Preface
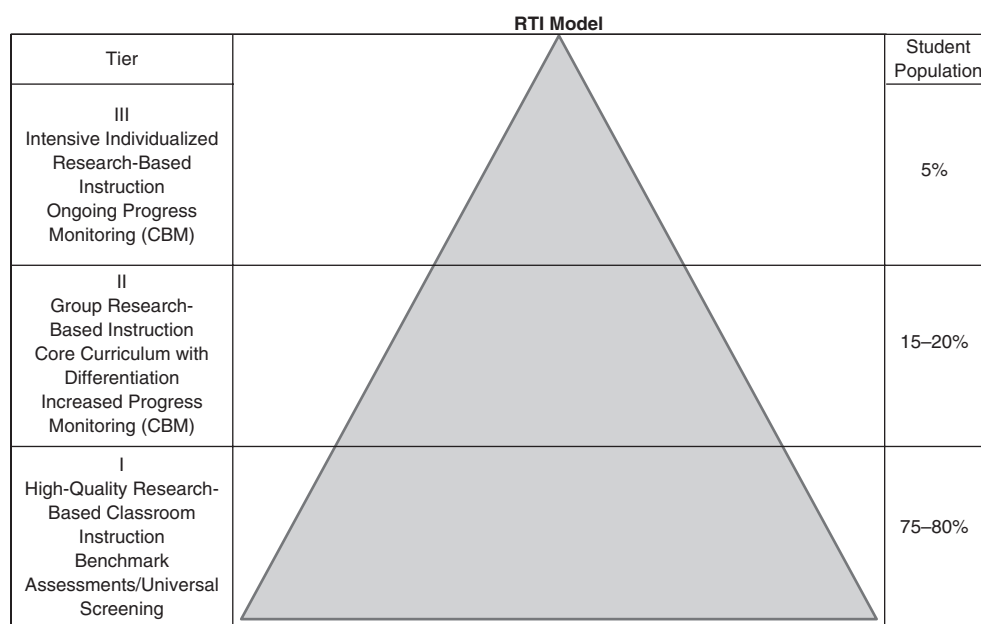
As students with disabilities and learning differences are included in general education settings in greater numbers and for longer periods of time, educators—expert and novice alike—are searching for ways to meet these students' needs most effectively. While many recognize that a teacher's expertise is often the critical determinant in any student's achievement, they also realize that meeting the increasingly diverse needs of students calls for additional information and support. In this context, response to intervention (RTI) has emerged as a promising practice for both identification and prevention of the "most vulnerable, academically unresponsive children" in schools and school districts (Fuchs & Deshler, 2007, p. 131). According to Bradley, Danielson, and Doolittle (2007), the popularity of RTI is based partly on the promise that "teachers no longer would have to wait for students to fail before the students could receive services" (p. 8) and partly in the pledge of change at the first indication of unresponsiveness to classroom implementations of scientifically based interventions. (See Figure 1: RTI Model on page viii.)

RTI is "a multitier prevention model that has at least three tiers" (Bradley et al., 2007, p. 9) or levels of intervention provided in response to increasing needs of students. Regular assessments and progress monitoring are prominent in RTI and establish the importance of using proactive identification of students experiencing difficulties for different tiers of intervention and support (Fuchs & Deshler, 2007). Primary (Tier I) interventions are designed to address the majority of students' instructional needs. If a student has been identified as needing additional support, RTI directs the use of evidence-based, "secondary" (Tier II) interventions, which are easy to administer to small groups of students and which require limited time and staff involvement. Tertiary (Tier III) intervention is specifically designed and customized instruction that is extended beyond the time allocated for Tiers I and II; in some states, Tier III intervention means the provision of special education services. Figure 1 depicts the RTI tiers.

When implementing RTI in a setting (see Table 1 on page ix: RTI Overview), teachers need easy and simple access to authentic information about effective teaching and instructional practices. (See www.ed.gov [search "RTI"] and www.whatworksclearinghouse.org.)

When using the RTI tiers as the framework for determining the appropriate structure and setting for each student, teachers must design instruction to address the student's current learning phase appropriately. In this way, students can move from Accuracy, to Proficiency, to Maintenance, and finally Generalization of skills. The Instructional Planning and Learning Phases Chart (see Table 2 on page x) can be used to guide planning and instruction.

RTI Model

Tier		Student Population
III Intensive Individualized Research-Based Instruction Ongoing Progress Monitoring (CBM)		5%
II Group Research-Based Instruction Core Curriculum with Differentiation Increased Progress Monitoring (CBM)		15–20%
I High-Quality Research-Based Classroom Instruction Benchmark Assessments/Universal Screening		75–80%

Figure 1   RTI Model

Overview

55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings is the third book in our collection of evidence-based practices designed to help teachers address the instructional needs in America's classrooms. As with the other books in the series, it is organized around four components of instruction (planning, managing, delivering, and evaluating), and it is based on our fundamental belief that teachers can respond to instructional diversity more effectively when provided with an easily accessible resource of effective tactics (cf. Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 1992; Algozzine, Ysseldyke, & Elliott, 1997).

This book differs a bit because we believe that most effective evidence-based practices (tactics) can be modified to meet the instructional needs of *all* learners across categories of disability, grade levels, and content areas in the context of RTI. Thus, we have eliminated those distinctions in this book. We have retained "learning differences" as a marker for providing information teachers need to teach effectively in inclusive settings. We have also added "RTI tier accommodations/modifications" to each tactic to guide teachers in adapting tactics to support RTI practices and meet individual instructional needs across levels and tiers of instruction.

Accommodations are changes in the ways in which students access information and demonstrate understanding; accommodations do not alter the content of instruction, just the methods used in the instructional and evaluation processes (Walsh, 2001). Commonly used accommodations include books on tape, enlarged print, untimed tests, and communication boards. *Modifications*, on the other hand, do change the content of student learning and are typically substantiated by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan (e.g., an alternate curriculum or different instructional goals for a particular unit or period of instruction). Selecting appropriate accommodations and modifications depends on collaboration among special and general educators, access to materials and resources, research, and common sense.

Table 1   RTI Overview

Guiding Principles: Focus on the general education curriculum, progress monitoring, early intervention, and the use of evidence-based practices. May be used to identify students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) for special education services.

	Tier 1	Tier II	Tier III
Students	All	Targeted (Unsuccessful in Tier I)	More specifically targeted (Unsuccessful in Tiers I and/or II)
Instructor	General Education Teacher	General Education Teacher Specialists (reading, speech/language)	General Education Teacher Special Education Teachers: (Resource, Special/Language Clinicians, etc.)
Location	General Education Classroom	Various locations	Various locations
Intensity	Daily instruction in language arts (reading, oral & written language), mathematics	Specified frequency: Hours per day: 5–10 Days per week: 3–4 Specified duration: # weeks (9–12)	Most intensive Frequency: based on student need Duration: minimum 12 weeks
Grouping Arrangements	Large and small groups Peers Independent	Small Group (2–5)	Small Group and Individualized
Monitoring	Focus: adequate progress in general education curriculum Universal screening (3 times per year or periodically) throughout the year	Focus: remediation of skill deficits 1–3 times per week	Focus: student learning daily
Curriculum	General Education	General Education	General Education or Alternative
Instruction	High quality, developmentally appropriate, differentiated instruction	Targeted instruction to remediate specific skill deficits	More specifically targeted instruction to meet the needs of individual learners

Table 2   Instructional Planning and Learning Phases

	ACQUISITION	PROFICIENCY/AUTOMATICITY	MAINTENANCE	GENERALIZATION
Goal	To increase probability of correct response **Skill Introduction**	To maintain high frequency, to correct frequency, to correct response, to develop high rates of correct responding **Skill Mastery**	To maintain high frequencies and rates over time **Independence**	To maintain high frequencies, rates over time, and across situations **Application**
Learner Characteristics	Naive Unskilled Low accuracy/low speed	High accuracy and speed	High accuracy and speed	High accuracy and speed
Instructional Characteristics	Intense Teacher/Student interaction	Fading Teacher/Student interaction	Fading Teacher/Student interaction	Fading Teacher/Student interaction Increased application across other natural environments

Instruction	**Teacher** **Student**
	model imitate
	demonstrate respond
	explain
	examples/
	nonexamples
	prompt
	guide
	cue
	feedback:
	(corrective/supportive)
		Teacher **Student**
		fading drill
		intermittent fast pace
		reminders Practice
		   massed
		   Guided to
		   Independent
			Teacher **Student**
			fade cues drill
			detail fast pace
			prominence Independent
			time Practice
			intermittent
			reminders
				Instruction imbedded in other activities
				
				natural antecedents
				high utility
				natural consequences

Content	**Introduction & Practice with:** Definitions Concepts characteristics Procedures	**Additional Practice with:** Definitions Concepts characteristics Procedures	**Review of:** Definitions Concepts characteristics Procedures	**Applications of:** Definitions Concepts characteristics Procedures
Measurement	**Accuracy** Frequency of correct/errors	**Accuracy and Speed** Frequency of correct/errors Rate of responding	**Accuracy and Speed** Frequency of correct/errors Rate of responding	**Accuracy and Speed** Frequency of correct/errors Rate of responding
Cue	**Do It**	**Do It Faster**	**Use It or Lose It**	**Use It Again Somewhere Else**

SOURCE: Algozzine, B., Campbell, P., & Wang, A. (2009a). *63 tactics for teaching diverse learners: Grades 6-12.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings provides all teachers (regardless of level, experience, or area specialization) with access to effective instructional tactics that can be used across multiple levels of intervention. The book was developed using a peer review process that encouraged flexibility and resulted in a collection of teaching tactics to enable teachers to meet the needs of diverse students, classrooms, and schools. It is based on sound, evidenced-based models of instruction, and its structure encourages the identification and use of effective practices. *55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings* includes practices that are effective for students with or without disabilities at all grade levels. It provides a foundation for the leveled intervention recommended as best practice within RTI models being implemented in America's schools.

Ecological Validity

Ecological validity refers to the extent to which the underlying constructs of an educational model are grounded in logical, representative, and important conditions within the real world of schools. It is a measure of the value, worth, or projected effectiveness of the model. The ecological validity or usefulness of *55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings* is grounded in five assumptions:

1. All children want to learn.
   Ask any child.

2. All children can learn.
   Ask any parent.

3. All schools can educate diverse groups of students.
   Ask any administrator.

4. All classrooms are places where students with varying instructional needs can learn.
   Ask any teacher.

5. All teachers want to teach well so students will learn and succeed; all they need is time, access to information, and sustained support.
   Ask anybody.

Underlying Model

55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings is based on a practical model in which four components serve as the base for a set of organizing principles of effective instruction (see below).

Components and Principles of Effective Instruction

Component	*Principle*
Planning	Decide What to Teach
	Decide How to Teach
	Communicate Realistic Expectations
Managing	Prepare for Instruction
	Use Time Productively
	Establish Positive Environments

Component	Principle
Delivering	Present Information
	Monitor Presentations
	Adjust Presentations
Evaluating	Monitor Student Understanding
	Monitor Engaged Time
	Keep Records of Student Progress
	Use Data to Make Decisions

To bring the model to life and address the ever-present concern of administrators and teachers for implementation assistance, each component and principle is embodied by a set of strategies that represents plans for action in putting theory into practice (see example below).

Components, Principles, and Strategies of Effective Instruction

Component	Principle	Strategy
Planning	Decide What to Teach	Assess to Identify Gaps in Performance
		Establish Logical Sequences of Instruction
		Consider Contextual Variables
	Decide How to Teach	Set Instructional Goals/Establish Performance Standards
		Choose Instructional Methods and Materials
		Establish Grouping Structures
		Pace Instruction Appropriately
		Monitor Performance and RePlan Instruction
	Communicate Realistic Expectations	Teach Goals, Objectives, and Standards
		Teach Students to Be Active, Involved Learners
		Teach Students Consequences of Performance

Strategies are steps that should be taken to implement principles and components of effective instruction (i.e., the "what" rather than the "how" of teaching). *Tactics* are actions that a teacher can take to influence learning (i.e., the "how" of effective teaching). They are the lowest level a component can be broken into for instructional purposes; they are specific behaviors or teaching activities (see below).

Organizational Relations in Algozzine and Ysseldyke Model

Component	Delivering Instruction
Principle	Providing Relevant Practice
Strategy	Provide Students with Help
Tactic	Use Signals to Request Help: Develop a signal for each student to use when assistance is needed during an independent practice session. Circulate through the room when students are practicing and look for signs that someone needs help. Provide help as quickly as possible so that students can continue to work.

This model of effective instruction has been translated into a collection of evidence-based tactics to help teachers respond to individual differences common in America's classrooms. The information in *55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings* was drawn from review of professional publications, as well as from extensive observations of experienced teachers and other professionals who teach students with disabilities and diverse learning needs in general education classrooms. The tactics are grouped according to the components and principles of effective instruction identified by Algozzine and Ysseldyke (1992), and they are presented in a consistent format. In this book, 8 of the 63 strategies have been integrated into a single tactic—thus, 55 tactics.

In addition, tactics have reviews by other educators as to their use, as well as references to the literature to provide evidence of their effectiveness. A reproducible checklist of accommodations/modifications and a worksheet for planning and implementing RTI accommodations/modifications are provided in Appendixes A and B, respectively; a worksheet for documenting RTI accommodations/modifications is provided in Appendix C. Finally, in addition to References and Additional Readings, we have provided Selected Internet Resources related to accommodations/modifications.

Where to Go From Here

Every day, teachers are faced with questions that must be addressed if they are to be effective with all children.

> I teach students in an elementary school. My specialty is history and mathematics. How can I develop appropriate learning activities for a student with learning disabilities? How can I arrange my instruction to accommodate students with a deficit in short-term memory? How can I improve my ongoing assessment of student learning? How do I use data to make decisions?

55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings is based on a fundamental belief: teachers can respond to instructional diversity more effectively when provided with an easily accessible resource of effective tactics. *55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings* responds to two fundamental problems in education: regardless of certification area, (1) very few teachers receive sufficient experience during student teaching or practicum experiences in identifying or using evidence-based tactics of effective instruction, and (2) very few teachers receive instruction in or have access to specific tactics for addressing instructional diversity and meeting individual needs in their classrooms.

55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings helps teachers to associate a problem with an easily accessible set of solutions. It is unique in that we not only provide classroom-tested tactics for effective instruction but we also substantiate them with relevant and related literature. Thus, teachers can be assured of implementing evidence-based practices grounded in ongoing research. We also provide feedback, comments, and examples from practicing teachers, who offer practical suggestions as to how tactics might be modified and/or enhanced in terms of their content or application. In addition, we have suggested RTI accommodations/modifications for each tactic and included related worksheets to assist teachers in implementing tactics. Many tactics are clearly applicable across RTI Tiers I and/or II and/or III. If, for example, a tactic were effective in a Tier III instructional setting, teachers would simply need to modify it for effective use in Tiers I or II. The same holds true as students move in and out of Tiers I, II, and III. Effective teaching strategies/tactics that are evidence/research based have multiple applications across instructional settings and learners.

Most teachers agree: they often do not have enough time to meet all the needs of all their students effectively. Thus, time is an ongoing and primary need. *55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings* addresses this need by providing teachers with quick access to reliable information about effective instructional tactics, regardless of their area of expertise or the diverse needs of their students. When using *55 Tactics for Implementing RTI in Inclusive Settings*, teachers have several options: identifying a problem and searching for solutions using the model of effective instruction, searching the database without referencing a problem or any aspects of it, examining the knowledge base underlying each tactic, saving items from the database for later use, implementing tactics, and evaluating and revising instructional plans using information in the database. This easy and simple access to authentic information about effective teaching and instructional practices promotes effective implementation of RTI.

For some teachers, the need to accommodate the individual learning needs of an increasingly diverse population of students is daunting. Focusing on critical instructional planning and learning phases as well as primary, secondary, and tertiary responses to instruction will

- benefit all students (including those who do not have a disability);
- apply across content areas, grade levels, and settings;
- address a student's learning style (possibly described in an IEP);
- provide ample opportunities for change and modification; and
- *enable students to learn and be successful.*