



# **Effective Instruction for Middle School Students with Reading Difficulties:**

## The Reading Teacher's Sourcebook

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

## Appendix, Part 2

## Guidelines for Reviewing a Reading Program

### Introduction

This document was developed to assist the Curriculum and Instruction Team at the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) as they review reading programs for grades 4–12 to determine alignment with current reading research.

### Process of Using Guidelines

When reviewing a reading program thoroughly, it is not sufficient to examine only a sample of lessons. In order to determine whether a program is aligned with current reading research, it is essential to review all the teacher and student materials. This document was developed to help navigate a reviewer through the lengthy but important process of reviewing a reading program. It was designed to be utilized in conjunction with the resources listed below. When using this document, place a check mark in either the yes or no column after each question. If the answer is not clear or not evident, write “not evident” in the comments column and leave the yes/no columns blank. It is very important to use the comments column to detail specific examples, note questions, etc. When a question is marked “no” or “not evident,” it is a concern that the program may not be aligned with current reading research. That is, if a reading program is aligned with current reading research, then “yes” will be marked on all of the questions with evidence to support this assertion written in the comments column.

Note that this document includes the sequence of instruction from 4th through 12th grade.

It is expected that a comprehensive reading program will incorporate the five components of reading identified by the National Reading Panel (phonological/phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) and reflect the elements of instructional design.

The following resources on the FCRR Web site ([www.fcrr.org](http://www.fcrr.org)) will assist educators who use this tool to guide their review of a reading program:

- Glossary of Reading Terms (boldface words in the Guidelines are in the Glossary).
- Continuum of Phonological Awareness Skills.
- Continuum of Word Types.
- FCRR Reports (reviews of reading programs already posted).
- References and Resources for Review of Reading Programs.

The guidelines begin on the next page.

## Overall Instructional Design and Pedagogy of the Reading Program

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Is there a clear “road map” or “blueprint” for teachers to get an overall picture of the program (e.g., scope and sequence)?			
Are goals and objectives clearly stated?			
Are there resources available to help the teacher understand the rationale for the instructional approach and strategies utilized in the program (e.g., articles, references, and reliable Web sites)?			
Is instruction consistently explicit?			
Is instruction consistently systematic?			
Is there a coherent instructional design (e.g., are the components of reading clearly linked within as well as across each component)?			
Are there consistent “teacher-friendly” instructional routines that include direct instruction, modeling, guided practice, student practice and application with feedback, and generalization?			
Are there aligned student materials?			
Does the difficulty of the text increase as students’ skills strengthen?			
Are there ample guided student practice opportunities, including multiple opportunities for explicit teaching and teacher directed feedback, (15 or more) needed for struggling readers?			
Are all of the activities (e.g., centers) reading related (i.e., word-building, fluency practice)?			
Are teachers encouraged to give immediate corrective feedback?			
Is scaffolding a prominent part of the lessons?			
Are there specific instructions for scaffolding?			
Is differentiated instruction prominent?			
Is instruction individualized based on assessment?			
Are there guidelines and materials for flexible grouping?			
Is small-group instruction with (small teacher-pupil ratio) part of daily instruction?			
Is movement from group to group based on student progress?			
Are enrichment activities included for advancing/proceeding students?			
In addition to the components of reading, are the dimensions of spelling, writing, oral language, motivation/engagement and listening comprehension addressed?			

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Word Analysis (WA) Instruction/Word Study  
Phonological analysis, decoding, structural analysis, syllabication,  
context clues, spelling, & dictionary skills

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Overall, does instruction progress from easier word analysis activities to more difficult?			
Is word analysis only a small portion of each lesson (10 to 20 minutes)?			
Does the program emphasize the use of grade-appropriate dictionaries and student-friendly explanations?			
Is there explicit instruction in the use and weaknesses of context clues to determine word meaning?			
Is explicit instruction in the meaning of roots and affixes provided and are there activities for students to manipulate common roots and affixes to analyze the relationship of spelling to meaning of complex words?			
Are word parts that occur with high frequency (such as un, re, and in) introduced over those that occur in only a few words?			
Are the limitations of structural analysis made clear?			
Are there activities for distinguishing and interpreting words with multiple meanings?			
Does the program include word origins, derivations, synonyms, antonyms, and idioms to determine the meaning of words and phrases?			
Are words used in word analysis activities also found in the student text?			
Once word analysis strategies have been mastered, are these strategies immediately applied to reading and interpreting familiar decodable connected text?			
Is there ample unfamiliar decodable text to provide practice with word analysis strategies?			
Are there ample opportunities to read multisyllabic words daily?			
Is there a section of the program devoted to word study?			
Does the program include spelling strategies (e.g., word sorts, categorization activities, word-building activities, analogical reasoning activities)?			

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## Fluency Instruction

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Is fluency building a part of each day's lesson?			
Does fluency-based instruction focus on developing accuracy, rate, and prosody?			
Do fluency-building routines include goal setting to measure and increase word-level fluency instruction and practice, reading accuracy and passage reading rate, teacher or peer feedback, and timed readings?			
Is fluency assessed regularly?			
Is there a fluency goal for each set of grade levels (e.g., 4-5 [113-127 wpm], 6-8 [140-142 wpm])? (Based on Hasbrouk and Tindal's end-of-the-year oral reading fluency scores at the 40th percentile.)			
Are ample practice materials and opportunities at appropriate reading levels (independent and/or instructional) provided?			
Are there opportunities to read narrative and expository text aloud?			
Are research-based fluency strategies included (e.g., repeated reading, peer reading, tape-assisted reading, choral reading, student-adult reading)?			

## Vocabulary Instruction

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Is there a component that incorporates reading and writing vocabulary?			
Is systematic and explicit instruction in morphemic analysis provided to support building word meaning through knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes?			
Is high-level terminology used to bring richness of language to the classroom?			
Are there ample activities provided to practice writing vocabulary in context?			
Are there opportunities for wide, independent reading?			
Is there repeated exposure to vocabulary in many contexts?			

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## Vocabulary Instruction

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Is there frequent use of teacher read-alouds using engaging books with embedded explanation and instruction?			
Is diverse vocabulary through listening and reading stories and informational text provided?			
Are a limited number of words selected for robust, explicit vocabulary instruction?			
Do sources of vocabulary instruction include words from read-aloud stories, words from core reading programs, words from reading intervention programs, and words from content area instruction?			
Are only important (words students must know to understand a concept or text), useful (words that may be encountered many times), and difficult (multiple meanings, idioms) words taught?			
Are vocabulary words reviewed cumulatively? For example, are words selected for instruction that are unknown, critical to passage understanding, and likely to be encountered in the future?			
Are ample opportunities to engage in oral vocabulary activities provided?			
Are student-friendly explanations as well as dictionary definitions used?			
Are word-learning strategies taught?			
Does the instructional routine for vocabulary include: introducing the word, presenting a student-friendly explanation, illustrating the word with examples, and checking the students' understanding?			
Are ample opportunities to use word-learning strategies provided?			
Is word awareness introduced through the use of word walls; vocabulary logs; and practice activities that are engaging, provide multiple exposures, encourage deep processing, and connect word meaning to prior knowledge?			
Is vocabulary taught both directly and indirectly?			
Are rich contexts for vocabulary learning provided?			
Are repetition and multiple exposures to vocabulary items prevalent?			
Are vocabulary tasks restructured when necessary?			
Is computer technology used to help teach vocabulary?			

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## Comprehension Instruction

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Is comprehension monitoring taught?			
Is the use of multiple strategies prevalent?			
Are cooperative learning groups part of instruction?			
Are frequent opportunities to answer and generate questions provided?			
Are graphic and semantic organizers, including story maps, used?			
Are there ample opportunities to engage in discussions relating to the meaning of text?			
Are there ample opportunities to read narrative and expository text on independent and instructional levels?			
Is explicit instruction in different text structures included?			
Are before-, during- and after-reading comprehension strategies emphasized?			
Is prior knowledge activated before reading?			
Are ample opportunities provided to generate questions during reading to improve engagement with and processing of text?			
Are there ample opportunities to employ a conceptual understanding of beginning, middle, and end in narrative text?			
Is learning to determine which strategy to use and why (metacognition) part of instruction?			
Are connections made between previously learned strategies and new text?			
Are strategies applied for authentic purposes using appropriate text?			
Is there an emphasis on creating independent strategic learners?			
Is strategy instruction cumulative over the course of the year?			
Are there frequent opportunities to discuss story elements and compare stories?			
Are elements of story grammar (setting, characters, important events, etc.) used for retelling a story?			
Are summarization strategies taught?			
Are opportunities provided to interpret information from charts, graphs, tables, and diagrams and connect it to text?			
Does text contain familiar concepts and vocabulary?			
Are main idea strategies previously taught (e.g., using pictures, then individual sentence, then paragraphs, etc.)?			

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Comprehension Instruction				
Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)	
Are ample opportunities to employ main idea strategies using more complex texts, where the main idea is not explicit, provided?				

Listening Comprehension				
Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)	
Is there an element of the program that requires students to follow specific oral directions in order to perform or complete written activities?				
Are ample opportunities to utilize listening comprehension strategies provided?				
Are there ample opportunities to listen to a variety of text structures?				
Are there ample opportunities to use reflective (describing feelings/emotions that accompany what is said instead of information given) and responsive (e.g., repeating, paraphrasing, summarizing, questioning for elaboration and/or clarification) listening skills to make connections and build on ideas of the author?				

Motivation and Engagement				
Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)	
Is there a component of the program that fosters intrinsic motivation in students (e.g., student selection of books, various genres of book titles, multicultural/international book titles)?				
Are there clear content goals for supporting intrinsic reading motivation?				
Is there a component of the program that fosters extrinsic motivation in students (e.g., external recognition, rewards, or incentives)?				
Are there ample opportunities for students to engage in group activities (social motivation)?				
Are there personal learning goals provided for reading tasks?				
Are students given immediate feedback on reading progress?				

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## Assessment

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Is rigorous assessment included in the program?			
Is formative evaluation included?			
Are the assessment instruments reliable and valid?			
Do the assessments measure progress in word analysis, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension?			
Do the assessments identify students who are at risk or already experiencing difficulty learning to read?			
Does assessment aid teachers in making individualized instruction decisions?			
Does the program provide teacher guidance in response to assessment results?			

## Professional Development for the Reading Program

Characteristic	Yes	No	Comments (e.g., specific examples, strengths, concerns, questions)
Is there adequate time offered for teachers to learn new concepts and practice what they have learned (before implementation)?			
Is there a plan for coaches, mentors, peers, or outside experts to provide feedback to teachers and follow up assistance as they put new concepts into practice?			
Are teachers taught how to administer and interpret assessments that accompany the program?			
Is PD for the program customized to meet the varying needs of the participants (e.g., first-year teachers, coaches, principals)?			
Does the PD provide support (e.g., principal checklists, follow-up in class modeling, a video/CD for teachers to view modeled lessons, printed teaching charts, graphs, transparencies) to facilitate application of content?			



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## References & Resources



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Developed under funding from The Meadows Foundation and the Texas Education Agency



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- University of Texas Center for Reading and Language Arts. (2003c). *Special education reading project secondary institute — Effective instruction for secondary struggling readers: Research-based practices*. Austin, TX: Author.
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# Resources for the Reading Teacher

NOTE: The following lists of assessments, books, and Web sites are provided as examples to the reader. These items are not endorsed by the authors of this book nor their sponsors. The list is not exhaustive, and many measures and materials that may be very useful to the reader may be missing from this list. The reader is urged to investigate several sources before selecting any materials.

## SCREENING MEASURES

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*AIMSweb assessment system* (oral reading fluency and maze tests). Information available at <http://www.edformation.com/aimswweb.htm>, [info@edformation.com](mailto:info@edformation.com), 1-888-944-1882, or 320-245-2401.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. (2003). *Dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills* (6th ed.). Longmont, CO: Sopris West. Information available at <http://www.sopriswest.com> or <http://dibels.uoregon.edu>

Hammill, D. D., Wiederholt, J., & Allen, E. A. (2006). *Test of silent contextual reading fluency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Mather, N., Hammill, D. D., Allen, E. A., & Roberts, R. (2004). *Test of silent word reading fluency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

*Reading fluency monitor*. (2003). St. Paul, MN: Read Naturally. Information available at <http://www.readnaturally.com>

Torgesen, J. K., Wagner, R., & Rashotte, C. A. (1999). *Test of word reading efficiency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

## DIAGNOSTIC MEASURES

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### Phonics/Decoding & Spelling

*Assessing reading: Multiple measures for kindergarten through eighth grade.* Consortium on Reading Excellence. Information available at <http://www.corelearn.com> or 888-249-6155.

Cunningham, P. M. (1990). Names test: A quick assessment of decoding ability. *Reading Teacher, 44*, 124–129.

Duffelmeyer, F. A., Kruse, A. E., Merkley, D. J., & Fyfe, S. A. (1994). Further validation and enhancement of the names test. *Reading Teacher, 48*, 118–128.

Hasbrouck, J. E. (2006). *Quick phonics screener (QPS)*. St. Paul, MN: Read Naturally. Information available at <http://www.readnaturally.com> or 1-800-788-4085.

*Roswell-Chall diagnostic reading test of word analysis skills.* Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Service. Information available at <http://www.epsbooks.com> or 1-800-225-5750.

### Fluency

*AIMSweb assessment system* (oral reading fluency and maze tests). Information available at <http://www.edformation.com/aimswweb.htm>, [info@edformation.com](mailto:info@edformation.com), 888-944-1882, or 320-245-2401.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. (2003). *Dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills* (6th ed.; K–6). Longmont, CO: Sopris West. Information available at <http://dibels.uoregon.edu>

Hammill, D. D., Wiederholt, J., Allen, E. A. (2006). *Test of silent contextual reading fluency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Mather, N., Hammill, D. D., Allen, E. A., & Roberts, R. (2004). *Test of silent word reading fluency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

*Reading fluency monitor.* (2003). St. Paul, MN: Read Naturally. Information available at <http://www.readnaturally.com>

Torgesen, J. K., Wagner, R., & Rashotte, C. A. (1999). *Test of word reading efficiency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

### Comprehension

*Assessing reading: Multiple measures for kindergarten through eighth grade.* Consortium on Reading Excellence. Information available at <http://www.corelearn.com> or 888-249-6155.

Burns, P. C., & Roe, B. D. (2002). *Informal reading inventory preprimer to 12th grade* (6th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Leslie, L., & Caldwell, J. (2002). *Qualitative reading inventory* (QRI-3; 3rd ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Woods, M. L., & Moe, A. J. (2002). *Analytical reading inventory* (7th ed.) Prentice Hall.

## Progress Monitoring Measures

*AIMSweb assessment system* (oral reading fluency and maze tests). Information available at <http://www.edformation.com/aimsweb.htm>, [info@edformation.com](mailto:info@edformation.com), 888-944-1882, or 320-245-2401.

Fuchs, L., Hamlett, C., & Fuchs, D. *Monitoring basic skills progress* (computer tool for progress monitoring in reading and math). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed. Information available at <http://www.proedinc.com> or 800-897-3202.

Good, R. H., & Kaminski, R. (2003). *Dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills* (6th ed.; K–6). Longmont, CO: Sopris West. Information available at <http://dibels.uoregon.edu>

Hammill, D. D., Wiederholt, J., Allen, E. A. (2006). *Test of silent contextual reading fluency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Mather, N., Hammill, D. D., Allen, E. A., & Roberts, R. (2004). *Test of silent word reading fluency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

*Pearson PASeries* (grades 3–12). Pearson Education. Information available at <http://paseres.com>

*Reading fluency monitor*. (2003). St. Paul, MN: Read Naturally. Information available at <http://www.readnaturally.com>

Torgesen, J. K., Wagner, R., & Rashotte, C. A. (1999). *Test of word reading efficiency*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

## BOOKS

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Baumann, J. F., & Kame'enui, E. J. (2003). *Vocabulary instruction: Research to practice*. New York: Guilford.

Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M. G. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford.



- Block, C. C., & Pressley, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Comprehension instruction: Research-based best practices*. New York: Guilford.
- Carnine, D., Silbert, J., & Kameenui, E. J. (2004). *Direct instruction reading* (4th ed.). Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- CORE reading research anthology: The why? of reading instruction*. Consortium on Reading Excellence. Information available at <http://www.corelearn.com> 888-249-6155.
- CORE teaching reading sourcebook: For kindergarten through eighth grade*. Consortium on Reading Excellence. Information available at <http://www.corelearn.com> or 888-249-6155.
- Curtis, M. E., & Longo, A. M. (1999). *When adolescents can't read*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline.
- Deshler, D. D., & Schumaker, J. B. (2006). *Teaching adolescents with disabilities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Fletcher, J. M., Lyon, G. R., Fuchs, L. S., & Barnes, M. A. (2007). *Learning disabilities: From identification to intervention*. New York: Guilford.
- Fry, E. B., Kress, J. E., & Foutoukidis, D. L. (2000). *The reading teacher's book of lists* (4th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Graham, S., & Harris, K. (2005). *Effective strategies for teaching students with learning difficulties*. Baltimore: Brookes.
- Hall, S. L., & Moats, L. C. (1999). *Straight talk about reading*. Lincolnwood, IL: Contemporary Books.
- Heimlich, J. E., & Pittleman, S. D. (1986). *Semantic mapping: Classroom applications*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Idol, L., Nevin, A., & Paolucci-Whitcomb, P. (1999). *Models of curriculum-based assessment* (3rd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.
- International Dyslexia Association. *Research-based education and intervention: What we need to know*. Baltimore: Author.
- Jetton, T. L., & Dole, J. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Adolescent literacy research and practice*. New York: Guilford.
- McCardle, P., & Chhabra, V. (Eds.). (2004). *The voice of evidence in reading research*. Baltimore: Brookes.
- McEwan, E. K. (1998). *The principal's guide to raising reading achievement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- McEwan, E. K. (2001). *Raising reading achievement in middle and high schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

- Moats, L. C. (2000). *Speech to print*. New York: Brooks.
- Pressley, M. (1998). *Reading instruction that works*. New York: Guilford.
- Shaywitz, S. (2004). *Overcoming dyslexia*. New York: Alfred Knopf.
- Shinn, M. R. (Ed.). (1989). *Curriculum-based measurement: Assessing special children*. New York: Guilford.
- Simmons, D. C., & Kameenui, E. J. (1998). *What reading research tells us about children with diverse learning needs: Bases and basics*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Sprick, R., Sprick, M., & Garrison, M. (1993). *Interventions: Collaborative planning for students at risk*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Stahl, S. A. (1999). *Vocabulary development*. Newton Upper Falls, MA: Brookline Books.
- Sturtevant, E. G., Boyd, F. B., Brozo, W. G., Hinchman, K. A., Moore, D. W., & Alvermann, D. E. (2006). *Principled practices for adolescent literacy: A framework for instruction and policy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Sweet, A. P., & Snow, C. E. (Eds.). (2003). *Rethinking reading comprehension*. New York: Guilford.

## WEB SITES

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Center for Academic and Reading Skills (CARS) at the University of Texas Health Science Center  
Houston: <http://cars.uth.tmc.edu>

Center for Applied Linguistics: <http://www.cal.org>

Center on Instruction (collection of scientifically based research and information on K–12 instruction in reading, math, science, special education, and English language learning):  
<http://www.centeroninstruction.org>

National Center on Student Progress Monitoring (evaluations of progress monitoring assessments):  
<http://www.studentprogress.org>

Florida Center for Reading Research (descriptions and evaluations of programs): <http://www.fcrr.org>

International Reading Association: <http://www.reading.org>

National Reading Panel: <http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org>

Reading Next: A Vision for Action and Research in Middle and High School Literacy, a report to Carnegie Corp. of New York: <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/ReadingNext/ReadingNext.pdf>

Teaching LD Current Practice Alerts: [http://www.dldcec.org/ld\\_resources/alerts](http://www.dldcec.org/ld_resources/alerts)

U.S. Department of Education's No Child Left Behind homepage: <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at The University of Texas at Austin:  
<http://www.texasreading.org>

What Works Clearinghouse (evaluations of the effectiveness of interventions):  
<http://www.whatworks.ed.gov>

Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High School:  
<http://www.all4ed.org/publications/WritingNext/index.html>