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FIND THE POWER

Does Your Intervention Have Enough Power to Create Progress?

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The Problem

A Question Nobody Asked

A student's data is flat. The team has tried. The file is thick. The next conversation is about whether the learning challenge is more severe than originally understood.

Before that conversation happens, this guide asks a different question.

Not, is the student trying hard enough? Instead, is the intervention trying hard enough?

Five variables determine whether an intervention has enough power to produce measurable progress. Most struggling interventions are not failing because the student is not capable. They are failing because one or more of these variables has not been set correctly. And if we don't pause to audit the intervention's power, we will not see this gap. And then we assume the lack is with the student.

This guide gives you the audit. It takes about ten minutes. What you find will either confirm that the intervention has been given a fair chance. Or it will show you exactly where the intervention power has been lacking.

Audit your intervention before you draw any conclusions about the student.

Keisha

Keisha received reading support for two years. Her file documented thirty minutes of intervention twice a week. The diagnosis was accurate. The program was evidence-based. The interventionist was experienced.

The data was flat.

The team was ready to conclude that the learning difficulty was more severe than previously understood. Keisha might need a different setting.

Then the student support director asked a better question.

Does the intervention have enough power to produce meaningful progress?

So the team audited the intervention. Not the student, the delivery. And the audit changed everything.

Attendance logs showed Keisha had missed nearly forty percent of sessions. Twice a week had become closer to once. The instruction targeted phonics, but her actual gap was in phonemic awareness, the skill that comes before phonics. The intervention group had six students with diverse needs, all sharing one interventionist. The interventionist was credentialed but not trained in the specific methodology to address Keisha's skill gap.

Every intervention variable had low power. Keisha had received two years of intervention that never had a realistic chance of working.

When the team increased every variable, Keisha made eleven months of reading progress in five months.

> **Same student. Same learning challenge. A more powerful intervention.**

This guide gives you two things: a reference table showing what low, medium, and high power look like across five research-based variables, and an intervention audit protocol you can run this week on any intervention whose data concerns you.

The Principle

Five variables determine whether an intervention has enough power to produce meaningful progress: session duration, session frequency, skill focus, group size, and interventionist expertise.

> **These five do not add. They multiply.**

When any one variable is insufficient, the others often cannot compensate. A brilliant specialist focusing on the wrong skill will not produce meaningful progress. The correct skill focus delivered once a week for 20 minutes will not build momentum. A perfectly focused plan in a group of eight with diverse needs will not generate enough real-time feedback to correct errors as they happen.

The goal is not maximum power. The goal is appropriate power, enough for the student to make meaningful progress. The table below is your reference sheet. It provides a framework for locating your current intervention on each variable, what the research says about increasing power, and the citations. When you make the case for increasing intervention power, you are presenting evidence, not opinion.

The Levers

A lever gives you the ability to move something otherwise difficult to move. When you design an intervention, you have a set of levers at your disposal. You can schedule a student for ten minutes per session or forty. That is the session duration lever. You can deliver instruction to a group of six or a group of two. That is the group size lever. Each lever is a variable you can adjust.

When a student is not progressing, the instinct is to conclude that the student is the problem. The intervention power framework asks a different question: have we pulled the right levers, at the right settings, to give this intervention a realistic chance of working? In most cases of flat data, at least one lever has been set too low. Adjusting it changes the outcome.

The table that follows shows what low, medium, and high power look like for each of the five levers and what the research says about each setting.

Power Table

LEVER 1: SESSION DURATION

Instructional minutes per session, from start of instruction to end, minus transitions, settling, and pack-up.

Power Level	What It Looks Like	Research Base
LOW	20–30 min per session.	WWC recommends 20–40 min for Tier 2 (Gersten et al., 2008). Gunn et al. (2000, 2002): 20 min daily produced positive effects on early literacy in kindergarten.
MEDIUM	30–45 min per session.	WWC recommends 40–50 min for Tier 2 in grades 1–2 as skill demands broaden. Denton et al. (2013): 45+ min sessions for Tier 3 produced significant gains. Vaughn et al. (2007): 45–60 min as Tier 3 baseline.

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Power Level	What It Looks Like	Research Base
HIGH	45–60+ min per session.	Torgesen et al. (2001): two 50-min sessions daily with previously stagnant students produced effect sizes of 4.4. Vaughn, Denton & Fletcher (2010): extending to 2 hours as one method of increasing Tier 3 intensity.

Critical nuance: More time by itself does not necessarily produce better outcomes. Wanzek & Vaughn (2008): Doubling session time with the same content did not improve results. Longer sessions matter only when the additional minutes are spent differently. We must evaluate all levers.

LEVER 2: SESSION FREQUENCY

Sessions delivered per week. Divide total sessions provided by total weeks in the intervention window.

Power Level	What It Looks Like	Research Base
LOW	2–3x per week. Common due to scheduling and caseload constraints.	WWC recommends 3–5x/week for Tier 2 (Gersten et al., 2008). Ukrainetz, Ross & Harm (2009): total sessions matter more than the schedule pattern.
MEDIUM	4-5x per week.	Vaughn, Linan-Thompson & Hickman (2003): more frequent intervention associated with faster progress rates. Denton et al. (2010); Mathes et al. (2005): daily intervention for 25–30 weeks reported higher response rates.
HIGH	10x per week (2 daily), sustained over months.	Torgesen et al. (2001): two sessions per day, five days per week — ten sessions weekly for eight weeks. Effect sizes of 4.4 with students previously stagnant for

Power Level	What It Looks Like	Research Base
		sixteen months.

Critical nuance: Frequency interacts with attendance. A student scheduled for 3x/week who attends 60% receives 1.8 actual sessions. Calculate delivered frequency, not intended frequency.

The frequency math: The Torgesen students received ten sessions per week. A student receiving two sessions per week would need nearly a full school year to accumulate the same number of sessions that those students received in eight weeks. The study that produced the largest effect sizes in the intervention literature used dramatically increased frequency.

LEVER 3: SKILL FOCUS

The precision of the instructional target. Compare the intervention content to the student's precise skill gap and the current zone of learning for that skill. Is the intervention focusing on the needed skill and at the current level?

Power Level	What It Looks Like	Research Base
LOW	Intervention addresses the correct general domain and level using a standard protocol.	WWC recommends Tier 2 target up to three foundational skill areas based on screening data (Gersten et al., 2008).
MEDIUM	Intervention focuses on the specific skill gap and level of that skill, informed by diagnostic assessment.	Vellutino et al. (1996, 2006): focused instruction reduced severe reading impairment from 9% to 1.5%. Al Otaiba & Fuchs (2002): Specific skill gaps predict nonresponse when not targeted.
HIGH	Instruction calibrated to the precise skill gap	McMaster et al. (2005): nonresponder category was partly an artifact of which

Power Level	What It Looks Like	Research Base
	at the precise zone of learning using ongoing diagnostic data, sequenced forward from the identified point.	skills were targeted. Fuchs et al. (2017): alignment as a distinct dimension of intervention intensity.

Critical nuance: This is the lever most likely to explain the lack of meaningful progress in an otherwise adequate intervention. A student receiving 45 minutes daily, one-to-one, from a trained specialist, aimed at the wrong skill, is not likely to make progress.

Note: Focusing on the high-power level requires knowing the precise point in the developmental sequence where the student's learning gap occurs. The Developmental Trace protocol in **Find the Gap** shows you how to trace a student's difficulty backward through the skill hierarchy to that exact coordinate. Without a precise developmental coordinate, this lever cannot be set correctly, regardless of how well the other four levers are configured.

LEVER 4: GROUP SIZE

Number of students per interventionist. The audit question: Can the specialist hear every error and correct it in real time?

Power Level	What It Looks Like	Research Base
LOW	4–6 students.	WWC recommends groups of 3–4 for Tier 2 (Gersten et al., 2008). Vaughn et al. (2003.
MEDIUM	2–3 students, well-matched on area and level of focus.	Elbaum et al. (2000): consistent positive effects for small group and 1:1 tutoring. IRIS Center/Vanderbilt recommends no

Power Level	What It Looks Like	Research Base
		more than 1:3 for Tier 3.
HIGH	1:1. Mechanism is feedback density: the interventionist hears every error, corrects at the point of the gap, adjusts pacing and level in real time.	Torgesen et al. (2001): 1:1 for intensive remediation. Wanzek et al. (2021): smallest groups produced the largest effects, especially for comprehension.

Critical nuance: A group of three students who all need work on the same phonemic awareness skill is an intervention group. A group of three students with three different reading profiles is three students receiving general reading support, not an intervention. The group size may look acceptable on paper. The actual feedback density may be insufficient.

LEVER 5: INSTRUCTOR EXPERTISE

The match between the interventionists' specific training in the methodology that the student's data suggests is needed.

Power Level	What It Looks Like	What This Looks Like in the Room	Research Base
LOW	General training. Might be an aide with coaching and supervision.	Follows the program script. Marks errors incorrect and moves on. Errors are noted but not analyzed.	Gersten et al. (2008): Tier 2 can be delivered by trained paraprofessionals with ongoing supervision. Vaughn et al. (2003): coached paraprofessionals with positive results at Tier 2.
MEDIUM	Specific training in	Recognizes the type	IDA (2019):

Power Level	What It Looks Like	What This Looks Like in the Room	Research Base
	the methodology the student's profile requires (e.g., structured literacy, handwriting without tears, number worlds).	of error and knows what it signals. Selects among activities based on what the student showed today, not what the manual says comes next.	structured literacy requires specialized knowledge beyond general reading instruction. Sanetti & Kratochwill (2009): quality of delivery is most dependent on instructor knowledge.
HIGH	Deep expertise in the relevant methodology. Understands the cognitive model and adjusts in real time based on what the student's error reveals.	Hears a specific error and knows immediately which sub-skill it reflects, what instruction is needed, and whether the sequence needs revision. Can tell you after the session what she learned and what changes tomorrow.	Durlak & DuPre (2008): programs delivered with high fidelity produce effect sizes 2–3x higher. Fidelity at this level requires understanding why each component matters and not just what to do.

Critical nuance: This lever is evaluating the match between the interventionist's training and the student's needs. A skilled reading teacher without structured literacy training is working with the wrong tools for a specific student. The mismatch is a design variable, not a personnel judgment. The most reliable indicator of high-power expertise is what an interventionist can tell you after the session about what she learned about the student. The intervention is diagnostic.

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Using Table

The levels are not inherently good or bad. They describe the power of the intervention as actually delivered.

If the student is making meaningful progress at a low level of power, the level is appropriate. **The goal is not maximum power. It is sufficient power: enough for the student to make meaningful progress.**

If the student is not progressing, check whether increasing power on one or more levers changes the rate of progress before concluding anything about the student. **The levers multiply. The weakest lever constrains the whole system.**

> When power is increased to match the student's needs, most students previously described as stuck begin to move. The students who do not make meaningful progress in a powerful intervention represent a much smaller group than the number typically not making meaningful progress. They can only be identified accurately after the intervention has been delivered with sufficient power to make the distinction meaningful.

The Audit

1. Time the sessions.

Record when instruction actually begins — not when the student arrives, but when learning begins. Record when the instruction ends. Subtract transitions, travel, settling, materials, and pack-up. The number that remains is the actual instructional time.

2. Count sessions delivered.

Count sessions that were actually delivered — not just scheduled. Subtract cancellations, absences, assemblies, testing days, and schedule disruptions. Divide by weeks. That is the real frequency.

3. Name the specific skill and its level.

State, in one sentence, the specific skill the intervention is building and its level. Not the subject. If the answer is a subject or a category ("ELA," "reading comprehension "), the target is not very precise. Check: Does the diagnostic data indicate that this is the skill gap, or is the intervention focusing on a downstream difficulty of something more foundational?

4. Test the feedback density.

How many students are in the group? Do they share the same specific skill gap and level? Can the interventionist hear or see every error and correct it in real time?

5. Ask what the specialist learned today.

After an intervention session, ask: What did you learn about this student today, and what are you doing differently tomorrow? A low-power answer describes what was covered. A high-power answer describes what the student's errors revealed and how that changes tomorrow's instruction.

Next Steps

If you can make the adjustment: One or two variables are insufficient and within your control — the target is imprecise, the group can be restructured, and the interventionist needs methodology-specific consultation. Fix them. Collect weekly data for six weeks. See what moves.

If it is a system problem: The same variables are insufficient across multiple students: frequency is eroded for everyone, groups are too large, and no one on campus has the specific training certain students require. That is not a student support issue. It is a school issue.

> *Bring the table. Show where your students' interventions currently sit. Show where the research says they need to be. The gap between those two columns is the case for structural change: staffing, scheduling, training, and group sizes.*

Before you make a conclusion about the student, audit the intervention. The most common reason a student's data is flat is not that the student cannot progress. It is that the intervention never had enough power to produce progress.

Fix the power first. See what moves.

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The Five-Lever Intervention Audit

Complete one per intervention when progress data is flat. Use in team meetings or independent review.

STUDENT: _____ **GRAGE:** _____ **DATE:** _____

Intervention name: _____

Current progress scores:

- ☐ More than expected progress
- ☐ Expected progress
- ☐ No progress
- ☐ Declining scores

LEVER 1: SESSION DURATION

Scheduled session length: _____ minutes.

Session	Scheduled	Instruction Start	Instruction End	Actual Minutes
1				
2				
3				

Average actual instructional minutes: _____

Power level: ☐ Low (under 25 min) ☐ Medium (25–40 min) ☐ High (40+ min)

Action needed? ☐ No ☐ Yes — specifically: _____

LEVER 2: SESSION FREQUENCY

Scheduled sessions/week: _____

Sessions actually delivered in last 6 weeks: _____ **Delivery rate:** _____%

What is eroding frequency? Assemblies / Testing days / Schedule conflicts / Staff absences / Student absences / Other: _____

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Power level: ☐ Low (under 70% delivered, or under 3x/week actual)
☐ Medium (3–4x/week actual) ☐ High (daily or near-daily)

Action needed? ☐ No ☐ Yes — specifically: _____

LEVER 3: SKILL SPECIFICITY

State the specific skill this intervention is building (one sentence — precise enough for a substitute specialist to know exactly what to teach):

Target confirmed by:
☐ Diagnostic data (assessment used): _____
☐ Screening score / diagnostic label only — more diagnostic data needed

Is instruction beginning at the student's actual developmental level?
☐ At actual developmental level (specify): _____
☐ At grade level — above the breakdown point

Power level: ☐ Low (general domain target)
☐ Medium (specific subdomain, diagnostic-informed)
☐ High (precise skill, calibrated entry point)

Action needed? ☐ No ☐ Yes — specifically: _____

LEVER 4: GROUP SIZE

Current group size: _____ students.

Do all students in the group share the same specific skill gap?
☐ Yes — same target skill
☐ No — grouped by schedule / diagnostic category / other: _____

Can a specialist hear every error each student makes and correct in real time?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

Power level: ☐ Low (4+ students, mixed profiles)
☐ Medium (2–3 students, matched)
☐ High (1:1 or 1:2, well-matched)

Action needed? ☐ No ☐ Yes — specifically: _____

LEVER 5: INTERVENTIONIST EXPERTISE

What specific methodology does this student's profile require?

_____

_____

Specialist's training in that specific methodology:

☐ General training only
☐ Some specific training
☐ Deep expertise in this methodology

After observing a session, ask: "What did you learn about this student today, and what are you doing differently tomorrow?"

_____

_____

_____

Power Level	
Low power signal	☐ Described what was covered — content focus, not student response focus
Medium power signal	☐ Described how the student responded and adjusted one element
High power signal	☐ Named a specific error, identified what it revealed about the gap, and stated the specific instructional change for tomorrow

Does this intervention require:
☐ Fidelity (following the program)
☐ Responsiveness (real-time adjustment based on student response)

Does the specialist's current delivery match that requirement?
☐ Yes ☐ No — Gap: _____

Power level: ☐ Low (general training, covers content)
☐ Medium (specific training, adjusts based on student)

☐ High (deep expertise, errors reveal the gap)

Action needed? ☐ No ☐ Yes — specifically: _____

AUDIT SUMMARY

Lever	Current Power Level			Action Needed
Duration	☐ Low	☐ Medium	☐ High	
Frequency	☐ Low	☐ Medium	☐ High	
Specificity	☐ Low	☐ Medium	☐ High	
Group Size	☐ Low	☐ Medium	☐ High	
Expertise	☐ Low	☐ Medium	☐ High	

Number of levers at low power: _____

Most likely explanation for flat data:

_____

_____

Revised intervention design:

_____

_____

Next 6-week check-in date: _____

If this is a system problem (same variables insufficient across multiple students): Bring this audit to school leadership. The gap between the "current power level" column and "Medium/High" is the case for structural change in staffing, scheduling, training, and group sizes backed by research.

Remember: If even one lever is at low power, the flat data is evidence about the intervention, not about the student. Fix the variable. Observe what happens.

Additional Resources

The five-lever framework in this guide is grounded in more than two decades of intervention intensity research. The sources below are the primary studies on which the Power Table and audit protocol are based. They are organized by lever.

Foundational Framework

Gersten, R., Compton, D., Connor, C. M., Dimino, J., Santoro, L., Linan-Thompson, S., & Tilly, W. D. (2008).

Assisting students struggling with reading: Response to Intervention and multi-tier intervention for reading in the primary grades. A practice guide. (NCEE 2009-4045). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/rti_reading_pg_021809.pdf

The What Works Clearinghouse practice guide that provides the evidence base for Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention parameters across session duration, frequency, group size, and interventionist qualifications. The primary reference point for what "the research recommends" across all five levers.

Lever 1: Session Duration

Torgesen, J. K., Alexander, A. W., Wagner, R. K., Rashotte, C. A., Voeller, K. K. S., & Conway, T. (2001).

Intensive remedial instruction for children with severe reading disabilities: Immediate and long-term outcomes from two instructional approaches. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 34*(1), 33–58.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/002221940103400104

The study behind the 4.4 effect size cited in this guide. Sixty children with severe reading disabilities received 67.5 hours of 1:1 instruction across two 50-minute sessions per day for eight weeks. Both programs produced very large gains stable over a two-year follow-up. The most cited study in intensive reading intervention research.

Wanzek, J., & Vaughn, S. (2008).

Response to varying amounts of time in reading intervention for students with low response to intervention. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 41*(2), 126–142.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022219407313426

Two studies examining whether doubling session time (single dose vs. double dose) improved outcomes for first-grade students who had already demonstrated low response to intervention. Single-dose and double-dose groups produced similar outcomes. More time does not improve results unless the additional time is used differently.

Vaughn, S., Denton, C. A., & Fletcher, J. M. (2010).

Why intensive interventions are necessary for students with severe reading difficulties. *Psychology in the Schools, 47*(5), 432–444.

https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3322477/

Reviews the rationale and evidence for intensive intervention design, including extending session length to two hours as one method of increasing Tier 3 power. Addresses why standard Tier 2 parameters are insufficient for students with persistent nonresponse.

Lever 2: Session Frequency

Torgesen et al. (2001) — see citation above.

The ten-sessions-per-week frequency in the Torgesen study is the source of the frequency math in this guide. Students receiving two sessions per week would need nearly a full school year to accumulate the same exposure those students received in eight weeks.

Vaughn, S., Linan-Thompson, S., & Hickman, P. (2003).

Response to instruction as a means of identifying students with reading/learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 69*(4), 391–409.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001440290306900401

Demonstrates that more frequent intervention is associated with faster rates of progress for students with reading difficulties. Students receiving daily intervention showed stronger response rates than those receiving less frequent sessions.

Ukrainetz, T. A., Ross, C. L., & Harm, H. M. (2009).

An investigation of treatment scheduling for phonemic awareness with kindergartners who are at risk for reading difficulties. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 40*(1), 86–100.

https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461(2008/07-0077)

Examines whether total number of sessions delivered matters more than how those sessions are distributed across the week. Findings suggest total session count is the more important variable — a point that affects how attendance losses should be calculated in the frequency audit.

Lever 3: Skill Focus

Vellutino, F. R., Scanlon, D. M., Sipay, E. R., Small, S. G., Chen, R., Pratt, A., & Denckla, M. B. (1996).

Cognitive profiles of difficult-to-remediate and readily remediated poor readers: Early intervention as a vehicle for distinguishing between cognitive and experiential deficits as basic causes of specific reading disability. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 88*(4), 601–638.

https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.88.4.601

Landmark study demonstrating that focused, targeted early intervention dramatically reduced the prevalence of severe reading impairment. Most struggling readers proved readily remediable when instruction was aimed at their precise skill gap. The small group that remained difficult to remediate had identifiable phonological profiles — not general learning incapacity.

Al Otaiba, S., & Fuchs, D. (2002).

Characteristics of children who are unresponsive to early literacy intervention: A review of the literature. *Remedial and Special Education, 23*(5), 300–316.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/07419325020230050501

Review of 23 studies on nonresponders to early literacy intervention. A majority of unresponsive students had phonological awareness deficits — the skill that comes before, not alongside, the skills being targeted in their interventions. Provides the evidence base for the claim that specific skill gaps predict nonresponse when not targeted.



McMaster, K. L., Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., & Compton, D. L. (2005).

Responding to nonresponders: An experimental field trial of identification and intervention methods. *Exceptional Children, 71*(4), 445–463.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001440290507100403

Experimental study demonstrating that the "nonresponder" category is partly an artifact of which skills were targeted, not a fixed student characteristic. Changing the skill target moved students out of nonresponder status.

Fuchs, L. S., Fuchs, D., & Malone, A. S. (2017).

The taxonomy of intervention intensity. *TEACHING Exceptional Children, 50*(1), 35–43.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0040059917703967

Establishes skill alignment — matching instruction to the student's precise deficit — as a distinct and measurable dimension of intervention intensity, separate from time and group size. Provides the theoretical framework for treating skill focus as its own lever.

Lever 4: Group Size

Elbaum, B., Vaughn, S., Hughes, M. T., & Moody, S. W. (2000).

How effective are one-to-one tutoring programs in reading for elementary students at risk for reading failure? A meta-analysis of the intervention research. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 92*(4), 605–619.

https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.92.4.605

Meta-analysis of 29 studies and 1,539 students. Consistent positive effects for 1:1 and small-group tutoring. Mean weighted effect size of 0.41 compared to controls. Source for the consistent positive effects of small group and 1:1 instruction cited in the group size lever.

Vaughn, S., Linan-Thompson, S., Kouzekanani, K., Bryant, D. P., Dickson, S., & Blozis, S. A. (2003).

Reading instruction groups for students with reading difficulties. *Remedial and Special Education, 24*(5), 301–315.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/07419325030240050501

Examines outcomes for students with reading difficulties across different group size conditions. Supports recommendations that Tier 3 group sizes should be no more than 1:3, with 1:1 producing the strongest feedback density.

Wanzek, J., Vaughn, S., Scammacca, N. K., Metz, K., Murray, C. S., Roberts, G., & Danielson, L. (2013).

Extensive reading interventions for students with reading difficulties after grade 3. *Review of Educational Research, 83*(2), 163–195.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.3102/0034654313477212

Synthesis of 19 studies on reading intervention for students in grades 4–12. Smallest groups produced the largest effects, particularly for comprehension outcomes. Provides the post–grade 3 evidence for group size effects cited in the Power Table.

Lever 5: Interventionist Expertise

Durlak, J. A., & DuPre, E. P. (2008).

Implementation matters: A review of research on the influence of implementation on program outcomes and the factors affecting implementation. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 41*(3–4), 327–350.

https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-008-9165-0

Review of over 500 studies examining implementation fidelity and program outcomes. Programs delivered with high fidelity produce effect sizes two to three times higher than those delivered with low fidelity. The primary evidence base for the expertise lever claim that high-fidelity delivery requires understanding why each component matters, not just what to do.

International Dyslexia Association. (2019).

Knowledge and practice standards for teachers of reading. Baltimore, MD: International Dyslexia Association.

https://dyslexiaida.org/knowledge-and-practices/

Establishes the knowledge base required for structured literacy instruction, distinguishing between general reading instruction training and the specialized content knowledge required for students with phonological and decoding profiles. Source for the IDA citation in the expertise lever.

Sanetti, L. M. H., & Kratochwill, T. R. (2009).

Toward developing a science of treatment integrity: Introduction to the special series. *School Psychology Review, 38*(4), 445–459.

https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2009.12087847

Establishes that quality of delivery is the implementation variable most dependent on instructor knowledge. The specialist who understands the cognitive model underlying an intervention delivers it more responsively than one who follows the script without that understanding.

For Deeper Reading

These three sources are the most important for practitioners who want to go beyond the audit and understand the full intervention intensity research base.

Vaughn, S., & Wanzek, J. (2014).

Intensive interventions in reading for students with reading disabilities: Meaningful impacts. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 29*(2), 46–53.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ldrp.12031

Synthesizes the accumulated evidence on what makes reading intervention intensive enough to produce meaningful change for students with persistent reading disabilities. The clearest single overview of intervention intensity research available.

Torgesen et al. (2001) — see full citation above.

If you read only one primary study, read this one. The design, the delivery parameters, the effect sizes, and the two-year follow-up data together provide the clearest demonstration of what a high-power intervention looks like in practice.

What Works Clearinghouse: Assisting Students Struggling with Reading (Gersten et al., 2008) — see full citation above.

The most widely used practice guide in the intervention field. Reads quickly. Every recommendation in the guide is rated for strength of evidence. An essential reference for making the case to school leadership for structural change in staffing, scheduling, and group design.



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