



**Make available intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers that can be provided by trained specialists**



*Students may require more support than they receive through general classroom instruction. Students who cannot meet learning goals often need rigorous and customized interventions provided by trained reading specialists. These interventions aid students in developing reading and writing skills that will help them meet learning goals. Identify struggling readers using an evaluation test or a benchmark score on a reading test in collaboration with an examination that is conducted, graded, and defined by a reading specialist. Each student struggling with literacy may have a different need, so interventions must be individualized. The purpose of the intensive intervention is to accelerate the student's ability to access grade-level materials independently.*



<b>How to carry out the recommendation</b>	<b>Potential roadblocks</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify struggling readers through reliable and benchmarked reading assessments versus informal observations.</li> <li>2. Identify an individualized intervention plan for each struggling reader.</li> <li>3. Recognize that struggling readers require more targeted and intensive interventions than their nonstruggling peers.</li> <li>4. For intensive interventions, use duplicate, additional comprehension activities and guided reflection.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Some schools may not have specialists or access to the resources needed to identify struggling readers' needs accurately.</li> <li>2. Some secondary content-area teachers may not have the knowledge or skills to teach reading or may believe that teaching reading skills is not their responsibility.</li> </ol>

*Reference:* Kamil, M. L., Borman, G. D., Dole, J., Kral, C. C., Salinger, T., & Torgesen, J. (2008). *Improving adolescent literacy: Effective classroom and intervention practices* (NCEE 2008-4027). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Retrieved from <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/8>



How to carry out the recommendation

---

**1. Identify struggling readers through reliable and benchmarked reading assessments versus informal observations.**

Some students will need a more in-depth screening assessment, while others can simply take an examination with benchmark scores to determine the need for intervention. Following the identification of a struggling reader, reading specialists can administer diagnostic tests and determine the intervention for individual students.

**2. Identify an individualized intervention plan for each struggling reader.**

Intervention strategies need to be explicit, provide reading techniques and rules that increase the student's ability to read independently. Intervention plans should provide opportunities for teachers in collaboration with students setting specific skill-development goals. Skill development should include teacher modeling, extended practice, feedback, and transfer of skill to other areas.

**3. Recognize that struggling readers require more targeted and intensive interventions than their nonstruggling peers.**

Students who are struggling more than other students will need more intensive interventions. Intervention intensity and focus need to align with assessed student needs. Studies indicate struggling readers improve with increased reading instruction time, small-group instruction, or a combination of these two approaches.

**4. For intensive interventions, use duplicate, additional comprehension activities and guided reflection.**

Teachers can provide strategies such as repeated reading, provision of adjunct questions to scaffold comprehension, and questioning for understanding to individual students or smaller groups.

*Make available intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers that can be provided by trained specialists*

---

Potential roadblocks and how to address them

---

<b>Roadblock</b>	<b>Suggested Approach</b>
<i>Some schools may not have specialists or access to the resources needed to identify struggling readers' needs accurately.</i>	<p>Effective identification of struggling readers is essential to student improvement. Reallocate resources to prioritize timely and accurate identification of students in need of intervention. Title I, state, and local funding can help fund these essential resources. Title II funding can support professional development for teachers in order to improve their understanding of these ideas. Make sure literacy is a schoolwide initiative.</p> <p>Students who are struggling in reading are most accurately diagnosed through formal assessment but may be identified through teacher recommendation or a student's individualized education plan. Students identified as struggling to read need further diagnostic assessment to identify specific student needs. Specialists who have received specialized training should complete this assessment.</p>
<i>Some secondary content-area teachers may not have the knowledge or skills to teach reading or may believe that teaching reading skills is not their responsibility.</i>	<p>Content-area teachers should not be accountable for implementing struggling readers' interventions. However, content-area teachers can learn how to use different approaches to make the text more available to students. Professional development will provide teachers with ideas on how to do this. Teachers can also use instructional tools that aim to make the text accessible to students. If schools provide teachers with time to collaborate on this idea, it will help as well. Literacy specialists, literacy teachers, and other experts can be helpful resources for teachers from other content areas.</p>



*For more information on the research evidence and references to support this recommendation, or for more detailed explanation from the What Works Clearinghouse committee who developed this recommendation, please refer to the practice guide cited at the bottom of the first page of this document.*