Using data and progress monitoring in a tiered intervention framework to provide high-quality individualized instruction to English learners who are struggling

Excerpts from three REL Northeast & Islands webinars, February and March 2018

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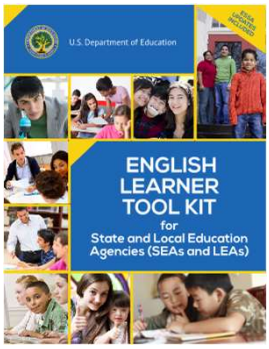
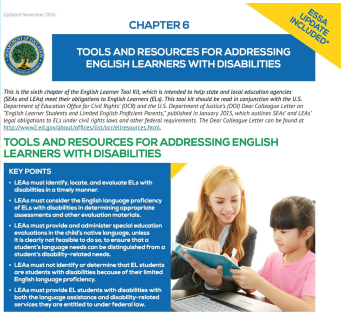
OELA tool: Language vs. disability

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition's *English Learner Toolkit*
- Chapter 6: Tools and Resources for Addressing English Learners with Disabilities
- Tool #2: Considering the Influence of Language Differences and Disabilities on Learning Behaviors





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OELA tool: Language vs. disability

Oral Comprehension/Listening

- **Learning behavior:** Does not respond to verbal directions
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Lacks understanding of vocabulary in English but demonstrates understanding in their home language
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Consistently demonstrates confusion when given verbal directions in the home language and English; may be due to processing deficit or low cognition

Possible data sources

- English language proficiency (ELP) score
- Conversations with parents about whether the student has any trouble responding to directions at home

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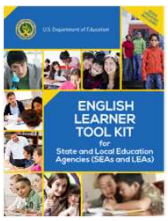
OELA tool: Language vs. disability



Speaking/Oral Fluency

- **Learning behavior:** Unable to orally retell a story
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Does not comprehend story due to a lack of understanding and background knowledge in English
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Has difficulty retelling a story or event in home language and English; may have memory or sequencing deficits

Possible data sources

- Formative assessments that test reading comprehension and story retelling separately, for the same story
- Formative assessments that test story retelling skills in both the student's home language and English
- Screening tools that test memory or sequencing skills

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OELA tool: Language vs. disability

Phonemic Awareness/Reading

- **Learning behavior:** Unable to decode words correctly
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Sound not in their home language, so unable to pronounce word once decoded
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Consistently confuses letters/words that look alike; makes letter reversals, substitutions, etc. that are not related to their home language; may be processing or memory deficit

Possible data sources

- Student background information – consult an ESL specialist regarding whether the sounds the student is struggling with are present in their home language
- Screeners in English and the home language
- Formative assessments

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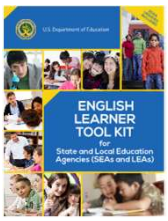
OELA tool: Language vs. disability



Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary

- **Learning behavior:** Does not understand passage read, although may be able to read with fluency and accuracy
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Lacks understanding and background knowledge of topic in English; is unable to use contextual clues to assist with meaning; improvement seen over time as English proficiency increases
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Doesn't remember or comprehend what was read in their home language or English; this does not improve over time; this may be due to a memory or processing deficit

Possible data sources

- Formative assessments of reading comprehension in both English and the home language
- Pre-reading assessment of background knowledge and key vocabulary, with scaffolds (e.g., images)
- Conversations with parents about students' reading abilities in the home language

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OELA tool: Language vs. disability

Writing

- **Learning behavior:** Has difficulty generating a paragraph or writing essays but is able to express his or her ideas orally
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Is not yet proficient in writing English even though he/she may have developed verbal skills; makes progress over time and error patterns are similar to other English learners
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Seems to have difficulty paying attention or remembering previously learned information; may seem to have motor difficulties and avoids writing; may have attention or memory deficits

Possible data sources

- ELP score, attending to performance on oral vs. writing tasks
- Formative written assessments and comparison over time
- Student background information regarding experience writing in home language

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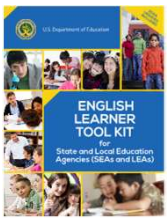
OELA tool: Language vs. disability



Spelling

- **Learning behavior:** Spells words incorrectly; letters are sequenced incorrectly
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Writing is reflective of English fluency or cultural thought patterns; words may align to letter sounds of home language (words spelled phonetically based on home language)
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Letter sequencing errors--letter reversals inconsistent with spelling in home language; may be due to a processing deficit

Possible data sources

- ELP score
- Writing samples (e.g., from formative assessments), in consultation with an ESL specialist with knowledge of home language writing conventions
- Information from family members about letter sequencing in the home language

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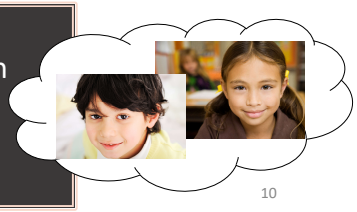
OELA tool: Language vs. disability

Mathematics

- **Learning behavior:** Manifests difficulty learning math facts and/or math operations
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Lacks comprehension of oral instruction in English; shows marked improvement with visual input or instructions in their home language
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Has difficulty memorizing math facts from one day to the next and requires manipulatives or devices to complete math problems; may have visual memory or processing deficits



Possible data sources

- Standardized math assessment scores, including comparison with "true peers"
- ELP score
- Formative assessments that test math and English skills

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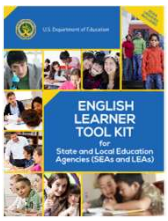
OELA tool: Language vs. disability



Handwriting

- **Learning behavior:** Unable to copy words correctly
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Lack of experience with writing the English alphabet
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Demonstrates difficulty copying visual material to include shapes, letters, etc.; may be due to a visual/motor or visual memory deficit

Possible data sources

- Student background information regarding experience with writing English, and with writing their home language
- Performance on formative assessments over time

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OELA tool: Language vs. disability

Behavior

- **Learning behavior:** Appears unmotivated and/or angry; may manifest internalizing or externalizing behavior
- **Indicators of a language difference:** Does not understand instruction due to limited English and does not feel successful; student has anger or low self-esteem related to English language acquisition
- **Indicators of a possible learning disability:** Does not understand instruction in home language or English and across contexts; may be frustrated due to a possible learning disability

Possible data sources

- ELP score
- Conversations with the school counselor and/or the student's family to learn about:
  - Immigration or personal story or background indicating past trauma
  - The student's behavior in other contexts

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Screening and Progress Monitoring for English Learners

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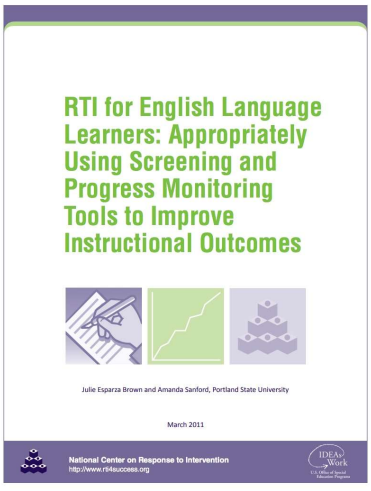
Screening and progress monitoring with ELs

RTI for English Language Learners: Appropriately Using Screening and Progress Monitoring Tools to Improve Instructional Outcomes (Esparza Brown & Sanford, 2011)

National Center on Response to Intervention

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SRBI/ELEMENTARY_ASSESSMENTS_4-9-12.pdf?la=en



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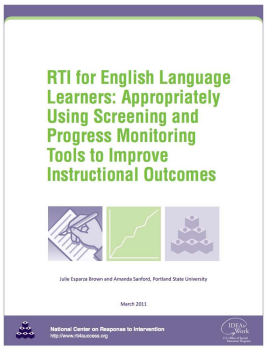
Language vs. disability



"For ELLs… performance that indicates 'at-risk' status and the need for more intensive instruction may well be due to ineffective instruction (e.g., when delivered only in English without adjusting for a student's current English proficiency level) with results that could mimic an intrinsic learning problem… an ELL's linguistic and educational experiences should be carefully considered in [illegible] appropriate instruction and interventions, and it should not be assumed that slower growth must be due to a learning disability."

- Esparza Brown & Sanford (2011, p. 13)

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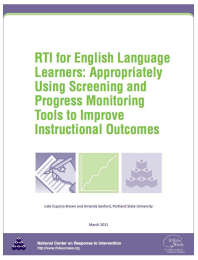
Identifying tools appropriate for ELs



- There is some research evidence that screening and progress monitoring tools can be used effectively with ELs.
- However, these tools shouldn't be used in isolation, and students may perform differently based solely on English language proficiency.
- Results should be interpreted with careful attention to a student's particular background.
- Multiple measures should be used to create a complete picture.

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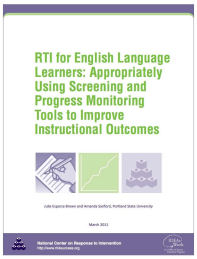
Recommendations for using screening tools with ELs

1. Use tools with demonstrated reliability and validity to identify and monitor students' need for instructional support in reading in both the home language and English.
   - Tools with demonstrated reliability and validity may still pose issues for ELs, particularly with regards to validity.
   - Consider how a student's specific background may impact their performance on a particular measure.



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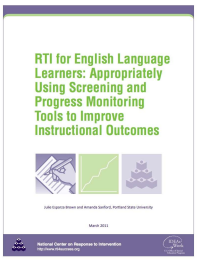
Recommendations for using screening tools with ELs

2. Assess students' language skills in the home language and English to provide an appropriate context regarding evaluation of current levels of performance.
   - Consider use of valid and reliable measures in a student's home language, when available (e.g., the IDEL in Spanish).
   - Use parents as resources for information about students' abilities in the home language.



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Recommendations for using screening tools with ELs

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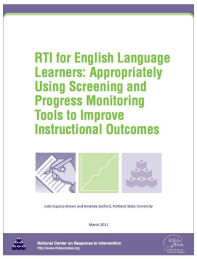
Evaluate the potential effect of the process of home language and English acquisition on current performance.

- English language proficiency impacts performance on English-medium assessments (e.g., re: DIBELS, see Ostayan, 2016).
- Look at particular skills and consider what linguistic knowledge and experience is required for specific assessments.



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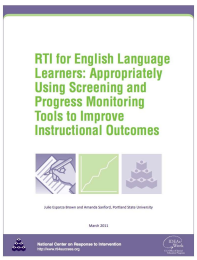
Recommendations for using screening tools with ELs

4

Plan instruction based on what is known about the student's current level of performance and his or her literacy experiences in the home language and English.

- Consider a variety of data and how they relate to each other to create a better, more comprehensive picture.
- Make this a collaborative, team-based process.



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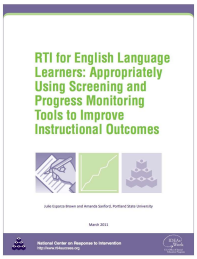
Recommendations for using progress monitoring tools with ELs

1

Monitor student progress in all languages of instruction.

- Consider use of valid and reliable measures in a student's home language, when available.
- Gather what data you can from classroom assessments and other formative assessments.
- Use parents as resources.



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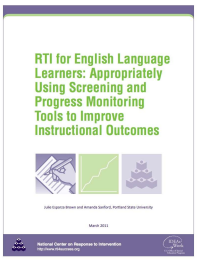
Recommendations for using progress monitoring tools with ELs

2

Set rigorous goals that support students toward meeting grade-level standards.

- Attend to English language proficiency when developing goals, and ensure supports are provided to enable students to reach goals.



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Recommendations for using progress monitoring tools with ELs

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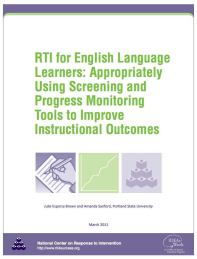
Evaluate growth frequently, increasing intensity of instruction when growth is less than expected.

- Use formative assessments regularly to examine whether and how students are improving in target skills.



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Recommendations for using progress monitoring tools with ELs

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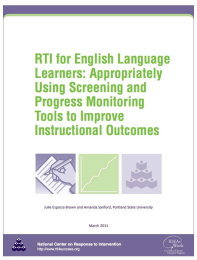
Evaluate growth as compared to that of true peers.

- Consider student's home language and literacy skills, English language and literacy skills, country of origin, prior schooling experiences, family background, and relevant academic performance data.



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Identifying tools: Which ones?

- CT State Education Resource Center (SERC): *Elementary Assessments: Universal Screening, Diagnostic, & Progress Monitoring*
  - https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SRBI/ELEMENTARY_ASSESSMENTS_4-9-12.pdf?la=en
  - Links to assessments and other resources
  - Includes lists for reading, math, writing, and behavioral & social/emotional
- Center on Response to Intervention's online interactive chart
  - https://charts.intensiveintervention.org/chart/academic-screening#
  - Provides information on validity and reliability

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Screening tools: Center on Response to Intervention

Grade - Any - **Subject** - Any -

Tool	Area	Classification Accuracy Rating	Generalizability	Reliability	Validity	Disaggregated Reliability, Validity, and Classification Data for Diverse Population	Efficiency			
							Administration	Administration & Scoring Time	Scoring Key	Benchmarks / Norms
Acuity	English Language Arts	◐	Moderate High	◐	●	—	Group	50 Minutes	Yes	Yes
Acuity	Mathematics	◐	Moderate High	◐	●	—	Group	50 Minutes	Yes	Yes
AIMSweb	Mathematics - Curriculum-Based Measurement	◐	Moderate High	◐	○	—	Group	2 Minutes	Yes	Yes

https://charts.intensiveintervention.org/chart/academic-screening

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Screening tools: Center on Response to Intervention

DIBELS Next

Oral Reading Fluency - Word Correct

Rating Summary

Classification Accuracy		●
Generalizability		Moderate High
Reliability		●
Validity		●
Disaggregated Reliability and Validity Data		◐
Efficiency	Administration	Individual
	Administration & Scoring Time	1-2 Minutes
	Scoring Key	Computer Scored
	Benchmarks / Norms	Yes

Cost	Technology, Human Resources, and Accommodations for Special Needs	Service and Support	Purpose and Other Implementation Information	Usage and Reporting
DMG: Materials may be	Testers will require 4-8	**Where to obtain**:	DIBELS Next measures are	Administration of the test

https://charts.intensiveintervention.org/chart/academic-screening

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Screening tools: CT SERC

ELEMENTARY READING ASSESSMENTS
(Underlined items are hyperlinked)

Use	Sample Concepts and Skills	Sample Assessments	Resources *This is not meant to be a complete resource list.*
UNIVERSAL SCREENING	• Kindergarten: o Phonological awareness o Letter naming o Letter sounds o Nonsense words • Grade 1: o Phonological awareness o Letter knowledge o Word identification fluency o Oral reading fluency • Grades 2 and 3: o Oral reading fluency	• AIMSweb (for use up to 8th grade) • Benchmark assessments aligned to CCSS o Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) from NWEA o CTB (McGraw Hill's acuity assessments) • Brigance Screener • Common assessments aligned to CCSS • Curriculum-Based Measures (CBM) o Maze o Oral reading fluency measures • Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) • Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA-2) • Emerging Literacy Survey (ELS) • First Steps Reading Map of Development • Gates-MacGinitie	Look at these first: • **Screening Reading Tools Chart** • Secondary Literacy Instruction and Intervention Guide (Stupski Foundation) – Appendix C contains a detailed chart of 26 assessments for elementary & secondary levels Other resources: • A Comprehensive K-3 Reading Assessment Plan • *ABCs of CBM* by Hosp, Hosp & Howell – complete how-to guide for creating, administering & scoring CBMs • Florida Center for Reading Research – maze • Florida Center for Reading Research – oral reading fluency • Free maze passages 4-6th grade

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/SRBI/ELEMENTARY_ASSESSMENTS_4-9-12.pdf?la=en

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Progress monitoring tools: CT SERC

ELEMENTARY READING ASSESSMENTS
(Underlined items are hyperlinked)

Use	Sample Concepts and Skills	Sample Assessments	Resources *This is not meant to be a complete resource list.*
PROGRESS MONITORING	Same as in Diagnostic section: • Phonological awareness o Phonemic awareness o Initial sound o Phonemic segmentation • Decoding o Alphabetic principle o Letter knowledge o Vowel sounds o Digraphs, blends o Prefixes, suffixes, base words • Fluency o Nonsense word	• AIMSweb • Common assessments aligned to CCSS • Curriculum-based measures (CBM) • Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) • Running records • Scoring guides • Student and family interviews • Student work samples • Teacher's College Reading & Writing Project Assessments • Yearly Progress Pro ELL Students: LAS Links	Look at this first: • Progress Monitoring Tools Chart See also resources in Universal Screening and Diagnostic sections Other resources: • Apps Designed with Disability in Mind • Charting in Microsoft Excel • Graphing Made Easy • National Center on RTI • National Center on Student Progress Monitoring • Research Institute on Progress Monitoring • Rubistar, free tool to create rubrics • teAchnology, variety of tools to create rubrics for different subjects

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The three tiers of RTI

Tier	Description	Key modifications for ELs
1	High-quality classroom instruction	• ESOL services • Culturally and linguistically responsive instruction
2	Supplemental instruction	• Differentiated interventions • Involvement of ESOL staff
3	Intensive interventions	• Curriculum modifications based on learning needs, including English language development • Staff training in working with ELs • Involvement of an ESOL specialist
All	Screening, Assessment, and Progress Monitoring	• Involvement of ESOL specialists • Assessments and screening tools researched with ELs • Assessments and screening tools available in students' first languages • Consideration of a broad range of data, including English proficiency • Comparison with true peers

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Tier 1: Academic instruction for English learners

- **Recommendation 1**: Provide students the opportunity to develop academic oral language while simultaneously teaching literacy and other content areas.
- **Recommendation 2**: Teach vocabulary across content areas.
- **Recommendation 3**: Provide instruction and/or instructional support in the primary language as needed.
- **Recommendation 4**: Provide appropriate interventions for English learners who need support beyond Tier I instruction.

Richards-Tutor, C., Aceves, T., & Reese, L. (2016). *Evidence-based practices for English Learners (Document No. IC-18).* Retrieved from University of Florida, Collaboration for Effective Educator, Development, Accountability, and Reform Center website.

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Tiers 2 and 3 interventions

In the next two sections, we'll review recommendations from three of today's resources:

1. IES Practice Guide: Assisting students struggling with reading: Response to intervention and multi-tier intervention in the primary grades (Gersten et al., 2008)
2. Scientific Research-Based Interventions for English Language Learners: A Handbook to Accompany Connecticut's Framework for RTI (CAPELL, 2012)
3. IES Practice Guide: Teaching academic content to English learners in elementary and middle school (Baker et al., 2014)

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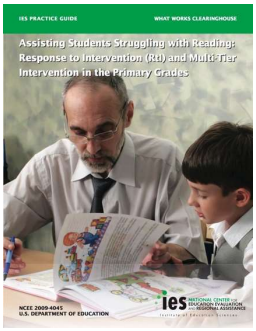
Tier 2: General recommendation from IES Practice Guide

Provide intensive, systematic instruction on up to three foundational reading skills in small groups to students who score below the benchmark on universal screening. Typically these groups meet between three and five times a week for 20–40 minutes.



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Tier 2 interventions: Monitoring progress for ELs

- Use data to identify students, but use caution
- Instruct students in small groups for interventions
- Conduct interventions different than in Tier 1
- Monitor student progress
  - Five days of interventions per week, 30 minutes per day, at least 8–10 weeks
- Reflect on data and make decisions
  - Adequate progress: return to Tier 1
  - Some progress: regrouping and implement additional 8–10 weeks of Tier 2
  - Very little to no progress: consider more intensive intervention in Tier 3

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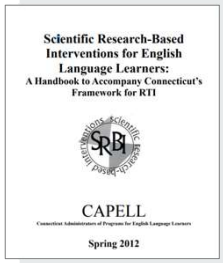
Tier 2 interventions and considerations for ELs

Tier 2	All Students	Considerations for ELs
Interventions  	• Short-term (e.g., eight to 20 weeks) • Well matched to students' specific academic, social-emotional, and/or behavioral needs	• Vary instruction in time and intensity from Tier 1 • Use systematic and explicit instruction with modeling, multiple examples and feedback • Focus on academic language and vocabulary instruction with multiple opportunities to practice • Provide frequent structured opportunities to develop oral language

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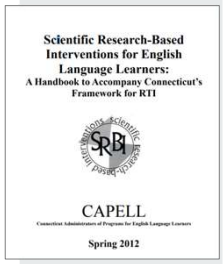
Tier 2 interventions and considerations for ELs

Tier 2	All Students	Considerations for ELs
Interventions  	• Delivered to homogeneous groups (i.e., students with similar needs) with a teacher:student ratio up to 1:4 or 1:6 • Implemented with fidelity supplemental to core program, and based on the Common Core State Standards	• Address specific reading and math skills as determined by assessment data • Incorporate reading, writing, listening, and speaking in authentic contexts • Involve reinforcement, repetition, practice and redundancy of vocabulary, skills, and strategies taught in core reading and math lessons

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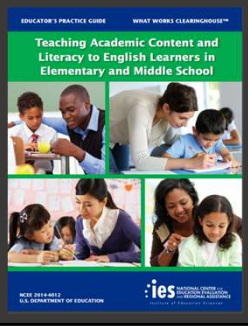
Tier 2: Interventions for ELs

Teach word-learning strategies to help students independently figure out the meaning of words.



- Context clues help students derive personal, yet workable definitions of words using the surrounding text that they understand.
- Word parts represent another way in which students can determine an unknown word's meaning, by focusing on prefixes, suffixes, and root words to find familiar patterns in unfamiliar words
- Cognates are words in two or more languages that share a common origin and help English learners link English words to their primary languages.

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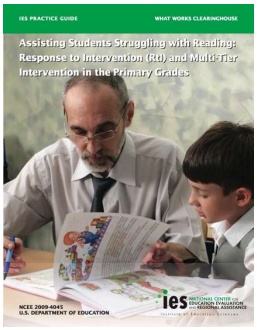
Tier 3: General recommendation from IES Practice Guide

Provide intensive instruction daily that promotes the development of various components of reading proficiency to students who show minimal progress after reasonable time in tier 2 small-group instruction.



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Interventions for ELs in Tier 3

- Tier 3: Intensive, individual intervention
- If after two rounds of Tier 3 intervention with fidelity, an English learner has not progressed to the level of his/her 'true peers,' he or she should be assessed for exceptionality
- Any referral received, regardless of the tier, must be reviewed by a planning and placement team.

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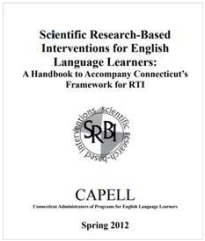
Tier 3 interventions incorporate:



- intensive and research-based small group instruction
- additional time each day – during, before, or after school
- progress monitoring every week, with instruction adjusted based on findings
- all personnel working together to assist the child (SLP, OT, reading specialist, etc.)
- parents involved and provided with data about their child's performance
- assistance may be in the classroom and in pull-out programs

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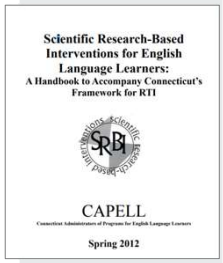
Tier 3 interventions and considerations for ELs

Tier 3	All Students	Considerations for ELs
Interventions  	• Appropriate short-term (8 to 20 weeks) interventions: well-matched to students' specific academic, social/behavioral needs • more intensive or individualized than Tier II interventions	• Interventions can include the option of receiving modified curriculum from Tiers I and II • curriculum and instruction address the specific learning needs

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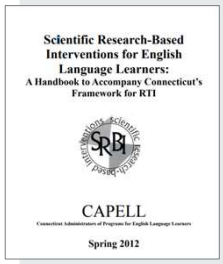
Tier 3 interventions and considerations for ELs

Tier 3	All Students	Considerations for ELs
Interventions  	• delivered to homogeneous groups (i.e., students with similar needs) • teacher:student ratio up to 1:3 • implemented with fidelity • supplemental to core program and based on the Common Core State Standards	• progress is carefully and frequently monitored • may include new and different resources

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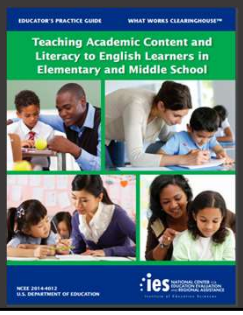
Tier 3: Interventions for ELs

Provide scaffolded instruction that includes frequent opportunities for students to practice and review newly learned skills and concepts in various contexts to promote retention.



- Scaffold students' learning by dividing instructional activities into small, manageable units.
- Teach students in an explicit, systematic manner, using ample modeling and think-alouds to depict how to complete each instructional task.
- Conduct frequent checks for student understanding and scaffold their learning and instructional tasks as needed.

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Source

- Data-Driven Implementation of Tiered Interventions with English Learners
  - *Session 1* (REL Northeast and Islands, February 1, 2018) This webinar is the first in a three-part training series for Connecticut educators on how to effectively implement response to intervention (RTI), or scientific research-based interventions (SRBI), with English learner students. Dr. Sarah Moore and Lindsey Massoud from the Center for Applied Linguistics provide background on RTI and English learners and offer strategies for and examples of implementing Tier 1 supports.
  - *Session 2* (REL Northeast and Islands, March 1, 2018) This webinar is the second in a three-part training series for Connecticut educators on how to effectively implement response to intervention (RTI), or scientific research-based interventions (SRBI), with English learner students. Dr. Sarah Moore and Lindsey Massoud from the Center for Applied Linguistics review the collaborative use of data for distinguishing between the sources of students' difficulties as well as modifications for screening and monitoring progress appropriate for English learners.
  - *Session 3* (REL Northeast and Islands, March 22, 2018) This webinar is the third in a three-part training series for Connecticut educators on how to effectively implement response to intervention (RTI), or scientific research-based interventions (SRBI), with English learner students. Dr. Sarah Moore and Lindsey Massoud from the Center for Applied Linguistics discuss how to make data-driven decisions regarding appropriate interventions for English learners in Tiers 2 and 3, and modifications to Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for English learners.

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