

Special Report

Progress Monitoring

&

Response to Intervention

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Caution:

The information contained within this report will help you implement RTI at your school. Do not read this information unless you wish to successfully use and apply these strategies.

**Special Report:
Progress Monitoring & Response to Intervention**

My name is Pat Quinn, also known as “The RTI Guy”. I am the author of the nation’s most popular newsletter on Response to Intervention and the author of the book *Ultimate RTI*.

I have helped over 4,000 schools around the country implement Response to Intervention. It gives me great pleasure to share information with you today about implementing Progress Monitoring as part of Response to Intervention.

If you have any questions after reading this guide to using the material, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would love to show you how schools across the country are improving instruction by implementing progress monitoring techniques as described in this guide.

Thanks!

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Introduction

Let's begin with a quick overview of RTI. Those of you who have heard me speak or purchased my book will quickly recognize this overview. For those who are not familiar with my work this will establish a common language and a context for our progress monitoring.

I have simplified RTI to its purest form. RTI does not need to be complicated. It does not need to include pictures of triangles or pyramids. It does not need to be extra work.

RTI will allow your school to better use its existing resources to help more students. This occurs when your school stops using a static test to tell if students are struggling, and instead begins to use a student's **response to instruction over time**. That's what progress monitoring is and that is why it is so important in the RTI process.

Here is a quick overview of RTI:

What is RTI?

RTI is a process of helping struggling students become successful. The process focuses on how a specific student responds to a specific intervention. In its simplest form, RTI includes the following steps:

- ✓ Identify a struggling student
- ✓ Implement an intervention to solve the problem
- ✓ Check to see if it worked

If the intervention works, you should naturally continue it. If the intervention does not work, you should try a different intervention.

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What are the basic steps of the RTI process?

RTI does not have to be as complicated as some people make it out to be. I am amazed that I can read an entire book on RTI and still not have any idea what RTI is or how I would go about implementing it in my classroom.

Every implementation of RTI includes basic steps:

Universal Screening

Identify students who are behind or struggling. For behavioral purposes, this often means looking over your data such as attendance, etc. to identify struggling or potentially struggling students.

Tier One: Full Class Instruction

Use a scientifically validated method to teach your full class. Every teacher that I know teaches their class about behavior. If you have not read any of Harry Wong's books, you should go get one and read it to learn about the importance of this process early in the school year.

Fidelity Check of Full Class Intervention

Have another person observe the teaching to make sure it is being done correctly.

Progress Monitoring during Full Class Intervention

Measure the progress of the students identified as struggling in the Universal Screening process. Progress Monitoring for behavior is observational data counting the number of occurrences of a specific behavior. If you are working on a student staying in their desk, count how many times they leave their desk in a certain period of time. If you are working on timeliness, count how many days each week they come to class on time.

Decision Time!

If after six weeks of receiving your full class instruction your data shows that the student is not improving, you need to do more. For these specific students you should move on to a Tier Two intervention.

Tier Two: Small Group Intervention

Implement a different intervention for the small group of students who are not making progress with the full class intervention. The group of students should share the same problem, and the intervention should be instructional in nature. Remember: Interventions always involve instruction. Detentions, suspensions and other punishments are not interventions. Candy, games and other rewards are not interventions. Interventions are when someone sits with a student and teaches them new skills and behaviors.

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Fidelity Check of Small Group Intervention

Have another person observe the small group intervention to make sure it is being taught correctly.

Progress Monitoring during Small Group Intervention

Measure the progress of students who are receiving the small group intervention. Just like the Tier One progress monitoring, this is observational data counting the specific behavior you are trying to change.

Decision Time Again!

After six weeks of receiving small group instruction you should have enough data to determine if the intervention is effective or not. If your data shows that the student is not improving STOP the intervention – it is not working. You probably do not have time or money to waste on an intervention that is not working. Instead you should try something else and measure to see if that works. If the intervention is causing improvement, continue the intervention until the students achieves an acceptable level of behavior.

Tier Three

At this point, schools in different states take different approaches. Some schools will try Tier Two again, with a different (more intense) intervention. Other schools go to what they call Tier Three, which is a different (more intense) intervention. Eventually you will either find an intervention that is effective to change the behavior or you will need to move to an eligibility meeting to discuss special education services.

That's it. That is RTI. Not complicated. Not new. Not extra work if you design it correctly.

You will see that two of the steps in the process involve progress monitoring. We will now dig deeper into what that means and what it looks like in real schools.

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Progress Monitoring

Progress Monitoring is monitoring the progress of *certain students* in a *specific skill over time*.

As you can see, there are three major parts:

1. Monitor the progress of certain students
2. Monitor progress in a specific skill
3. Monitor progress over time.

Let's look at each of the parts separately:

Monitor the progress of certain students.

Do you need to monitor the progress of all of your students in class? No. Who do you monitor? Only the students identified with your Universal Screening tool. (That was the purpose of the Universal Screener.)

Sometimes teachers get overwhelmed about the thought of monitoring the progress of every student. You do not need to do this. Only monitor the progress of the few students identified with the Universal Screening tool. So, in a typical class there may be 3 or 4 students who you should be doing this with.

Monitor progress in a specific skill

This is the hardest part of progress monitoring for teachers to understand.

If you ask most teachers whether or not they monitor progress, they will respond, "Yes. I give the chapter one test, I give the chapter two test and I give the chapter three test."

The chapter one test, the chapter two test, and the chapter three test is not progress monitoring in an RTI context. This is because the chapter one test, the chapter two test and the chapter three test are measuring three different sets of skills.

You need to measure the SAME SKILL each time. Not the same test items, but test items at the same level measuring the same skill.

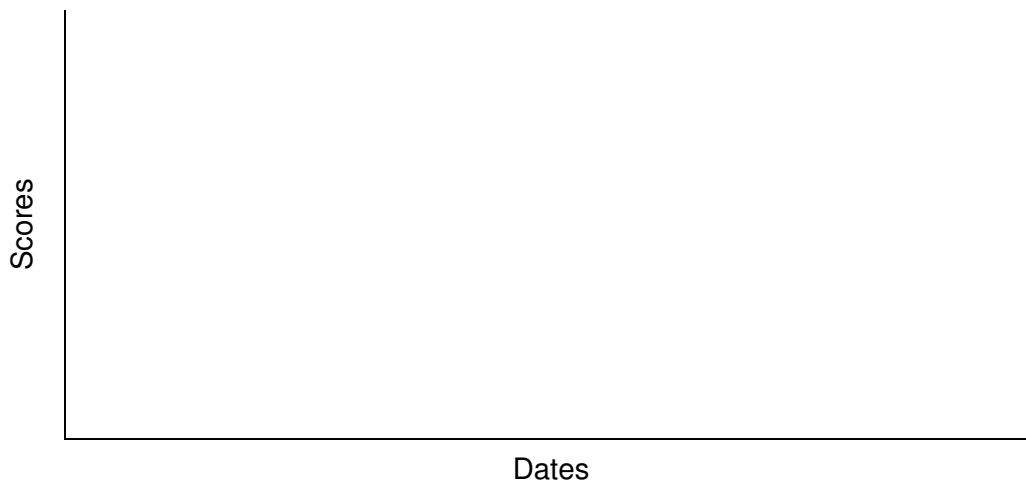
Monitor progress over time.

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The progress of a particular student needs to be monitored repeatedly over time. Most experts would say to measure the progress 10-12 times over at least six weeks of instruction.

Each time you measure the progress you will get a score. You should graph the scores on a simple graph with dates on the bottom and scores going up the left side.

The graph may look like this:



When you graph 12 scores on this graph you can connect the points with a line. The line will either be going up, going straight across, or going down. The direction of this line will tell you whether or not your instruction is working with a particular student.

If the instruction is working, keep doing it.

If the instruction is not working, do something more.

This is where the term "Response to Intervention" actually comes from. We are measuring and graphing the student's response to the intervention.

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Progress Monitoring Tests and Tools

At the youngest grade levels, progress monitoring in the area of Reading is usually done with an oral reading fluency test. Oral Reading Fluency is certainly a good measure of reading progress, and is preferred by many teachers. The reason for this is that Oral Reading Fluency is correlated with just about any indicator of good reading, and it takes just a few minutes to assess.

As students get older, schools often switch to a test of reading comprehension level. This type of test will give the students' comprehension levels as a grade level (such as 4.2) or a score (such as 400).

Below is a list of research-validated progress monitoring tools in the area of Reading and Language Arts. This list is not comprehensive or all-inclusive. It is provided simply to give you a taste of what is available.

Oral Reading Fluency

DIBELS

Early Literacy

AIMSweb

STAR

Initial Sound Fluency

DIBELS

Vital Indicators of Progress (VIP)

Letter Naming Fluency

Vital Indicators of Progress (VIP)

Maze

AIMSweb

EdCheckup

Nonsense Word Fluency

DIBELS

Vital Indicators of Progress (VIP)

Phoneme Segmentation

Vital Indicators of Progress (VIP)

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Phonemic DIBELS

Phonemic Decode Efficiency Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE)

Reading Accelerated Math and Reader AIMSweb EdCheckup Monitoring Basic Skills Progress (MBSP) PASeries STAR Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF) Yearly Progress Pro

Reading Fluency iSTEEP (System to Enhance Educational Performance)

Retell Fluency DIBELS

Segmentation Fluency DIBELS

Sight Word Efficiency Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE)

Spelling AIMSweb

Word Use Fluency DIBELS

Written Expression AIMSweb

Additional progress monitoring tools in the area of Language Arts and Reading can be found at <http://www.studentprogress.org> .

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Mathematics

In the area of Mathematics, students are usually given a test of basic math facts at the youngest grade levels. Because this is fast and easy to measure, teachers will often perform this sort of test with the entire class even though you only need to monitor the progress of a few certain students.

Below is a list of research-validated progress monitoring tools in the area of Mathematics. This list is not comprehensive or all-inclusive. It is provided simply to give you a taste of what is available.

Early Numeracy

AIMSweb

Basic Math Facts

Math Fact Fluency by Skillstutor

Math

Accelerated Math and Reader

AIMSweb

Monitoring Basic Skills Progress (MBSP)

PASeries

STAR

Yearly Progress Pro

Additional progress monitoring tools in the area of Mathematics can be found at <http://www.studentprogress.org>.

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Secondary Progress Monitoring

Teachers who teach subjects other than Math and Reading, and teachers who teach at Secondary grade levels often have a difficult time picturing what progress monitoring might look like in their classrooms.

Teachers at these grade levels often have more focus on the “topic of the day” than they do on “big picture” skills and ideas. As teachers we cannot slow down from the pacing guide or the “topic of the day” lest we fall behind and do not complete enough instruction before standardized testing or the end of the school year.

To create effective progress monitoring in these classes we ask teachers to think about the “essential skills” that are bigger than the “topic of the day”. What are the big skills that students acquire in your class? These “essential skills are bigger than any day, any chapter or even one course. They cut across your entire curriculum.

Schools should spend professional development time meeting by department to determine these “essential skills”. After an essential skill is developed, the teachers should develop a way to measure student progress in this area.

For example, a group of science teachers met and identified “Graphing” as an essential skill. It was used in every chapter of every course they taught. They developed a simple rubric to measure a student’s proficiency at graphing.

Now they have a tool that can be used to measure a student’s progress from the first day of school in this area. Certain students (those identified with a Universal Screening Tool) will have their graphing progress measured and graphed repeatedly throughout the school year. Classroom instruction will work for many of these students and their scores will improve. Other students will need additional Tier Two support to improve in the area of graphing.

Every subject and every grade level can do this, but it requires stepping back from the “Topic of the Day” and focusing instead on “Essential Skills”.

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Conclusion

Progress Monitoring is new for most teachers. It should not be assumed that most teachers know how to do it or are comfortable with it. We are not trained on it in college and have not been doing it for years.

One of the essential components of your school successfully implementing RTI will be professional development on Progress Monitoring.

Here are signs that your school is making progress:

Elementary:

- The school selects and purchases a tool to measure progress in Reading and Math.
- Teachers are trained in the use of this tool, and are comfortable graphing the results.
- Teachers routinely show up to meetings with graphs of student progress data.

Secondary:

- Professional Development time is spent at the secondary level so teachers can identify "Essential Skills" and develop tools to measure them.
- Teachers use the developed tool to measure the progress of certain students.
- Teachers routinely show up to meetings with graphs of student progress data.

Progress monitoring is at the very core of RTI, because it is the only way we can measure the student's **Response** to the **Intervention**. I hope this guide has helped you understand this important part of RTI.