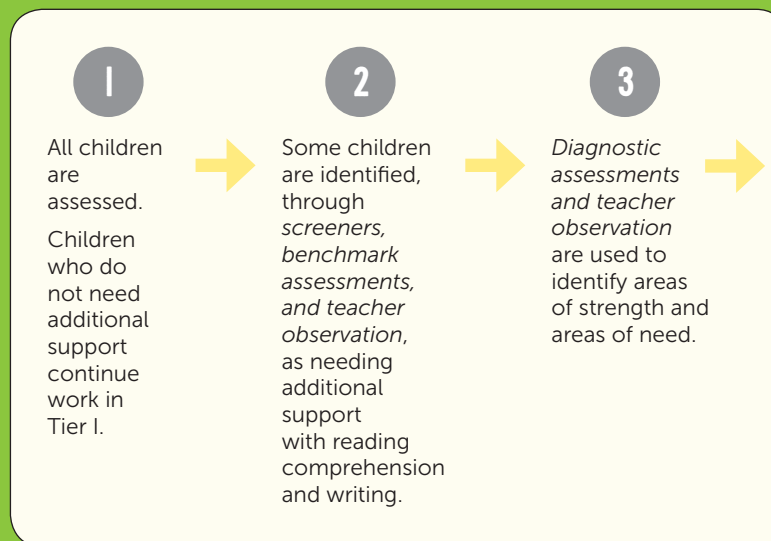


# DIFFERENTIATED LITERACY INSTRUCTION

*Kindergarten to Grade 3*

## TIER I ALL CHILDREN RECEIVE TIER I INSTRUCTION

High quality, **research-supported instruction** enables most children to meet grade-level expectations for reading comprehension and writing. This instruction includes **differentiated** small-group instruction. *Embedded formative assessment* is used regularly.



**100 PERCENT OF CHILDREN RECEIVE TIER I INSTRUCTION**

**80-85 PERCENT RECEIVE ONLY TIER I INSTRUCTION**

## TIER II

These children receive *additional*, targeted **research-supported instruction**, with *embedded formative assessment*, to improve reading comprehension and writing. This instruction does not occur during core literacy, science, or social studies instruction, nor during specials or recess.

Children's progress is monitored using assessments and teacher observation and decisions are made accordingly:

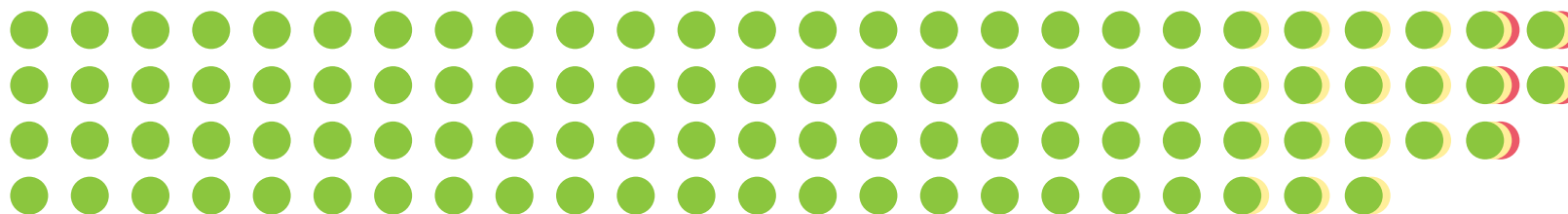
- a discontinue *additional* support
- b continue *additional* support
- c shift *additional* support

**10-15 PERCENT**

## TIER III

- d provide *additional research-supported instruction*

**5 PERCENT**



# TIER I

Tier I provides high-quality, research-supported literacy instruction for all children. Instruction is differentiated at Tier I. For example, small groups are formed based on, and instruction is targeted to, children's observed and assessed strengths and needs in specific aspects of literacy development.

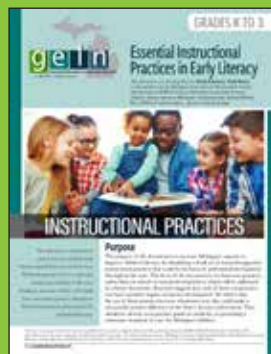
The most powerful influence on the effectiveness of tier I literacy instruction appears to be specific teacher practices. There are many sources for research-supported literacy instructional practices, such as:

What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guides  
<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc>



The Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators General Education Leadership Network Early Literacy Task Force's *Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: K to 3*, which identifies ten literacy instructional practices that we believe should be in every K to 3 classroom.

Migeln.org



In addition to using specific literacy instructional practices, effective literacy teachers engage in broader pedagogical practices. For example, one review found that, among other things:

- **Effective teachers are responsive.** They are mindful of students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, their prior experiences within the classroom, their interests, and their individual needs, and they design instruction accordingly.
- **Effective teachers teach for equity.** They vary instruction based on individual students' needs to achieve success for each student. In contrast to much of what has been documented as typical in past research, they provide high-quality, higher order instruction to all students, even those who are the lowest achieving.
- **Effective teachers focus on higher order thinking.** Teachers more often engage students in metacognitive and higher level thinking through the tasks they offer, the questions they ask, and the discussions they lead. These teachers focus on meaning, even when the instructional targets are lower level knowledge and skills.
- **Effective teachers teach for depth.** Observations documented effective teachers teaching for precise word choice, teaching a unit with complex content related to equality and inequality, and providing opportunities for students to write not just to complete an assignment but, also to communicate with audiences beyond the teacher.
- **Effective teachers coach.** Rather than teaching a skill and then sending students off to use it, effective teachers remain present as a 'guide on the side' during the early stages of students' application, providing crucial prompting and other supports to scaffold students to independence.
- **Effective teachers create opportunities for students to collaborate.** From partner reading to discussions to group writing projects, effective teachers foster an environment of cooperation and collaboration among students.
- **Effective teachers offer choice and control.** Although they establish themselves as the authority in the classroom, teachers also provide ways in which students can exercise their own control and choices in daily life in the classroom.
- **Effective teachers are purposeful.** They explicitly communicate clear purposes for instruction to their students and/or communicate these purposes tacitly by linking discrete instruction in skills and strategies to reading and writing connected texts.
- **Effective teachers foster success.** Effective teachers convey clear expectations for what constitutes success, extensively model success (e.g., successful application of a particular strategy), and employ scaffolding to support students' own engagement and success with instructional tasks.
- **Effective teachers emphasize effort.** They convey a sense that all students are capable as learners when effort is put forth, and they attribute students' success to their effort as well as their ability.
- **Effective teachers are positive.** Enthusiasm, curiosity, praise, and encouragement are common in the classrooms of effective teachers.
- **Effective teachers carefully construct the classroom environment.** Whether displaying motivational messages, incorporating examples of students' writing into the classroom, or posting guidance on classroom routines, effective teachers are thoughtful in how they construct the classroom environment.
- **Effective teachers promote self-regulation.** Their teaching is designed to move students to independence, whether in their engagement in classroom routines, their application of a particular strategy in reading, or their ability to reflect on specific characteristics of their writing.
- **Effective teachers don't waste time.** Their teaching is characterized by a brisk pace of instruction and clear routines—thoroughly taught—participation structures, and engagement supports that maximize on-task behavior.
- **Effective teachers connect with students' homes.** They do this both through responsive teaching within the classroom (see also, the first characteristic) and through many mechanisms of interacting directly with family members who are important in each student's life.
- **Effective teachers "orchestrate"** (Turner, 2005, p. 30). Rather than appearing as a disjointed set of promising practices, effective teachers appear to seamlessly integrate a wide range of practices including motivational, managerial, curricular, environmental, and instructional, as they engage in literacy instruction.

*Excerpted from pages 41–42 of Duke, N. K., Cervetti, G. N., & Wise, C. N. (2016). The teacher and the classroom. Journal of Education, 196, 35–43.*

## TIER II & TIER III

For his/her grade level:

Regardless of intervention, children's engagement is a top priority, instruction is responsive, and the child has considerable time to apply what is being learned during actual reading and writing.

The child has needs across many aspects of literacy.



This child needs a relatively broad **research-supported instruction** that has been shown to improve **reading comprehension**, such as:

- Reading Recovery® (grade 1)\*
- Interactive Strategies Approach (grade K–1) (e.g., Scanlon, Vellutino, Small, Fanuele, & Sweeney, 2005)†
- Early Intervention in Reading® (tested in grade 1, available K–5)\*
- Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition® (CIRC®) (tested in grades 2–3 (bilingual version) and 3–4 (monolingual version))\*
- Instruction delivered by a teacher with extensive professional development in early literacy education using research-supported instructional practices.†

The child is relatively strong in academic vocabulary, background knowledge, and tools for constructing meaning but struggles with reading words.



This child needs **research-supported instruction** that focuses on phonological processing, phonics or orthographic knowledge, word reading strategies, and spelling strategies (to varying degrees depending on relative strengths and weaknesses in each of these areas) and that has been shown to improve **reading comprehension**, such as:

- Lexia Reading® (tested in grade K for comprehension effects)\*
- Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing® (grades 1–4)\*
- Instruction delivered by a teacher with extensive professional development in early literacy education using research-supported instructional practices, such as Word Ladders (McCandliss, Beck, Sandak, & Perfetti, 2003).†

The child has relatively strong word-reading skills but struggles with constructing meaning.



This child needs **research-supported instruction** that focuses directly on **reading comprehension** skills and strategies that has been shown to improve reading comprehension, such as:

- Graphophonological semantic cognitive flexibility training (e.g., Cartwright, Coppage, Lane, Singleton, Marshall, & Bentivegna, 2016)†
- Text structure instruction (e.g., Williams, Pollini, Nubla-Kung, Snyder, Garcia, Ordynans, & Atkins, 2014)†
- Instruction delivered by a teacher with extensive professional development in early literacy education using research-supported instructional practices, such as Transactional Strategies Instruction (e.g., Brown, Pressley, Van Meter, & Schuder, 1996).†

The child is relatively strong in reading words and tools for constructing meaning but lacks academic vocabulary and background knowledge.



This child needs **research-supported instruction** that focuses on vocabulary and/or knowledge building with the goal of improving **listening or reading comprehension**, such as:

- PAVED for Success (K-PAVE) (Goodson, Wolf, Bell, Turner, & Finney, 2010)
- The Content Area Literacy Instruction (CALI) intervention (Connor, Phillips, Kaschak, Apel, Kim, Al Otaiba, Crowe, Thomas-Tate, Johnson, & Lonigan, 2014)†
- Instruction delivered by a teacher with extensive professional development in early literacy education using research-supported instructional practices to improve students' vocabulary knowledge such as explicit vocabulary instruction during interactive read-alouds (e.g., Biemiller & Boote, 2006).†

The child is relatively strong in word reading and tools for constructing meaning but is hampered by poor reading fluency (accuracy, automaticity, and prosody).



This child needs **research-supported instruction** that focuses on developing reading fluency and has been shown to improve **reading comprehension**, such as:

- Quick Reads® (tested in a study with grades 4–5: Vadasy and Sanders, 2008)† and in a non-peer-reviewed study in grades 2–5)
- Start Making a Reader Today® (SMART®)\*
- Instruction delivered by a teacher with extensive professional development in early literacy education using research-supported instructional practices such as Wide Fluency-Oriented Reading Instruction (Wide-FORI) (Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, Morris, Morrow, Woo, Meisinger, Sevcik, Bradley, & Stahl, 2006).†

The child is struggling with the mechanics of writing (e.g., handwriting, spelling, sentence construction).



This child needs **research-supported instruction** that has been shown to improve **written composition**, such as:

- WriteStart handwriting instruction (Case-Smith, Holland, & White, 2014)†
- Structured Supplemental Spelling Instruction (Graham, Harris, & Chorzempa, 2002)†

The child is struggling with written composition.



This child needs **research-supported instruction** that focuses on composition and has been shown to improve **written composition**, such as:

- Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) focused on story writing (e.g., Harris, Graham, & Adkins, 2014)†
- Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) focused on persuasive and story writing (with impacts on informative and personal narrative writing) (Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2006)\*
- Instruction delivered by a teacher with extensive professional development in early literacy education using research-supported instructional practices.

\* Listed in the What Works Clearinghouse as having positive effects on comprehension or composition

† Found to be effective in one or more studies reported in peer-reviewed research journals

## PIECES CITED

- Biemiller, A., & Boote, C. (2006). An effective method for building meaning vocabulary in primary grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(1), 44–62. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.98.1.44
- Brown, R., Pressley, M., Van Meter, P., & Schuder, T. (1996). A quasi-experimental validation of transactional strategies instruction with low-achieving second-grade readers. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 88*(1), 18–37. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.88.1.18
- Cartwright, K. B., Coppage, E. A., Lane, A. B., Singleton, T., Marshall, T. R., & Bentivegna, C. (in press). Cognitive flexibility deficits in children with specific reading comprehension difficulties. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*. Available online 7 March 2016. doi: 10.1016/j.cedpsych.2016.01.003.
- Case-Smith, J., Holland, T., & White, S. (2014). Effectiveness of a co-taught handwriting program for first grade students. *Physical & Occupational Therapy In Pediatrics, 34*(1), 30–43. doi: 10.3109/01942638.2013.783898
- Connor, C. M., Phillips, B. M., Kaschak, M., Apel, K., Kim, Y-S., Al Otaiba, S., Crowe, E. C., Thomas-Tate, S., Johnson, L. C., & Lonigan, C. J. (2014). Comprehension tools for teachers: Reading for understanding from prekindergarten through fourth grade. *Educational Psychology Review, 26*, 379–401. doi: 10.1007/s10648-014-9267-1
- Duke, N. K., Cervetti, G. N., & Wise, C. N. (2016). The teacher and the classroom. *Journal of Education, 196*, 35–43.
- Goodson, B., Wolf, A., Bell, S., Turner, H., and Finney, P.B. (2010). *The Effectiveness of a Program to Accelerate Vocabulary Development in Kindergarten* (VOCAB). (NCEE 2010-4014). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.
- Graham, S., Harris, K. R., Chorzempa, B. F. (2002). Contribution of spelling instruction to the spelling, writing, and reading of poor spellers. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 94*, 669–686.
- Harris, K. R., Graham, G., & Adkins, M. (2015). Practice-based professional development and Self-Regulated Strategy Development for tier 2, at-risk writers in second grade. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 40*, 5–16. doi: 10.1016/j.cedpsych.2014.02.003.
- Harris, K. R., Graham, S., & Mason, L. H. (2006). Improving the writing, knowledge, and motivation of struggling young writers: Effects of Self-Regulated Strategy Development with and without peer support. *American Educational Research Journal, 43*, 295–340. doi: 10.3102/00028312043002295
- Kuhn, M. R., Schwanenflugel, P. J., Morris, R. D., Morrow, L. M., Woo, D. G., Meisinger, E. B., . . . Stahl, S. A. (2006). Teaching children to become fluent and automatic readers. *Journal of Literacy Research, 38*(4), 357–387.
- McCandliss, B., Beck, I. L., Sandak, R., & Perfetti, C. (2003). Focusing attention on decoding for children with poor reading skills: Design and preliminary tests of the word building intervention. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 7*, 75–104. doi: 10.1207/S1532799XSSR0701\_05
- Scanlon, D. M., Vellutino, F. R., Small, S. G., Fanuele, D. P., & Sweeney, J. M. (2005). Severe reading difficulties—Can they be prevented? A comparison of prevention and intervention approaches. *Exceptionality, 13*(4), 209–227. doi: 10.1207/s15327035ex1304\_3
- Vadasy, P. F., & Sanders, E. A. (2009). Supplemental fluency intervention and determinants of reading outcomes. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 13*, 383–425.
- Williams, J. P., Pollini, S., Nubla-Kung, A. M., Snyder, A. E., Garcia, A., Ordynans, J. G., & Atkins, J. G. (2014). An intervention to improve comprehension of cause/effect through expository text structure instruction. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 106*(1), 1–17. doi: 10.1037/a0033215

### Pictured on page 2:

- Foorman, B., Beyer, N., Borradaile, K., Coyne, M., Denton, C. A., Dimino, J., Furgeson, J., Hayes, L., Henke, J., Justice, L., Keating, B., Lewis, W., Sattar, S., Streke, A., Wagner, R., & Wissel, S. (2016). *Foundational skills to support reading for understanding in kindergarten through 3rd grade* (NCEE 2016-4008). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/practiceguide/21>.
- Graham, S., Bollinger, A., Booth Olson, C., D'Aoust, C., MacArthur, C., McCutchen, D., & Olinghouse, N. (2012). *Teaching elementary school students to be effective writers: A practice guide* (NCEE 2012- 4058). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/17>.
- Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators General Education Leadership Network Early Literacy Task Force (2016). *Essential instructional practices in early literacy: K to 3*. Lansing, MI: Authors. Retrieved from <http://www.gomaisa.org/sites/default/files/K-3%20Literacy%20Essentials%203.2016.pdf>.
- Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N. K., Pearson, P. D., Schatschneider, C., & Torgesen, J. (2010). *Improving reading comprehension in kindergarten through 3rd grade: A practice guide* (NCEE 2010-4038). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/14>.