

# DOINGWHATWORKS



## Presentation

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

### Modeling Initial Sounds in Tier 3

Tri-Community Elementary School, Pennsylvania • November 2009

Topic: Response to Intervention in Primary Grade Reading  
Practice: Systematic Skill Instruction

#### Highlights

- An example of conducting an intensive Tier 3 lesson using one-on-one instruction
- Nancy Bookwalter, reading specialist at Tri-Community Elementary, teaches phonological awareness skills, including letter names, letter sounds, and hearing initial sounds in words
- Demonstration of a lesson on initial sounds, using strategies such as providing extensive practice opportunities and immediate corrective feedback
- Starting the lesson with a review of previous letter sounds and moving on to new letter sounds
- Importance of modeling and scaffolding instruction including the “I do, we do, you do” approach
- An example of modeling for the student how to produce the sound through proper mouth formation
- Discussion of progress monitoring and how to share information with classroom teachers and parents

## About the Site

Tri-Community Elementary School

Steelton, PA

### Demographics

38% Black

37% White

19% Hispanic

5% Asian

1% Other

53% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Response to Intervention and Instruction (RtII) was introduced at Tri-Community Elementary School six years ago. Since then, the school has moved from lowest performing in the district to successfully meeting Adequate Yearly Progress targets. Strong leadership and a partnership with a regional technical assistance network have helped to sustain:

- Data-driven differentiation of instruction in the core curriculum and tiered interventions.
- A teaming structure that manages data, assesses progress, and plans interventions.
- Collaboration between special education and teaching staff.
- Instructional planning that consistently integrates explicit teaching strategies, continuous progress monitoring, and a focus on teaching to mastery.

## Full Transcript

Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to Modeling Initial Sounds in Tier 3.

Slide 2: Introducing Nancy Bookwalter

My name is Nancy Bookwalter, and I'm a reading specialist. The skills group that I was teaching was a Tier 3 kindergarten skills group, and they are focusing on the very beginning of phonics and phonological awareness: letter names, letter sounds, hearing sounds in words, particularly hearing initial sounds in words.

Slide 3: Beginning the lesson

When we began the lesson, the student and I reviewed the letters that he had already learned. I

modeled the letter name and the letter sound, and then he echoed it back, and then I asked him to do it independently. Then they practice hearing that sound as the initial sound in words. Then they practice finding words that have that initial sound.

#### Slide 4: Introducing new sounds

We moved on to introducing the new letter C. He had to find pictures that began with that initial sound. There was a card with three pictures on it, and that he struggled with. We tried two cards, and he was guessing, just pointing at other words. The last card, I just showed him picture by picture, showed him one picture instead of a set of three, until he could hear it and find the picture.

#### Slide 5: Scaffolding

With the young kids that come in, the kindergartners, especially the intensive children often haven't had a lot of previous instruction, so modeling is really important because they come in with very little background of what a letter looks like, or what it sounds like, or how it's written. We scaffold it with a lot of teacher guidance and then it's that whole "I do, we do, you do."

#### Slide 6: Producing the proper sound

One of the components of the program that we teach is showing the children how the letter sounds feel in their mouths. So I always show them that with my mouth. I have them look at me and I show them in my mouth, and we talk about where your teeth are and if your lips are open or closed and where your tongue is sitting in your mouth. Then I'm quiet and I listen to them to make sure they're producing the proper sound, because some of the letters have the same mouth formation as other letters but they're voiced or not voiced.

#### Slide 7: B and P example

The one student that I have often would get B and P mixed up, and the mouth formation is similar, but the production of it, whether you use your voice box or not, is what's different. And so for P, to put our hand in front of our mouth and have him make that sound and to feel the puff of air that comes out really helped him see that that is different from the B sound, which, if they put their hand on their neck or on their mouth, can actually feel more of a vibration. So that modeling of the letter sounds and how they're produced in the mouth really helps the intensive kids to differentiate between some of those sounds that maybe they wouldn't normally pick up.

### Slide 8: Immediate feedback

I give them a lot of verbal feedback and get excited for them, and I think that helps them get excited and motivates them. For errors that he made, I give him immediate feedback. A lot of times I just correct, make him echo it back so that he's successful, so that he's not just guessing randomly. But there are times I do give them a second chance, say, "Try that again or think about that again," or try and redirect them without just giving them the answer, making them have a little bit of wait time to stop and think. It just kind of depends on where we are in the lesson, or what I think he can do, or if I think he's just rushing it a little too much.

### Slide 9: Assessing progress

Throughout the lesson, I assessed his understanding on each different component as we went along. First I reviewed the previous letters we had done, and he could tell me every letter name and every letter sound. I can model for him and we can do it together, but I always want to make sure that they can do it independently. And that's one of the things that he struggles with. He can do a lot of things more with support and with scaffolding, but does not yet have those skills very securely to be able to do it independently, especially the initial sound fluency.

### Slide 10: Classroom connections

Because we pick up the children and deliver them each day from their classroom, we can give immediate feedback or get answers to questions. I can transfer what they're learning as a whole group into what I'm doing in skills. And they see that what we're doing in reading skills is connected to what they're doing in their core reading time.

### Slide 11: Home connections

With my Tier 3 children, they're also getting a letter ring, which the student got and was really excited about, was excited to see his name on it. And I wanted to put it in his take-home folder so it would be safe and sound and he wouldn't lose it, and he decided it needed to be even closer to him. And he grabbed it and right away had to put it in his little jeans pocket, and he seemed so proud about having that. He was excited to look at the letters in it and even said that he had some of those letters at home, but he didn't have letter C.

Slide 12: Parent support

It's really great to see that the parents at home are supporting what we're doing here at school. And I think that's such an important component of what we do, is having that communication with parents and letting them know this is what we're learning and having those children transfer that learning at home.

Slide 13: Learn more

To learn more about Modeling Initial Sounds in Tier 3, please explore the additional resources on the Doing What Works website.