedback, games, simulations, practice, questions, organizers) (20)
- Work in small groups of 3-6 students to focus on deficits (21)
- Use campus/district allocation per subject to determine the amount of time for instructional delivery (22)
- Administer progress monitoring to determine progress made and document results on specified forms (23)
- Keep a log of intervention efforts and students' progress (24)
- Use campus/district policy to determine what documentation is needed in lesson plans (25)
- Teach all students expectations, which are reinforced and monitored in all settings by all adults. Use ongoing discipline and other types of data to design interventions that are preventative and proactive. (26)

### Tier-1 Academic Strategies

The majority (80-90%) of school-aged students respond successfully to quality core instruction in the general education classroom. Universal screenings are used to identify students who are struggling to learn the core curriculum and are in need of intervention. Universal interventions are delivered by the classroom teacher in small, flexible groups for these identified students.

- Utilize mnemonic cues (e.g., songs, cartoons, rhymes, stories, images) for teaching math facts, vocabulary, or steps in a process (1)
- Build frequent opportunities for movement during instruction to address needs of students who are kinesthetic learners (2)
- Circulate among students and observe and question as they are working (3)
- Make eye contact with students before giving directions and have students repeat the directions (e.g., turn to a partner, individually) (4)
- Provide clearly written directions and instructions in a step-by-step manner with illustrations and use as few words as possible (5)
- Write instructions on the board as well as say them aloud (6)
- Differentiate instruction by using all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy to ask questions and plan learning activities (7)
- Use reading partners and skilled peer or adult mentors to provide academic support (8)
- Provide varied texts or supplementary materials at different levels of reading difficulty (9)
- Use multiple and flexible grouping opportunities for students (e.g., teams, partners, whole group, independent, by interest, by learning style, teacher-assigned, self-selected) (10)

- Divide instruction into shortened segments and provide feedback to students before moving to the next segment (11)
- Break assignments into smaller chunks to give students opportunities to respond frequently (12)
- Adjust and extend time as needed (13)
- Integrate cooperative experiences into instruction (14)
- Use direct, systematic instruction for students who show areas of concern (15)
- Use technological tools or computer software to allow students to access content in multiple ways (16)
- Use multi-sensory techniques to present information (17)
- Use visuals, charts, and models for concept reinforcement (18)
- Use graphic organizers to focus attention on key elements, concepts, or ideas (19)
- Provide practice opportunities using multiple modalities (20)
- Provide opportunities for students to respond in a variety of ways (e.g., questions, dry-erase boards, thumbs-up, partner share, graphic organizers) (21)
- Offer materials, tasks, and learning options at varied levels of difficulty (22)
- Use frequent monitoring to assess the progress and non-progress made by students so instruction can be adjusted in a timely manner (23)
- Explain clearly each academic task and the specific criteria needed to successfully complete the task (24)
- Monitor student understanding continuously so misunderstanding can be clarified and corrected immediately (25)
- Reinforce memorization of steps using repetition in a variety of contexts where memory is required (e.g., oral, written, act it out) (26)
- Work collaboratively on tasks with a student and gradually withdraw the support (27)
- Anchor new knowledge to previously learned knowledge (28)
- Provide a master set of notes, when notetaking is required, to improve student's notes (29)
- Integrate learning into a game-show format (30)
- Create and provide students an easy-to-follow visual that specifies problem-solving steps in a clear manner that students may reference as needed (31)
- Display poster-size versions of problem-solving steps in the classroom, refer to the posters often, and encourage students to follow the steps (32)
- Design a signal for a student to use when help is needed on independent practice. The student displays the help signal on the desk (e.g., brightly colored index card folded like a tent) (33)
- Review and practice previously taught material frequently (34)
- Present new concepts using a logical instructional sequence that maximizes the likelihood a skill will be learned (e.g., model, guided practice, independent practice) (35)
- Integrate real-life experiences into instruction (36)
- Use storytelling, theatrics, and props to capture and focus the attention of students as a new concept is introduced (37)

- Activate prior student knowledge by promoting a discussion that enables a student to make connections to learned information/experiences prior to the introduction of a lesson (38)
- Employ auditory signals to attract and maintain focus of students (e.g., play chimes, ring a bell, use a clap pattern, play music) (39)
- Use visual signals to attract and maintain focus of students (e.g., illustrations, raised hand, overhead timer) (40)
- Use a laser pointer, stick pointer, highlighter tape, or colored pens to focus on key information in the text (41)
- Frame projected information (e.g., use of hands, a drawn box, highlighter, pointer) when using an overhead or LCD projector (42)
- Avoid instructional lag time by preparing materials in advance (43)
- Allow students to readjust seating if they are not positioned where they can see the board or media screen (44)
- Present instruction at a lively pace using humor (45)
- Use an egg timer or an hourglass timer as a guide to complete tasks (46)
- Have students record notes or make illustrations of key points during instruction (47)
- Use illustrations, diagrams, demonstrations, charts, and manipulatives to present instruction (48)
- Illustrate key points, no matter the level of artistic ability, to focus attention and help with retention of information (49)
- Use organizers to focus attention and increase comprehension of concepts to be learned (50)
- Incorporate names of students when telling stories or presenting problems to capture student attention (51)
- Make sure of color in gaining attention of students (e.g., colored dry-erase pens on dry-erase boards, colored highlighting tape, colored Post-it notes) (52)
- Have earphones/earplugs available for students who have auditory distractibility (53)
- Seat reluctant students close to students who remain focused throughout instruction (54)
- Stop often to summarize key elements in a lesson (55)
- Invite students to use their own words to summarize key points in a lesson to a partner (56)
- Allow students opportunities to move about the room during instruction when appropriate (57)
- Alternate between passive and active instructional activities (58)
- Pause during instruction to ask questions and check students' levels of understanding or any misunderstandings of content (59)
- Use Think-Pair-Share to give each student an opportunity to think prior to forming a response and to allow each student an opportunity to share ideas (60)



## Tier-1 Behavioral Strategies

At Tier-1, behavioral instruction is provided to all students in all settings and consists of teaching school-wide expectations, rules, and procedures. Universal screening is administered and students with at-risk behaviors are identified. Primary prevention occurs in the school/classroom setting and school-wide systems are in place to support students who need universal interventions.

- Incorporate a screening measure to proactively identify students who are at-risk of inappropriate behavior (1)
- Establish a positive, predictable school-wide climate (2)
- Establish and implement a school-wide discipline plan (3)
- Establish and implement a classroom discipline plan (4)
- Communicate the classroom behavior plan to students and parents (5)
- Take proactive steps to establish a positive classroom environment (6)
- Develop positive relationships with students (7)
- Define clearly expectations and motivate students with positive reinforcement (8)
- Teach rules and procedures (9)
- Teach social skills lessons and reinforce social behaviors through role-play (10)
- Provide positive, active supervision (11)
- Establish clear, consistent routines and expectations for accomplishing daily tasks and activities (e.g., entering the classroom, taking attendance, handing in homework, working in groups, working independently) (12)
- Provide examples and models of expected student behavior (13)
- Teach, model, and practice specific procedures and expectations for out-of-class activities (e.g., walking in hallways, cafeteria routines, attendance at an assembly) (14)
- Design the layout of the classroom to facilitate a smooth flow so students move around the room with ease (15)
- Use preferential seating to help students focus on learning (16)
- Make materials quickly and easily accessible to students (17)
- Give directions after the attention of all students has been gained (18)
- Face students and maintain eye-to-eye contact during direct instruction (19)
- Use voice intonation to sustain student attention throughout a lesson (e.g., whisper, pause, tone variation) (20)
- Move around the room during instruction and independent work to maintain visibility (21)
- Include directions for procedures when students complete tasks or assignments (22)
- Give praise and positive feedback to students when explicit directions are followed (23)
- Use relaxation and visual imagery exercises to set a calm atmosphere after recess, lunch, or any physical activity (24)
- Play soft, classical background music (25)
- Provide daily warm-ups or bell-ringer activities for immediate student engagement (26)
- Post and adhere to a daily or weekly schedule incorporating transitional times (27)
- Notify students of any schedule changes in advance (28)

- Eliminate disruptions between lessons or activities through careful planning and preparation (29)
- Reduce the amount of down time between activities or a change in subjects (30)
- Give consistent visual or auditory signals and verbal cues to alert students to a transition (e.g., bell ringing, clapping rhythm, countdown, overhead timer, sounding a clicker, playing music, performing a chant) (31)
- Model appropriate procedures and signals for transitioning; have students practice all procedures; give feedback as they practice (32)
- Provide "transition time" for students to follow through and/or prepare before the next activity begins or before instructions are given (33)
- Circulate among students during transition times to assist, prompt, or intervene before a disruption occurs or escalates (34)
- Provide incentives or other reinforcers for smooth and successful transitions (35)
- Develop a plan to prevent triggers that lead to misbehavior (36)
- Have planned responses to avoid emotional reactions to student misbehavior (37)
- Deal with misbehaviors promptly, fairly, consistently, and equitably (38)
- Use a soft, soothing voice when directing/redirecting a student to focus (39)
- Refrain from engaging in an argument or power struggle (40)
- Refuse to threaten or plead with a student (41)
- Use specific information and avoid vague language so students know precisely what to do and what behavior is expected (42)
- Allow students to ask questions to clarify any misunderstandings (43)
- Avoid unnecessary talking after directions are stated and allow five seconds wait-time for students to comply (44)
- Repeat directions after wait-time if needed (45)
- Model a problem-solving strategy for students and talk through the steps as it is taught to help students internalize the steps (46)
- Encourage students to think aloud the steps or the process they use to solve a problem so feedback can be given (47)
- Seek additional services after school-wide and classroom interventions have been implemented (48)
- Use time management tools (e.g., daily planners, assignment sheets, calendars) (49)
- Teach students how to use time management tools (50)
- Use a timer to keep students on task (e.g., kitchen timer, overhead timer ) (51)
- Create a well-organized room arrangement that maximizes space (52)
- Teach and practice housekeeping procedures (e.g., class routines, homework guidelines, disposal or trash, sharpening pencils, restroom protocol) (53)
- Allow kinesthetic learners to move about while working (54)
- Reduce environmental noise to keep learning at an optimal level (55)
- Allow earphones or earplugs to minimize auditory distracters (56)
- Provide both soft light and bright light areas in the classroom (57)
- Set room temperature at a comfortable level (58)



- Collaborate with school personnel who are directly involved with the student to provide a support system for the student (59)
- Communicate all rules and expectations to parents in written form (60)
- Establish relationships with parents that promote active home and school partnerships (61)
- Communicate regularly with parents (e.g., newsletter, calendar, web site, e-mail) (62)
- Invite input from parents in setting behavior goals (63)
- Initiate parent/teacher/administrator conferences when needed (64)
- Use nonverbal warning signals when redirecting a student (65)
- Engage students in hands-on learning (66)
- Use specific, positive verbal acknowledgement for on-task behavior (67)
- Give students time to organize their desks and work areas (68)
- Create situations that promote a sense of belonging for each student in the classroom (69)

## Tier-2

The Response to Intervention approach provides increasing levels of interventions to address academic and/or behavioral concerns. A teacher must understand and become familiar with what is offered at each tier of instruction. This knowledge helps a teacher know the responsibilities required throughout the process and recognize that a multi-tiered delivery model of instruction offers all students an opportunity to be successful. The following provides an overview of Tier-2 Core and Supplemental Instruction.

### Core and Supplemental Instruction

- Supplemental interventions are intended for 5-15% of students (1)
- When a student continues to fall significantly behind peers, even though classroom supports are provided, the teacher can refer the student to the RtI team (2)
- Possible reasons are identified to explain why the student is experiencing academic and/or behavioral difficulties (3)
- The student may be accepted at Tier-2 if data warrants the placement and a collaborative decision is reached by the RtI team (4)
- Develop an intervention plan with the RtI team to address student's specific learning needs (5)
- Use the student's preferred learning style to deliver appropriately matched interventions (6)
- Implement research-based interventions and monitor them closely to ensure quality of intervention follow-through (7)
- Deliver interventions to a small group of 5-8 students, 15-30+ minutes per day, 4-5 days per week, in a 6-8-12 week cycle. Students with similar instructional needs are grouped together. (8)
- Monitor the student's interventions using progress monitoring measures and/or daily behavior report card to see if the expected goals for improvement are being achieved by the student (may be as often as once a week) (9)
- Use a visual display of data to graph student progress to make it easier to see improvement (10)
- Share information with parent(s) and RtI team (11)
- Meet with the RtI team to change or adjust the intervention plan (12)
- Implement intervention plan with the assistance of classroom teacher and/or school specialists such as a math teacher, reading teacher, or other assigned staff (13)
- Provide interventions to students identified as academically or socially at-risk due to behavioral issues (14)

## Tier-2 Academic Strategies

Tier-2 is designed to provide secondary interventions (core instruction plus supplemental instruction) and assistance for a small percentage (5-15%) of students who are performing below standards in academic domains. Research-based interventions for these students are provided as targeted individual interventions in one or more areas delivered through small-group instruction.

- Utilize mnemonic cues (e.g., songs, cartoons, rhymes, stories, images) for teaching math facts, vocabulary, or steps in a process (1)
- Deliver instruction in short sessions using a brisk pace (2)
- Build frequent opportunities for movement during instruction to address needs of students who are kinesthetic learners (3)
- Provide clearly written directions and instructions in a step-by-step manner with illustrations and use as few words as possible (4)
- Differentiate instruction by using all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy to ask questions and plan learning activities (5)
- Use reading partners and skilled peer or adult mentors to provide academic support (6)
- Provide varied texts and supplementary materials at different levels of reading difficulty (7)
- Use multiple, flexible grouping opportunities for students (e.g., partners, independent, by interest, by learning style, teacher-assigned, small group of 5 or less students) (8)
- Divide instruction into shortened segments and provide feedback to students before moving to the next segment (9)
- Break assignments into smaller chunks to give students opportunities to respond frequently (10)
- Adjust and extend time through collaboration with RtI team (e.g., 3-4 sessions per week at 30-60 minutes per session) (11)
- Use direct, systematic instruction delivered by the classroom teacher or another skilled adult (12)
- Use technological tools or computer software to allow students to access content in multiple ways (13)
- Use multi-sensory techniques to present information (14)
- Increase the use of visuals, charts, and models for concept reinforcement (15)
- Use graphic organizers to focus attention on key elements, concepts, or ideas (16)
- Provide audiotapes of text or literature read (17)
- Increase the amount of practice opportunities using multiple modalities (18)
- Increase opportunities for students to respond in a variety of ways (e.g., questions, dry-erase boards, thumbs-up, partner share, graphic organizers) (19)
- Use frequent monitoring to assess the progress and non-progress made by students so instruction can be adjusted in a timely manner (20)
- Explain clearly each academic task and the specific criteria needed to successfully complete the task (21)

- Monitor student understanding continuously so misunderstandings can be clarified and corrected immediately (22)
- Reinforce memorization of steps using repetition in a variety of contexts where memory is required (e.g., oral, written, act it out) (23)
- Work collaboratively on tasks with a student and gradually withdraw the support to increase student independence and confidence (24)
- Anchor new knowledge to previously learned knowledge (25)
- Have students record notes or make illustrations of key points during instruction (26)
- Provide a copy of the text with main ideas highlighted (27)
- Create and provide students an easy-to-follow visual that specifies problem-solving steps in a clear manner that students may reference as needed (28)
- Review and practice previously taught material frequently (29)
- Present new concepts using a logical instructional sequence that maximizes the likelihood a skill will be learned (e.g., model, guided practice, independent practice ) (30)
- Increase modeling, guided practice, and hands-on learning to increase students participation (31)
- Integrate real-life experiences into instruction (32)
- Activate prior student knowledge by promoting a discussion that enables a student to make connections to learned information/experiences prior to the introduction of a lesson (33)
- Employ auditory signals to attract and maintain focus of students (e.g., play chimes, ring a bell, use a clap pattern, play music) (34)
- Use visual signals to attract and maintain focus of students (e.g., illustrations, raised hand, overhead timer) (35)
- Use a laser pointer, stick pointer, highlighter tape, or colored pens to focus on key information in the text (36)
- Frame projected information (e.g., use of hands, a drawn box, highlighter, pointer) when using an overhead or LCD projector (37)
- Avoid instructional lag time by preparing materials in advance (38)
- Present instruction at a lively pace using humor (39)
- Use illustrations, diagrams, demonstrations, charts, and manipulatives to present instruction (40)
- Illustrate key points, no matter the level of artistic ability, to focus attention and help with retention of information (41)
- Pause during a lesson to allow students to repeat a word or phrase about the concept being taught (42)
- Use organizers to focus attention and increase comprehension of concepts to be learned (43)
- Incorporate names of students when telling stories or presenting problems to capture student attention (44)
- Make use of color in gaining attention of students (e.g., colored dry-erase pens on dry-erase boards, colored highlighting tape, colored Post-it notes) (45)

- Turn off room lighting and use a flashlight to highlight or draw the attention of students to key words/items (46)
- Have earphones/earplugs available for students who have auditory distractibility (47)
- Keep desktop and/or table top free of clutter to help students focus on instruction (48)
- Stop often to summarize key elements in a lesson (49)
- Invite students to use their own words to summarize key points in a lesson to a partner (50)
- Provide access to a less distracting location for independent work (51)
- Allow students opportunities to move about the room during instruction when appropriate (52)
- Alternate between passive and active instructional activities (53)
- Pause during instruction to ask questions and check students' levels of understanding or any misunderstandings of content (54)
- Use Think-Pair-Share to give each student an opportunity to think prior to forming a response and to allow each student an opportunity to share ideas (55)

## Tier-2 Behavioral Strategies

Students who continue to exhibit social problems after receiving Tier-1 universal interventions, which have proven successful with the majority of students, are identified as needing Tier-2 interventions. Screening measures must be in place to identify these students. Office discipline referrals may be used as an additional identification measure. Tier-2 interventions should be easy to administer in small groups and should require limited time and staff involvement.

- Administer evidence-based interventions to small groups of students (1)
- Use different types of rating scales to monitor the progress of interventions (2)
- Increase supervision and monitoring of expected behavior (3)
- Provide small group counseling sessions (4)
- Provide small group, pull-out social skills sessions led by the counselor (5)
- Apply the skills from counselor sessions in the classroom setting (6)
- Teach expectations of group behavior thoroughly: explain, model, demonstrate, role play, and practice (7)
- Establish clearly defined daily social skills goals (8)
- Have a mentor or coach meet at the beginning and end of the day with a student who is receiving small group interventions to review goals and monitor progress toward reaching those goals (9)
- Reinforce social skills goals in the classroom setting (10)
- Provide positive, active supervision (11)
- Reduce the amount of down time between activities (12)
- Post and adhere to a daily or weekly schedule (13)
- Notify students of schedule changes in advance (14)
- Give consistent visual or auditory signals and verbal cues to alert students of transitions (e.g., bell ringing, clapping rhythm, countdown) (15)
- Circulate among students during transition times (16)
- Share literature that provides positive examples of appropriate behavior or character (e.g., books about bullying, books about honesty, character training videos) (17)
- Give students a task card with a list of things to do to help them stay on task and manage their time (18)
- Model a problem-solving strategy for students and talk through the steps as it is taught to help students internalize the steps (19)
- Encourage students to think aloud the steps or the steps or the process used to solve a problem so feedback can be given (20)
- Watch for signs of student frustration and use de-escalation strategies to redirect and calm a student (21)
- Call student by name and discreetly redirect (22)
- Intervene quickly at the first sign of a student losing control (23)
- Assign a task for redirection (e.g., passing out paper, running an errand, taking a note to a neighboring teacher) (24)

- Use relaxation exercises (e.g., guided imagery, deep breathing, cross-lateral exercises, counting slowly, laughter) (25)
- Teach students to use positive self-talk (26)
- Model and practice "Give Me Ten" (e.g., count forward or backwards to 10) (27)
- Allow time for student to refocus and gain self-control (28)
- Lead students to recognize when a problem situation might occur and what action to take (29)
- Provide a cool down area in the classroom that a student can access when needed (30)
- Allow student to take a walk with supervision (31)
- Use physical activities to relieve stress (e.g., walking fast, using clay, squeezing a stress ball) (32)
- Provide a note to a non-compliant student to enforce following directions (33)
- Follow through with a mild consequence for non-compliance to directions (34)
- Plan and inform students of consequences that relate to misbehaviors (35)
- Teach student to take responsibility for self and actions (36)
- Follow through with consistent consequences in a timely manner (37)
- Use "I" messages to let students know what is expected (e.g., "Linda, I need you to put the book inside your desk.") (38)
- Avoid using threats (39)
- Identify significant others with whom the child is successful and involve them in working with the student to help reach a behavior goal (40)
- Report serious infractions to campus administrator (41)
- Use the following initial corrective interventions: (42)
  - Close proximity
  - Quiet redirection
  - Private nonverbal cues
  - Verbal reminders (e.g., "Beverly, remember to \_\_\_\_.")
  - Directives (e.g., "Sam, I need you to \_\_\_\_.")
  - Repeated practice (e.g., If a student uses inappropriate vocabulary, makes unsuitable choices, or interrupts unnecessarily, talk about how the acceptable behavior would look and sound and have student practice the action.)
- Administer the following consequences after warnings are given: (43)
  - Loss of privilege
  - Time of silence
  - Correct inappropriate action (e.g., "Martin, please go back and walk down the hallway.")
  - Temporary time away from the group, yet remain in the classroom
  - Log misbehaviors in a notebook
  - Student reflects on misbehavior through journaling
  - Teacher/student conference
  - Parent contact (e.g., phone call, note home, report card note, parent conference)
- Teach students a problem-solving approach to use when confronted with a conflict (44)

- Provide behavioral contracts for students who have difficulty in out-of-class settings (e.g., bus, playground, cafeteria) (45)
- Follow campus guidelines and the overall campus discipline plan for corrective action (46)
- Involve the student in developing a behavior contract that is meaningful and motivating to the student (47)
- Deal with misbehaviors promptly, fairly, consistently, and equitably (48)
- Follow this procedure when a student is argumentative: (49)
  - Approach the student in private
  - Use a calm, non-accusatory tone when talking to the student
  - Allow the student cool down time
  - Talk in a firm voice and display an in-control manner at all times
  - Offer the student an opportunity to share his/her side
  - Role play the situation, reversing roles of those involved in the misbehavior, and discuss appropriate behaviors
- Use the following strategies when a student shows lack of respect: (50)
  - Model respect to student, and require respect from the student in return
  - Role play situations where a lack of respect occurs, followed by discussion of alternative actions to take
  - Present a professional image in appearance and actions in order to earn respect
  - Create situations that promote a sense of belonging for each student in the classroom
  - Explain realistic rules and avoid ultimatums that provoke confrontation
  - Listen to student's explanation without predetermined judgments
  - Seek the assistance of the counselor; use guidance materials and resources that deal with respect; follow up with a discussion; make a plan for the future
- Follow this procedure when a student responds negatively to rules and directives: (51)
  - Speak privately to the student to discuss the situation and ask, "What were you doing?" "What should you have been doing?" "What will you do differently?"
  - Listen actively to what the student says
  - Give student time to reflect privately
  - Have student write the misbehavior in a log and identify positive ways of responding in the future
  - Provide reinforcement when positive behavior is observed in the future



## Tier-3

The Response to Intervention approach provides increasing levels of interventions to address academic and/or behavioral concerns. A teacher must understand and become familiar with what is offered at each tier of instruction. This knowledge helps a teacher know the responsibilities required throughout the process and recognize that a multi-tiered delivery model of instruction offers all students an opportunity to be successful. The following provides an overview of Tier-3 Intensive, Individualized Interventions.

### Intensive, Individualized Interventions

- Interventions are intended for the 105% of struggling students who need support (1)
- When a student continues to fall significantly behind peers, even with Tier-2 interventions, the student may advance to Tier-3 interventions (2)
- Tier-3 interventions are more intensive and of longer duration than at any other tier (3)
- Data on learning rate and level determines the intensity and duration of intervention (4)

### Tier-3 Implementation Steps

- Use additional diagnostic assessments to determine the targeted interventions needed to address specific skill deficit(s) (5)
- Reduce the teacher-student ratio to 1:2 or 1:3 (6)
- Use the smaller group size on a 1:1 basis if sufficient progress is not achieved (7)
- Increase the time for interventions to occur over a longer duration than other tiers (8)
- Increase time such as 30-90 minutes per session, 4-5 days per week, using 8-12-20 week cycle (9)
- Use diagnostics to narrow the problem more specifically (10)
- Provide interventions that match the skill(s) deficits (11)
- Use a reading and/or math program to replace core instruction if warranted (12)
- Use frequent progress monitoring to determine if identified goals on intervention plan are being met (13)
- Use an appointed intervention specialist who may be an available classroom teacher in general on special education to deliver interventions (14)
- Provide interventions to students with intensive/chronic behavior challenges based on comprehensive evaluation (15)

### Considerations before Referral to Other District Options

- Verify that students received research-based instruction at each tiered level (16)
- Verify that students received interventions of sufficient intensity and duration (17)

- Ensure that the group size for previous interventions was reduced from 1-on-2 to 1-on-1. Ensure the interventions were provided for more than 20 minutes for at least 4 days a week for more than 12-15 weeks. (18)
- Use at least two different progress-monitoring methods to monitor problem areas. If not, continue the intervention several more weeks before special education referral is made. (19)
- Verify that a minimum of two intervention plans were tried with different interventions before referral. If not, implement additional interventions for an extended time cycle or several more weeks before a final decision is made about a referral. (20)
- Ensure that collected data demonstrated that changes were not leading to the expected level of progress (21)
- Consider student for other district options when tiered-level interventions have been implemented and determined to be effective but are not producing the desired effect for identified student (22)
- Employ additional evaluative services to determine placement of student. More intensive, specialized services may be needed. (e.g., Section 504, special education, other district options) (23)

### Tier-3 Academic Strategies

Students who are not successful in Tier-2 and show little or no progress are provided more individualized intensive interventions at Tier-3, targeting the skill deficits for a longer time period than previously provided. Further assessments are used to refine and specifically define the skill deficit to be addressed. Individualized instruction is provided in addition to core instruction using a reduced teacher-student ratio of 1:2 or 1:1. Multiple interventions and services are delivered by skillfully trained staff and instructional time is increased.

- Administer diagnostics that link directly to actual or suspected deficit in content area (1)
- Meet daily to provide student with specific intensive instruction targeted to the skill deficit (2)
- Consult with and involve instructional specialists and document actions taken (3)
- Utilize mnemonic cues (e.g., songs, cartoons, rhymes, stories, images) for teaching math facts, vocabulary, or steps in a process (4)
- Build frequent opportunities for movement during instruction to address need of students who are kinesthetic learners (5)
- Provide clearly written directions and instructions in a step-by-step manner with illustrations and use as few words as possible (6)
- Differentiate instruction by using all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy to ask questions and plan learning activities (7)

- Provide varied texts and supplementary materials or resources at different levels of reading difficulty (8)
- Divide instruction into shortened segments and provide feedback to students before moving to the next segment (9)
- Break assignments into smaller chunks to give students opportunities to respond frequently (10)
- Adjust and extend time as needed (11)
- Use direct, systematic instruction (12)
- Use technological tools or computer software to allow students to access content in multiple ways (13)
- Use multi-sensory techniques to present information (14)
- Increase the use of visuals, charts, and models for concept reinforcement (15)
- Use graphic organizers to focus attentions on key elements, concepts, or ideas (16)
- Provide audiotapes of text or literature read (17)
- Increase the amount of practice opportunities using multiple modalities (18)
- Increase opportunities for students to respond in a variety of ways (e.g., questions, dry-erase boards, thumbs-up, graphic organizers) (19)
- Use frequent monitoring to assess the progress and non-progress made by students so instruction can be adjusted in a timely manner (20)
- Explain clearly each academic task and the specific criteria needed to successfully complete the task (21)
- Monitor student understanding continuously so misunderstandings can be clarified and corrected immediately (22)
- Reinforce conceptualization of steps using repetition in a variety of contexts where memory is required (e.g., oral, written, act it out) (23)
- Anchor new knowledge to previously learned knowledge (24)
- Provide a copy of the text with main ideas highlighted (25)
- Create and provide students an easy-to-follow visual that specifies problem-solving steps in a clear manner that students may reference as needed (26)
- Review and practice previously taught material continuously (27)
- Present new concepts using a logical instructional sequence that maximizes the likelihood a skill will be learned (e.g., model, guided practice, independent practice) (28)
- Increase modeling, guided practice, and hands-on learning to increase student participation (29)
- Integrate real-life experiences into instruction (30)
- Activate prior student knowledge by promoting a discussion that enables a student to make connections to learned information/experiences prior to the introduction of a lesson (31)
- Use a laser pointer, stick pointer, highlighter tape, or colored pens to focus on key information in the text (32)
- Frame projected information (e.g., use of hands, a drawn box, highlighter, pointer) when using an overhead or LCD projector (33)

- Avoid instructional lag time by preparing materials in advance (34)
- Use illustrations, diagrams, demonstrations, charts, and manipulatives to present instruction (35)
- Illustrate key points, no matter the level of artistic ability, to focus attention and help with retention of information (36)
- Pause during a lesson to allow students to repeat a word or phrase about the concept being taught (37)
- Use organizers to focus student attention and increase comprehension of concepts to be learned (38)
- Incorporate names of students when telling stories or presenting problems to capture student attention (39)
- Select high-interest material to introduce and teach a new concept (40)
- Make use of color in gaining attention of students (e.g., colored dry-erase pens on dry-erase boards, colored highlighting tape, colored Post-it notes) (41)
- Turn off room lighting and use a flashlight to highlight or draw the attention of students to key words/items (42)
- Have earphones/earplugs available for students who have auditory distractibility (43)
- Keep desktop and/or table top free of clutter to help students focus on instruction (44)
- Stop often to summarize key elements in a lesson (45)
- Provide access to a less distracting location for independent work (46)
- Allow students opportunities to move about the room during instruction when appropriate (47)
- Alternate between passive and active instructional activities (48)
- Pause during instruction to ask questions and check students' levels of understanding or any misunderstandings of content (49)
- Provide a different program that addresses a content area or special learning need to be used in place of an existing program or approach that has resulted in insufficient student progress (50)
- Use varied organizers for students to organize their thoughts and create clear, concise answers to questions (51)
- Read, stop, and reread to check accuracy and clarify meaning of text (52)
- Have students repeat aloud or write responses to clarify and/or document the spoken message (53)
- Use prior knowledge, text content, and reasoning to support interpretations and conclusions (54)

## Tier-3 Behavioral Strategies

Tier-3 behavioral strategies are provided to individual students who are not successful at tier-2. These interventions are intensive in nature, assessment-based, and address severe behavior problems. The RtI team collaborates to study these problem behaviors and determine the personnel necessary to provide support services. Schools need to carefully match services, time, and resources to a student's specific needs.

An in-depth analysis of progress monitoring data from Tiers 1 and 2 is considered before a student is recommended for Tier-3 interventions. A brief Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) may be administered, and/or a behavioral or mental health rating scale may be completed. If Tier-3 interventions are warranted, a Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP) based on the results of the assessment is developed. If a student continues to exhibit problem behaviors, a more formal FBA should be administered and a more detailed BIP developed.

- Increase supervision and monitoring (1)
- Provide individualized counseling (2)
- Provide individualized social skills instruction (3)
- Review and reinforce each expectation of desired behavior thoroughly: explain, model, demonstrate, role play, and practice (4)
- Give students a daily report card that identifies the school's social expectations and establishes clearly defined daily social skills goals (5)
- Rate behavior performance after major activities for elementary students and at the end of each period for secondary students (6)
- Have a mentor or coach meet at the beginning and end of the day with a student who is receiving interventions to review goals, monitor progress toward reaching those goals, and provide reinforcement and/or encouragement (7)
- Administer an FBA to determine events that predict and maintain problem behavior (8)
- Determine the root cause of the problem (e.g., hunger, illness, family, academic difficulty) (9)
- Determine if an element in the environment needs adjustment to avoid the display of inappropriate behavior by a student (10)
- Analyze and document an inappropriate situation to gather information on what might have triggered a student's misbehavior (11)
  - What was the behavior the student displayed?
  - What should the student have been doing at the time of the displayed behavior?
  - What occurred prior to the behavior?
  - When did the behavior occur (e.g., day, time of day; before, during or after a particular subject or activity)?
  - Is there an observable pattern among the gathered information
- Develop a BIP based on the results of assessments and data collected (12)
- Involve the student in developing a behavior plan that includes more intense techniques, is closely monitored, and is meaningful and motivating to the student (13)

- Have planned responses to avoid an emotional reaction (14)
  - Acknowledge student's feelings when upset (e.g., "I understand you are upset.")
  - Offer choices (e.g., "You have a choice. You may \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_.")
  - Use diffusing statements (e.g., "I can see you are angry. I need you to use words to solve the problem." "Throwing books won't make the problem go away. It only makes it worse." "Rest for a few minutes and then we will talk.")
  - Use "what" questions and avoid "why" questions (e.g., "What were you doing?" "What should you have been doing?" "What will you do differently?")
- Have defiant students maintain a daily log of successes and accomplishments to track improvement (15)
- Use additional data collection procedures when a student's behavior problems become more persistent and/or severe (16)
- Continue with strategies used in the general education setting, such as: (17)
  - Reinforce social skills goals in the classroom setting
  - Present materials at the student's independent level to reduce frustration
  - Assign short, manageable tasks
  - Model a firm, fair, and consistent approach when dealing with difficult behaviors
  - Refrain from engaging in an argument or power struggle with students
  - Refuse to threaten or plead with students

# Grouping for Instruction

Small-group teaching is optimal for active learning and is usually thought of as being more productive than whole-class discussion. Before learning can occur in any group, the teacher must build trusting relationships with the students.

Small groups are used to engage students in learning experiences, such as problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, and decision making. Students develop understanding of concepts and acquire or improve strategies for learning. Small-group instruction, if used effectively, increases higher-level learning and motivates students to learn.

## Role of Teacher/Group Leader

The leader is generally the teacher or the adult in charge of delivering the instruction and/or the intervention.

- Facilitate the participation of the group, promoting collaborative learning to enhance each individual student's learning (1)
- Define expectations for group work prior to grouping (2)
- Assume the roles of coach and facilitator (3)
- Be an attentive, active listener so that student comments are assessed for any misconceptions or errors (4)
- Use multiple techniques in group instruction to promote successful learning experiences for all students (5)

## Small Group Implementation

Small groups can be used at any tier of RtI. As a student advances through the tiers, the number of students in the small group is reduced and the length of time spent in small-group instruction is increased.

- Identify a purpose for the activity or a goal for learning to provide direction and focus for the students. (6)
- Use flexible grouping. Student groups can be a pair of students but are generally most effective when they are no larger than six students. Small-group instruction should be intermingled with independent work and whole-group instruction. (7)
- Provide sufficient time for presenting, discussing, and exploring concepts by taking into account such things as attentiveness of students or complexity of skills (8)
- Instruct in small segments and check frequently for understanding (9)
- Paraphrase or summarize major points often (10)
- Pause during instruction to question student's grasp of content or to allow a student to summarize the learning to a partner or to the group (11)
- Use guided instruction to coach and allow repeated skill-practice opportunities (12)

- Build practice in predicting relationships, determining similarities/differences, and making connections (13)

## Student Participation

**Know the students in order to facilitate active and successful participation in small groups.**

- Become familiar with the manner in which students respond in small groups (14)
- Prevent any one student from dominating a group activity (15)
- Identify which students are quiet and which students are more outspoken (16)

Quiet –

- Request that each student contribute
- Use questions that generate discussion
- Direct a question to each student
- Reduce group size

Outspoken –

- Redirect discussion to another
- Restate their comments
- Reduce the size of the group

## Questioning

**Skillful questioning is used to generate interest, clarify concepts, place emphasis on major points, reinforce understanding, and promote higher-order thinking in students.**

- Establish a risk-free, safe environment for asking and responding to questions (17)
- Vary the use of open-ended and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions are preferable and do not limit the discussion as there is not one expected answer. Closed-ended questions are useful when specific information is needed to move the group discussion forward. (18)
- Allow sufficient wait-time (19)
- Use questioning stems and prompts to probe and/or explore information from students (20)
- Refer to the section entitled *Questions* in the *Effective Instructional Practices* tab for additional suggestions (21)

## Wait-Time

**Differentiate wait-time to allow students sufficient time to process and formulate a response to a question before asking a student to respond.**

- Give students 3-5 seconds of wait-time (22)
- Allow more than 5 seconds when the question is above students' recall level (23)



- Provide a 40-60 second time period to process information for every 15-20 minutes of direct instruction (24)
- Allow extra time for the retrieval of words and/or thoughts for students with oral language difficulties (25)
- Provide additional time to process information for students whose primary language is not English (26)
- Allow additional wait-time for students from poverty (27)
- Increase wait-time for students with specific learning disabilities who may have difficulty locating and retrieving information from prior learning (28)

## Graphic Organizers

Graphic organizers can be used before, during, or after the group experience.

- Use organizers in advance to engage students in the learning and determine prior knowledge (29)
- Use organizers during the group session to develop or assess the skill and to determine if there are any misconceptions that would warrant reteaching (30)
- Complete organizers after the session to extend or assess learning (31)
- Use varied organizers to focus students on learning (32)
- Clarify thinking by using organizers to organize text and/or ideas (33)
- Arrange problems on an organizer to see patterns and relationships in learning (34)
- Use organizers as a planning tool (e.g., writing a story, product development) (35)

## Monitoring

The progress of each student in the group must be continually monitored to determine who might need additional assistance.

- Observe group dynamics and make changes as needed to facilitate the flow of learning (36)
- Check for understanding by listening actively to what students say and how they respond (37)
- Record the responses of students (e.g., keeping a chart, maintaining anecdotal records) (38)
- Script students' comments and questions to evaluate accuracy of conceptual understanding (39)
- Observe the level of functioning: Does the student depend on another student? Does the student appeal to the adult? Does the student work independently? (40)
- Stop frequently during instruction or discussion and invite students to process or summarize the skill being addressed (41)
- Administer brief probes targeting the skill (42)

## Feedback

Effective feedback must be provided to help students reach their maximum potential. Without feedback, mistakes might not be corrected, performance might not be reinforced, and students might perceive an inaccurate account of their performance.

- Give immediate feedback (43)
- Give positive reinforcement to increase productivity levels (44)
- Use non-judgmental feedback to help students measure their own skills and knowledge (45)
- Correct mistakes in learning by supplying students with specific feedback (46)
- Reinforce student performance by commenting specifically on the targeted skill (47)
- Give instructive and constructive feedback (48)
- Focus on the students, rather than what the teacher or leader knows. Small-group instruction assists students by direct involvement as opposed to delivery of information. (49)
- Build what students say into the discussion. If students respond incorrectly or inappropriately, help reframe their comments and ideas. If students respond accurately, extend or elaborate upon their comments and ideas. (50)

# Assessments

Assessments are critical to the success of RtI. The assessment process is used to gather information about students and make instructional changes. Changes in instruction can occur after the study of assessment data, such as an increase in instructional time, a change in the presentation strategy, a change in a teaching technique, and/or a change in the grouping format from small group to one-on-one. Three purposes are identified for assessments: (1) universal screening, (2) diagnostics, and (3) progress monitoring. The results of assessments are used to plan classroom instruction and/or interventions.

## Universal Screening

**Universal screenings are informal or formal assessments administered to all students to determine who may be identified as "at-risk" of falling below state or grade level standards.**

- Administer universal screening to all students at least three times per year to determine as early as possible which students are not progressing in the core curriculum at expected rates (1)
- Use probes or brief tests in core subject areas (2)
- Determine baseline scores in each subject area (3)
- Use formal or informal behavioral screenings to assess the degree to which student behavior reflects school-wide expectations (4)
- Determine criteria or establish a baseline score from which to identify students whose behaviors differ significantly from that of the peer group (5)
- Identify students whose scores on the screenings fall below an established baseline or the designed criteria to receive academic and/or behavioral interventions (6)
- Use the results of the screenings to establish a baseline from which to measure future progress (7)
- Generate results on an easy-to-read graph to establish a baseline and monitor growth (8)
- Answer these questions before interventions are implemented: "Is the core instruction working for most students? Do most students respond positively to the school-wide discipline plan? Can students perform or do they choose not to perform on the screenings? Which students need intervention?" (9)
- Determine the effectiveness of core instruction and the school-wide discipline plan by analyzing campus data. If 80-90% of the students are not meeting academic and behavioral standards, a problem likely exists in core instruction or with the school-wide discipline plan. Changes or revisions need to be considered and implemented by the campus. (10)

## Diagnostics

**Diagnostics are assessments that help teachers plan instruction by providing specific or in-depth information about targeted skills or instructional needs of students. These assessments determine what students can and/or cannot do successfully in academic and/or behavioral areas.**

- Administer diagnostic assessments to students who are identified “at-risk” based on universal screenings (11)
- Identify the specific skill areas in academic and/or behavioral domains that show strengths and deficits of students using diagnostics (12)
- Provide interventions to target the skill(s) that portray(s) a deficit (13)
- Use diagnostic data to determine the areas of highest instructional needs of the students and to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions (14)

## Progress Monitoring

**Progress monitoring is a scientifically research-based practice that shows data about student growth over time in the core curriculum and determines the effectiveness of instruction and/or interventions.**

- Use progress monitoring to: (15)
  - Become more effective in making timely instructional decisions and in communicating the results of student progress more clearly
  - Make informed instructional decisions and to quantify a student’s rate of progress
  - Measure the success of interventions, how the student responded to instruction, and if instructional changes are needed
  - Provide a picture of the student’s performance and state of growth that is used to make informal instructional and curricular changes so that every student reaches proficiency of targeted skills
- Administer short assessments (typically one to five minutes) to monitor student performance on a frequent basis (16)
- Collect and analyze data to determine the effectiveness of interventions, to make changes as needed, and to support decisions about moving students from tier to tier (17)
- Gather information to determine the responsiveness of the student to the intervention (18)
- Determine the type and amount of instruction/intervention a student needs through the use of student data (19)
- Use data from progress monitoring to determine: (20)
  - What each student needs in order to learn
  - Whether or not academic and/or behavioral interventions are producing the desired effect
  - When a student’s response in an upper tier is sufficient to permit successful re-entry to a lower tier
- Implement progress monitoring with an entire classroom or with individual students (21)

## Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM)

**Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) is a method of progress monitoring through direct assessment of academic skills and/or behavior.**

- Use CBM as a method of progress monitoring because it is brief, easy to administer and score, and a good predictor of student ability (22)
- Utilize CBM to repeatedly assess specific skills and/or behaviors over time (23)
- Administer CBM probes in reading, writing, and/or math to identify students who show non-mastery of basic skills (24)
- Compare a student's proficiency with class norms (25)
- Make decisions about interventions, student performance, and instructional needs based on CBM data (26)
- Use data to determine if one or more instructional changes are warranted (27)
- Ensure the data is charted, followed, and compared to baseline data to measure the success toward indentified goals (28)
- Use graphed data to see quickly how a student's performance compares to expectations (29)
- Use CBM data to: (30)
  - Assess student response to core instruction and identify students who require more intensive intervention at Tier-1
  - Determine whether sufficient response occurred during supplemental instruction at Tier-2
  - Help develop individualized, more intensive interventions at Tier-3
- Analyze data to determine if a positive or negative response exists and whether a more intensive form of intervention is required (31)

## Classroom Assessment Strategies

Assessment is a method, or a set of techniques, procedures, and items, used to measure performance on the part of a student. Assessment provides the information from which an evaluation is formed to effectively determine the student's level of competency in any given area. Assessment occurs before, during, and after instruction takes place using multiple measures to determine a comprehensive view of a student's proficiency. Multiple research-based strategies are listed to make judgments or draw inferences about a student's progress or educational needs.

- Allow for multiple quick-check response techniques (e.g., tell your partner, individual dry-erase boards, thumbs-up/ thumbs down, non-verbal signals) (32)
- Use Pair-Share to allow students to summarize what they learned (33)
- Use a variety of informal, formal, and authentic assessments (34)
- Vary the type of written test items (e.g., multiple choice, short-answer response, extended-answer response) (35)
- Use frequent checks for understanding to correct or clarify and misunderstandings (36)
- Check for understanding by listening closely to what students say (37)
- Chart student responses during group discussions (38)
- Hold individual conferences with students to determine what they understand (39)
- Keep anecdotal records by recording notes about individual reactions and student interactions with peers (40)
- Examine student-written responses to determine whether or not students are making connections (41)
- Script student's comments and questions to determine if student is using strategies independently and correctly (42)
- Evaluate the thinking process and product by asking student to articulate, orally or in writing, how they solved a problem (43)
- Use a KWL chart to determine what students know and what they have learned (44)
- Use performance-based tasks and/or activities (e.g., oral presentation, role-playing, paraphrasing, summarizing, retelling, problem-solving situation) (45)
- Use rubrics and/or checklists when evaluating student products (46)
- Utilize illustrations and oral/ written explanations to demonstrate content knowledge and understanding (47)
- Use probing questions to stimulate curiosity and to determine the depth of knowledge of what is being learned (48)
- Use open-ended questions that encourage elaboration and have more than one possible answer (49)
- Ask questions that generate a variety of solutions and stimulate creative thinking (50)
- Use open-book or open-note tests (51)
- Provide study questions, study sheets, or opportunities to study with a partner prior to formal testing (52)

- Use graphic organizers to display conceptual understanding (e.g., comparison charts, cause and effect organizers, flowcharts) (53)
- Use book-response journals for students to record short or extended written reactions to what they have read and follow-up with conferences (54)
- Allow students to demonstrate learning through art, drama, movement, and/or music (55)
- Provide equitable opportunities for students to participate in discussions to determine the level of comprehension of a topic (56)
- Implement portfolios gradually to compare a student's work to his/her previous work to determine growth over time (57)
- Build time within the class schedule to involve students in the portfolio process (58)
- Have students share "I learned..." statements orally or use a learning log during and at the conclusion of a unit of study (59)
- Use an interview to determine the student's depth of understanding rather than whether or not the student can provide the correct answer (60)
- Use investigations to assess students' knowledge of procedures and use the results to determine what has been learned (e.g., diagrams, graphs, tables, experiments) (61)

# Learning Styles

Learning styles define how brains learn and store information. All students can be successful when instruction and/or interventions reflect a variety of learning styles. Research indicates that instructional strategies serve as effective teaching strategies when students' strengths are utilized to address targeted deficit areas.

Information presented in classrooms is not always conducive to the learning styles of all students. No single approach will be equally effective for every student. Students respond most effectively to new or difficult information by using their natural learning styles to process the information.

Identification of learning modalities is essential to the presentation of effective instruction and/or interventions. Some learners are visual; others are auditory; and other learners favor tactile, kinesthetic channels of learning. The following strategies provide teachers with multiple suggestions on how to address the varying needs of students.

## Visual Learners

Visual learners learn best by using their eyes to see information. Seeing words or numbers written in text form helps them learn. Visual learners learn more easily when graphics and/or pictures are used, when they are given opportunities to observe real-life objects or events, or when instruction incorporates visual aids. These learners like to see who is talking. Visual learners use the body language and facial expression of the speaker to understand the information being presented or discussed.

- Support text information with pictures, graphics, and written key words (1)
- Use demonstrations, modeling, charts, and graphic organizers to introduce, develop, and extend information (2)
- Secure student attention by using visual aids (3)
- Use illustrated text or textbooks, videos, or overhead transparencies (4)
- Emphasize key points using highlighters, highlighter tape, or color coding (5)
- Utilize tangible models/teaching aides/diagrams when teaching abstract concepts (6)
- Present new information using outlines, advance organizers, and notes (7)
- Use bulleted information in handouts, lectures, and displayed written texts (8)
- Deliver instruction using visual technological resources (9)
- Review videotapes or other media related to content being studied (10)



- Review illustrations, photographs, diagrams, or charts in the text of handouts or within a textbook or magazine article (11)
- Use guided imagery and/or visual analogies to emphasize and associate content (12)
- Encourage students to make flashcards to help increase comprehension (13)
- Present oral information through the use of visual clues and memory strategies (14)
- Encourage the use of an assignment log (15)
- Provide step-by-step written directions/instructions and/or explanations (16)
- Offer seating where students can view the speaker rather than having an obstructed view (17)
- Use non-verbal cues to draw attention to a concept being taught (18)
- Allow the option of taking notes during direct oral instruction (19)
- Teach a system for organization of notes to help recall information heard (20)
- Be aware that body language can help or distract a visual learner (21)
- Offer choices in student products (e.g., maps, graphs, cartoons, illustrations, diagrams, models, computer-generated materials) (22)

## Auditory Learners

**Auditory learners learn best by listening and talking. They use their sense of hearing to process information. They learn when information is presented orally, and when they are allowed to discuss and ask questions. Auditory learners like to talk things through and listen to the viewpoints of others. They make meaning of speech by listening to voice tone, speed, and pitch. Written information may have little meaning to auditory learners until they hear the information.**

- Verbalize steps needed to solve problems (23)
- Present new information using an oral delivery method and stand where all can see the speaker (24)
- Use hand motions or gestures when giving explanations (25)
- Substitute oral reports in place of written reports (26)
- Use brainstorming, cooperative learning, and listening opportunities (27)
- Encourage students to read text aloud quietly or talk to a partner or an adult to process information (28)
- Have students verbalize directions or summarize learning to a study partner (29)
- Allow students to talk through a task orally (30)

- Involve students in discussions and group collaboration (31)
- Invite students to lead a group discussion (32)
- Teach concepts and support mastery of skills with jingles, raps, songs, cheers, chants, poetry, and mnemonic devices (33)
- Allow students to create zany songs or poems that summarize key points of subject matter (34)
- Administer an oral test, in lieu of a written test (35)
- Use a variety of reading intervention formats (e.g., taped reading, books or text on tape, oral reading, choral reading, duet reading, echo reading) (36)
- Review material using oral activities in study groups or with a partner before independent work (37)
- Offer choices in student products (e.g., taped reports, debates, panel discussions, oral presentations, games, interviews) (38)
- Involve music and sound effects to increase learning of information (39)

## Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners

**Tactile/Kinesthetic learners learn best when they are active. They concentrate when they are doing something so they like movement. Sitting for long periods of time makes learning difficult and organization is not easy for them. These learners prefer opportunities for practicing or doing what they are learning. Tactile/Kinesthetic learners like to work with their hands rather than merely reading, writing, or listening to information.**

- Engage students in hands-on learning experiences (40)
- Allow students to move around while learning (41)
- Alternate between passive and active activities (42)
- Design seat work that involves a minimal time period and gradually lengthen assignments (43)
- Divide complex instructions into shorter segments for presentation (44)
- Reduce the work task into parts (45)
- Use manipulatives or concrete objects, role playing, games, and simulations to develop conceptual understanding (46)
- Present instructions prior to passing out materials (47)

- Remove distractible items from the student's work surface (48)
- Design instructional opportunities that use movement and rhythm to extend or reinforce learning (49)
- Show students how to use rhythm (beats) to memorize or explain information (50)
- Create and use student responses involving hand motions, clapping hands, tapping feet, or snapping fingers (51)
- Provide time for students to use a computer to reinforce their learning by using the sense of touch (52)
- Design models that demonstrate main concepts or ideas (53)
- Have students make flashcards for each step in a procedure and practice placing cards in order until the sequence becomes automatic (54)
- Listen to previously recorded instruction or discussions to review and reinforce learning (55)
- Allow students to use movement, writing, or dance to present learned information (56)
- Incorporate "act it out" opportunities for students (57)
- Encourage the use of a ruler, marker, index card, or other tracker to maintain the place in reading text or to assist in task completion (58)
- Use concrete objects to develop mathematics concepts (59)
- Use magnetic letters or writing in sand or on sandpaper to practice spelling (60)
- Use maps, globes, and puzzles to study social studies and geography (61)
- Provide students with something they can squeeze (e.g., stress ball) or rub (e.g., sandpaper) while they study or listen to oral presentations (62)
- Offer choices in student products (e.g., role-playing, drawings, models, creative dramatics, experiments, demonstrations, games, projects) (63)

## Learning Environment

Individual students have preferred way to process and organize information. Students also have different ways in which they respond to things around them. Teachers can capitalize on student preferences by varying teaching techniques and arranging classrooms accordingly. Research suggests that teachers who have the insight to adapt instruction to meet learning needs favorably affect the learning process. Teachers need to consider the following points when designing learning experiences or interventions.

- Determine students who prefer a brightly lit area and those who prefer low-level lighting (64)
- Find which students prefer a cool learning environment and those who prefer a warmer surrounding (65)
- Identify students who prefer a quieter, informal classroom and those who prefer more verbal interaction (66)
- Know your students as learners. Students who are self-directed can handle long-term assignments, monitor, and pace themselves. (67)

For struggling learners:

- Provide additional support by dividing a lesson into smaller segments and checking for meaning along the way
- Present assignments in smaller chunks with periodic due dates
- Allow physical movement to accommodate the time students learn best
- Exhibit teacher enthusiasm (e.g., presentation tone, facial expressions, gestures, acceptance of student participation) to increase student attentiveness (68)
- Use teacher behaviors that promote student achievement (e.g., inform students of goals of lesson, give steps in a sequenced manner, provide time for processing information or practicing skills, highlight key points in a lesson, use examples, review material ) (69)
- Recognize that some learning tasks might require a learning modality that is not the preferred style of learning for the student (70)

## Effective Instructional Practices

Effective instructional practices are strategies that research has shown improve teaching and learning. Teachers can increase the learning potential of students with research-based practices. These practices demonstrate the power of individual teachers to improve learning results.

### Feedback

Feedback is important to the total learning process and should be used as part of a teaching strategy to improve instruction. Communication to students must be carefully and systematically applied by clearly specifying the action or skill being reinforced. Feedback techniques for students focus on praise, results of assigned tasks, and grades.

- Use words specific to the task at hand to praise students rather than global comments like “good job” or “way to go” (1)
- Provide direct and specific information to help students see and learn how to correct errors (2)

- Provide prompt or timely feedback to strengthen a student's corrective action and to affirm efforts (3)
- Return papers, activity sheets, and tests promptly, and personalize with written comments about strengths and weaknesses (4)
- Follow an explanation of how a student can improve his/her learning with multiple practice opportunities (5)
- Invite students to monitor and provide feedback to other students (6)
- Engage students in reviewing their own academic/behavioral performances (7)
- Supply students with rubrics in advance of an activity so students can adjust and improve learning as they work (8)
- Refrain from using grades as the only source of feedback; instead focus on praise and results of the tasks at hand (9)

## Games and Simulations

Games and simulations are useful teaching tools that provide a variety of learning opportunities in the classroom. Educational games involve students in decision-making roles in which they strive for objective and follow rules. Simulations present situations or events that represent reality. Students assume roles and there are specific activities to role play. Both activities create student interest and alleviate tension in curriculum areas that prove difficult for some learners. Students find these learning experiences a fun way to learn.

- Deepen learning and sustain understanding through games and simulations (10)
- Target specific content and set a specific purpose (11)
- Use simulations to model real-life experiences (12)
- Reinforce tutoring, exploration, and practice through games (13)
- Engage students in role playing to work collaboratively and practice interpersonal skills (14)
- Develop cooperation, teamwork, and conflict resolution through games (15)
- Promote a high level of involvement, curiosity, and interest in learning concepts through interrelated games and simulations (16)

## Cooperative Grouping

Cooperative grouping involves the use of small groups in which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. This technique is especially helpful for students who are more dependent and prefer not to work alone. When cooperative grouping is used, students learn to take risks and are praised for their efforts and/or contributions.

- Group students in small, heterogeneous learning groups a minimum of once a week (17)
- Utilize base groups (up to 6 students) to provide social and interpersonal support (18)

- Organize students in formal learning groups (up to 4 students) when time and effort are emphasized (19)
- Refrain from overusing cooperative learning groups for all instructional experiences to allow for other groupings (e.g., individual, partner, Pair-Share) (20)
- Use a variety of strategies for determining group members (21)
- Model and teach interpersonal and interdependence skills prior to group work (e.g., expectations for success, collaboration rubric, decision making, time management, conflict resolution) (22)
- Practice, monitor, and adjust cooperative learning groups (23)

## Homework and Practice

Homework and practice are effective instructional strategies that can be integrated into instruction and school-based interventions. They can increase a student's active involvement and improve student performance. Varied feedback is essential to both homework and practice. The purpose of homework should be clearly identified and should accent something a student has learned. Practice is the application of new learning. Mastering a skill takes focused practice, so practice should target specific elements of a skill or a process. Research shows that homework and practice should be used as well-planned strategies for increasing student understanding.

- Provide and explain homework policies that communicate expectations, consequences, guideline, and brief pointers (24)
- Match practice tasks to students' skills (instructional level), focusing on fewer skills at a time on a deeper level (25)
- Break down complex skills into shorter segments and allow repeated practice (26)
- Improve mastery through focused practice over time (e.g., days, weeks) (27)
- Be sensitive to differences in how students learn and coach and guide students until they learn to apply the skill comfortably (28)
- Provide feedback on any homework/practice work with instructive, embedded comments (29)
- Offer appropriate feedback to correct any misunderstandings or errors in thinking (30)
- Give constructive feedback within hours (no more than a day) after a completed assignment/task (31)
- Use planners, assignment notebooks, or journals to organize assignments and provide a support structure (32)
- Use parent involvement to facilitate the completion of an assignment, rather than the parent completing the assignment (33)

## Questions

**Effective questions are an integral part of quality instruction. Students should be challenged to think critically, creatively, and make discoveries. Many different forms of questions assess students' comprehension and promote understanding. Appropriately posed questions help students think and reflect about learning.**

- Allow 3-5 seconds wait-time after asking a question and before calling on a student; allow all students time to process the question and generate responses (34)
- Use questions before, during, and after a learning experience (35)
  - Before – to determine what students know
  - During – to determine and correct any misunderstandings
  - After – to determine what students learned
- Ask higher-level thought questions to increase retention/comprehension (36)
- Use questions that link ideas and questions that probe for information (37)
- Model how to ask quality questions by using lower-level questions to build a knowledge base and then extend concept development with higher-level questions (38)
- Increase student responsibility of asking questions to promote processing of information (39)
- Use open-ended questions that encourage elaboration and have more than one possible answer (40)
- Mix higher-level and lower-level questions to keep students engaged (41)
- Form questions that use the vocabulary and knowledge level of the student or group of students (42)
- Avoid asking leading questions that prevent reflective or creative thinking (43)
- Use clear, concise questions with a single focus to promote understanding and prevent confusion (44)

## Graphic Organizers

**Graphic organizers are visual representations of concepts, ideas, or knowledge. The use of organizers helps students think about information, demonstrate their learning, review concepts, and make connections. Students can work as a class, in small groups, or individually when using organizers.**

- Model cognitive processing by “thinking out loud” when demonstrating the use of an organizer (45)
- Record students' prior knowledge on a graphic organizer to determine gaps in learning (46)
- Assess students' learning during or after the lesson to determine the depth of understanding or the connections made (47)
- Allow student to work individually or in small groups to demonstrate grasp of sequence and interrelationships of parts (48)
- Help students prepare for and visualize future learning with advance organizers (49)
- Provide an overview of the lesson in a condensed and organized form (50)

- Present information in multiple ways (e.g., graphically, written, verbally) (51)
- Focus students on what they are about to learn using graphic organizers (52)
- Use organizers to organize, illustrate, and interpret abstract concepts (53)
- Use visual aids (e.g., Venn diagrams, story webs, T-charts, KWL charts) to organize information in an orderly manner (54)
- Build practice in predicting relationships, determining similarities/differences, and making concept connections (55)

## Guidelines for Teaching Skills

Planning for and teaching a skill involves a carefully thought-out procedure and a structured process. The purpose is to teach a skill and have students learn and use the skill with ease and confidence. Teaching is not about telling, but it is about helping students learn. The following steps offer an approach for skills instruction.

- Engage the students by peaking their interest (56)
- Briefly explain the skill and create an appreciation of value of learning the skill (57)
- Break the skill into smaller, simpler steps (58)
- Demonstrate or model the skill slowly and clearly to help students gain confidence in their ability to acquire the skill (59)
- Allow students to practice the skill, offering coaching and guidance to help them become ready to use this skill in actual situations (60)
- Provide positive feedback and reinforcement to help students feel successful about the learning and about themselves (61)
- Correct any misunderstandings immediately and tactfully (62)
- Combine the steps so that the entire skill is developed to the desired proficiency level (63)

## Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is used to meet the needs of individual learners, provide them with the appropriate level of challenge, and give them the necessary support for the attainment of learning goals. Research supports being responsive to each learner rather than teaching the same way to all learners.

A differentiated classroom provides varied experiences in what students need to learn (content), how students learn (process), and/or how students demonstrate what they have learned (product). Differentiation strategies should be selected pending the curriculum taught and the needs of students. Differentiation can also occur by adjusting the learning environment.



Differentiated instruction is a way to approach teaching and learning by varying and adapting instruction to meet the diverse needs of students in the same classroom. Rather than students changing themselves to fit the curriculum, instructional approaches and the presentation of content are adjusted. Teachers employ a wide range of instructional strategies, use varied rates of instruction, vary levels of complexity, and use time flexibly.

Evidence shows that successful students are taught in ways that are responsive to their varied readiness levels, interests, and learning styles. The following are suggestions for how to differentiate instruction in order to optimize the growth and success of each individual student.

## Content

**What students need to learn or how students access information.**

- Assess needs of students by using diagnostic assessments to determine readiness levels in order to match skills appropriately to the students (1)
- Tier assignments to match student needs based on their readiness (2)
- Compact content by eliminating teaching or student practice if content or skill has been previously mastered (3)
- Give an interest inventory to determine topics that motivate or interest students (4)
- Engage students in setting personal learning goals (5)
- Use learning contracts to help students realize they are responsible for their learning (6)
- Work with students to plan a method of investigating a topic of interest and decide upon the outcome or the independent study (7)
- Provide opportunities for student choice in enrichment or accelerated study of a topic (8)
- Use multiple learning styles to present content or skills (9)
- Design meaningful activities for students to work on independently at the beginning of class or when students have completed assignments (10)
- Encourage and allow students to undertake projects that interest them as part of regular classroom work (11)
- Provide independent research projects for students who are ready for that level of challenge (12)
- Promote content integration where students connect prior knowledge to newly learned information (13)
- Select materials and tasks that are at the appropriate level of difficulty and relate to student interests (14)
- Provide opportunities for students to define their own learning goals and evaluate their achievement (15)
- Build a knowledge base of key concepts (16)
- Use a variety of assessments to determine a student's ability or readiness. A student may need necessary prerequisite skills to be successful. (17)

- Adjust the activities for student groups by level of complexity, use small-group direct instruction, and arrange the content from simple to complex or tier the instruction so that struggling learners can benefit (18)
- Break the content into smaller chunks of learning, offering multiple steps and extended time to build conceptual understanding (19)
- Accommodate differences in ability and/or readiness by varying the levels of questions (20)
- Employ multiple and varied resources (human and material) to present and supplement content (21)
- Offer multiple options to students so they can internalize content (22)
- Use advance organizers and varied graphic organizers to present content and promote comprehension (23)
- Use a variety of books, instructional materials, and other resource materials that reflect different levels of complexity and different learning modalities (24)
- Offer relevant options to extend learning for students who need additional challenges (25)

## Process

### How students learn

- Determine the learning style preferences of individual students (26)
- Provide opportunities for students to build upon their preferred learning styles (27)
- Use multiple learning styles to help students learn skills or content (28)
- Provide students with choices in the different ways to access the material to be learned (e.g., learning station, computer) (29)
- Use a variety of teaching strategies and grouping formats (e.g., whole group, quads, triads, pairs, and individual) (30)
- Provide flexibility in grouping and regrouping students (31)
- Engage students in varied opportunities of working with other students who are similar and dissimilar in interests, styles of learning, and readiness levels (32)
- Allow students to work in groups assigned by the teacher, groups chosen at random, and groups chosen by the students (33)
- Provide precise guidelines for groupwork. Guidelines are taught prior to the groupwork and are consistently reinforced. (34)
- Support group efforts by modeling and practicing how to mediate conflicts within a group (35)
- Teach a variety of time management skills so students manage time effectively (36)
- Ensure that all students find a way to contribute to the success of the group (37)
- Reinforce skills of notetaking, summarizing, research strategies, and collaboration (38)
- Engage students in hands-on critical and creative thinking to promote active learning (39)
- Vary the types and/or complexity of questions asked (40)
- Use open-ended questions and learning experiences (41)

- Prompt high-level thinking and responses for all students (42)
- Use wait-time before allowing students to respond to a question (43)
- Allow additional time for ELL or struggling students to process information and to respond to questions (44)
- Encourage multiple responses for a question (45)
- Encourage students to build upon the responses given by themselves and other students (46)
- Allow students think-time or an opportunity to talk to a partner prior to responding or writing down a response (47)
- Ask students to rank the list of responses, based on effectiveness or other criteria (48)
- Use technology as a viable means to support classroom experiences and to address multiple learning needs (49)
- Use time lines to help students remain on target and prevent procrastination (50)
- Use mini-lessons and different levels of scaffolding as needed (51)
- Provide repetition and guided practice paced at a rate that matches students' needs (52)
- Accelerate the learning pace by using monitoring data to guide appropriate instruction. Adjust activities so students who experience difficulties move at an appropriate pace to achieve success. (53)
- Determine the appropriateness of time for students to complete learning experiences, as some students need more time and others need less time (54)
- Reteach a skill in small group sessions to struggling learners (55)
- Present opportunities for choices in activities (56)

## Product

### How students demonstrate what they learn

- Apply the results of inventories that measure students' learning styles and interests to allow varied opportunities for students to demonstrate learning (57)
- Use multiple learning styles to allow students to show what they have learned (58)
- Give students a choice of products to demonstrate learning (59)
- Have students keep a log or journal to document the process of a project (60)
- Require students to explain or give evidence why responses are correct or incorrect (61)
- Vary assessment strategies for students to demonstrate what they have learned, to guide instructional decisions, and to focus on learning goals of the students (62)
- Involve students in self-assessment and reflective thinking about their growth in learning (63)

- Teach students to self-evaluate their learning so they recognize when they are experiencing difficulty or success (64)
- Have students evaluate if they are performing their personal best (65)
- Establish and communicate clear criteria for success to the students in advance of any project, product, or learning experience (e.g., rubric, checklist) (66)
- Use varied rubrics (e.g., analytical, regular) to provide different opportunities for students to know the criteria for success (67)
- Have students choose from multiple types of student products that reflect a range of learning styles (e.g., skit, book response, debate, panel discussion, advertisement, song) (68)
- Encourage students to create their own product assignments to show what they have learned or to extend their learning (69)
- Incorporate different homework options, questions, and journal prompts to measure and/or practice student understanding (70)

## Learning Environment

### How the classroom works to facilitate teaching and learning

- Vary the classroom areas available for learning (e.g., quiet places, open spaces to move around, areas for collaboration) (71)
- Explain to students the need for some to have different ways to learn or different levels of support (e.g., the need for active learning, a quiet place to learn, working with a partner) (72)
- Establish clear guidelines for working individually, in pairs, and in small groups (73)
- Develop students' capacity to take control of and responsibility for their own learning (74)
- Cultivate a climate where students feel secure, where errors can be instructive, and where tension is minimized or eliminated (75)
- Help students believe they can be better than they are (76)
- Accept that students are alike and different from each other (77)
- Help students understand themselves and their preferences for learning (78)
- Use the strengths of students to plan and provide appropriate instruction/interventions (79)
- Show acceptance of all students as individuals by appreciating and valuing each student (80)
- Monitor the growth of students, providing guidance and discipline in response to individual needs (81)
- Provide materials that are inclusive of different cultural perspectives (82)
- Teach for success and student independence (e.g., rubrics, time lines, varied grouping formats, multiple resources, human instructional support, small-group reteaching, scaffolded instruction) (83)