

The background of the slide is a solid dark brown color with a pattern of lighter brown, stylized autumn leaves scattered across it. The leaves have prominent veins and are in various orientations, some overlapping.

A Teacher's Guide to RTI Assessment

Are you getting what you need?

Focus of Manual

- **The focus of this manual will be on the assessment process in the RTI model of decision-making. A comprehensive coverage of RTI would include a discussion of the ‘change’ process in school systems including the identification of change agents and the creation of ‘buy-in’ in such systems.**

Focus of Manual II

- **Additionally, a comprehensive manual would contain chapters on the need for an alternative model of decision-making, the parent's role in such a model; and an intensive discussion on tiers of intervention including differentiated instruction, strategic instruction and intensive instructional strategies.**

Focus of Manual III

- **This manual will focus solely on the assessment process during RTI. It is designed for the classroom teacher and as such, is not meant to be a comprehensive desk reference with specific recommendations on test options or how to deal with the logistical obstacles that surface with assessment.**

Focus of Manual

- It is not the intent of this manual to leave you, the classroom teacher, with the impression that you have to either buy or design assessment tools for RTI. The intent of this manual is to familiarize you with RTI assessment terminology and process.

Focus of Manual

- There will be an expectation that classroom teachers, as they become more familiar with the RTI process, will have the confidence to open discussion with their buildings and districts for additional assessment tools to assist instruction.

Why Do We Assess?

- We assess to inform instruction
- Assessment should be individualized to the specific needs of the student
- There are different types of assessment
 - Summative assessment tells you how much a child has learned as a result of previous instruction
 - Formative assessment tells you where a child can benefit from changes in instruction or how they have benefited from changes while the instruction is ongoing.

Examples of Summative Evaluation

- WASL
- End-of-semester/year tests
- Unit tests from a curriculum
- End-of-week spelling tests
- What they have in common
 - No matter what the result, you, as instructor, are moving on to the next chapter, unit, spelling list

What Summative Assessment Doesn't Tell You

- It does not tell you about your students' level of achievement while you are instructing them
- It often takes a long time to administer which results in loss of instructional time
- It doesn't help you teach but is rather a report card on how much the students have learned
- Does not assess student behavior, motivation or a range of other concerns

Value of Summative Evaluation

- Summative evaluation does give you, as teacher, feedback on your success at delivering a curriculum unit
- Summative evaluation does provide administrators with ‘snapshots’ on achievement levels of students
- Summative evaluation does provide parents feedback on their child’s level of achievement.

If not Summative Assessment then what? Formative evaluation!

- The multi- level assessment system- Universal Screener, Diagnostic, Progress Monitoring, Special Education Eligibility

Universal Screener

What is it?

- An efficient assessment designed to identify at risk students

Why use it?/ when to use it

- Short administrative time
- Quick turn-around of results
- They are predictive of high stakes assessment but not necessarily linked to a specific curriculum
- They are typically administered three times per year for benchmarking

Diagnostic/Targeted Assessment

- *What is it?*
- A test/procedure to identify a specific skill deficit and develop an instructional program
 - *Why/when use it?*
- To make sure that children who are struggling meet benchmark by identifying specifically what they need
- When a child is not making adequate instructional progress- the question becomes “what exactly is holding them back?”

Progress Monitoring

- *What is it?*
- A way to see the child's progress over time
 - *Why use it?*
- It gives us feedback relative to the effectiveness of intervention over time
- Allows a team to fine-tune intervention if needed.

Core Instructional and Curricular Practices

- The three tiers of instruction in RTI reflect the intensity and individualization of instruction
- Students in Tier I receive high quality scientific, research-based instruction from general education teachers in the **core curriculum**. Interventions are implemented at the whole group level and are not targeting specific children

What if Core Instructional and Practices Are Not Working?

For the majority of students (70-80%) the core curriculum is typically successful. If less than 70% of your class is at benchmark, the first step is to evaluate the core curriculum from content and delivery point of views.

- Is the core curriculum being delivered as designed?
- Is the core curriculum being delivered consistently?
- Do the students in your class have the necessary prerequisite skills?

The concept of tiers

- Tier 1 intervention is often equated to differentiated instruction where instructional strategies, style and content are modified for different groups of students.
- Tier 2 intervention often occurs in small groups and reflects a shared need with other students
- In Tier 3 instruction is more individualized and focused
- refer to appendix C

Universal (Benchmark) Screening in Reading

- The brief oral reading of a grade-level passage has been shown to correlate highly with overall reading ability including all five essential reading components.
 - The information will show whether a student is on target against a benchmark standard
 - For students off benchmark, more diagnostic assessment and/or program changes may occur
 - Refer to appendix H

Using and Making Use of the Universal Screener Math

- Some screeners enable strand analysis, while others, measure computation and ability to make sense of a math applied problem. Oral Reading Fluency is also highly correlated to Math WASL passage.
- The information will show whether a student is on target against a benchmark standard
- For students off benchmark, more diagnostic assessment and/or program changes may occur
- Refer to Appendix J

Using and Making Use of the Universal Screener Writing

- The scoring of a short, timed-writing sample has been shown to be highly correlated with overall writing ability.
- The information will show whether a student is on target against a benchmark standard
- For students off benchmark, more diagnostic assessment and/or program changes may occur
- Refer to appendix E

Making Use of the Universal Screener- Behavior and Emotional

- Screeners could look at a child's behavior in the classroom or emotional constructs such as depression or anxiety
- The information will show whether a student is on target against a benchmark standard which could use the class as a frame of reference or age-peers
- For students off benchmark, more diagnostic assessment and/or program changes may occur



Does it lead to
LASIK surgery-NO

If failed-do we
teach the eye chart-
NO

If the child does
poorly on this- we
assess further

Potential Cautions-Screening

- Misuse of Data
 - Allowing results of screeners to drive Instruction (e.g. teaching reading fluency following ORF benchmarking)
 - Using screener results for eligibility decisions (e.g. using ORF data without more targeted assessment)
 - Using comprehensive assessments as your screener (e.g. using the WASL to identify high-risk students). WASL is not efficient nor are results timely.

Diagnostic/Targeted Assessments

- A skill specific assessment designed to match the correct intervention with the individual need of the child

Selecting Diagnostic/Targeted Assessments

- Skill specific assessments drawn from the general curriculum
- The focus is to identify specific student error patterns, and then target intervention appropriately.
- Diagnostic assessments continuously occur while teaching. This assessment refers to a more systematic assessment that leads to a more individualized, intensive and focused (targeted) intervention.

Reading Diagnostic Examples

- Grade level appropriate books on the classroom shelf – check for phonemic awareness, sight word vocabulary, oral comprehension, silent reading comprehension, listening comprehension etc.
- Running records or reading inventories
- For younger children oral reading from a list of phonemes, upper or lower case letters, or high frequency word lists
- Refer to appendix D
- Refer to appendix I

Math Diagnostic Examples

- Computation generally through single or mixed skill probes
- For word problems, have students work orally noting their problem-solving strategies and miscues.
- Refer to appendix B

Diagnostic for Written Language

- Error analysis (error patterns/consistent problems) from an un-timed writing prompt.
 - Fluency (total words written)
 - Legibility (letter formation analysis)
 - Conventions (spelling/punctuation/capitalization)
 - Syntactic Maturity (varied sentence lengths/types)
 - Semantic Maturity (variety of words/vocabulary)
 - Content (organization, cohesion)
 - Writing Process(plans ahead, transitions)

Diagnostic for Behavior

- Diagnostics in this area can focus either on emotional development or behavior
 - Emotional development- there are many commercial products that look at emotional development from a clinical focus. These instruments look for the similarity between your students and a clinical population.
 - Behavioral diagnostic information can most easily be obtained through classroom observation, either time-sampling or in narrative.

Procedures for Diagnostic/Targeted Assessments

- Provides a clear picture of a student's specific struggle
- The test should point out specific trends in the child's error making
- These assessments are designed to isolate specific skill deficit
- Diagnosis is only for children who are flagged as at-risk in the Universal Screening process
- Refer to appendix F (literacy intervention)

Potential Cautions

- Perceived need to use published specialized tests as diagnostics

Progress Monitoring

- Progress monitoring is often done during the delivery of a specific unit or content and is occasionally embedded within the curriculum
- RTI progress monitoring refers to the type of monitoring that provides feedback efficiently on a more general measure such as reading
- Data generated on a regular basis to ensure that a large instructional gap does not develop
- Data is collected to ensure that growth occurs at the expected rate
- How often data is collected depends on the intervention, the behavior in question and the severity

Selecting Progress Monitoring Tools

- Progress monitoring tools are selected to provide frequent feedback on the effectiveness of an intervention related to a specific skill deficit
- Whether a particular tool can be used as a progress monitoring tool in RTI depends upon its ability to be administered frequently and be sensitive to small gains

Potential Cautions-Progress Monitoring

- Inadequate progress monitoring for different tiers
- Inadequate attention paid to progress
- Decisions based on misleading data

Assessing Student Response to Intervention

- Student progress is monitored compared to an ideal rate of student growth.
- The ideal rate is defined as the rate of growth that will accelerate the student to a benchmark standard.

Assessing Student Response to Intervention

- If progress is slower than ideal, the team must meet and consider the following questions:
 - Was the intervention delivered as intended (with fidelity)?
 - If so, will the gap between student and peers be narrowed if the intervention is continued?
 - Will the gap narrow if the intervention is either intensified or delivered more frequently?
 - Would another intervention be more successful?
 - If not.....

Assessment for Special Education Eligibility

- When the team determines that a child has not responded to intervention the team evaluates:
 - The learning rates of the child compared to peers and to an ideal benchmark
 - The progress made with the increasingly individualized and focused intervention
 - They must determine if additional data is needed from speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist or psychologist for example

Special Education Eligibility

- Eligibility is still dependent on a comprehensive evaluation. This evaluation should focus on the three-pronged ‘litmus test’ for special education eligibility:
 - The identification of a disability
 - Learning Disability identification under RTI is an alternative to the ability/achievement discrepancy model
 - The adverse impact on learning that the disability exerts
 - The need for specially designed instruction

Conclusion

- RtI assessment and evaluation represents a more focused; need-oriented; monitoring approach than previous assessment. It is no longer the priority of assessment and evaluation to validate or attempt to find the origins of a deficit. Rather, the focus is on identifying what a child needs, specifically, to succeed. The ‘why’ is less important than the ‘what’ when it comes to a child’s academic or social/emotional needs.

Conclusion cont'd

- The only assessment we will ask of teachers in the RTI process is that assessment that will help guide intervention and hence, instruction. Assessment must occur while instruction is on-going and therefore can be altered by the results of assessment.
- “If you collect it, use it. If you don't need it, don't collect it!”