

Intervention Groups

Intervention groups are small groups of students, uniquely grouped for specified periods of time to provide supplemental literacy instruction. Specially trained teachers provide an additional layer of literacy instruction and support beyond the daily, differentiated classroom literacy instruction. The goal of Intervention Groups is to serve the students for the shortest possible time while simultaneously providing the necessary support for independent performance within the classroom.

Students served in Intervention Groups are selected by the Intervention Team based on on-going assessments and teacher observations of student achievement and growth. The Intervention Team is comprised of classroom teachers, intervention teachers, and other school personnel who are critical in the academic success of students. Students who have demonstrated a lag behind their peers, are new to the school and are needing support to perform alongside their peers, or who need additional assistance in acquiring effective literacy skills are considered in the Intervention Team Meetings. The Intervention Team collaboratively creates a plan of action for supporting each student's literacy learning.

Intervention groups occur regularly either within the classroom environment (push-in) or outside the classroom (pull out). The instruction is targeted to meet the needs of the students within the group. Typically, smaller groups (3-4 students) are able to make considerable progress over larger groups (5-7), however, concessions must be made to meet the diverse needs of students within any given school setting.

Intervention groups typically provide short, targeted lessons in reading and writing processes that align to the classroom curriculum in order to meet the goal of independent performance within the classroom. For this reason, most groups meet for 20 minutes. The shortened time frame allows the Intervention teacher to serve additional groups. While some groups specifically focus on reading and spend a majority of time re-reading familiar texts, participating in guided reading or discussing texts, other groups may focus on writing. Students requiring a mix of reading and writing experiences will often rotate reading and writing experiences from day to day or week to week to promote the reciprocal processes of reading and writing. These decisions are made within Intervention team meetings, in collaboration with classroom teachers and as a result of review of ongoing data collection and analysis.

Intervention groups include ongoing assessments and data analysis as well as classroom observations and teacher conferences.

Scheduling for Intervention groups is critical. Planning group "slots" requires careful consideration of the classroom literacy configuration, scheduling and dynamics. Students **MUST** receive initial and core instruction within the classroom in addition to the intervention. Intervention group instruction is typically scheduled during the independent work and/or literacy center time of the school day. The shorter blocks of time for Intervention Groups seems to enhance the ability to support additional students with a decrease in the interruption to regular classroom instruction.

During the independent/literacy corners time during Reading Workshop and following the classroom teachers' guided reading lesson with the students, the students may work independently at a literacy corner or on a project, and also spend time with the intervention teacher during the 90 minute reading block. In addition, intervention support during Writers' Workshop promotes longer "on-task time" for students who have typically struggled.

The type of support within a classroom setting may depend on the teacher-teacher relationship and needs within the classroom. The following list of Writing Workshop supports have been shown to promote greater student independence:

- Intervention teacher provides a frequent one-on-one conference with the writer who needs additional help. This is supplementary to the one or two conferences a week that a classroom teacher may be able to provide during her regular conferencing times
- Intervention teacher observes the mini-lesson, allows the students to write independently for a period of time, and then calls the students to join her in a common area within the room. From here, the Intervention teacher provides an assisted writing group that supports the mini-lesson or matches the unique needs of the learners in the group.

- The intervention teacher may also work, on occasion, with students who are performing well in writing in order to see the level of work, achievement and expectation for students who continue to need support.

As in all organizational structures, critical decision making and ongoing monitoring of student progress is the key to success. Consistent and open communication, promoting the positive outcomes of student achievement and instruction will facilitate a “can do attitude” as well as fostering a community of support for all children. Flexibility in groupings of students, sharing concerns in order to solve problems, and monitoring how students are doing within the classroom environment will allow the maximum number of students to be served while ensuring that no child has been left behind.