



# International Reading Association Webinar Series on RTI Guiding Principle #1: Instruction

**RTI is first and foremost intended to prevent problems by optimizing initial language and literacy instruction.**

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# What is Response to Intervention?

- **New (alternative) process for identifying specific learning disabilities**
- **Origins - President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2002)**
  - **Children with LD should first be considered general education students;**
  - **Special education should embrace a model of prevention as opposed to failure.**

# IDEA (2004) and RTI

“...when determining whether a child has a specific learning disability as defined in section 602, a local educational agency shall NOT be required to take into consideration whether a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability [P.L. 108-446, 614(b)(6)(A)]

“In determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, a local educational agency may use a process that determines if the **child responds to scientific, research-based intervention** as a part of the evaluation procedures...” [P.L. 108-446, 614(b)(6)(B)]

# Important Facts about Law/Regulations

- What it does NOT include
  - RTI is not named as such
  - Models, programs, approaches (e.g., 3-tier model) intentionally not specified
  - Screening not mandated
- What it does include
  - Requires data-based documentation of what is done and repeated assessments at reasonable intervals
  - Scientific, research-based interventions

# Identification vs. Prevention

- RTI as Identification
  - Measurement problem
  - Emphasizes standardization
- RTI as Prevention
  - Instructional problem
  - Emphasizes responsive teaching

# Examples of RTI Approaches

- Approaches emphasizing standardization
  - Standard Protocol (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006)
  - Problem-solving (Marston et al., 2003)
- Approaches emphasizing responsive teaching
  - Interactive Strategies Approach (ISA) (Vellutino & Scanlon, 2002)
  - Comprehensive Intervention (CIM) (Dorn, et al., 2007)



# **IRA Guiding Principles for RTI**

- 1. Instruction**
- 2. Responsive Teaching and Differentiation**
- 3. Assessment**
- 4. Collaboration**
- 5. Systemic and Comprehensive**
- 6. Teacher Expertise**

**[http://www.reading.org/General/Conferences/RTIW\\_ebinars.aspx](http://www.reading.org/General/Conferences/RTIW_ebinars.aspx)**

# IRA Guidelines on RTI

## Principle #1-A: Instruction

- Whatever approach is taken to RTI, it should ensure optimal instruction for each student at all levels of schooling.
- It should prevent serious language and literacy problems through increasingly differentiated and intensified assessment and instruction, and reduce the disproportionate number of minorities and English language learners identified as learning disabled.





# IRA Guidelines on RTI

## Principle #1-B: Instruction

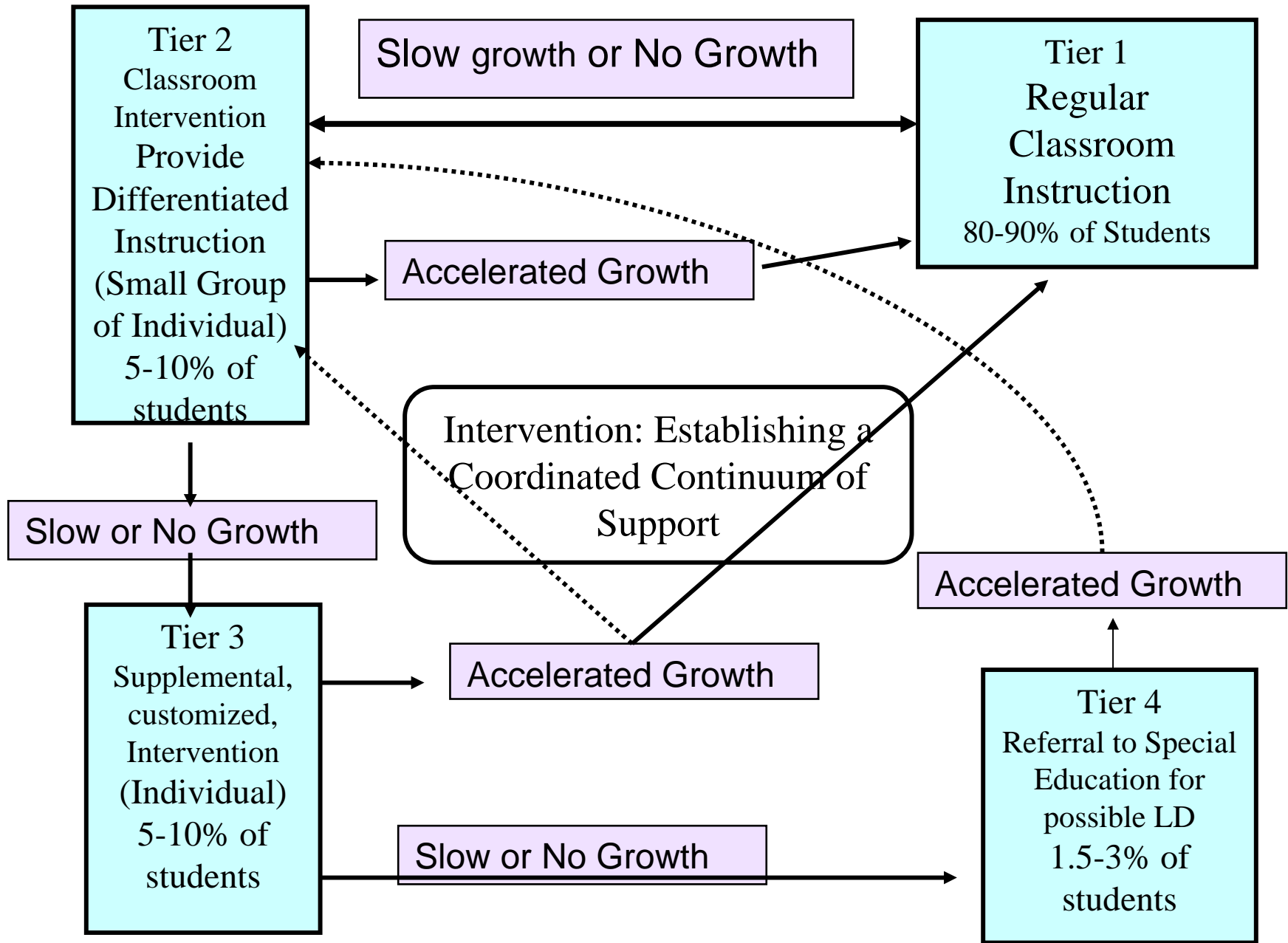
- Instruction and assessment conducted by the classroom teacher are central to the success of RTI and must address the needs of all students including those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Evidence shows that effective classroom instruction can reduce substantially the number of students who are inappropriately classified as learning disabled.



# Principle 1: Scientific Research-based Instruction (Points 4 & 5)

- The success of RTI depends on the classroom teacher's use of research-based practices.
- Research-based practices must not only provide information about “what works,” but also what works with whom, by whom, in what contexts, and on which outcomes.

# Possible RTI Approach



# Good Teaching Matters

- “Many students currently identified as learning disabled would not have been identified if instruction had been appropriately targeted and responsive” (Scanlon et al. 2008, p. 1)
- Assess student responses to good first instruction within the classroom.
- Adapt instruction within the core reading program as opposed to creating totally new programs.
- Use multiple strategies to promote learning.

# IRA Guidelines on RTI

## Principle #1-C: Instruction

- A successful RTI process begins with the **highest quality classroom core instruction**; that is, instruction that encompasses all areas of language and literacy as part of a **coherent curriculum** that is **developmentally appropriate** for preK-12 students and does not underestimate their potential for language and literacy learning.
- This core instruction may or may not involve commercial programs and, in all cases, must be provided by an informed, competent classroom teacher.



# Research—Teachers' Core Instruction

- The impact of the teacher is the single most powerful variable in explaining student reading achievement (Nye et al. 2004)
- Effects of effective/ineffective teachers on students reading achievement are cumulative (Bembry et al, 1998)
  - The greater the number of effective teachers students had over 3 years, the higher the students' achievement
  - Students taught by consistently ineffective teachers scored in 29th percentile compared with those taught by consistently effective teachers who scored in 70th percentile

# What is a Strong Core Program?

- It is NOT
  - A different program for every student
  - Different assignments for every student
- It IS
  - Identification of major ideas/concepts/skills -- what's important?
  - Intentional planning of instruction matched to outcomes -- what does everyone get?
  - Responsive teaching of individual students -- what is required to help specific students be successful?

# What Research Says

- Pairing effective supplementary instruction with appropriate classroom lessons produces better gains than classroom reading alone (Mathes et al., 2005)
- Consistency in literacy instruction is related to better student outcomes (Mosenthal, Lipson et al., 2004)
- Although collaboration between intervention and classroom teachers is rare, it is associated with stronger reading outcomes (Borman et al., 2001)



# Start with Good First Instruction

- Developmentally-appropriate Curriculum
- Comprehensive and balanced literacy program: "including the use of **scientifically based instructional practices.**"
- Explicit instruction in different component areas of literacy at different developmental stages
- Assessment that informs instruction
- Extensive opportunity to read and write
- Different materials, tasks, and approaches to accomplish different outcomes
- Different texts for different purposes
- Instruction that is differentiated and responsive to students' needs



# IRA Guidelines on RTI

## Principle #1-E: Instruction

- Research on instructional practices must not only provide information about “what works,” but also what works with whom, by whom, in what contexts, and on which outcomes. The effectiveness of a particular practice needs to have been demonstrated with the types of students who will receive this instruction, notably students from rural/urban areas as well as from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- **Join us for A Webinar on RTI and Linguistic Diversity on April 15 at 6 pm EST**



# IRA Guidelines on RTI

## Principle #1-F: Instruction

- Research evidence frequently represents the effectiveness of an instructional practice “on average,” which suggests that some students benefited and others did not. This means that instruction must be provided by a teacher who understands the intent of the research-based practice being used and has the professional expertise and responsibility to plan instruction and adapt programs and materials as needed (see Expertise Principle).

# Instructional Decisions

- Long-term goals
- Outcomes/focus for instruction (what)
  - Components
- Organization and Scheduling (when and where)
- Methods (how)
- Materials and tasks (what will Ss do/read)
- Assessment (how will we know)
- Differentiation (how much of what things? How will this change developmentally? For individuals?)
  - Grouping
  - Methods
  - Materials
  - Tasks
  - Contexts



# Focus on the Big Picture: Long-term Goals

- ◆ Think about the long-term expectations or outcomes of your instruction (think in terms of PreK-12, not just one grade)
- ◆ Ask yourself
  - Are students developing the inclination/ability to read for **purpose** and **pleasure**?
  - Are we providing them the strategies and dispositions necessary to be lifelong learners?
  - Are students communicating effectively through reading, writing, listening, speaking and viewing?
  - Are students becoming strategic, self-regulating learners?
  - Are students able to engage in self-assessment and self-reflection?
  - Do students know how to apply dispositions and strategies to other subject areas and to their lives?

# Instructional Decisions

- **Long-term goals**
- **Outcomes/focus for instruction (what)**
  - **Components**
- Organization and Scheduling (when and where)
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# Classroom Instruction

- ◆ Comprehensive and balanced literacy program: "including the use of scientifically-based instructional practices."
- ◆ Explicit instruction in different component areas of literacy at different developmental stage

## Components

- Phonological Awareness
- Phonics/decoding
- Fluency
- Vocabulary/Oral language
- Comprehension
- Writing

# Phonological Awareness

- ◆ Explicit and dedicated instruction until mastered and then integrated with other reading activities and incorporated into decoding and encoding instruction
  - except in extreme cases, more important in K-2nd grade
- ◆ Learning to read builds phonological awareness (Castle & Colhart, 2004)
- ◆ Blending and segmenting phonemes appears to be more highly associated with later reading skills than other skills such as rhyming
  - When used in combination with print (e.g., letters), phonological awareness activities appear to be more effective



# Decoding and Phonics

- ◆ The ability to read unfamiliar words
  - integrated use of decoding strategies including firm grasp of rules of phonics
- ◆ Grapheme-phoneme correspondence
- ◆ Phonics - structural rules of decoding
- ◆ Structural analysis (syllables)
- ◆ Acquisition of orthographic knowledge
  - Encoding -- spelling
  - Morphemes and morphological awareness
    - root words, prefixes, suffixes
- ◆ A variety ways of to teach decoding and phonics

# Fluency

- ◆ Automatic and fluent reading of words and connected text
  - When reading aloud, includes appropriate prosody
  - Influenced by text difficulty (Armbruster)
- ◆ Fluency is associated with comprehension
- ◆ Considered the bridge between decoding and comprehension (Samuels)
- ◆ Strategies
  - Repeated reading of connected text
  - Wide reading -- several texts on the same subject
  - Readers' Theater

# Oral Language

- Links between language and literacy at all levels
- Phonemic
- Morphological
- Syntactic
- Semantic
  - includes vocabulary
  - background and academic knowledge
- Pragmatics
  - knowledge about how to use language e.g., conversations
  - genre
  - text structure



# Comprehension

- ◆ The ability to actively extract and construct meaning from text -- a dynamic and interactive process
  - ◆ Components of comprehension
    - oral language -- vocabulary and listening comprehension
    - background and academic knowledge
    - strategies
    - knowledge of text structure and features
  - ◆ Explicit instruction in each component is associated with stronger comprehension
  - ◆ Focus on understanding the content may be more important than specific strategies
    - discussion
    - questioning, especially open-ended questions
  - ◆ Comprehension monitoring and strategic reading

# Writing

- A critical aspect of literacy that is frequently ignored
- Emergent writing
- Opportunities to write
- Explicit instruction in the elements of writing
  - text structure
  - processes
  - revision
- Writers' Workshop
  - Supports the iterative process of writing including reviewing and revising

# Integrating all of the components

- While the individual components deserve targeted and explicit instruction
- Students are unlikely to integrate these skills unless they are explicitly taught to integrate them

# Instructional Decisions

- Long-term goals
- Outcomes/focus for instruction (what)
- **Organization and Scheduling (when and where)**
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# Orchestrating the Literacy Block

## Components:

- ◆ Teacher/child-managed Whole Class
- ◆ Teacher/child-managed Small Group
  - Opportunity to focus on more advanced skills or practice/review of skills not yet mastered
  - "Tier" Intervention (s)
  - --Differentiated instruction
  - Flexible and and have a variety of purposes
- ◆ Child and Peer-managed Center/Station Activities
  - Meaningful learning opportunities -- not busy work
  - Release of responsibility
- ◆ **Independent and/or Sustained Engagement with Text**
- ◆ **Shared/Paired Reading**
- ◆ **Read Alouds**



# Goals for Literacy Block

- ◆ Once Components are determined for a balanced language arts program, it is ...

# Block Scheduling

## K-6: Core Instructional Approaches for READING 90-120 Minutes (Depending on components addressed in this block)

READING Instruction	Goal(s) and Key areas of Focus	Standards of Practice
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Teacher Managed Whole Group Instruction</b>	<b>GOAL:</b> <b>Focus:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Key Characteristics</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Teacher/child-managed Small Groups</b>	<b>GOAL:</b> <b>Focus:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Key Characteristics</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Child/Peer-managed Stations</b> And/or <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Individual or Small Intervention Groups</b>	<b>GOAL:</b> <b>Focus:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Key Characteristics</li> </ul>

# Reading Block (continued)

READING Instruction	Goal(s) and Key areas of Focus	Standards of Practice
□ <b>Independent and/or Sustained Engagement with Text</b>	<b>GOAL:</b> <b>Focus:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time</li><li>• Key Characteristics</li></ul>
□ <b>Teacher Read Aloud</b>	<b>GOAL:</b> <b>Focus:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time</li><li>• Key Characteristics</li></ul>
□ <b>Word Work</b>	<b>GOAL:</b> <b>Focus:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time</li><li>• Key Characteristics</li></ul>

# Opportunity

- Students need opportunities to engage in meaningful and authentic experiences
  - ◆ Sustained reading
  - ◆ Sustained writing

# Instructional Decisions

- Long-term Goals
- Outcomes/focus for instruction (what)
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- **Methods (how)**
- ~~Materials and tasks (what will Ss do/read)~~
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# IRA Guidelines on RTI



## Principle #1-G: Instruction


- When core language and literacy instruction is not effective for a particular student, it should be modified to address more closely the needs and abilities of the student.
- Classroom teachers, at times in collaboration with other experts, must exercise their best professional judgment in providing responsive teaching and differentiation.

**Join us for A Webinar on Responsive Teaching and Differentiation on March 23 at 8 pm EST**

## Opportunity: Re-examining the Obvious

- Opportunities for large amounts of reading and writing
- **Complexity** -- usually involving a variety of activity
- Grouping
- Purposeful focus on productive work
- Independent as well as guided work
- Collaborative discussions
- Rapid transitions
- Effective management; well-established routines and lively pace of instruction support the complexity that is present
- **Block scheduling produces chunks of uninterrupted instructional time for literacy**
- **Reading and writing support each other in the schedule and the curriculum**

# Principle 1: Scientific Research-based Instruction (Points 4 & 5)

- The success of RTI depends on the classroom teacher's use of research-based practices.
  - Research-based practices must not only provide information about “what works,” but also what works with whom, by whom, in what contexts, and on which outcomes.
- 



# Scientific Research-based Instruction (conti).

- Research evidence frequently represents the effectiveness of an instructional practice on average, which suggests that some students benefited and others did not.
- Students have different needs and they may not respond similarly, even when research-based instruction occurs.
- No single approach to instruction or intervention can address the broad and varied goals and needs of all students, especially those from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds

# Instructional Decisions

- Long-term Goals
- Outcomes/focus for instruction (what)
- Organization and Scheduling (when and where)
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- **Materials and tasks (what will Ss do/read)**
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# RTI Is Not A “One Size Fits All” Approach



- None of the intervention programs studied were equally effective for all of the children studied. There may be individual characteristics of children that predispose them to more or less success with a particular program.
- It's clear we need to move away from a “one-size-fits-all” mentality and apply continuous assessment approaches that evaluate how well an instructional program is working with particular students. (Lyon et al., 2001)

# Instructional Decisions

- Long-term Goals
- Outcomes/focus for instruction (what)
- Organization and Scheduling (when and where)
- Methods (how)
- ~~Materials and tasks (what will Ss do/read)~~
- **Assessment (how will we know)**
- ~~Differentiation (how much of what things? How will this change developmentally? For individuals?)~~
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# Assessment

- Use data to inform instruction and engage in data-based conversations with colleagues to make decisions (formative assessment)
- Use a range of assessment information
- Create an assessment system: Try to avoid both too little and too much assessment
  - Screening
  - Progress Monitoring
  - Diagnostic

# Instructional Decisions


- Long-term Goals
- Outcomes/focus for instruction (what)
- Organization and Scheduling (when and where)
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- Assessment (how will we know)
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  - **Contexts**

# RTI: Roles & Responsibilities

- All school personnel need to play a number of important roles in using RTI to identify learners needs and provide needed instruction to all students
- Roles will require some fundamental changes in the way general education and special education engage in assessment and intervention activities


***New Roles to Response in Intervention:  
Creating Success for Schools and  
Children, 2006***

# RTI AND READING TEACHERS

- Identify systemic areas of student need and appropriate instructional strategies;
  - Develop, lead, and evaluate school literacy programs;
  - Identify and analyze evidence-based approaches to literacy assessment and instruction;
  - Provide PD for all teachers
- 



# Reflecting on Your Current System

- **What is working?**
  - **What is not working?**
  - **Where does the system begin to break down?**
  - **What are reasonable next steps?**
  - **What do you need in order to take the next step?**
- 

# Taking Stock

1. What are the strengths and areas for growth of the current Literacy programs?
2. Are all students receiving appropriate instruction designed to improve their literacy development and achievement?
3. Is daily small-group differentiated instruction, delivered by the classroom teacher, part of the core instructional program?
4. Is there consistency within and across grade levels in how language arts time is allocated across the grades and content domains?
5. Has the classroom teacher received professional development in research-based methods to prevent difficulties before they arise and refine their use as soon as they have evidence that students are struggling in reading?



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- ◆ Wanzek, J. & Vaughn, S. (2008). Response to varying amounts of time in reading intervention for students with low response to intervention. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 41*(2), 126-142.

# Selected Professional Development and Instructional resources:

- ◆ IRA: ReadWriteThink <http://www.readwritethink.org/>
- ◆ PD 360 <http://www.pd360.com>
- ◆ Barb Marinak's webpage: <http://www.personal.psu.edu/bam234/>
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