



Targeted Management Tips to Enhance the Effectiveness of Tier 2, Guided Reading Instruction

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Abstract

Guided reading is a popular approach to teaching reading in today's schools. With the increase of schools and districts implementing response-to-intervention programs, guided reading can be easily enhanced to provide additional supports for students at risk for school failure who exhibit learning and behavioral challenges. This column offers teachers targeted behavior management tips to use before, during, and after more-focused Tier 2 guided reading instruction.

Keywords

guided reading, behavior management, RTI, Tier 2

Today, in thousands of elementary classrooms across the United States, teachers work with small groups of students who are engaged in guided reading lessons (Fountas & Pinnell, 2012). Guided reading involves teachers working with small groups to provide differentiated instruction as students develop reading fluency and comprehension (Witherell, 2007). Guided reading instruction may involve a discussion of the illustrations in a leveled book, oral or silent reading of the text, comprehension questions, and/or direct instruction for specific reading strategies (Lyons & Thompson, 2012). Of course, not all students come to the classroom with the requisite academic and behavioral skills needed to be successful in guided reading groups. In particular, students who are at risk for school failure often exhibit learning and behavioral challenges requiring the need for additional supports (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010; Weiss, 2013).

To better meet the needs of all students, particularly, those at risk for school failure, response to intervention (RTI) can be an effective multilevel prevention system (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010). RTI most often involves three tiers of instruction, moving from core reading instruction provided in general education (Tier 1) to more-focused strategic/supplemental intervention at Tier 2, to intensive intervention/special education at Tier 3 (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2007). According to Vaughn and Roberts (2007), approximately 20% to 30% of students

may require Tier 2 instruction contingent on the effectiveness of Tier 1 instruction; this supplemental intervention often involves additional opportunities to practice the skills taught in Tier 1 in a more focused manner with a fewer number of students.

As students' learning and behavioral challenges increase, more-effective behavior management strategies are often warranted. Student behavior is affected by teacher performance in creating an effective learning environment (Martella, Nelson, Marchand-Martella, & O'Reilly, 2012; Stewart, Benner, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2007; Stewart, Martella, Marchand-Martella, & Benner, 2005). Research has demonstrated a strong positive correlation between behavior problems and low academic achievement (Gest & Gest, 2005; Landrum, Tankersley, & Kauffman, 2003). Beyond being correlated, Payne, Marks, and Bogan (2007) reported that behavioral and academic problems are reciprocal in nature—behavior problems may lower academic engagement, and as a result, students may fail to master skills because of this diminished engagement. Strategies

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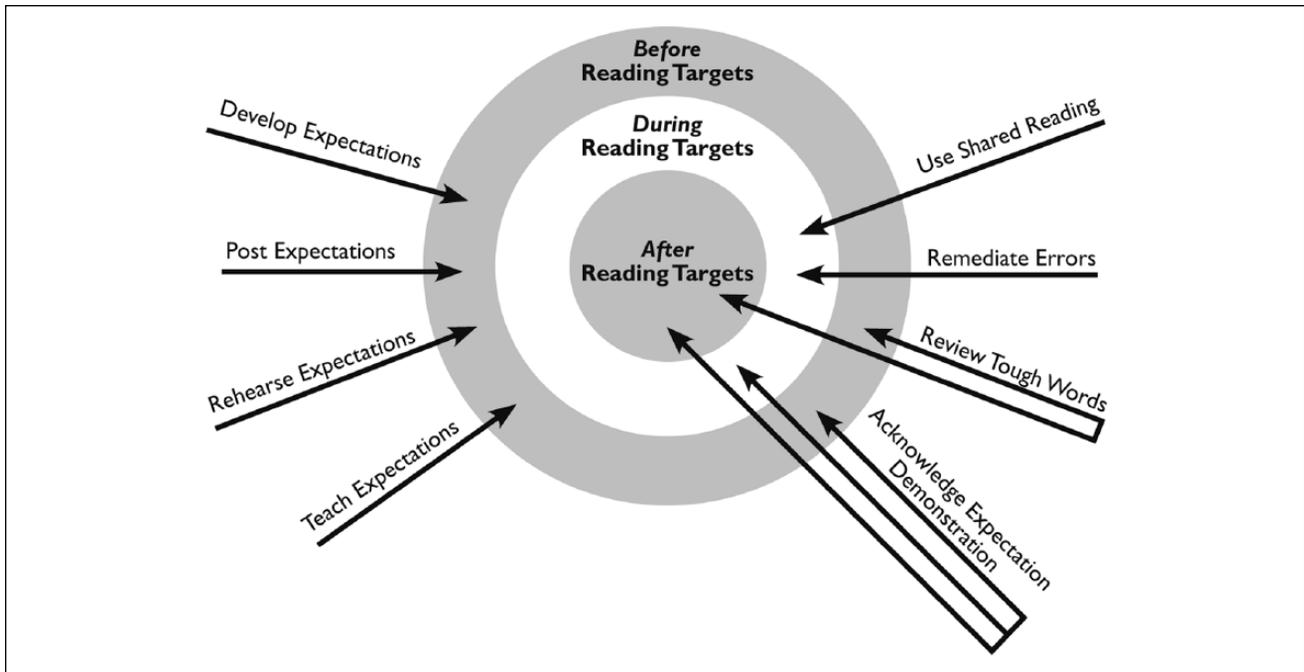


Figure 1. Before-, during-, and after-reading targets for use in Tier 2 guided reading instruction.

that minimize student risk for long-term negative learning outcomes are warranted to promote higher levels of on-task behavior, particularly when more focused interventions are used, such as Tier 2 guided reading instruction.

Targeted Management Tips

To enhance guided reading instruction provided at the Tier 2 level, behavior management tips can be provided to help teachers better meet the needs of students who are at risk for school failure (see Martella et al., 2012, for details). These tips can be used before, during, and after guided reading instruction (see Figure 1).

Before-Reading Targets

Three to five expectations should be targeted that are idiosyncratic to the small-group guided reading experience. One recommended set of expectations that could be used is called STAR (i.e., S = *sit* in the learning position, T = *track* with your finger, A = *answer* on signal, and R = *respect* others); this set of expectations is often seen in Direct Instruction reading programs (e.g., Engelmann, Hanner, & Johnson, 2008). Before providing instruction, teachers should post these expectations in a prominent location, preferably behind them and in direct view of the students. These expectations should be rehearsed with the students in a unison fashion (e.g., Teacher: “S stands for ‘sit in a learning position.’ What does S stand for?” Teacher and students respond: “Sit in the learning position.”). Eventually,

teachers should fade their participation, letting students respond on their own.

The targeted expectations should also be taught directly to students. The “I do, we do, you do” strategy (see Archer & Hughes, 2011; Martella et al., 2012; and Weiss, 2013, for details) is an excellent model for teaching classroom expectations in a direct manner. Essentially, explicit instruction is provided to students in the following way. First, during “I do,” teachers model the expectation (“Watch as I sit in the learning position”). Then they show (or tell) students examples and non-examples of these expectations and ask students to determine their correctness (“Is this sitting in the learning position?”). Second, during “we do,” the students practice demonstrating each expectation with teacher guidance; teachers praise the expectation specifically when it is exhibited (e.g., “Nice job sitting in the learning position”). When errors occur, teachers remedy them (e.g., “This is the way you sit in the learning position. Now show me how to sit in the learning position”), being sure to praise correct responding once it is demonstrated (“That’s the way to sit in the learning position”). Finally, during “you do,” students demonstrate meeting these expectations on their own; the teacher praises students for following the expectations, correcting errors when they arise. Teachers review the classroom expectations on a regular basis to ensure they are maintained.

Before reading a leveled book, teachers should place sticky notes on the table, in front of each student. If cost is a factor, index cards cut in half or small pieces of paper can be used. Teachers may also mark tallies on the table directly in front of each student using a dry-erase marker. When students join the

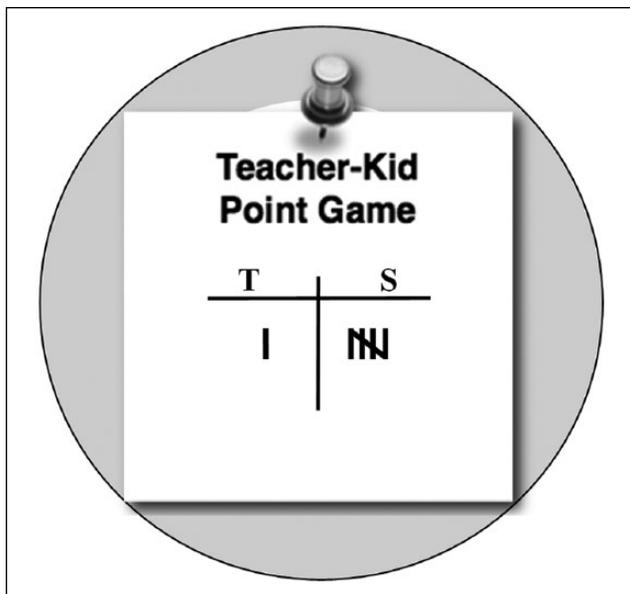


Figure 2. Teacher-kid point game.

group, they should be acknowledged with praise and a tally on their sticky notes, based on their demonstration of the expectations before guided reading instruction begins (e.g., “I like the way Juan, and Mary, and Matt came to group and immediately sat in the learning position”). If a student is not following expectations, a praise-around procedure can be used wherein teachers praise and provide points only to those students following the expectations. Once the student who is off task demonstrates the expectation, he or she receives praise and points. A startup request can be used if the praise-around procedure does not work (e.g., “Dominic, you need to sit in the learning position”) followed by praise and points when the student complies.

If a leveled book includes tough words that were shown to be problematic during Tier 1 guided reading instruction, teachers should review them before the book is read. They could write the words on a whiteboard and review them (e.g., “This word is *camouflage*. What word?”). Teachers should praise students when they exhibit group expectations (e.g., “Nice job answering on signal”).

During-Reading Targets

As teachers guide students through the reading experience, they should praise students based on the expectations as often as possible, without breaking the momentum of the lesson (e.g., “Nice job tracking with your finger”). Teachers may also use the “teacher-kid” point game wherein a schematic is drawn on the whiteboard (see Figure 2); they provide points when the students display the expectations. Teachers receive points when students do not follow the expectations.

Round-robin reading should not be used. Instead, teachers should call on students in a random order, saying, “Read until I tell you to stop, [student’s name].” Speaking a student’s name at the end helps ensure all students are on task and are ready to read at any moment. Telling a student to read until the teacher says to stop keeps students focused on reading as compared to counting sentences or skipping ahead to the next paragraph. Those students who are not reading aloud should follow along by tracking with their finger. Again, teachers should praise student behavior based on the expectations (e.g., “I liked the way everyone was tracking with their finger when Juan was reading”) and provide tallies on the sticky notes (or whiteboard for the teacher-kid point game). The praise-around procedure and startup requests can be used. If time permits, teachers may ask comprehension questions based on what was read using “who, what, when, where, why, or how” questions.

During reading, errors should be remedied. An easy-to-use error correction procedure is a modified version of the “I do, we do, you do” approach. First, teachers say the word (e.g., “That word is *camouflage*”) and then have the group repeat the word (e.g., “Everyone, what word?”). Correct responding is praised (e.g., “Yes, that word is *camouflage*”). The student who made the error rereads the sentence containing the error and continues reading. Teachers keep track of incorrect words by writing them in a column on a whiteboard or paper for later review.

After-Reading Targets

After the leveled book is read, teachers should praise overall group responding, providing tallies and praise based on the expectations (e.g., “Nice job sitting in the learning position in group today”). These expectations should be reviewed as needed. Further, incorrect words written on the whiteboard or paper can now be reviewed using the following firming procedure. Teachers should point to each word and ask, “What word?” The students should respond in unison and be praised on correctness (“Yes, the word is *camouflage*”) and on following STAR expectations (e.g., “Nice job answering on signal”). If the students do not respond correctly, they should be error corrected. If they do not respond in unison, they should repeat the response (e.g., “I need to hear everyone together. What word?”). The word should be repeated after the column is read or teachers can start the column of words again to ensure firm responding. The praise-around procedure and startup requests can be used. If time permits, teachers may ask comprehension questions using “who, what, when, where, why, or how” questions.

Summary

Guided reading instruction can be enhanced by the use of targeted behavior management tips. These tips should be

used before, during, and after more-focused Tier 2 guided reading instruction. They are based on clearly identified expectations that are taught and reinforced. Errors are immediately corrected, and difficult words are either previewed before or reviewed after instruction. If these targeted management tips are followed, students are likely to exhibit higher levels of academic engagement and achievement.

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