What is RTI?

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs (rtinetwork.org).

Guiding Principles

The International Reading Association outlines guiding principles of RTI which include: instruction, responsive teaching and differentiation, assessment, collaboration, a systematic and comprehensive approach, and teacher expertise (Honchell, 2010).

The Problems and the Possibilities

The challenges we face as teachers are strained caseloads, paperwork responsibilities, and most often, scheduling conflicts (Swanson et al., 2012).

Standard treatment options indicate that all learners benefit from the same instruction (Johnston, 2011).

There is a constant push for student achievement and teacher accountability.

At times we assume that the problem lies within the child, when do we challenge the integrity of the interventions being delivered? (Beecher, 2011).

With this model, it gives us the opportunity to critically analyze our teaching practices, engage in professional development, and intervene early with our most struggling learners (Swanson et al., 2012).

We are able to successfully problem-solve and analyze data with colleagues (Swanson et al., 2012).

There is often a feeling of acceptance among school personnel and in the school community (Swanson et al., 2012).

There is a shared responsibility for student achievement and common goals (Swanson et al., 2012).

Attributes of Effective Interventions

There is not one approach that is essential to student achievement. There must be careful attention to student progress with expert teaching (Lipson & Wixson, 2012).

Teachers must not overlook the value of the processing system; reading is a complex process. Filling in the gaps is simply not enough (Clay, 2007).

There is a large focus on materials for student achievement, not the teacher. The expertise lies within the teacher in order to provide the most meaningful, effective instruction (Johnston, 2011).

A highly skilled and prepared teacher far exceeds any program (O’Conner, Briggs, & Forbes, 2013).

Teacher skill is an unfailing predictor of responsiveness of students (O’Conner & Klingner, 2010).