



# Literacy Links

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Monthly E-Newsletter of Maine Reading First



## Upcoming Maine Reading First Events

**Debbie Diller is returning to Maine in August 2009! The Maine Reading First initiative will be sponsoring day long workshops with Debbie Diller on August 19 and 20. Her focus will be small group differentiated instruction. On August 19 she'll work with K-3 educators and on August 20 with grade 4-6 educators. Location details and registration materials will be available in early 2009.**

## Spotlight on... Response to Intervention (RtI) Reading

There is a plethora of information on the current Response to Intervention (RTI) initiative. "RTI is not a particular method or instructional approach; it is a *process* that plans to shift educational resources toward the delivery and evaluation of instruction that works best for students" (Dickman, 2006). This article will focus on the essential components of a response to intervention approach for reading.

### What is RTI?

RTI is the practice of providing high quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs. It involves tracking student learning rates over time to determine the impact that instruction is having and to inform teaching decisions. The intensity and duration of interventions for struggling readers is based on how individual students respond to instruction across multiple tiers of intervention.

The Maine Department of Education outlines RTI as:

- A multi-step process to shift educational resource to improve instruction for all students that begins in general education;
- A framework for early intervention that is systematic, based on formative assessment, and responsive to students' changing instructional needs; and
- An approach for redesigning and establishing teaching and learning environments that are effective, efficient, relevant, and durable for all students, educators, and families.

Dickman (2006) provides guidance through an article entitled "*RTI in a Nutshell*" ([www.readingrockets.org/article/14596?theme](http://www.readingrockets.org/article/14596?theme)). He outlines the process of implementing RTI and describes these components:

- **Screen:** "Valid (universal screening) measures predict who is, and who is not, at risk for future reading difficulties" (Dickman, 2006). Children considered to be "at risk" may experience difficulty keeping up in the core curriculum delivered in the general education classroom (Dickman, 2006). Curriculum Based Measures (CBMs) are acceptable universal screening tools. (See resources related to CBMs in the *Professional Text* and *Check It Out* sections of this newsletter)
- **Teach:** RTI is a classroom-based initiative. "Core curriculum in *general*

**The Maine Reading First Literacy Leaders' Network (LLN) is underway for the 2008-09 school year. To learn more about the LLN, visit: <http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/materials.html> or contact: [Leeann.Larsen@maine.gov](mailto:Leeann.Larsen@maine.gov)**



**The only things worth learning are the things you learn after you know it all.**

**-- Harry S. Truman**

education classes should be research-based and field tested. This means that, based on evidence from converging research, the core curriculum contains all the elements found necessary to effectively teach reading and has shown a track record of success. Such curriculum is delivered by 'highly qualified' teachers trained to deliver selected instruction with fidelity to design" (Dickman, 2006). Guidance describing what constitutes scientifically researched-based reading programs is outlined in the *Instructional Ideas* section of this newsletter.

- **Intervene:** "Provide 'at risk' children with enhanced opportunities to learn, including additional time exposed to core curriculum in small groups of 3-6 students" (Dickman, 2006). Using supplemental materials and interventions matched to students needs, more intensive instruction should be provided to students who are not meeting grade level standards (Dickman, 2006).
- **Probe (Progress Monitor):** "Progress monitoring tests (again usually CBMs) are brief measures of specific reading skills that are administered to determine if the child receiving intervention is responding as intended (i.e. learning)" (Dickman, 2006). They are given frequently, every 10 to 30 lessons, depending on the intensity of student needs.
- **Chart:** "Progress is regularly charted to provide a visual record of the rate of gain in specific reading skills in relation to specific goals (Dickman, 2006). The goals of intervention are for the child to improve and to perform closer to grade level standards. Intervention should be individualized according to the child's needs (Dickman, 2006).
- **Adjust:** Depending upon whether the child is achieving a rate of progress determined by his individual goals, the manner and intensity of intervention will be adjusted. The cycle of progress-monitoring and adjustment of intervention will continue, even if a determination for special education eligibility is made" (Dickman, 2006); or until a child has been successful at reaching grade level reading standards.

#### **Tiers of Intervention, Professional Development, and Collaboration:**

Many sources are available to provide examples of how RtI may look in any given school. Maine law suggests a Three Tier Model where referral for Special Education Services occurs after the third tier of intervention; and there may be multiple layers of intervention within each of the Three Tiers. For more explicit guidance about ways to configure tiers of intervention and, for implementing RtI in Maine schools, go to <http://www.maine.gov/education/rti/index.shtml>.

An integral component for the success of Response to Intervention in any given school is ongoing professional development. Providing continued support to highly qualified teachers provides them the necessary tools to ensure every student receives quality reading instruction. The intensity and content of ongoing teacher training is specific to the needs of staff in each district. One major goal of RtI is to match the most struggling students with the most highly trained professionals. Resources from within the school system and from outside are shared across departments.

Finally, through collaboration amongst all of the educators who support each child's learning, the individual needs of students can be problem solved so that instruction is responsive to student learning. Opportunities for educators to examine student progress monitoring data and to plan instructional interventions for students are critical to the success of RtI frameworks.

Additional sources of models and examples for implementing RtI are listed at the end of this article and in the *Check it Out* section of this newsletter.

#### **Where is RTI in Maine Law?**

Response to Intervention is a product of special education law but is **NOT** a special



## Upcoming Events

Grade 5-9 Teachers—Save the Date

*You'll Reach Every Reader When You Differentiate Instruction*

Laura Robb, veteran educator, author and literacy coach, is coming September 11, 12, & 14, 2009. She will work in three locations across Maine, one location each day. These workshops will be sponsored by the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development. Contact Amy Cates at 581-2438 for registration information

education initiative. In Maine, regulations for RtI can be found in Chapter 101, Section III of the Special Education rules and regulations. This law stipulates that by July 1, 2010, pre-referrals require a multi-step process of providing interventions and supports to students who struggle to meet appropriate behavior and learning benchmarks. See <http://www.maine.gov/education/rti/projects.html>

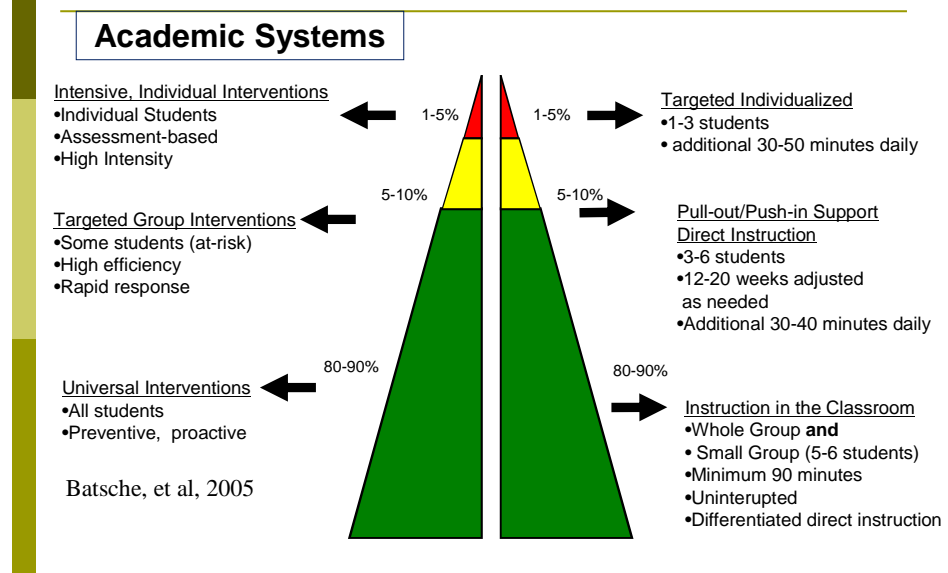
### Resources to support implementation of RTI:

- <http://www.maine.gov/education/rti/index.shtml>
- <http://www.RTI4Success.org>
- <http://www.rtinetwork.org>
- <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu>
- <http://www.studentprogress.org>

## Description of Instructional Ideas...

### Three Tier Model Reading Model

#### Elementary Instructional Model for Reading/Language Arts



Adapted from NRF Conference information 2007 and Batsche, et al 2005.

### A Recipe for a Comprehensive Reading Program:

The following recipe outlines what content and design fit the criteria for a comprehensive reading program based on scientific



**Institute for  
Designing Whole  
School Plans for  
Response to  
Intervention, K-8**

This institute will be sponsored by the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development on August 10-12, 2009. Contact Amy Cates at 581-2438 for more information and registration materials.



research in reading (SBRR). A comprehensive program is built, not from one published product but from implementing sound educational design using essential content and proven instructional techniques.

## Scientifically Based Reading Programs

- Instructional Content
  - Phonemic Awareness
  - Phonics
  - Fluency
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension
- Instructional Design
  - Explicit Instructional Strategies
  - Coordinated Instructional Sequences
  - Ample Practice Opportunities
  - Aligned Student Materials



Ingredients



Recipe

From Presentation: **Scientifically Based Reading Programs** (Fall 2005) by Marcia L. Kosanovich, Ph.D., Florida Center for Reading Research, SLP Academy available at [www.fcrr.org](http://www.fcrr.org).

## Summary of Professional Texts...

### RtI Text Set

**Implementing Response to Intervention: A Principal's Guide** (2007) by Susan L. Hall is available from Corwin Press and the ISBN-13 is 978-1412955072978.

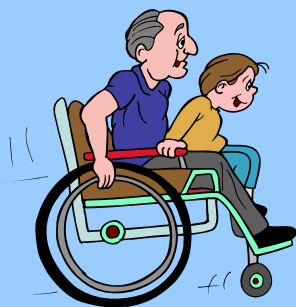
"Reading this book is like having a personal coach guiding one through the RTI implementation process. At a time when RtI has become one of the hottest buzz words in education, this book is a user-friendly resource providing education leaders with moral support and clear, practical suggestions." (The School Administrator, June 2008 )

**What Really Matters in Response to Intervention: Research-based Designs (What Really Matters Series)** (2008) by Richard L. Allington is available from Allyn & Bacon and the ISBN-13 is 978-0205627547.

Written for educators who serve kindergarten through ninth grade, literacy researcher Richard Allington provides helpful considerations for designing response to intervention programs that support children's growth as readers and writers. The importance of accelerating learning, building opportunities for children to engage in purposeful reading activities, and insuring that text selection encourages, rather than discourages, children's reading habits are a few of the well-developed points upon which Allington elaborates.

One of the reasons people stop learning is that they become less and less willing to risk failure.

-- John W. Gardner



**Response to Intervention: A Framework for Reading Educators** (2008) by Douglas Fuchs, Lynn S. Fuchs, and Sharon Vaughn is available from IRA and the ISBN-13 is 978-0872076228.

Leading experts in literacy and special education describe a three-tier approach that begins with effective instruction for all children, move to preventive tutoring through a variety of approaches, and conclude with a reformed conceptualization of special education. Key to the approach is using assessment to identify students at risk, monitor student progress, and guide appropriate instructional support.

**The ABCs of CBM: A Practical Guide to Curriculum-Based Measurement (The Guilford Practical Intervention in Schools Series)** (2006). By Michelle K. Hosp, John L. Hosp, and Kenneth W. Howell is available from Guilford Press and the ISBN-13 is 978-1593853990.

This book presents a researched-based conceptual framework and hands-on instructions for conducting curriculum-based measurement (CBM) in grades K-8. The authors provide everything needed to evaluate student learning in reading, spelling, writing, and math; graph the resulting data; and use this information to make sound instructional decisions, plan interventions, and monitor progress. The role of CBM within a Response-to-Intervention model is also explained. Every chapter includes helpful answers to frequently asked questions, and the appendices contain over 20 reproducible administration and scoring guides, forms, and planning checklists. The large-size format and lay-flat binding facilitate photocopying and day-to-day use.

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## Children's Literature Titles...

### New Texts for Author/Theme Studies

**Snow** (2008) by Cynthia Rylant (with illustrator Lauren Stringer, previously paired for Scarecrow) is available from Harcourt Children's Books and the ISBN-13 is: 978-0152053031.

Rylant creates a new celebration of snow, capturing the listener: "The best snow is the snow that comes softly in the night, like a shy friend afraid to knock." and ending with "complete silence" (Publishers Weekly, 2008). This book is appropriate for ages 4-8, and a read-aloud for ages 3-6.

**Missuk's Snow Geese** (2008) by Anne Renaud and Genevieve Cody is available from Simply Read Books and the ISBN-13 is 978-1894965828. d

This story delivers a tender poetic tale of a little girl who dreams to be a stone carver like her father. The exquisite watercolor illustrations set the tone as Missuk awaits her father's return from his hunt during a terrifying storm. This story is intended for ages 4-8 but will resonate with young and old alike.

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## News from Maine Reading First...

We want your suggestions! As you peruse the monthly editions of *Literacy Links*, you might have topic ideas for the spotlight, instructional strategy, children's literature, professional text, or web site resource sections. We'd love to hear your ideas. Please email them to: [geecon@fairpoint.net](mailto:geecon@fairpoint.net).

**Check it out...**

*Web-sources for Curriculum Based Measures*

[www.studentprogress.org/chart/chart.asp](http://www.studentprogress.org/chart/chart.asp)

**National Center on Student Progress Monitoring:** Contains listing of reviewed CBM tools

[www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/cbmwarehouse.php](http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/cbmwarehouse.php)

**Intervention Central:** A clearinghouse with links to many CBM measures

[www.dibels.uoregon.edu](http://www.dibels.uoregon.edu)

**Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills:** Source for a variety of early literacy and reading measures

[www.aimsweb.com](http://www.aimsweb.com)

**AIMSweb:** Source for CBM measures

<http://terpconnect.umd.edu>

**Project AIM (Alternative Identification Models):** Source for Letter Naming and Oral Reading Fluency probes

**Newsletter Archives**

Earlier editions of *Literacy Links* available on the Maine Reading First website at <http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm>

<b>Edition</b>	<b>Spotlight Topic</b>
March, 2005	Maine Reading First
April, 2005	Maine Reading First Course
May, 2005	Reading Fluency
June, 2005	Vocabulary
September, 2005	Phonemic Awareness
October, 2005	Phonics
November, 2005	Comprehension



The purpose of learning is growth, and our minds, unlike our bodies, can continue growing as long as we live.

- Mortimer Adler



**SNEAK PREVIEW**

**Coming soon!**

2008-2009  
Literacy Links

- ❖ Purposeful  
Text selection
- ❖ Strategies  
for non-fiction  
comprehension

December, 2005/January, 2006	DIBELS
February, 2006	Literacy Centers
March, 2006	Interactive Read Aloud
April, 2006	Nonfiction
May, 2006	Word Walls
June, 2006	Classroom Design
September, 2006	Shared Reading
October, 2006	Automaticity
November, 2006	Using Assessment to Guide Instruction
December, 2006	Deepening Comprehension
January, 2007	Selecting Quality Children's Books (part 1)
February, 2007	Selecting Quality Children's Books (part 2)
March, 2007	Making Instruction Explicit
April, 2007	Motivation and Engagement
May-June 2007	Grouping for Instruction
September 2007	Making Instruction Systematic
October, 2007	Pacing Instruction
November, 2007	Managed Independent Practice
December, 2007	A Deeper Look at Phonemic Awareness
January, 2008	Phonics at the K-2 Grade Span
February, 2008	Phonics and Word Work Grades 3-5
March, 2008	Vocabulary Revisited
April, 2008	A Deeper Look at Vocabulary Instruction
May-June 2008	Fluency Revisited
August 2008	Fluency Assessment
September-October 2008	The Revised Maine <i>Learning Results</i> English Language Arts Standards
November 2008	Comprehending Comprehension
December 2008	Comprehension Strategies: Instructional Methods for Helping Readers Construct Meaning



For additional information about any of the items in this newsletter or to sign up to receive this e-newsletter, please email [Leeann.Larsen@maine.gov](mailto:Leeann.Larsen@maine.gov)

Click here to view the Maine Reading First website  
<http://www.maine.gov/education/rf/homepage.htm>

The professional development opportunities and materials are listed in *Literacy Links* for informational purposes only and are not necessarily endorsed by the Maine Department of Education's Maine Reading First Initiative.