

ELS and 3-Tier Reading Model

Tier I

Definition: "Effective core instruction, assessment and progress monitoring for all students. Assessment is critical to identifying children when they first begin to struggle in reading (screening), to understanding the specific reading skills that require special instructional support (diagnosis), and to determine whether a child's instructional program is sufficiently powerful to stimulate adequate growth in overall reading ability (progress monitoring). Effective progress monitoring enables teachers to provide struggling readers with the extra support they need in order to maintain an adequate rate of growth in all the critical skills and knowledge necessary for grade level performance in reading."

CODEBREAKER[®] is a supplemental program to be used as a part of a district/school's core instruction. It, therefore, fits well into Tier I applications.

Tier II

Definition: "Tier II supplemental instruction addresses the needs of students who are not adequately progressing in the general education classroom. Benchmark assessments identify these students who exhibit low early literacy skills and may be at-risk for reading difficulty. Tier II supplemental instruction should support and augment general classroom reading instruction. The goal is to get students back on track so they can continue to succeed without further intervention.

"Additional instructional time for intervention support must be provided within class, during, before, and after school hours for students identified as at risk for reading difficulties on the basis of early assessment instruments. This intervention should be coordinated with core reading instruction, but should never replace the core program. It should provide more systematic and explicit support for the needs of individual children and should be provided by a highly trained individual."

ELS[®] is the ideal intervention program for Tier II. The rules say that the "Interventionist" may be "the classroom teacher, a specialized reading teacher, or an external interventionist specifically trained for the supplemental instruction." In our labs, the lab facilitator would meet the qualification of an external interventionist or a specialized reading teacher.

The Tier II Interventionist is to "redirect off-task behaviors, provide students with positive feedback, and effectively communicate expectations by providing clear and explicit goals for activities." Our program does all those things.

In addition, of course, the program is based on scientifically based evidence. It is individualized to meet a diversity of student learning needs.

Tier II instruction typically lasts ten to twelve weeks, covering most of the semester. After the first round of supplemental instruction, a decision should be made about the student's instructional needs. The student can exit the Tier II program, be enrolled for another round (second semester), go into Tier III, be required to attend summer school, and/or be referred for special services (dyslexia, 504, special education, etc.).

The guidelines are clear that Tier II interventions must be provided daily and must not be done during the regular classroom reading instruction since the aim is to supplement, rather than to replace—which is exactly what CEI recommends.

Grouping guidelines recommend 3-5 students, but that guideline assumes that one teacher is providing the instruction herself—not facilitating the instruction aided by software. ELS enables them to focus the instruction on skill deficits as recommended.

Instruction should be systematic and explicit (instruction with modeling, multiple examples, and feedback to individual students). It should be paced to match each student's skill level. Students should have multiple opportunities to participate and respond, with the interventionist providing corrective feedback. Again, ELS does exactly these things. The ELS correlation to the NRP guidelines shows how ELS is aligned with the requirements of the core instructional program.

ELS is listed in Appendix G (p. 110) as a "helpful resource to schools as they make decisions about Tier II and Tier III instructional materials" in the following TEA publication: **3-Tier Reading Model: Reducing Reading Difficulties for Kindergarten through Third Grade Students**.

Tier III

Definition: "Intensive intervention support must be provided on an ongoing basis for the small percentage of students (estimated at 5-7%) who continue to struggle with reading concepts following supplemental instruction as described in Tier II." Guidelines are as follows: "Generally, students enter Tier III if they have participated in two rounds (two semesters) of Tier II instruction and have not made sufficient progress. In some cases, students may enter Tier III instruction after receiving only one round of Tier II instruction. These students show a marked lack of progress.

They continue to state, "Tier III instruction for intensive intervention may work in conjunction with special education reading instruction.... When adopting the 3-Tier Reading Model, each school or district must decide how it will address the relationship between instruction in Tier III and instruction delivered through special education services."

Source: 3-Tier Reading Model: Reducing Reading Difficulties for Kindergarten through Third Grade Students