RESEARCH BASED ASSESSMENT OF READING DIFFICULTIES

BIG IDEAS

LEARNING TO READ
✓ Reading is a skill that develops across stages in which the key tasks are different at each stage.
   ➢ Stages include:
     ▪ Laying foundations
     ▪ Acquiring alphabetic insight
     ▪ Practice to increase fluency
     ▪ Reading to learn
   ➢ As with the development of all skills, proper practice is essential.
   ➢ Success at each stage is dependent on:
     ▪ Success at previous stage
     ▪ Different cognitive abilities
✓ Must develop a store of automatically recognized words and word units
   ➢ Forming connections among phonological, orthographic and meaning information about words
✓ Rapid word identification frees up resources for comprehension

EARLY SCREENING
✓ There are two approaches to early identification of children at risk of reading difficulties:
   ➢ Identify children with known risk factors
   ➢ Evaluate development of foundational skills
✓ Successful screening programs are multi-faceted.
   ➢ In screening for children at risk of reading failure it is important to evaluate phonological processing and naming speed.
✓ Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
   ➢ Assess phonological awareness
   ➢ Fluency

DIAGNOSING READING DISABILITIES
✓ In evaluation of children having ongoing reading problems there are two questions:
   ➢ Where has the learning process gone astray?
     ▪ Considering the stage model of reading development where is the child?
   ➢ What underlying cognitive processing deficits might be impeding the development of reading?
     ▪ May impact type and level of intervention
✓ Response to intervention is another approach to eligibility.
   ➢ Requires exposure to appropriate instruction
✓ Multi-faceted evaluation
Non-cognitive factors
- Environmental variables

Evaluation should assess at all levels of reading process:
- Sub-word
- Word
- Text
- Oral Language
- When assessing component skills it is critical to look at accuracy and fluency
- Use Step-by-Step process

DYSLEXIA
- Word specific problem
  - Most commonly associated with difficulties using sound/symbol relationships to identify words
- Single deficit vs. double deficit
  - Phonological processing
  - Naming speed
  - ?
- Unexpected in relation to age and other abilities

INTERVENTION
- Successful interventions provide direct, systematic instruction
  - It is important to develop fluency as well as accuracy
- A multi-modality approach increases the number of connections a student can develop for specific word or letter units
- Interventions should be coordinated across phonological, orthographic and morphological areas
- Focus on both reading and spelling
- Differential response to intervention

TERMS
- Grapheme
- Phoneme
- Decoding
- Context
- Whole language
- Lexicon
- Sight word
- Mental representation
- Instantiate
- Dyslexia
- Phonics
- Phonological processing
- Phonemic awareness
- Alphabetic principle
- Orthographic
- Lexical access
- Fluency
- Direct instruction