Differentiating in the Content Classroom using
Response Through Intervention
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Our Goals:
- Basics of RTI
- How RTI relates to quality ELL instruction
- Examples of Tier 1 and Tier 2 RTI practices in classes including ELs.

What is the purpose of RTI?
- Response to intervention (RTI) models have been developed
- To prevent academic failure through frequent progress monitoring and early intervention
- to meet government expectations for quality instruction based on scientific research
- to ensure the use of highly qualified teachers in the classrooms,
- to provide instruction informed by regular assessment

What is RTI
- A multi-tiered organizational framework for assessing, and instructing, students in a continuum of services that become increasingly intensive and specialized
- Originally designed for literacy instruction in early elementary grades – has now been expanded to higher grade levels with the addition of math instruction

**What is the relationship of
RTI to ELLS?**
- In the past, ELLs were disproportionally over-represented in special education classes (Artiles, Trent, & Palmer, 2004; Donovan & Cross, 2002)
- RTI is one way to prevent academic failure for linguistically diverse students by providing them with quality instruction and support (Klingner & Edwards, 2006).

Quality ELL Instruction
- Teachers are familiar with the "beliefs, values, and cultural and linguistic practices of their diverse students so that they can support their learning in positive ways" (Orosco & Klingner, 2010, p. 272).
- Teachers have acquired expertise in understanding how learning to read in a first language is different from learning in an additional language (August & Shanahan, 2006).
- Teachers are aware that not all evidence-based practices have been researched with language learners in the sample population (Klingner & Edwards, 2006).

What is Culturally and Linguistically Responsive RTI?
- Instruction that is
    - High quality
    - Evidence-based
    - Language-rich
    - Delivered by Highly qualified content teachers

Quality ELL Instruction
- For language-learning students, "All practice needs to be culturally responsive in order to be best practice" (Moje & Hinchman, 2004, p. 321).
- Culturally responsive teachers understand the socio-historical contexts that influence ELLs and their classroom learning (Klingner & Edwards, 2006).

What makes a content teacher "highly qualified"?
- TESOL Professional Standards
- Certification/Endorsement
- Available expertise from ELL specialists in school

RTI In Practice

Tier 1: Research-based instruction in the general education classroom
- Make learners aware of *academic words* –words that they don't often use in ordinary conversation but that are important for learning in school.
- Play with words every day – study root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Make a list of common word parts (and meanings) that learners can refer to when they encounter new words.
- Teach learners that words can have multiple meanings. Have them collect multiple meanings for some common words such as: *like, run, play,* or *lock.*

Rich Vocabulary Development of Academic Words
- contextualizing each target word
- providing student-friendly explanations
- giving many examples
- asking learners to provide their own examples
- posting & using the target words

Building Word Awareness:
Names
- What is your name?
- What does it mean?
- Where does the word come from?
- Why are you named that?
- What are the sounds in your name?
- Are there other words like your name?
- Is anyone else's name in the room like your name?
- How do you feel when someone says your name wrong?

Activities for Vocabulary Development in Tier 1
- Slates
- Rich Vocabulary Development
- Building Word Awareness
- Vocabulary Journal
- Sentence Machine

Activities for Vocabulary Development in Tier 2
- Teaching study skills
- Drawing
- Dipsticking
- One Question Quiz

Resource

Levine, L. N. & McCloskey, M. L. (2012). *Teaching English Language and Content in Mainstream Classes: One Class, Many Paths*. Pearson Education.

RTI Examples in the Area of Vocabulary Development

RTI Tier 1 Sampler:
- Make a list of cognates and borrowed words that come from the countries of learners in your classes on your WordWall. Encourage ELLs to be aware of ways that the language they know can help them learn English
- Ask the English learners to tell you about situations where they really needed a word but did not know it.
- Make sure that your ELLs have access to both a learner dictionary and to translation dictionaries for the languages they speak.
- Teach a lesson about phrasal verbs, which English learners find so difficult. How can they learn the differences in meaning of *look up, look over, look down on, look forward to, look back on, look out,* and *look up to?*
- Help learners set up their personal dictionaries. Remind them to make entries for important words you cover in class. Have them choose words in their notebooks to study with partners for a week. Partners give one another a quiz at the end of the week.
- Develop a classroom library, or section of the school library, where ELLs can find materials suited to their age, interests, cultural backgrounds, and reading proficiency. Promote the use of this library with classroom tasks, such as choosing a book, reading from it with a partner.
- Read aloud to your students daily, and take time to teach three or four important words from the selection.
- Make learners aware of *academic words* –words that they don't often use in ordinary conversation but that are important for learning in school.
- Play with words every day – study root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Make a list of common word parts (and meanings) that learners can refer to when they encounter new words.
- Teach learners that words can have multiple meanings. Have them collect multiple meanings for some common words such as: *like, run, play,* or *lock.*
- Every day, assess the learning materials you will use to determine vocabulary needs of learners.
- Guide learners through the New Word Decision-Making Flow Chart. Make sure they understand how to use all of the learning strategies included.
- Have learners make word cards of words they want to learn. Use the Conga Line activity to have learners teach one another the words. Play I have/Who has with the word cards.

RTI Tier 2 Sampler
- Assess the vocabulary level of English learners individually. With them, make a list of important words they want to study and learn.
- Teach learners ways to study words with a partner, like *test, study, retest*.
- Teach small groups of learners how to draw simple pictures to help them understand and remember words.
- Observe small groups of learners as they do a word sort – how well do they choose the categories for the sort? Does the sort show that they understand the words?
- Use semantic maps to show small groups of learners different meanings of words along with related words.
- Before assigning a reading, pre-teach important words from the reading for a lesson to an individual or small group including ELLs.
- Teach learners how to select for study words that will be important for them to succeed in their academic work.
- Have a small group create a Sentence Machine to answer questions about the topic you are studying. Give them specific terms they must include in their sentences.
- Create a cloze passage from a recent class reading. Devise different levels of support for different levels of learners.

Levine, L.N. & McCloskey, M.L. (2012). *Teaching Learners of English in Mainstream Classes*. Upper Saddle River NJ: Pearson