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The template consists of the following sections: Title page, Abstract body, and Appendices (References and Tables and Figures). Figures and tables included as part of submission should be referred to parenthetically—“(please insert figure 1 here).” The body section of your abstract should be no longer than 5 pages (single spaced, using the Times New Roman 12-point font that has been set for this document). The Title page and Appendices do not count toward this 5-page limit.

Insert references in Appendix A of this document. References should be in APA format (see examples at the end of this document). Insert tables and graphics in Appendix B. Do not insert them into the body of the abstract.

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* Mosteller, F., Nave, B., & Miech, E. (2004). Why we need a structured abstract in education research. *Educational Researcher*, 33(1), 29–34.

Abstract Title Page
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Title:

Remediation of Older Students with Reading Difficulties: Intensity of Intervention

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Abstract Body
Limit 5 pages single spaced.

Background/context:

Response to Intervention (RTI) is an approach to enhancing classroom instruction and systematically implementing more intensive interventions to meet the instructional needs of struggling readers. Under IDEA 2004, RTI can also contribute to the identification of students with learning disabilities. Response to Intervention (RTI) models are designed to enhance outcomes for students at risk by assuring that several key elements are in place: (a) screening so that all students at risk are identified, (b) continually monitoring students' progress to determine instructional response so that instruction can be appropriately altered and supplemented, and (c) delivering increasingly intensive interventions to assure opportunities to learn. Intensity of interventions is typically approached through a layered system in which increasingly intense interventions are provided to students who do not benefit adequately from current or previous instruction. In RTI models, these layers of intervention are typically referred to as "Tiers" of intervention. Tier 1, or primary intervention, consists of high-quality research-validated instruction provided to all students; Tier 2 (secondary) intervention consists of more intensive intervention for students who do not respond adequately to Tier 1 alone; and Tier 3 (tertiary) is a highly intensive level of intervention for students with persistent difficulties characterized by inadequate RTI in secondary interventions.

The findings from recent intervention studies with older students with reading difficulties provide initial evidence that older students do benefit from intensive reading instruction (Edmonds et al., 2009; Scammacca et al., 2007). Typically, researchers use standard protocols of instruction when implementing reading interventions for students with reading difficulties. (e.g. Lovett et al., 2000). These interventions provide scientifically based reading instruction to all students performing at low levels and although the materials and instruction are matched to the students' needs, the emphasis and procedures for implementing the instruction are similar for all students receiving the intervention. Benefits of using a standardized protocol include the structured nature of the intervention for teachers. In contrast to standardized intervention protocols, the effectiveness of individualized interventions that respond to the various needs of individual students has been understudied (Wanzek & Vaughn, 2007; Scammacca et al., 2007); however, individualized interventions may be necessary to meet the various needs of students in the upper grades who still struggle to read.

Our knowledge about primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions with elementary students, particularly in the area of reading, is quite robust (Blachman et al., 2004; Denton, Fletcher, Anthony, & Francis, 2006; Felton, 1993; Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007; Jenkins & O'Connor, 2002; Lovett et al., 2000; Mathes et al., 2005; McMaster, Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2005; Torgesen et al., 1999; Vellutino et al., 1996). However, research-based guidance for the effective implementation of tiered interventions (including standardized vs. individualized protocols) at the secondary level are minimal, and are compromised by our

limited knowledge of effective interventions for this population (e.g., Fletcher, Coulter, Reshley, & Vaughn, 2004; Vaughn & Fuchs, 2003).

Purpose/objective/research question/focus of study:

In this session, we describe an approach to multi-tiered reading intervention implemented and evaluated as a part of a large-scale experimental study of RTI with struggling readers in middle school and funded by National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). During Year 1, students were identified as having reading difficulties and were randomly assigned to treatment and control conditions. Intervention students were provided daily explicit Tier 2 reading instruction in groups of approximately 1:15. Our purpose was to determine the efficacy of systematic, explicit reading practices with older students with reading problems and identify and describe the response to intervention of various subgroups of students.

During Year 2, minimal responders from year 1 were identified and randomly assigned to standardized or individualized intervention protocols provided in a small group format with instructional group sizes ranging from 3-5 students. Our specific purpose during year 2 was to examine student response to more intensive intervention, vary systematically whether students in more intensive interventions respond to standardized or individualized intervention protocols, and identify and describe the response to intervention of various subgroups of students.

During Year 3, minimal responders from year 2 were identified and assigned to another year of intervention- an intensive, individualized Tier 2 intervention in group sizes of approximately 3 students. Our specific purpose of year 3 was to examine student response to even more intensive individualized intervention.

We will provide participants with an overview of the entire study including student outcomes from year 3, as well as implications for implementing intervention to older students in a RTI model.

Setting:

During Year 3, the intervention took place in 3 highly diverse middle schools (including many English language learners) in Austin and Houston, Texas. Students participated in the intervention during one 45-50 minute period of their regular school day.

Population/Participants/Subjects:

To qualify for the study in Year 3, eighth grade students had to have participated and made minimal progress in the Tier II intervention in Year 1 and the Tier III intervention in Year 2 (standardized OR individualized Tier 3 intervention). Criteria for minimal response included: (a) failing the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), or (b) being a student who was exempted from the TAKS because of special education status. Additional pre and post assessment outcomes were considered from students' first and second years in the study.

Approximately 30 students participated in the Year 3 intervention. Students who were randomly assigned to the “business as usual” comparison condition in Year 1 of the study remained in this condition during Year 2 and 3.

Intervention/Program/Practice:

The instructional framework implemented in the intervention reflects research on effective interventions for students with reading difficulties, as well as the phonology of the English writing system. One guiding premise for the intervention design is that many older students struggling with reading have difficulties due to lack of mastery in decoding and accurate word reading (Paulesu et al., 2001). Simultaneously, instruction addresses learning to read words that are less phonetically regular (Ehri & Wilce, 1983; Goswami, 1993). An ongoing part of the design is teaching comprehension skills through improving vocabulary and concept knowledge and increasing knowledge of how to understand and interpret expository and narrative texts. Thus, the intervention is aligned with current research on developing vocabulary and comprehension (Beck et al., 2002; Fitzgerald, 1995; Gersten & Baker, 2000; Ulanoff & Pucci, 1999). Finally, the instructional design is based on converging research on the benefits of explicit and systematic instruction in reading that provide high opportunities for student response with feedback while the teacher scaffolds instruction in word study and decoding, fluency, construction of meaning, vocabulary, spelling, and writing (Baumann & Kame’enui, 2004; Berninger et al., 2003; Foorman & Torgesen, 2001; Pressley, 1998; Torgesen et al., 2003).

The individualized intervention protocol was implemented daily in 45-50 minute periods for an entire year. This intervention incorporated all the effective elements of a scientifically based reading intervention including very intensive instruction in: word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, text reading, and a motivation component. Teachers had a great deal of flexibility in this intervention to respond to the dynamic needs of the individuals in their group. For example, teachers learned to create, assess, and respond to outcomes of curriculum based measures designed to determine if students had mastered, were still emerging, or deficient in a particular concept. Therefore, the individualized intervention was designed to be a very responsive, dynamic approach designed to meet the needs of each individual.

Research Design:

The project design reflects a randomized controlled trial experimental design with multiple tiers of intervention (response to intervention), starting with a cohort of 6th-grade students with reading difficulties and continuing through 7th grade and 8th grade. We will be presenting findings from Year 3 (8th grade) in this session along with discussion of the design and questions to be addressed in the future.

Data Collection and Analysis:

Latent Variable Analysis , Including multilevel growth analysis, was used to describe and compare patterns of development over time within and across groups on the outcome measures. A random sample of on-track readers comprise a third group for comparison, though the questions of primary interest involve the treatment groups. Outcomes of interest are measures of word recognition, reading fluency, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and written expression.

Findings/Results:

Results from the second year of the study suggest that differences between treatment and comparison conditions were small, but slightly favored the treatment condition (Individualized). Twenty one of the 29 students (1 student moved) passed the reading portion of the Texas State Test after failing it during the previous two years of intervention. Data is currently being analyzed.

Conclusions:

Because the data analysis is still being finalized, conclusions are preliminary. Overall, because of the small differences between treatment and comparison conditions, we determined that additional time in more intensive intervention may be necessary to make significant differences with students who struggle to read at the secondary level. Implications will be discussed.

Appendixes
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Appendix A. References

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