

Progress Monitoring Challenges/Appropriate Responses

Questions	Answers
<p>1) What are the potential positive results for progress monitoring for ELLs?</p>	<p>ELLs face the dual challenge of learning a new language and learning in that new language. Therefore, a comprehensive approach to progress monitoring includes academic progress monitoring, as well as monitoring the ELL’s ongoing level of acculturation and new language development all <i>within the context of “comparisons to ELL’s true peers”</i>. For a comprehensive list of evidence-based progress monitoring tools, go to the National Center on Response to Intervention at http://www.rti4success.org/chart/progressMonitoring/progressmonitoringtoolschart.htm include a Progress Monitoring Tools Chart to assist educators and parents in becoming informed consumers of a variety of reading and mathematics progress monitoring tools that meet the needs of their students.</p> <p>When appropriately implemented, a comprehensive progress monitoring approach yields the following positive results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives teachers data about ELL’s progress and needs in meeting CSOs and English Language Proficiency Standards • Helps teachers plan differentiated lessons based on individual needs • Helps teachers vary instructional techniques based on individual needs • Provides a common reference point for ESL teachers, classroom teachers, reading interventionists, etc.
<p>2) What are the challenges and appropriate responses within the current RTI progress monitoring system for ELLs?</p>	<p>Challenge: How can school districts establish procedures, including the selection of appropriate assessment tools, for schools to appropriately screen and progress monitor English Language Learners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example: Ms. Jones, an ESL educator, discovers that a Level 3 Beginning English Fluency student is being considered for Tier 3 services because the student has not made adequate progress in Tier 2. This student, while quite fluent in Basic Interpersonal Communication, still has a limited vocabulary. Since this student belongs to a cultural group that places a strong emphasis on knowing the right answer, the student hesitates to read words with which she is unfamiliar. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended Response: Procedures for screening and progress monitoring ELL’s should be developed by an Intervention Team that draws upon the expertise of the English Second Language (ESL) educator responsible for the student’s English language acquisition and development. <p>Challenge: How can the Intervention Team assure that screening and progress monitoring assessments are providing reliable and valid data for ELLs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example: Mr. Smith, an RTI specialist, screens a newly enrolled ELL. The student is from an Asian country and has great difficulty articulating sounds that must be

echoed back to the assessor as a part of the screening. The student is assessed as needing intensive instruction in phonemic awareness, even though the student can read on grade level in his native language.

- **Recommended Response:** Screening and progress monitoring assessment tools must be critically evaluated by the Intervention Team to assure that they provide reliable and valid data for ELLs. Cultural or linguistic assessment biases must be considered and eliminated. Some standard American English sounds may not be found in the student's native language; similarly, letters used in standard American English words and in the student's native language may look the same but are pronounced differently. Basic Cultural Awareness and Second Language Acquisition training should be provided to all assessors as well as a review of national and state guidelines that require ELL's be compared to "true peers" when assessing their performance
<http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/RTIMemoReELLS081308.pdf>

Challenge: How can the team differentiate between language and/or academic delays and the influence of the student's own cultural characteristics?

- Example: Miss Black, an RTI interventionist, attempts to screen a newly enrolled ESL student. The student refuses to make eye contact with Miss Black and will not speak to her. Miss Black refers the student to the Autism Team. The student is from a culture where it is rude for children to make eye contact with adults.

- **Recommended Response:** ELLs come from a variety of cultures, and their individual learning needs and language proficiencies differ widely. It is very common for ESL students to go through a silent period when first adjusting to their situation. Ensuring that school staff members are adequately trained to address these concerns is an important part of each school's professional development plan. ESL teachers have expertise in second language acquisition characteristics such as "silent period" and often have experience with students from a variety of cultural norms. In addition, the team may choose to review research-based literature regarding the specific cultural and linguistic characteristics for each ELL they are serving.

Challenge: What other factors (emotional, behavioral, time in US, parent background) should be weighed when monitoring the progress of ELLs?

- Example: Mr. Martinez, an RTI specialist, has progress monitored an ELL in Tier 3 for 100 sessions and his findings suggest that the student needs to be tested for special education. The student has not made the requisite gains in oral reading fluency and comprehension. The student has a history of limited formal schooling. The student's parents are not literate in either their native language or English.

- **Recommended Response:** The most accurate way to measure ELL progress is within a context that compares them to "true peers." If several "true peers" are struggling, this is

	<p>an indication that the instruction is less than optimal for that group of students. In some situations such as a small number of ESL students or great diversity in certain districts, it may be difficult to examine the achievement of the student’s “true peers”. In these situations, it is important to ask the ESL teacher regarding his/her perspective of “true peers”, conduct additional research and determine if true peers exist within your community and district, or seek further technical assistance from state or national resources.</p>
<p>3) What are the challenges and recommended responses within the current RTI approach to Interventions for ELLs?</p>	<p>Challenge: How can schools ensure appropriate scheduling of all required services and avoid the unintended consequence of pulling students out of general education instruction too much?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example: An ESL student is pulled from general education instruction for ESL services. In addition, he/she is pulled out for RTI and could potentially be removed again for other services (Title I, Speech etc.). The cumulative impact could mean the student misses a substantial amount of general education classroom instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended Response: All educators should work collaboratively through the LEP Committee to develop a schedule that best serves the needs of the student. Team members should try to coordinate services schedules with other specialists to be there on different days or offset time. If the general education teacher needs support in offering appropriate Tier 1 or Tier 2 interventions to the ELLs, another possibility is to have some services “pushed-in” to the classroom with individual/academic instructional support. <p>Challenge: How can schools ensure that the content and focus of all intervention services are coordinated and not operating in isolation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example: When an ELL is removed from class for ESL services, the ESL teacher provides instruction on an area that is no aligned to or redundant of the focus of the interventionist instruction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended Response – ESL services, as noted in the 2008 Memo (http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/RTIMemoReELLS081308.pdf) are considered a Tier 2 intervention within the RTI Model. Collaboration between the ESL teacher, the interventionists, and the classroom teacher is important in interpreting and addressing the needs based on the screening instrument. Supplementary/RTI materials should be made available to help the ESL teacher have the resources to ensure they are reinforcing the general educational curriculum as well. Similarly, the ESL teacher can help the classroom teacher and interventionist understand the instructional and cultural strategies that can be used to help with developing English proficiency within the classroom. Neither the RTI nor the ESL curriculum is more/less important than the other but both must be considered within the context of individual ELL needs.
<p>Collaborations (Title I, Special Education, Interventionists and ESL teachers)</p>	

Questions	Answers
<p>4) What role do ESL Services play as a Tiered Intervention ?</p>	<p>All ELLs should begin in TIER 1 instruction in the general education classroom with appropriate classroom modifications and accommodations. The LEP committee is responsible for determining the nature and extent of ESL services for each student based on the results of their English proficiency screening and according to county guidelines. (Schools should refer to <i>West Virginia Connections Toolkit for Connecting Classroom Best Practices and Limited English Proficient Students</i> http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/toolkit.html for appropriate identification and placement schedule).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 1- sometimes an ELL may have progressed in the development of his/her English proficiency so that he/she no longer requires direct ESL services but may not be ready to exit the ESL program. These students should be monitored by ESL teacher. In these instances, the ESL teacher may serve as a resource to the classroom teacher by providing information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The student’s cultural and language background ○ Second language acquisition processes ○ Appropriate instructional and assessment strategies • Tier 2 – By definition, an ELL has limited English proficiency and needs additional support to learn English. For ELLs with negligible to intermediate proficiency levels, direct ESL services will be provided by an ESL teacher and these services are considered as a Tier 2 intervention http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/RTIMemoReELLS081308.pdf • Tier 3 – When an ELL has demonstrated limited response to targeted intervention at Tier 2 and continues to have considerable and persistent academic difficulty, the problem solving team may recommend Tier 3. Tier 3 intervention is very explicit and intensive; may include the use of an alternative reading or mathematics program; is long term in nature; and, may necessitate a multidisciplinary evaluation for special education. • Special Education Evaluation Referral - for information regarding moving ELLs to Tier 3, refer to Question #8. <p>ESL services may support ELLs across all three tiers as well as within special education.</p> <p>Challenge: The ELL is having difficulty with <i>Phonemic Awareness and Phonics</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example: A recently-enrolled ESL student is limited in both their first and second language and lacks an understanding in both languages that words can be broken down into a series of sounds. During observation, the teacher notices that the student has not visually learned the letters and cannot discriminate between the letters. • Recommended Response – With intense ESL instruction and RTI intervention along with the classroom teacher, ELLs can make improvements in phonemic awareness and English phonics skills. All members should work collaboratively to provide letter and sound repetition; formal and informal assessment of skills. If possible, using examples from the student’s native language can help reinforce awareness of certain phonemes.

	<p>ESL services can play a crucial role to help build phonemic awareness.</p> <p>Challenge: The student is having difficulty in <i>vocabulary development</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example: An ESL student is a very fluent reader in class, however when questioned about the sentence meaning, the student is unable to respond. • Recommended Response – Learning a second language takes time and building vocabulary is an important key to bridging the literacy skill gaps for each student. Sometimes, ELLs learn to decode English words and can pronounce them accurately, but lack the general vocabulary knowledge to understand the meaning of the word. ESL teachers can work with the intervention team to develop a coordinated approach to building the student’s vocabulary skills. <p>Challenge: The student is having difficulty in fluency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example 1: The ELL reads a section from a book that is very choppy and hinders the complete thought process. In oral conversation, they often use short utterances and 2 word answers with pauses and hesitations. The same may occur while answering questions orally in class or during writing activities. • Recommended Response – Fluency occurs in areas of reading, writing and speaking. ESL instruction can provide the student with appropriate speaking activities with gestures to help understand the vocabulary and idea. The ESL teacher can provide additional time on task and also use variety of resources to increase reading fluency such as those found at http://www.readingresource.net/readingfluencyactivities.html .
<p>5) How can the RTI Professional Learning Community (Title 1, Special Education, intervention ists, ESL teachers) better collaborate to address the needs of ELLs?</p>	<p>It is crucial that all educators work together to collaborate and communicate to ensure success for English Language Learners. Below are some challenges and recommendations for facilitating that process:</p> <p>Challenge: How can Intervention specialists and teachers communicate and work as a team?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example: ESL teachers may be unaware of or unable to attend a scheduled team meeting that addresses an ELL. • Recommended Response: To work cooperatively and in the best interest of the ELL, everyone who is directly involved with meeting the student’s learning needs should attend team meetings. This can be accomplished by developing a list of team members, which includes the names, titles, and contact information of each RTI team member, early in the school year. This list should be updated regularly. It can be used to check availability when team meetings are called to ensure that all team members, including the ESL teacher, can attend. Joint planning time and professional development are keys to answering this challenge. <p>Challenge: How can the Intervention team respond in “real-time” to the evolving needs of ELLs?</p>

	<p>Example: Some ELLs may quickly develop a basic proficiency in listening/speaking that may/may not correlate with their reading/writing skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended Response: Prevention and intervention are more timely and effective when the team shares information so that each student’s challenges can be addressed immediately. This can be accomplished through regularly scheduled meetings or on an as needed basis, through emails and face-to-face meetings between the ESL teacher, general education teachers, and the interventionist specialists to review changing English language acquisition and academic performance throughout the school year. • Ensuring all team members have access to student data (including benchmark scores and ongoing documentation related to student progress) allows the team to assess intervention practices and determine appropriate and timely movement between tiers.
<p>6) What other “Tier 2” services might also benefit ESL students?</p>	<p>Title I teachers can offer small group reading and English language instruction to ELLs who will benefit from their specific skill set as trained reading instructors. Title I teachers can also offer assistance as they co-teach in Tier 1 settings.</p> <p>Special Education teachers are permitted under Policy 2419 guidelines. <i>Regulations for the Education of Exceptional Students</i>, states that the role of interventionist should be filled by educators knowledgeable of scientific research based strategies and interventions. Accordingly, the policy allows a special education teacher to fill the role of interventionist for students in the RTI process. When beneficial, then, ELLs may receive Tier 2 intervention from special education teacher who fills the interventionist within a school.</p> <p><i>Note: Limited English proficiency does not mean that a student is impaired or delayed, he/she is going through the natural stages of English language development, and can eventually meet or exceed levels held by first language, English speaking peers (see Question #8 and guidance at http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/IdentEvalulePspecEd.pdf). However, learning delays, impairments, and physical disabilities can and do exist for some ELLs. Those exceptional needs should be assessed with their English language limitations in mind.</i></p> <p>Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) can be great resources for building phonemic awareness. However, there is specific guidance addressing the role of SLPs working with ELLs that must be considered http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/IdentEvalulePspecEd.pdf</p> <p>Guidance counselors can help ELLs make their transition into a new culture. Possible behaviors, such as overt shyness, noncompliance, disruptive behavior, difficulty making friends, and anxiety may occur for an ELL. As a result, he/she will likely need help adapting to new school and home environments. In addition to the cultural transition, some ELLs may be at risk for a variety of emotional and social adjustments experienced by children and young adults in the United States today.</p>

<p>7) In an RTI Model, how can schools provide flexibility when enrolling ESL students?</p>	<p>In order, to address the needs of individual ELLs within the RTI process, there must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a systematic process for examining specific background variable such as language proficiency, educational history, socioeconomic status, and culture; ○ examination of appropriateness of classroom instruction; ○ information gathered from informal and formal assessments; and ○ nondiscriminatory interpretation of all assessment data. <p>If a student does not progress sufficiently, a variety of modifications can be made within the general classroom including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● use of smaller group formats and more explicit or scaffolded instruction. ● students starting in a whole group setting could be recommended for more intensive instructional support in a small group setting outside the classroom if progress is insufficient (such a move would be considered Tier 2 support) <p>After a reasonable amount and duration of Tier 3 intervention has been provided (<i>when made with a comparison to “true peers”</i>), the student may be referred for an evaluation for special education.</p>
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Beyond Tier 2- When ELLs need Tier 3 Interventions

Questions	Answers
<p>8) What are the cautions about moving ELLs from Tier 3 to Special Education?</p>	<p>Direct ESL services by an ESL teacher should be considered as a Tier 2 intervention. Students are placed in the ESL program according to county guidelines. Some students with negligible to intermediate proficient will be immediately placed in an ESL class or pulled for ESL instructions on a regular basis. Others with more fluent skills will be placed in general education classes with routine monitoring by an ESL instructor. In deciding if a student will continue to receive Tier 3 instruction as a means of closing an ELL’s achievement gap or be recommended for evaluation for Special Education services because a disability is suspected, the LEP Committee will consider the best interests of the student. It is important to note the Tier 3 is not synonymous with special education services. A student must be provided the opportunity to acquire skills across Tiers 1, 2 and 3 prior to initiating a referral for special education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Example: A new student has enrolled and his/her proficiency level is intermediate however the classroom screen results show him/her at very high risk. After several rounds of Tier 3 interventions, the student has demonstrated insufficient progress and still has academic difficulties. The teacher automatically wants to send the student onto evaluation for Special Education. However, the ESL teacher wants more intensive instruction and time at the Tier 2 level outside of the Tier recommendation. ● Recommended Response: The degree to which the student’s English proficiency has developed should be a primary consideration when measuring student progress. Below are some general timelines for language acquisition progress:

- Progress from Level 1 to Level 2 (1+ year)
- Progress from Level 2 to Level 3 (1+ year)
- Progress from Level 3 to Level 4 (2-3 years)
- Progress from Level 4 to Level 5 (2-3 years)

In addition to these general timelines, the team should consider all additional factors (cultural background, time learning English, level of formal education in the native language etc.) that may impact student progress and make comparisons to the students “true peers”. This may require Tier 2 instruction longer than the recommended two rounds, or it may indicate that the student needs additional Tier 3 services.

Caution against over-identification (*referring students too much or too quickly for evaluation for special education*)—student is hastily referred to Tier 3 when progress in the Tier 2 environment is not immediately evident

Recommended Response: Comprehensive analysis of student’s current levels of academic performance and rate of learning based on input from all team members, i.e. general education educators, ESL teacher, administration, etc. including the following considerations:

- Second language acquisition timeline, i.e. years student has functioned at current ELP level
- Progress monitoring evidence
- Standardized test results
- Degree of progress related to “true peers” as explained in Framework Document at http://www.nccrest.org/Briefs/Framework_for_RTI.pdf
- Low SES / demographics and cultural background of students
- Absences – are students present for Tier 2 instruction? If not, ensure students receive reasonable frequency/duration of Tier 2 intervention prior to consideration of Tier 3 placement.

Caution against under-identification (*failing to refer ELLs when appropriate for evaluation for special education*)—despite lengthy difficulty in the Tier 2 environment and significant unsuccessful efforts to address the student’s needs, the student is not referred for Tier 3.

- **Recommended Response:** Careful consideration of all the factors which have affected the student’s ability to succeed in the school environment including the following:
 - Literacy background of the student prior to English as a second language instruction
 - Curriculum of the ESL program
 - Degree of collaboration between content area teacher and ESL teacher
 - Amount of professional development provided to general education educators regarding the literacy needs of ELL’s
 - Proper documentation exists to substantiate the need for Tier 3 intervention
 - Consideration of the advantage to the student who is limited by time and
 - Use of valid and reliable assessment instruments

	<p>Indicator which may be related to a need for more intense instruction, such as Tier 3 intervention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Low achievement ○ Behavior problems ○ Delayed oral language acquisition ○ Reading problems ○ Social/emotional difficulties ○ Written language difficulties ○ Low/limited attention span
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<p>What are some other Resources</p>	<p>WV Connections Toolkit for Elementary and Secondary students http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/toolkit.html http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/RTIMemoReELLS081308.pdf http://wvconnections.k12.wv.us/documents/IdentEvalulePSpecEd.pdf</p>
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List of Abbreviations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSO – Content Standards and Objectives • ELL – English Language Learners • ESL – English as a Second Language • RTI – Response to Intervention • SAT – Student Assistance Team • SES – Supplemental Education Services • SLP – Speech Language Pathologists 	