

How RTI Supports Early Identification of Students with Different Learning Profiles

	Good Word Reading	Poor Word Reading
Good Language Comprehension	Skilled Readers	1. Specific Word Recognition Difficulties (e.g., dyslexia)
Poor Language Comprehension	2. Specific Reading Comprehension Difficulties	3. Mixed Reading Difficulties

Addressing Dyslexia and other Reading Disabilities

Response to Intervention (RTI)* implemented properly and well can and should address the needs of students with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. In order to identify and provide appropriate instruction for these students as early as possible, universal screening and subsequent diagnostic assessments for students identified as "at risk" must be administered with fidelity to determine the *specific nature* of the reading difficulties. Leadership, instructional, and support teams must look beyond universal screenings and dig deeper to develop and implement an educational plan tailored to each student's reading profile.

Using Universal Screening Data to Differentiate Profiles

How can we use screening data to differentiate among the three profiles of struggling readers (depicted above)? David Kilpatrick (2015) suggests an approach that uses two questions to initially determine if a student's *reading comprehension* is weak. First, "*Would he understand the text if you read it to him?*" Second, "*Does his oral reading seem effortless?*"

Diagnostic Decision Tree

A decision tree can guide the digging deeper process and the selection of diagnostic assessments to provide information on *why* a student with good language comprehension is struggling to comprehend what s/he reads. Teachers can use Kilpatrick's questions in conjunction with the decision tree. For example, in order to answer "*Does his oral reading*

seem effortless?" the teacher would need to administer an oral reading fluency assessment that measures the student's accuracy, rate, and prosody while reading connected text.

Supporting At-Risk Students

When RTI is implemented effectively, students at risk for reading difficulties are identified early and can receive instructional interventions without waiting to fail. RTI provides the framework to implement the important goal of ensuring at-risk students, including those with dyslexia, receive the support they need. RTI team members who understand the nature of these three reading profiles are in a position to administer and analyze universal screening data to determine next steps in terms of diagnostic testing and the prescription for appropriate intervention.

* In Connecticut, we use the term Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI).

This article is adapted from: Gillis, M.B. (Summer 2017). How RTI supports early identification of students with different reading profiles. *Perspectives on Language and Literacy* 43 (3): 41-45.

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