

# Leading for Literacy

BRIEF AND INFOGRAPHIC



## Increasing Instructional Intensity Across Tiers of Support

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Students with intensive reading needs, including those who score below the screener’s cut score and those in need of individualized intervention, should receive explicit, systematic instruction across a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) framework. Whether it is a student who is not responding to grade level instruction, or a student who is not responding to an intervention platform delivered with fidelity, intensifying instruction across the tiers maximizes the supports being provided to students with the most severe and persistent reading needs (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Vaughn, 2014).

### Tier I

All students receive core, grade level reading instruction – including students who score below the screener’s cut score and students in need of individualized instruction. High-quality Tier I reading instruction is delivered in both whole and small group formats – and is aligned with the core reading program. At the elementary school level, core reading instruction should address the essential components of reading, with emphasis shifting appropriately at each grade. This includes explicit, systematic strategy instruction in the areas of phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

### Tier II

Tier II instruction includes students who score below the screener’s cut score – as well as students who may potentially need individualized instruction. To increase the intensity of instruction for students receiving Tier II supports, explicit and systematic instruction typically occurs in small groups of 3-8 students, among students with similar reading needs (i.e., foundational reading skills, or comprehension). The focus of this instruction is on teaching, reviewing, and practicing targeted skills from Tier I instruction using a standardized intervention program. Tier II instruction is delivered supplementally, or in addition to, to Tier I (core) instruction.

### Tier III

Tier III instruction typically includes students who need individualized instruction. To further increase the intensity of instruction for students receiving Tier III supports, this instruction occurs in very small groups (up to 3 students) or is 1:1. Students who do not respond to a Tier II intervention that is delivered with fidelity require intensive instruction at Tier III. This instruction is even more explicit and systematic, and uses a highly structured evidence-based intervention program to address individual needs. Tier III instruction typically focuses on up to three essential components of reading (e.g., phonics and fluency). Tier III instruction is delivered supplementally, or in addition to, to Tier I (core) instruction and in place of, or in addition to, Tier II instruction.

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## Conclusion

With effective instruction and practice opportunities, most students become fluent readers and understand what they read. In other words, they develop foundational reading skills (Baker, S.K., Turtura, J., & Gearin, B. (2017). However, many students have difficulty in spite of these efforts. For these students, instruction and practice should be targeted to address their difficulties as early as possible – using intensification and [data-based individualization](#) to tailor instruction to meet their needs.

## Citations

Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L., & Vaughn S. (2014). What is intensive instruction and why is it important? TEACHING Exceptional Children, 46(4), pp 13-18. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0040059914522966>

Baker, S.K., Turtura, J., & Gearin, B. (2017). Succeeding in school: Essential features of literacy development. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Special Education Programs, National Center on Improving Literacy. Retrieved from <http://improvingliteracy.org>.

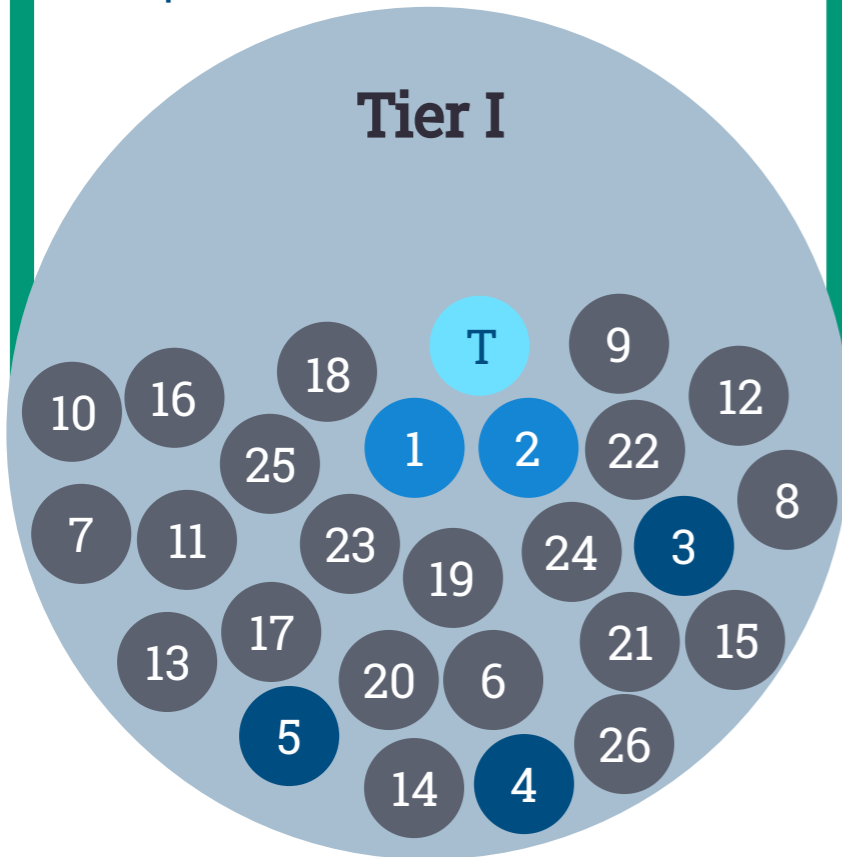


# Increasing Intensity Across Tiers of Instruction

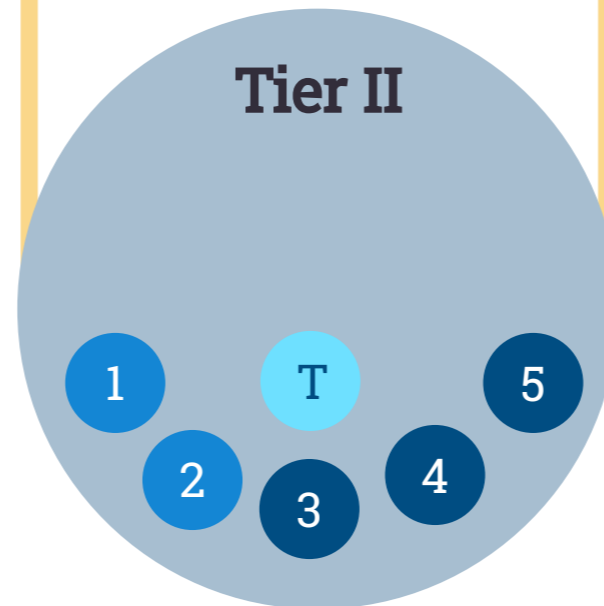
Explicit, systematic instruction with an increase in intensity



- All Students - whole group and small group
- Explicit, systematic, strategy instruction using core reading program: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension



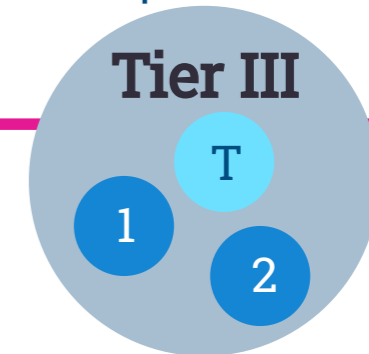
- Students below benchmark
- In addition to Tier I
- More explicit and systematic
- Teach/review/practice targeted skills from Tier 1 instruction



## Key

- Teacher (light blue circle)
- Student (dark grey circle)
- Students who score below the screener's cut score (dark blue circle)
- Students in need of individualized instruction (medium blue circle)

- Students who do not respond to Tier II intervention
- Explicit, systematic delivery of highly structured evidence-based program to address individual needs
- Typically focuses on up to three essential components of reading



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