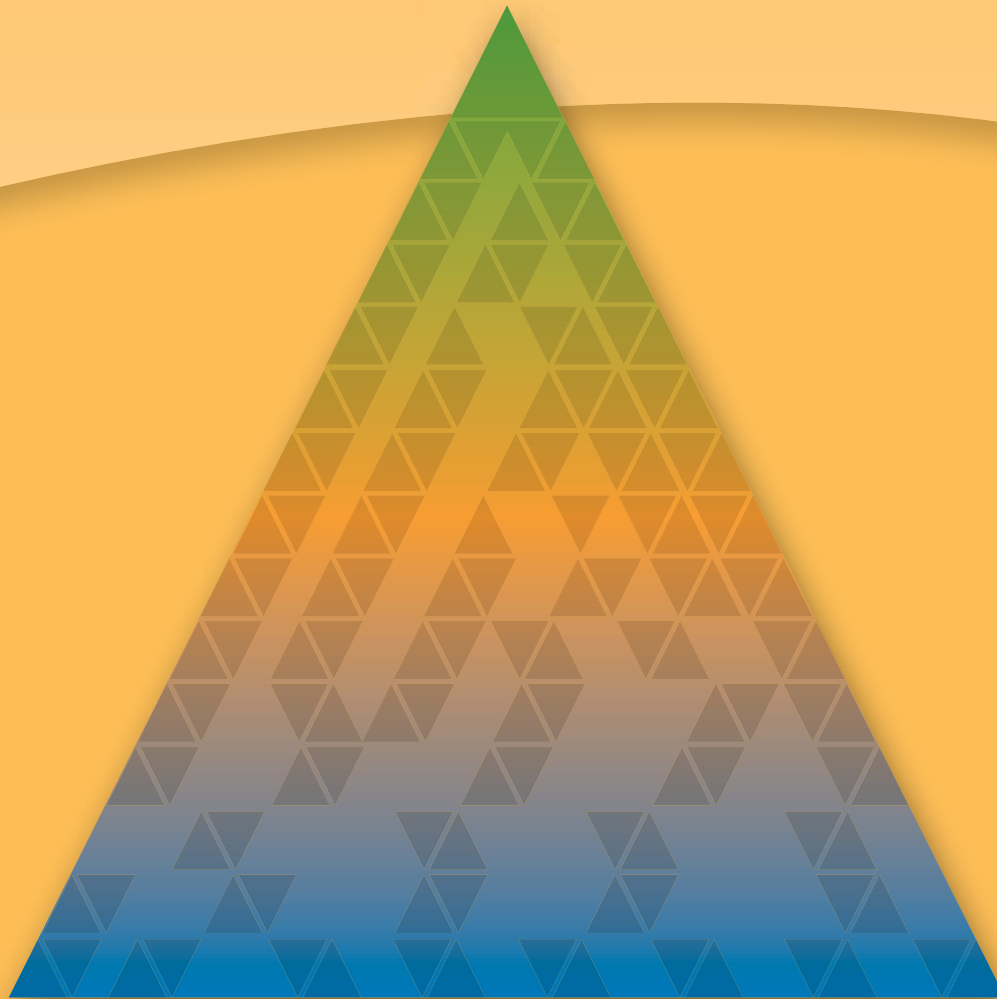


Making Sense of RTI

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION



Response to Intervention: Creating new opportunities for you to help students thrive

The concept of Response to Intervention (RTI) is changing the landscape for assessment professionals, opening new avenues for you to help guide students on the path to success, every step of the way. Pearson Assessments can help you make the most of this opportunity to expand your influence on young lives.

A balanced view of RTI

Within an RTI service delivery model, curriculum-based measurement and psychoeducational testing are complementary, not competing, approaches. Used at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way, these approaches help you pinpoint student strengths and weaknesses, monitor progress, and identify specific learning disabilities (SLD)—all integral components of the RTI framework.

You can count on Pearson Assessments to meet your need for a continuum of resources and balanced information that support best practices in the RTI environment. These resources include proven standardized assessments, targeted intervention materials, and professional expertise and training to help you satisfy the unique needs of all your students.



About the law

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the regulations that apply to the identification of students with learning disabilities require a range of strategies and a comprehensive evaluation to identify a specific learning disability (SLD) (see definition on the next page). IDEA was reauthorized in 2004 and the regulations were enacted in 2006. The criteria for such identification, found in the Federal regulations at 34 CFR §300.307, provide generally that:

- A State must adopt criteria for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability (SLD) and public agencies must use the State-adopted criteria
- The criteria adopted by the State
 - Must not require the use of a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement for determining whether a child has a specific learning disability;
 - Must permit the use of a process based on a child's response to scientific, research-based intervention; and
 - May permit the use of other alternative researched-based procedures for determining whether a child has a learning disability.

Both the IDEA §614(b)(2)(B) law and the regulations (34 CFR §300.304 (b)(2)) state that in conducting its evaluation, "the public agency must not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child."



Identifying a specific learning disability (SLD)

The definition of SLD

IDEA defines the term “specific learning disability” as “a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.”

Public Law 108-146.
http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=108_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ446.108
Page 118 STAT 2657-2658. Accessed April, 2007.

Failure to respond to interventions is not enough for SLD identification

RTI is beneficial for the early identification and treatment of learning problems. It also helps schools meet accountability guidelines and use sound instructional methods. However, the diagnosis of SLD cannot be based solely on a student’s lack of response to intervention. In some cases, the child may continue to struggle, regardless of ongoing interventions, particularly if there is an underlying processing disorder. For this reason, the last tier of any RTI model calls for an individual and complete multidimensional assessment for diagnosing SLD. The design of effective treatments for learning disabilities can be based on test results.

What the U.S. Department of Education says about using RTI to determine SLD

Question: The regulations require an SEA [State education agency] to adopt criteria for determining if a child has a specific learning disability (34 CFR §300.307(a)). Does this preclude the SEA from mandating RTI as the sole criterion used to determine if a child has a specific learning disability? Must an LEA [local education agency] follow the State-developed criteria for determining if a child has a specific learning disability?

Answer: An LEA must comply with the criteria adopted by their SEA regarding this requirement. Section 300.304 (b) states that in conducting an evaluation, a public agency must use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parent, that may assist in determining eligibility and not use any single measure or assessment as the sole criterion for determining whether a child is a child with a disability and for determining an appropriate educational program for the child.

The Department [of Education] provided additional clarification regarding this issue in the *Analysis of Comments and Changes* section of the regulations, page 46648. This section states, “an RTI process does not replace the need for a comprehensive evaluation. A public agency 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 34 CFR §§300.304 and 300.305. As required in 34 CFR §300.304(b), consistent with section 614(b)(2) of the Act, an evaluation must include a variety of assessment tools and strategies and cannot rely on any single procedure as the sole criterion for determining eligibility for special education and related services.”

Adapted from:
Questions and Answers on Response to Intervention (RTI) and Early Intervening Services (EIS).
ED.gov U.S. Department of Education. For a complete listing of all questions and answers go to: <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/%2Croot%2Cdynamic%2CQaCorner%2C8%2C>



The RTI models

According to the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, "the application of RTI is typically understood within the context of a multitiered model or framework that delineates a continuum of programs and services for students with academic difficulties. Although no universally accepted model or approach currently exists, the many possible variations can be conceptualized as elaborations on or modifications of" the categories provided in the diagram below. State agencies may select the RTI model they deem appropriate. However, policy dictates that the model should include data-based documentation of repeated assessment at reasonable intervals to reflect student improvement during instruction.

Responsiveness to Intervention and Learning Disabilities
National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities
June 2005

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Universal Screeni

Elements of a typical RTI model include assessments for screening, identification, and diagnosis

Universal screening of all children

- Identify students at risk by conducting universal screening of academic performance and behavior
- Provide class-wide instruction in a general education setting that utilizes scientific/research-based teaching and intervention methods and continuously monitor progress

Identifying specific strengths and weaknesses

- Measure response to previous teaching and interventions
- Administer standardized tests to pinpoint specific areas of difficulty among students who continue to struggle
- Based on test results, tailor group or individual interventions that are progressively more intensive and monitor progress

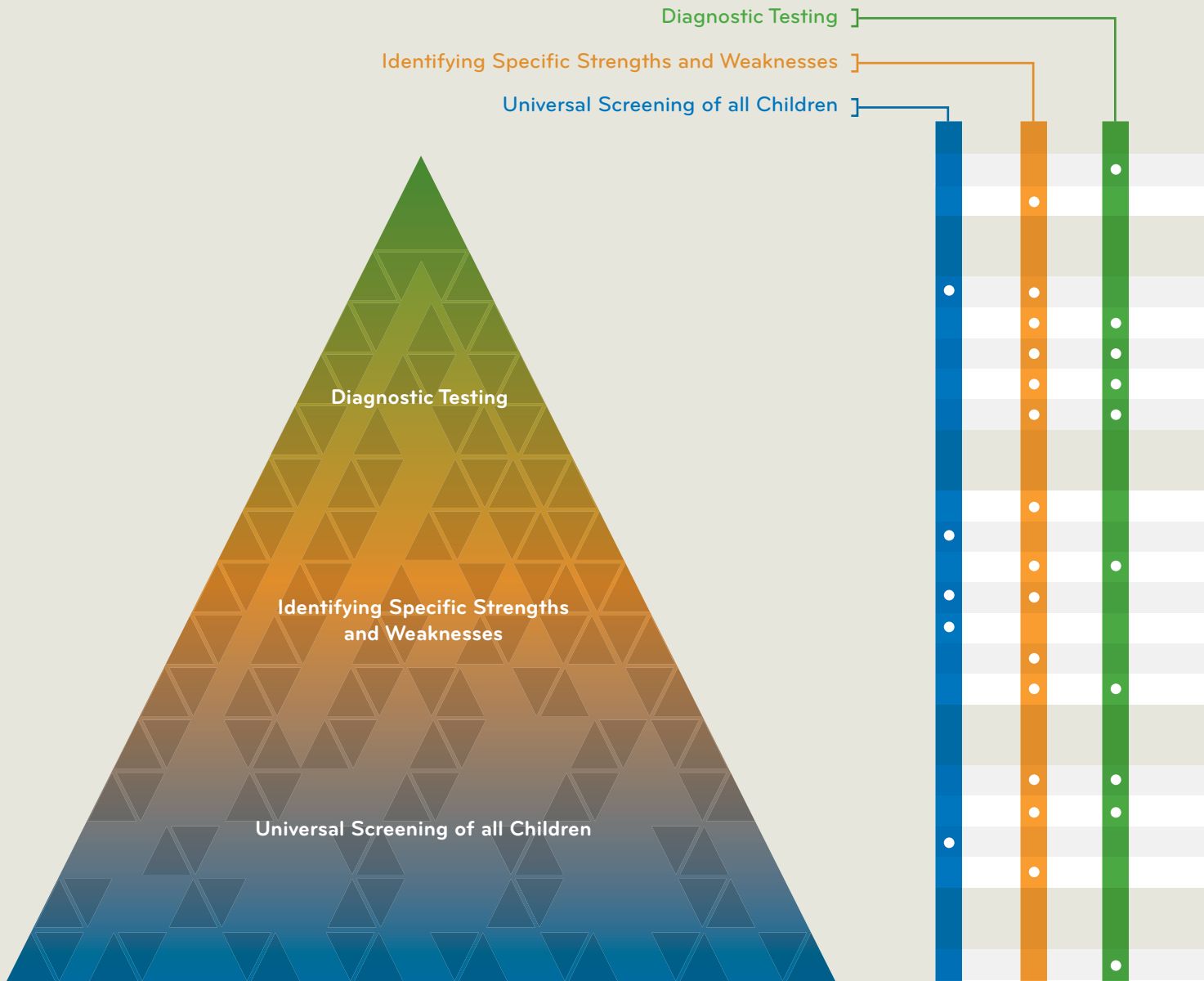
Diagnostic testing

- Measure response to ongoing intensive intervention
- Administer comprehensive diagnostic assessments appropriate to individual needs to those who continue to show poor progress
- Diagnose SLD based on test results and all other available information
- Develop individualized educational plans and/or special education and related services and monitor progress
- Include documentation that underachievement of a child suspected of having an SLD is based on a processing disorder and is not due to the lack of appropriate instruction

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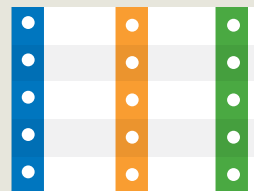
ng of all Children



Unparalleled formative assessments for RTI

Pearson Assessments is pleased to offer you a variety of formative assessment tools that range from software engines for creating and delivering benchmark tests to research-based items and pre-built tests for screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic uses. These assessments provide unparalleled flexibility and functionality. Teachers and administrators receive support for evaluating instruction and meeting legislative requirements. Parents and students receive timely, personal information on how to improve learning.

Go to our Website for more information at Formative.PearsonAssessments.com.



We're committed to bringing you valid, reliable assessments and evidence-based interventions for use across RTI

Ability

Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children, Second Edition (KABC-II)

Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test, Second Edition (KBIT-2)

Achievement

Basic Achievement Skills Inventory (BASII™)

Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, Second Edition (KTEA-II) Comprehensive and Brief Forms

KeyMath™-3 Diagnostic Assessment

Peabody Individual Achievement Test-Revised/Normative Update (PIAT-R/NU)

Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised/Normative Update (WRMT-R/NU)

Behavior/Social

BASC-2 Portable Observation Program

BASC-2 Screening System

Behavior Assessment System for Children, Second Edition (BASC-2)

School Motivation and Learning Strategies Inventory (SMALSI)

Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) Performance Screening Guides

Social Skills Rating System (SSRS)

Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Second Edition (Vineland-II)

Developmental/Neuropsychological

Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration, Fifth Edition (Beery™ VMI)

Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency, Second Edition (BOT-2)

Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning, Third Edition (DIAL-3)

Early Screening Profiles (ESP)

Speech & Language

Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language (CASL)

Expressive Vocabulary Test, Second Edition (EVT-2)

Goldman-Fristoe Test of Articulation, Second Edition (GFTA-2)

Khan-Lewis Phonological Analysis, Second Edition (KLPA-2)

Oral and Written Language Scales (OWLS)

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Fourth Edition (PPVT™-4)

Test de Vocabulario en Imágenes Peabody (TVIP)

Interventions: For use across all RTI tiers

KeyMath™-3 Essential Resources

The Picture File

Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS) Classwide Intervention Program

Sounds & Symbols Early Reading Program

The Bridge of Vocabulary: Evidence-Based Activities for Academic Success

Case Studies

With students like Rolando, RTI can help assessment professionals avoid inappropriate placement in special education.



Rolando, Age 10

Rolando seemed to really enjoy the fourth grade. He laughed easily as he interacted with other students but was soft-spoken as he worked to make himself understood in English. After reviewing the fall results for the classroom formative reading assessment, Rolando's teacher saw that his reading comprehension skills were significantly below those of his classmates. In addition to 30 minutes of daily ELL instruction, the classroom teacher included Rolando in a small group focused on comprehension strategies and monitored his progress with a brief benchmarking assessment every two weeks. At the end of 12 weeks, the entire class took the reading formative assessment again. This time Rolando demonstrated improved performance, but was still showing scores below the average for his grade level. The ELL and special education staff recommended continuing the ELL service and classroom reading intervention. They also determined that if Rolando's results on the class reading assessment did not continue to show strong progress by the end of the next 12-week cycle, they would then consider whether he should take an individual reading diagnostic test to better pinpoint the areas in which he had the greatest weaknesses.

Emira's story illustrates just one example of how assessment professionals can add value throughout the RTI process.



Emira, Age 7

When Emira was in first grade, she took the fall formative assessment with her classmates and struggled in the areas of listening comprehension and vocabulary. Although her entire class participated in vocabulary-building activities led by her classroom teacher, Emira also took part in a 12-week intensive program in the classroom, along with some of her classmates. Led by her teacher with consultation by the speech-language pathologist, the program covered explicit work on both areas. During the fall, it appeared that Emira's vocabulary knowledge and use were improving, but not her overall listening skills. After the winter formative assessment confirmed Emira's lack of progress, she was given a brief standardized test of listening skills and comprehension. The results of this test were used to tailor an intervention program suited to Emira's needs. She and a small group of her peers participated in the sessions.

Progress monitoring early in the spring semester showed that Emira had made some improvement but not adequate progress in listening and language comprehension skills. By the time the spring formative assessment was administered, her performance and lack of adequate response to intervention led the educational team to refer her for a special education assessment. This evaluation took into account all of the testing and intervention data collected for Emira during first grade as well as data from previous years. Deep assessment procedures, including formal and informal testing, helped determine that Emira was eligible for special education and/or further individualized intensive interventions.

Combining results from formative and individual tests can help students like Catherine who have been struggling for years.



Catherine, Age 15

Catherine was beginning ninth grade at a large public high school. Labeled a "struggling student" since fifth grade, she worried mostly about making friends, but also wondered what her classes would be like and how demanding her teachers would be. Her parents worried too, but they were concerned whether their daughter had an undiagnosed learning disability and if she was getting the kind of attention and support she truly needed.

Catherine, along with her other classmates, participated in a class-wide formative assessment program the first month of the school year. Catherine's results indicated difficulties in reading and listening comprehension, and were shared with the building educational support team. The team recommended some basic interventions that had worked well with other students in the past, including more individualized attention in the classroom, modified homework assignments, and access to the general education academic support services program.

Another group assessment was given to all ninth graders in the spring and Catherine's results showed that the gap between her performance and that of her classmates was widening. Her core subject teachers consulted with the building-level team again, and they decided additional individualized assessment was warranted to better understand Catherine's academic strengths and needs.

A meeting was set up between Catherine's parents and her teachers. Together, they reviewed results from both group and individualized assessments, discussed additional strategies, and proposed the next steps in helping Catherine succeed academically.

Success often hinges on the tools you use and the partners you choose

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D5A F11RTIB 1412-0000 05/07

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