



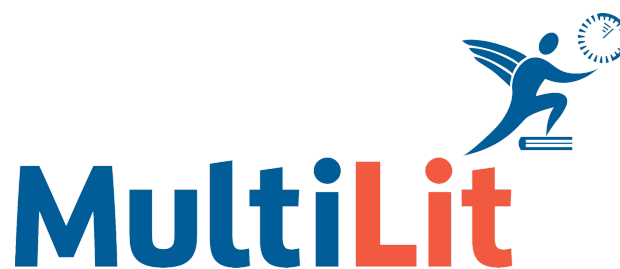
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AUSTRALIA

## 2023 RTI Conference Handouts

*Saturday 28th Oct*

*Session 1 - Fundamentals of RTI by Julie Scali*

Thanking all our Gold Sponsors...



## Learning Difficulties Australia

Learning Difficulties Australia is an association of teachers and other professionals dedicated to assisting students with learning difficulties through effective teaching practices based on scientific research.



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## The fundamentals of Response to Intervention

October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Julie Scali

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### Julie Scali

- Director of Literacy Impact, Perth WA
- Bachelor of Arts, Pmy, Grad Cert LD
- Primary teaching background- Perth; London and Belfast- 24 years in total
- Learning difficulties support Teacher- SSEND, DoE, WA
- Deputy Principal for 8 years- leading literacy improvement
- Started Literacy Impact in 2021- consulting in schools; online masterclasses, professional learning for schools, coaching
- Learning Difficulties Australia Bulletin- Editor
- Author of *High Impact Reading Instruction and intervention in the Primary Years*



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## Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to acknowledge that this meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Whadjuk-Noongar people. We acknowledge them as the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to the elders both past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia.



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## Session outline:

- Essential components of RTI and why is it essential in every school
- Universal screening
- How to implement progress monitoring for students at risk
- Recommendations for Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction and intervention
- Overcoming some of the challenges of RTI implementation
- Sharing progress monitoring data with parents and other stakeholders



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## What is Response to Intervention (RTI)

- A model that grew out of disease prevention in the public health sector and then also in special education settings
- Schoolwide model for effective instruction and intervention
- System that contributes to the process of being able to identify learning disorders such as dyslexia, dysgraphia.
- RTI was a response to the inadequacy of the IQ discrepancy model of identifying students with additional learning needs.
- A multitiered system of support (MTSS)



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## The key features of RTI

Research based core literacy instruction (whole class)

Universal screening- schoolwide

Prompt intervention for at-risk students

The use of data to inform instruction- individuals and system wide

SYSTEMIC approach (schoolwide) to instruction, intervention and data collection

(Spear-Swerling, 2015, p204)



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## Why RTI?

- Has the potential to **radically improve** instruction and intervention for large numbers of students (Spear-Swerling, 2015)
- It is both **preventive** and **responsive** to all students learning needs
- **Instruction** -Tiers 1, 2 and 3, depending on severity of need. Improving instruction for students who are falling behind.
- **Identification**- of learning disability, in terms of a discrepancy model. A child that is struggling with learning- despite a normal IQ that has had exposure to high quality, evidence-based instruction, and intervention (6 months+). Case by case basis
- It works! **Effect size of 1.07** (Hattie & Zierer, 2017 in 2018, p7)



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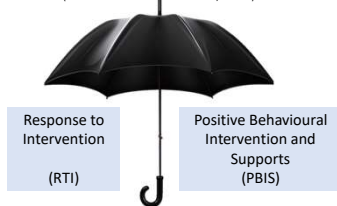
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## MTSS as an umbrella term

"A growing consensus considers MTSS an umbrella term that includes RTI, which focuses mainly but not entirely of academics, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which focuses on behavior problems."

(Hallahan in Pullen & Kennedy, 2019)



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## RTI can also applied with behaviour

**Clearly defined schoolwide behavioural expectations** that are taught to all students at least once a year and a school-wide discipline plan that defines procedures for regular acknowledgment of appropriate behaviour and consistently applied consequences for inappropriate behaviour (Sugai & Horner, 2002).

**Additional support programs and intervention** for Tier 2 behavioural interventions about 15% of a school's population that support students with behavioural difficulties

**Tier 3 behavioural interventions for individual students** that frequently involve behaviour support plans (BSPs) based on functional assessment data (Crone & Horner, 2003; O'Neill et al., 1997; Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, & Hagan, 1998; Umbreit, Lane, Ferrero, & Liaupsin, 2006 in Hawken et al. 2008)



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## 'Well functioning' MTSS and RTI systems are the same

"Well functioning RTI/MTSS systems are based on school-wide, multi level instructional and behavioural programming for **preventing school failure** based on **evidence-based** instructional and behavioural interventions. The **likelihood of student success** in RTI/MTSS is **increased** if such systems are grounded in **evidence-based practices**."

(Yell, in Pullen and Kennedy, 2019, p37)

"RTI/MTSS models focus on **prevention** and **early intervention**" (Reinke et al in Pullen & Kennedy, 2019, p100)



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## The leaky bucket analogy

"Researchers now estimate that 95% of all children can be taught to read by the end of first grade"

Dr Louisa Moats (2010)

Without it, we will always have a leaky bucket effect.



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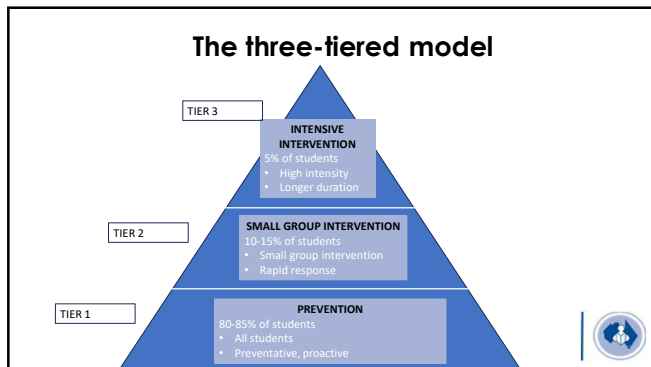
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**Fundamental #1**  
**Tier 1 instruction must be high quality and evidence based**

- When tier 1 instruction is high quality with high rigour differentiation then 80% of student needs are met
- High quality means- explicit instruction and structured approaches for literacy and numeracy
- Based on the science of learning- cognisant of CLT
- Literacy- systematic, PA and phonics instruction, daily high- quality teacher read aloud and explicit teaching of the big 5 with strong oral language focus
- Numeracy-explicit teaching, using worked examples

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**How does instruction look in each tier?**

Tier 1 – Whole class	Tier 2- 15% of students	Tier 3- 5% of students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily, high quality, evidence based explicit teaching for the whole class</li> <li>• High rigour differentiation in terms of support- pull aside groups</li> <li>• High expectations for every student</li> <li>• Use of formative assessment, adjusting instruction to student needs</li> <li>• Rigorous checking for understanding</li> <li>• Explicit instruction of new knowledge and skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group intervention in addition to the Literacy Block (3-5 students)</li> <li>• Increased intensity and frequency (3-5 x 30 mins per week)</li> <li>• Intervention is aligned to specific subskills of reading identified</li> <li>• Clear, short-term targets and progress monitoring</li> <li>• Frequent progress monitoring (every 2-5 weeks)</li> <li>• Aim is to catch these students up and close the reading gap</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1 intervention</li> <li>• Clear plan with specific targets</li> <li>• Often will involve a case management approach with school psychologist and will investigate underlying learning disabilities</li> <li>• Longer duration of intervention/support</li> <li>• Frequent progress monitoring (every 1-2 weeks)</li> </ul>

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## Slide 14

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**GU0** Can I suggest bullet point 1 is rephrased as: "When instruction at the tier 1 level is of high quality, rigorous, and differentiated, it meets the needs of 80% of students."

Guest User, 2023-10-10T09:19:32.729

## Slide 15

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**GU0** Could you mention that Tier 2 could be 30 minutes 3-5 times a week instead of 3. I can't tell you how many schools I have spoken to who cut back the Tier 2 intervention to 3 times a week instead of 5. Or could it have added, the frequency would depend on the data.

Hope this makes sense!

Guest User, 2023-10-10T09:29:49.708

**GU0 0** from J

Guest User, 2023-10-10T09:31:06.369



### How long should Tier 2 intervention last?

How long should a small-group tuition program go for?

"At least 10 weeks, with some programs extending for 20 weeks. Generally, if students do not respond to small-group tuition within 10 to 20 weeks, they should be re-assessed to determine what support is likely to be best for them." Grafton, 2023

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### Fundamental # 2

#### Intervention must be prompt & evidence-based

- "The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development reports that **it takes four times as much assistance** to improve a child's reading skills if help is delayed until Year Four than if it is begun in the Prep year." (Pfeiffer, S., Davis, R., Kellog, E., Hern, C., McLaughlin, T.F., & Curry, G. 2001, p. 4)
- Intervention must be based on sound evidence or be evidence informed
- Must have an end date- antibiotics analogy
- Do not need an IEP for every student
- Universal screening is how we identify students at risk- next slide

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### What is the impact of my teaching?

"Too often there is an overemphasis on the teaching or interventions, even when adoption of these interventions is not related to what students know or do not know, and too often, the same intervention or teaching method is reproduced and students are blamed for not attending, not being motivated, or not being smart. Instead, if students do not learn the first time, a change in the method of teaching is more likely to move these students forward" (Hattie & Zierer, 2018, p.7)



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### Fundamental # 3

#### Evidence based universal screening

three times per year

- Universal screening is like a blood pressure check
- Literacy- eg. Dibels 1 min ORF, CUBED (oral language F-3)
- Numeracy- eg. Westwood One Minute Number Test, SENA (NSW), Acadience Maths
- To screen all students F-6 and identify risk and track schoolwide trends



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### Universal Screening for Prevention

- Whole school process for assessing every K-6 student 2-3 times, yearly
- Assesses a snap-shot of aspects of the specific reading subskills (not levels!)
- Provides whole school data of patterns, trends, focus areas for PL
- Identifies reading difficulties early and tracks student progress



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Speech and language screening in K/P

Phonemic Awareness screener PP

Phonics/decoding screener Year 1, 2

Oral reading fluency rate (ORF) Year 2-6

Language and Reading comprehension assessment P-6

## Suggested Universal Screening for Reading

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### Fundamental #4 Rigorous decision making based on the universal screening

- Identify the percentage of students in each band- is there a tier 1 issue?
- Identify the students in yellow and red
- Identify the needs of the students in yellow and red
- Set appropriate intervention for students in yellow and red- intervention can be evidence based or evidence-informed.
- Set appropriate targets for the students (desirable)



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### What intervention is required?

Simple View of Reading:  
Decoding x Language Comprehension = Reading Comprehension  
Gough & Tunmer, 1986



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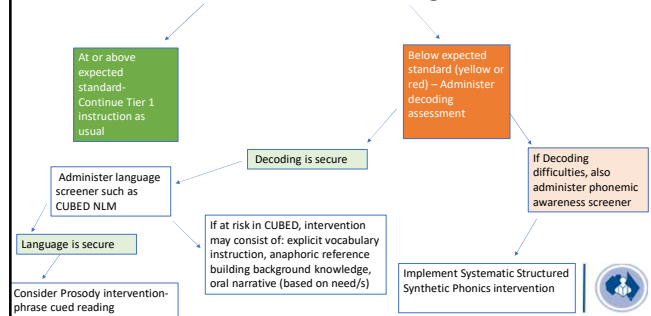
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### ORF Decision Making Tree



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### Fundamental #5

### Rigorous Progress Monitoring

- Students identified in red-every 2 weeks
- Students identified in yellow-every 4 weeks
- Utilise Education Assistants to support this practice
- Monitor the data at a class and school wide level

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### Progress Monitoring

- Brief, one minute check in assessments to ensure students at risk are making accelerated progress to catch up to peers eg Dibels (fluency)/CUBED (language)
- Progress monitoring- using standardised passages (1 minute) every 2 (students in red) or 4 weeks (students in yellow)
- Use of a line graph shows growth/track progress

<https://meadowcenter.org/resource/progress-monitoring-line-graph/>

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### Use of Dibels Progress Monitoring Materials

**BELS 8<sup>th</sup>**  
(BELLIS) Progress Monitoring - Grade 3  
ORF Scoring Booklet

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Current Date										
Week 1										
Week 2										
Week 3										
Week 4										
Week 5										
Week 6										
Week 7										

**Progress Monitoring Materials**

Scoring booklets and student materials by grade for progress monitoring assessment.

**Tip:** We recommend opening the materials in the latest versions of Adobe Acrobat or [Adobe Reader](#).

- Grade K:** [\(K\) Student Progress Monitoring Materials & Scoring Booklets \(R\)](#)
- Grade 1:** [\(1\) Student Progress Monitoring Materials & Scoring Booklets \(R\)](#)
- Grade 2:** [\(2\) Student Progress Monitoring Materials & Scoring Booklets \(R\)](#)
- Grade 3:** [\(3\) Student Progress Monitoring Materials & Scoring Booklets \(R\)](#)
- Grade 4:** [\(4\) Student Progress Monitoring Materials & Scoring Booklets \(R\)](#)
- Grade 5:** [\(5\) Student Progress Monitoring Materials & Scoring Booklets \(R\)](#)
- Grade 6:** [\(6\) Student Progress Monitoring Materials & Scoring Booklets \(R\)](#)
- Grade 7:** [\(7\) Student Progress Monitoring Materials & Scoring Booklets \(R\)](#)

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### Progress Monitoring- Goal Setting and Choral Reading

By Week 8, Term 3, 2023, these students will be able to read a Year 3 level Dibels benchmark passage with an ORF of 100 Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM).

We will achieve this through:

Example SMART target- for a student with an ORF of 80 WCPM



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### Fundamental # 5 School-wide approach to instruction, intervention and data collection

- Build assessment weeks and progress monitoring into the year planner- each term – system wide, monitored at classroom and school level- same for data collation
- Incorporate an Intervention Fidelity Checklist- to ensure fidelity to the plan, timings, procedure, progress monitoring (Reinke et. al, in Pullen & Kennedy, 2019, p.93)
- Build in accountability measures into tier 1 literacy instruction- peer observations, leadership observations, coaching model
- School wide ongoing evidence based professional learning- teachers need to be highly skilled to deliver whole class instruction
- An emphasis on systems is essential to ensure literacy education is maximally effective and that at-risk students are not overlooked (Spear-Swerling, 2015, p7)



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### Fundamental # 5 School-wide approach to instruction, intervention and data collection

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### Fundamental # 5 School-wide approach to: literacy and numeracy, intervention, managing behaviour and data collection

- Build in accountability measures into tier 1 literacy instruction- peer observations, leadership observations, coaching model
- School wide ongoing evidence based professional learning- teachers need to be highly skilled to deliver whole class instruction
- An emphasis on systems is essential to ensure literacy education is maximally effective and that at-risk students are not overlooked (Spear-Swerling, 2015, p7)



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### Progress Monitoring Schedule

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
Universal screening- Week 2 (BOY)	Week 2 (red)	Week 2 (red)	Week 2 (red)
Week 4 (red)	Week 4 (red and yellow)	Week 4 (red and yellow)	Week 4 (red and yellow)
Week 6 (red and yellow)	Week 6 (red)	Week 6 (red)	Week 6 (red)
Week 8 (red)	Universal screening- Week 7 (MOY)	Week 8 (red and yellow)	Universal screening- Week 7 (MOY)
Week 10 (red and yellow)	Week 8 (red and yellow)	Week 10 (red)	Week 8 (red and yellow)
	Week 10 (red)		Week 10 (red)



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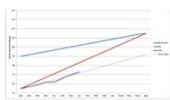
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### Sharing Progress Monitoring Data with Parents

A basic progress monitoring graph conveys a lot of information that parents want to know about their child:

- What is my child's current skill level?
- How different is my child's performance from expected standard?
- What is the goal for my child?
- When do we expect to achieve this goal?
- Is my child making adequate progress towards the goal?
- What can I do to support my child in achieving this goal?



<https://www.doe.mass.edu/assessment/progress-monitoring-line-graph/>

(Adapted from Acadience Assessment Manual)



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Episode 10: Myths and misconceptions about universal screening with Nancy Nelson

Dr. Nancy Nelson, research assistant professor at the Center on Teaching and Learning at the University of Oregon, discusses myths and misconceptions around RTI, Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS), and universal screening in reading instruction.

Science of Reading the Amplify podcast

Podcasts

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### Overcoming some of the challenges

1. When to do the intervention
2. The number of students needing intervention
3. When to do the analysis of data
4. Make the time for the students needing Tier 3 intervention- if you don't, the issue will get bigger and the time and cost will only increase with time (not to mention the social and emotional toll on the students)
5. For RTI to be effective teachers need to be highly skilled in whole class literacy (and numeracy instruction).



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### To finish: The need for RTI in every school..

"Without RTI practices, educators may overlook many children's reading difficulties, fail to address them properly, or even inadvertently exacerbate them by faulty instruction" (Louise Spear-Swerling, 2015)

"Learning difficulties are everyone's business" (Robyn Wheldall, 2023)



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**Thank you for joining me and  
enjoy the conference!**



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