RtI webinar Series
SLD Identification in an RTI Framework - Part 3

Amy Dilworth Gabel, Ph.D, NCSP
Misty Sprague, M.A., Ed.S
Agenda:
~Review of previous sessions
~A theoretical framework for the tiered process
~Instructional organization at Tier 3
~The need for comprehensive assessment at Tier 3
~SLD identification
~Case Study
Nature-Nurture Interaction

- Learner’s skills result of (a) individual’s processing abilities at a specific time in development, AND (b) instructional environment (curriculum, instructional materials, and teaching approach and practices)
- Assess both the student and the instructional environment
Individual Differences in the Processes in the Learner’s Mind or Brain

Curriculum and Instructional Materials

Teachers’ Instruction (Pedagogy)
Operationalizing RtI

- Multi-tiered model of assessment, intervention, and progress monitoring
- Determine whether effective instruction is in place for groups of students
- Provide effective instruction to a target student and measure its effect on performance
- Refer students whose RtI warrants additional or intensive continuing assessments and interventions

(Adapted from Kovaleski & Prasse, Communiqué 2004)
5.29.08

Strategic Interventions for Students at Risk of Academic Failure

Level 3:
Intensive Interventions
For Low Performing Students; Alter curriculum, Add time, Support, resources…
Comprehensive Individual Assessment

Level 2:
Strategic and Targeted Interventions
For Students At–Risk for Failure
Strategic Instruction, Increased Time and Opportunity to Learn

Level 1:
Benchmark Assessment and School Wide Interventions (Universal Screening)
for Students on Grade-level (benchmark) and All Students (Effective Instructional Practices provided within the General Education Curriculum)

(Adapted From PA Training and Technical Assistance Network, 2005)
As needs increase, what does Tier 3 look like?

- Instruction – becomes more differentiated and intense
- Assessment – individualized, comprehensive
- Continued Progress Monitoring
Why should Tier 3 look this way?

Key Points Regarding Instruction and Assessment
• At Tier 3, efforts focus on the needs of individual students who are experiencing significant problems in academic, social, and/or behavioral domains. Thus, the process at this level must be more intensive and individualized than it is at other levels.
Tier 3

- **Instruction/Interventions** - Interventions, accommodations and modifications for Tier III students are more intense than Tier II students.
  - Some Tier III students may have needs that require special education teacher support.
  - Instructional decisions (e.g., modifying/changing instruction when student fails to progress) are based on continuous progress monitoring.
  - When students fail to progress, after multiple documented and monitored attempts to address difficulties, a comprehensive multidisciplinary team evaluation (for initial referrals) or change of program should be considered.
Tier 3 Intervention

- Interventions delivered to very small groups of 2-3 students or individual students
- Interventions focused on narrowly defined skill areas identified from the results of frequent progress monitoring and previously gathered diagnostic assessment.
- Interventions implemented with integrity (e.g., number of minutes/day and per week, materials used, progress monitoring and implementer) tied to an individualized intervention plan
Tier 3: Service Providers

- Use of trained support personnel to provide practice opportunities under the direction of the classroom teacher
- School teams, such as literacy team, grade level team, student study team to plan and support Tier 3 instruction
- Curriculum (i.e., reading/math) specialists, special education teacher, speech/language pathologists or other person qualified to teach the students who continue to struggle
- Encouragement of parent-school partnership
- Home practice and support
- Before and after school instructional program
  - Professional development for school personnel
Assessment at Tier 3

**Progress monitoring** - High risk students are assessed on a *weekly* basis using progress monitoring ‘probes’.

**Diagnostic assessment** - Assessments that help to refine the identification of student difficulties (e.g., language, phonological awareness, specific skill deficits, attention, behavioral/emotional difficulties).

- Parents informed of student progress on a regular basis
Tier/Level 3 – Intensive Assessment and Intervention

- Reserved for those students who have not responded to the assessments, interventions, and monitoring that has taken place in Levels 1 and 2.
- Allows for the fact that a small percentage of students, despite interventions, will not keep pace with age-mates in physical, emotional, academic, and/or cognitive domains.
Level 3-

- Draws upon the extensive information from Levels 1 and 2, to develop a customized individual assessment to provide additional information concerning cognitive, academic, social, behavioral, and/or emotional profile.
- Purpose: to obtain specialized data regarding the child’s functioning to develop a more effective educational plan.
- Immediate entry into Level 3 may also be appropriate in situations where a youngster’s needs dictate that it is the most appropriate course of action.
Level 3-

- Systematic hypothesis testing to evaluate the underlying processes that impact academic, emotional, and behavioral functioning.
  - Careful, systematic observation of how an individual solves problems, rather than a simple interpretation of overall scores
Learning is a Multifactorial Process

- Memory
- Attention & Executive Functions
- Language
- Sensory Input and Motor Action
- Visuospatial Processing
Neuropsychology of Reading

- It is an extremely complex behavior
- It is multi-system based and requires several areas of brain integration including:
  - Vision
  - Executive Functions
  - Audition/Language
  - Memory
The Reading Brain

- Visual information (words & letters) processed mainly by the right hemisphere, but does require integration of the left hemisphere also.
  - The right hemisphere provides the contour and gestalt.
  - The left hemisphere provides the detail.

- The pathway for the integration of the visual information is through the corpus collosum and (most likely) the posterior commissure to some extent

- The visual information must be transformed into language. This is the job of the angular gyrus.
When poor, creates a “bottleneck” for learning
- Forget instructions
- Forget details of what are working on
  - When reading a passage, forget content, can’t formulate main idea, draw conclusions, etc.
  - When writing a sentence, forget the content while working on the spelling of words
Processes Related to Reading

Cognitive Processes

1. Necessary to gain meaning from the printed page and to use this meaning for the purpose of thinking.
2. Comprehension of text requires simple to higher-order abstract reasoning, efficient processing speed, working memory, the ability to understand concepts such as main idea, sequence of events, cause and effect, inference, and prediction.
Evaluate Language and Cognitive Processes

- Phonology, Morphology, Semantics, Syntax, Pragmatics of Language

- Cognitive Processes related to Working Memory, Processing Speed, Problem Solving, Reasoning
Math Assessment

Math

- Procedural Skills
- Reasoning
- Fluency

- Selective Attention
- Visual-Spatial Functions
- Memory
- Executive Functions/Working Memory
- Language Capabilities

S. Hooper (2001)
### Examples of Assessments for Tier 3 Literacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WIAT-III</strong></td>
<td>Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Third Edition: In-depth assessment of early literacy, reading, written expression, fluency, math and oral language skills for ages 4 to adult. Test software generates error analysis, growth scores and intervention suggestions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KTEA-II</strong></td>
<td>Kaufman Test of Education Achievement-II: In-depth assessment of early literacy, reading, written expression, fluency, math and oral language skills for ages 4 to 25. Includes alternate forms, error analysis, growth scores and intervention suggestions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAL-II</strong></td>
<td>Process Assessment of the Learner –II: Comprehensive, evidence based assessment and intervention system used to evaluate and remediate the cognitive processes related to the acquisition of reading, writing and math skills for grades K-6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WISC-IV Integrated</strong></td>
<td>WISC-IV Integrated: Provides assessment of cognitive skills relevant to learning. It is important to understand the potential constraints on comprehension based upon cognitive abilities. It also permits an analysis of critical language, vocabulary, and memory skills essential for literacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DAS-II</strong></td>
<td>Differential Ability Scales – Second Edition: Provides essential information concerning reasoning with a variety of inputs and outputs. Helps to uncover processing weaknesses and strengths as they impact literacy development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WRM T-R</strong></td>
<td>Woodcock Reading Mastery Test-R—Measures visual auditory learning, letter identification, word identification, word attack, and comprehension skills for ages 5-adult. (New edition coming in 2011).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOR T-4</strong></td>
<td>Gray Oral Reading Test, Fourth Edition—measures rate, accuracy, fluency, comprehension and overall reading for ages 6-18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CTO PP</strong></td>
<td>Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing—measures phonological awareness, phonological memory and naming for grades K-12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KABC-II</strong></td>
<td>Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children – Second Edition: Provides information concerning cognitive capabilities that impact learning. Minimizes the impact of SES on performance by providing scoring options (Lurian and CHC-Based interpretation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEPSY-II</strong></td>
<td>NEPSY-II provides an in-depth assessment of key processing skills related to learning. A specific battery evaluating language, memory, and executive functioning skills is suggested for the evaluation of literacy skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PPVT-4</strong></td>
<td>Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test—Test of receptive vocabulary which generates growth/progress scores and evidence based interventions, ages 2 to adult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EVT-2</strong></td>
<td>Expressive Vocabulary Test—Test of expressive vocabulary and word retrieval which generates growth/progress scores and evidence based interventions, ages 2 to adult.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Examples of Assessments for Tier 3 Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Math 3</strong></td>
<td>In depth assessment of math proficiency skills; includes alternate forms and optional intervention materials and generates growth scores for K-12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WIAT-III</strong></td>
<td>Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Third Edition- In-depth assessment of early literacy, reading, written expression, fluency, math and oral language skills for ages 4 to adult. Test software generates error analysis, growth scores and intervention suggestions.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEPSY-II</strong></td>
<td>NEPSY-II provides an in-depth assessment of key processing skills related to learning. A specific battery evaluating abstract visual reasoning, memory, and executive functioning skills, for example, is suggested for the evaluation of math skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WISC-IV Integrated</strong></td>
<td>WISC-IV Integrated: Provides assessment of cognitive skills relevant to learning. The WISC-IV permits an analysis of critical reasoning and memory skills essential for mathematics.</td>
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Innovative Thinking?

What happens if we start screening for working memory concerns early in the process???
What Happens to Students with WM Difficulties?

Study involving a group of children with low working memory but typical scores in general ability measures

- Compared with classmates with typical working memory skills, the low working memory children frequently:
  - forgot instructions,
  - struggled to cope with tasks involving simultaneous processing and storage, and
  - lost track of their place in complex tasks.

- The most common consequence of these failures was that the children abandoned the activity without completing it.
  (Gathercole et al., 2006).
When deciding upon intervention or instructional strategies, proper “diagnostic” work must be done first. It is important to understand why gaps in learning occur. Proper assessment helps us understand why, and provides with a purpose and scope of the intervention.
IDEA Requirements

Any evaluation of a child suspected of having a disability must (1) be conducted using a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child; (2) not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion; and (3) use technically sound instruments that may assess the relative contribution of cognitive and behavioral factors, in addition to physical or developmental factors. (34 C.F.R. § 300.304(b)).
(4) An RTI process does not replace the need for a comprehensive evaluation. LEAs must use a variety of data gathering tools and strategies even if an RTI process is used. The results of an RTI process may be one component of the information reviewed as part of the evaluation procedures required under §§ 300.304 and 300.305.
# AIMSweb Training (SAMPLE DATA)

Year: 2010-2011

**FILTER:**
Reporting Method: National Norms - Criterion Referenced

## Class Distribution by Scores and Level

Washington School District (SAMPLE DATA) - Adams Elementary School
Grade 2 - (Ms. Taft - Homeroom) Fall 2010-2011
Reading - Curriculum Based Measurement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Corrects</th>
<th>Errors</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Performance Summary</th>
<th>Potential Instructional Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angel, Avery</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>Reading: Continue Current Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target = 60.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenthie, Jaylynn</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Reading: Continue Current Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berg, Chelsea</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Reading: Continue Current Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dugas, Victoria</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Reading: Continue Current Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson, Amanda</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Reading: Continue Current Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianson, Ben</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Reading: Continue Current Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evingson, Sarah</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Reading: Continue Current Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average &gt;= 32.1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boland, Austin</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Reading: Further Assess and Consider More</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intensive Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorenson, Daniel</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Reading: Further Assess and Consider More</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intensive Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Below Average &gt;= 16.1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sapp, Eric</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Well Below Average</td>
<td>Reading: Begin Immediate Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith, Ellie</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>Well Below Average</td>
<td>Reading: Begin Immediate Problem Solving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background

● 5th grader
● Failing grades in reading and language arts.
● Lack of focus/poor organization
● Decline in motivation/increased frustration
● Little to no progress at Tier 1
Next Steps

- Gather additional information from general education teacher to form referral questions.
- Complete additional assessments.
- Plan Tier 2 interventions
- Progress Monitor
Gather Additional Information:

- Interview teacher
- Have them complete the ACES (Academic Competence Evaluation Scale)
- Interview parents
- Interview and observe student

From this data create assessment question(s)
Interview and Observation

- Reported:
  - Lack of focus
  - Poor organization
  - Easily Frustrated
  - Forgetful with homework and chores
  - Does get along well with others
  - Happy Child
Assessment Questions:

- Why has Ellie not shown adequate progress to Tier 1 Interventions?
- Does she have specific needs that can be addressed to improve skill acquisition?
- Does she have a disability that may require more intensive intervention?
Tier 2 Assessment Tools

- **WIAT-III**
  - The Wechsler Individualized Achievement Test - III
  - Assess on reading subtests.

- **PAL-II**
  - The Process Assessment of the Learner –II
  - Assess on specific subtests that look at the processes behind the basic reading skills that she is struggling on.
### WIAT–III Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word Reading</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7(^{th})%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudoword Decoding</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5(^{th})%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Reading Fluency</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5(^{th})%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>8(^{th})%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# PAL-II (Process Assessment of the Learner II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtest</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orthographic Coding</td>
<td>Recall words or word parts she had seen previously.</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Choice</td>
<td>Presented with 3 phonetically equivalent words, ID the correct spelling</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonological Coding</td>
<td>Manipulating sounds orally.</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RapidAutomatized Naming</td>
<td>Naming letters or letter groups quickly</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ASSESSMENT IS A CLINICAL PROCESS

- A score is only reflective of “what” the student was able to demonstrate, it doesn’t answer why the results were obtained, nor does it provide individualized information regarding how that particular student processes information.
- Process-oriented, clinical assessment focuses on the how and why.
- Assessment answers the referral question and tells you how to intervene.

- **What additional assessments can we use to answer how and why?**
Questions that have come out of Tiers 1 and 2?

- Does Ellie have a concern with her short/long term memory?
- Is her executive functioning impacting her learning?
- Will extra time or repetition help?
Tier 3 Assessments

- WISC-4
- WISC Integrated
- NEPSY-II
### WISC-IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Percentile Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Reasoning</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>75th percentile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measures verbal reasoning and concept formation.

VCI correlates highly and is a good predictor of achievement, especially in the areas of reading and writing.....

Struggles NOT due to weak vocabulary or other language related skills
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Percentile Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal Reasoning (PRI)</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>70th%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measures nonverbal abstract reasoning, visual perception and organization

Note: She scored lower on tests that required quick response time
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
<th>Percentile Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Memory</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>21st%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measures auditory attention, concentration, sequencing skills, mental manipulation of verbal information.
## WISC-IV and WISC-IV Integrated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digit Span Forward (WISC)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digit Span Backward (WISC)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Standard Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WISC-Integ. Visual Digit Span</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISC-Integ. Spatial Span Forward</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISC-Integ. Spatial Span Backward</td>
<td>5 (5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domain</td>
<td>Standard Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processing Speed Measures; short-term memory, learning ability, cognitive flexibility, attention, motivation</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On both subtests she scored in the 16\(^{th}\)%
What did we learn?

- Ellie has Average abilities in both verbal and nonverbal learning.
- She has a weakness in the area of Working Memory, especially visual spatial memory.
- She has a weakness in the area of processing speed. Is repetition helping her?
In order to investigate how Ellie’s slower processing speed and difficulties on working-memory tasks affect learning, the team decided to give select subtests from the NEPSY-II to look at her executive functioning.
### NEPSY-II

<p>| List Memory | She improved from 6 to 9 words, where most kids improve to 12. The second time she improved from 5 to 15. She was asked to recall the info later and only recalled 6 words. She was asked to recall words one more time and she recalled 8 words. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal Sort</th>
<th>Below Average abilities. She was found to sort slowly and talked her way through each one</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auditory Attention and Response Set</td>
<td>She had Below Average abilities. She had a great deal of difficulty shifting and maintaining set, multi-tasking, reacting quickly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NEPSY-II

What did we learn?

- She is easily overwhelmed by too much competing information.
- Repetition did not help her
- Learning improved when she had more time to move the information into her long-term memory.
- Weakness in executive function.
  - Poor planning abilities
  - Organizing
  - Sustaining attention
  - Lack of effective and efficient learning strategies, (metacognition)
Assessment Questions:

- Why has Ellie not shown adequate progress to Tier 1 Interventions?
- Does she have specific needs that can be addressed to improve skill acquisition?
- Does she have a disability that may require more intensive intervention?
Why has Ellie not shown adequate progress to Tier 1 Interventions?

- Over time considerable effort has been put into improve Ellie’s phonological skills.
- However it is NOT just phonological skills.
  - Deficit orthographic skills
  - She does not respond to repetition
  - Deficits in working memory block her from getting all the information into long term memory.
Does she have specific needs that can be addressed to improve skill acquisition?

- She learns best when information is presented orally.
- She is overwhelmed when too much information is presented at once.
- She needs additional time to move information to long term memory.
- Deficits in executive functioning, planning organizing.
- Teaching her visual imagery or visual organization strategies will help decrease cognitive load.
- Present her with limited information and regular success intervals.
Does she have a disability that may require more intensive intervention?

- Despite strong reasoning abilities, her cognitive deficits related to slower processing speed, working memory and executive functioning have affected learning.
- Significant deficits in orthographic and phonological learning.
Next steps

- Ellie has compelling evidence to meet the criteria for Specific Learning Disability.
- She needs:
  - Remediation of phonological and orthographic skills through systematic, explicit instruction.
  - Weekly progress monitoring.
  - Opportunities to read orally from 3rd or 4th grade text to increase comprehension and fluency.
  - Additional time to answer questions and learn information.
  - Check for understanding.
  - Memory and organization strategies.
Comprehensive assessment within a data-based decision making model includes:

- Multiple domains
- Multiple environments
- Across time
- Multiple methods
- Multiple sources of information
- Multiple disciplines
What are keys to success?

- Focus on the Student
- Fidelity in Assessment and Intervention
- Follow-up and Teamwork
- Monitoring and changing your team’s approach, as appropriate
Key Reference

Questions?

Amy Dilworth Gabel, Ph.D
amy.gabel@pearson.com

or

Misty Sprague, M.A., Ed.S
misty.sprague@pearson.com