SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura

Tier 2 Intervention for Native Spanish-Speaking Students

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A child's life trajectory may be guided by the skills acquired in the earliest grades. For many students whose primary language is Spanish, the trajectory is dramatically altered based on the quality of Spanish reading instruction received between kindergarten and first grade.

Teaching children to read is the most critical task we face. A culturally and linguistically appropriate approach to teaching reading in primary language builds not only academic skills but cultural bridges.

SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura is designed to work comfortably with a variety of existing core programs to provide a significant increase in the intensity of instruction in the critical strands of beginning reading—phonemic awareness, graphophonemic awareness, the structure of language (Spanish), aural language fluency, decoding fluency, and comprehension. **SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura** is a Spanish language parallel format to **SRA Early Interventions in Reading**, providing language-specific instruction for early reading in the Spanish language.

SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura is appropriate for those students whose native language is Spanish or for non-native speakers in immersion programs who are at-risk in Spanish reading and language acquisition. It is appropriate for students in the second semester of kindergarten through third-grade who are failing to make benchmark progress as assessed by the Texas Primary Reading Inventory in Spanish (Tejas LEE) or other Spanish index of risk. The 120 lessons represent the language-specific progression of skills from kindergarten through the end of first grade.

The curriculum and model (English) was first implemented in 1999 as part of an NICHD-funded research project. Since then, it has been the primary intervention in a series of federally funded studies conducted in Florida and Texas. Results from federally funded research studies using the materials confirm that, after using **SRA Early Interventions in Reading** for one year, nearly all students' at risk of reading failure at the start of the academic year were no longer at risk. Struggling readers significantly improved in their abilities in word attack, word identification, passage comprehension, and oral reading fluency, closing the gap with average performers. Multiple studies confirm statistically significant, positive effects with native English speakers, native Spanish speakers, English learners of diverse other primary languages, students with dyslexia, students at risk, and students with other specific learning disabilities.

Shaywitz (2003) noted **SRA Early Interventions in Reading** (Proactive Beginning Reading) is an "intense, highly focused on specific basic reading skills, and taught in small groups" program that "works" for students with dyslexia (p. 263).

SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura provides explicit, direct instruction that is systematic, sequential, cumulative, and intensive. Instruction is specific to the appropriate structure and instructional sequence of the language and is specifically designed to meet the needs of students at-risk. Instruction may be preventative and proactive, or may be provided as intervention for students failing to progress on schedule.

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Multiple studies published in peer-refereed journals have validated the effectiveness of *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* for both native Spanish speaking students scoring below the 20th percentile, and those who are Title I.

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH: *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* takes a systematic approach to instruction.

- Words are introduced according to their sound and spelling similarities, providing a framework for building decoding skills.
- Vocabulary-controlled stories provide the decoding and high-frequency practice readers need to become fluent.
- Appropriate pacing and ample practice ensure that students never feel overwhelmed.
- Sentence structures and story lines are carefully crafted to interest students while introducing comprehension skills.

A LANGUAGE-SPECIFIC SEQUENCE *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* is built upon instructional sequences that are specific to what the scientific research tells us about developmental reading. The sequence of instruction for phonemes and graphemes is based upon the utility and frequency of use in early reading in Spanish. A model of continuous blending was validated in the literature to be more effective for students with dyslexia (Allor, Mathes, Champlin & Cheatham, 2009)

A LOGICAL, SEQUENTIAL PLAN OF INSTRUCTION The purpose of *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* is to provide intensive small-group instruction in order to develop phonemic awareness, phonetic decoding, reading fluency, and comprehension. *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* is a comprehensive reading intervention that scaffolds elements of tasks that are initially beyond the student's ability, permitting the student to concentrate on and complete only those elements within his or her range of competence. Lessons are designed to scaffold new information in ways that allow students to assimilate and integrate the information into existing schema. Taught with fidelity, *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* will move children from primer to second grade reading level in 120 lessons (Mathes, Denton, Fletcher, Anthony, et al, 2005).

NO ASSUMPTION OF PRIOR SKILLS *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* is based on the Direct Instruction methodology (Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, 1997) that assumes no prior knowledge, but rather explicitly teaches every skill and subskill necessary for students to accomplish each task.

This systematic and explicit instruction with appropriately scaffolded skills and subskills affords struggling learners the necessary foundations and repetitions to perform successfully in each lesson.

ASSESSMENT Placing students in the appropriate level and lesson is an essential part of ensuring student success in *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura*.

An in-program placement assessment provides a greater certainty that students receive instruction within their proximal zone of development and thus maximizes student engagement. Student performance is tightly connected to the lessons.

Program-specific assessments are provided throughout the curriculum. Students are assessed for lesson mastery daily during the independent-practice portions of each activity via teacher observation. Guidance is provided to immediately remedy skills that have not been mastered.

Daily individual fluency checks are used to monitor decoding rate and accuracy during the lessons. This allows for frequent assessment of rate and accuracy as part of the routine instruction. By the end of *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura*, students demonstrate normal fluency levels of 60 words per minute on end-of-first-grade Spanish text. In addition, Mastery Tests measure student progress at every fifth lesson.

THE ALPHABETIC PRINCIPLE *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* addresses the alphabetic principle through a developmentally appropriate scope and sequence for the Spanish language.

- No more than three letter-sound correspondences are introduced each week.
- The most common or frequently occurring letter-sounds are taught first. The first ten sounds taught in Spanish are /m/, /a/, /s/, /l/, /p/, /n/, /e/.
- Letters that are visually similar or that sound alike are separated by at least three other letter-sound introductions so that students can more easily distinguish them. For example, /d/ is taught in Lesson 18 and /b/ is taught in Lesson 66. The two letters are separated by the introduction of 19 other letter-sounds and 12 diphthongs.

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PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONEMIC AWARENESS is fundamental to matching speech to print. If a child is unable to tell that *mango* and *mucho* begin with the same sound or cannot blend the sounds /m/ /a/ /s/ into the word *más*, that child will have great difficulty in connecting the sounds with their written symbols or blending sounds to create words.

- Activities targeting visual, auditory, and kinesthetic-tactile modalities intended to build phonological awareness in young children;
- Sound Cards are used for auditory-visual stimulation.
- Online components supplement the print instruction

Phonics instruction in *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* helps students become successful readers through targeted, carefully paced instruction and practice.

The phonics strand of *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* is based on a language-specific word-analysis approach with explicit instruction in phonics and Spanish orthography. "Phonics instruction teaches children the relationship between the letters (graphemes) of written language and individual sounds (phonemes) of spoken language. It teaches children to use these relationships to read and write words" (Armbruster et al., 2003, pg. 12). According to the NICHD (2000), systematic and explicit phonics instruction is more effective than non-systematic or no phonics instruction.

In the phonics strand, sounds are taught in a prescribed sequence to ensure student success. Letters/sounds that are similar in how they look/sound are separated from other highly similar letters/sounds. Sounds that are frequently used in words are demonstrated before less frequently used sounds.

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*The phonics strand for SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura
is engineered to produce correct responding the first time
so students are less likely to experience failure.*

CONCEPTS OF PRINT It is important for students to learn that there is a one-to-one correspondence between spoken words and groups of letters separated by spaces in a sentence. Students are explicitly taught through modeling how to recognize word placement in a sentence, relating spoken language to print.

WORD RECOGNITION AND SPELLING In comparison to the English language, the Spanish language is consistent with few irregularities; there are comparatively fewer sounds and letters to learn when beginning to read in Spanish. The Spanish language has a transparent writing system in which the correspondence between graphemes and phonemes is predictable and apparent. The simple orthography of the Spanish language consists of five vowel sounds that are well defined and constant. Because of this consistency, beginning Spanish reading and spelling in *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* focuses on explicit syllabic instruction in which phonemes are manipulated. Students are quickly able to both decode and encode in Spanish. Tools to support visual-auditory-kinesthetic connections in the Word Knowledge and Spelling strand of *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* include:

- Decodable minibooks
- Sound cards
- High Frequency Word Cards (words considered tricky because they cannot be decoded phonetically with the letter-sounds students know)
- Interactive White Board activities

Spelling dictation in the *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* spelling strand is based on dictations in which proper pronunciations, an analysis of the sound-sequence of words and sound-symbol (phoneme-grapheme) associations are explicitly taught and practiced. Daily dictation in the spelling strand serves a dual purpose. It indicates a level of skill mastery to the teacher for further support or differentiation and provides continued practiced of the visual-auditory-kinesthetic connection that is necessary for exceptional learners to master a skill.

VOCABULARY instruction is planned, systematic, and sustained, based on specific learning goals for students to learn. Research supports a variety of broad approaches for improving students' vocabulary, including wide reading and broad language exposure to stimulate students' incidental word learning, instruction in transferable and generalizable strategies that can help students become more proficient at learning vocabulary on their own, and direct instruction in specific vocabulary words.

ORAL LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES help students develop oral language, specifically listening comprehension (receptive language) and oral expression (expressive language). Students read selections and engage in discussions of the meaning of text as well as individual words. This strand addresses language skills including expressing thoughts, understanding directions, and engaging in discussions. Opportunities are provided to learn new, meaningful vocabulary. This strand includes:

- Explicit vocabulary instruction
- Engaging in discussions about texts

The focus of the language development instruction is to provide children with instruction in tier-two words and tier-three words as related to literary analysis.

STRATEGY-ORIENTED INSTRUCTION IN DECODING AND COMPREHENSION

A solid body of research supports that readers cannot focus on decoding and comprehension simultaneously. A primary goal of instruction in *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* is to ensure that children can fully attend to meaning. This goal is accomplished through explicit instruction in decoding skills to full automaticity. Automaticity allows the child to move from learning to read to reading to learn.

Decoding, the act of translating language from printed text, is best taught using a program that teaches phonemic awareness, phonics, and blending explicitly (NICHD, 1996; NRP, 2000; Snow et al., 1998). This is referred to as a code-emphasis approach. Research continues to demonstrate the superiority of a code-emphasis program in the acquisition of beginning reading skills (Carnine et al., 1997; Foorman, 1995; Salerno, 1992). *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura* coordinates what the students read with the letter-sound correspondences explicitly taught in each lesson. Students practice the new sounds in isolation. Then, they will read words in lists that contain the new sound. After words with the new sound are introduced, students read these words in stories. Throughout the progression from sound to word to story, all the words the children read are composed with sounds that have been pre-taught. Decodable text provides students with an avenue to practice their new knowledge of letter-sound relationships in the context of real reading.

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SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura includes highly decodable text. In fact, the text used for decoding is 95 percent decodable or higher, which means that at least 95 words out of 100 are composed of letter-sound relationships the students are learning (or have learned). When the decodable text level is high, students experience success rather than failure. They practice reading materials in which they have already received instruction. Sentences that appear early in the program are relatively easy to read.

FLUENCY Strand instruction provides students plenty of opportunity to read text that is familiar, predictable, and decodable in order to develop fluency. Reading progresses through several phases in the Fluency Strand beginning with single sentences, to Readers, to the Student Edition, made up of engaging nonfiction selections.

- Students practice and apply word-recognition strategies

- Students read connected text in each lesson, starting in Lesson 7

- Fluency is built through repeated, timed readings.

COMPREHENSION Many students master lower-level comprehension naturally, others must receive guidance to understand the literal meaning of text. In *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura*, students are provided frequent opportunities to practice strategies at the literal level (e.g., answering *who*, *when*, *where* questions). Teachers model the strategy, and students then repeat it. As students become independent with each task, the amount of teacher assistance is reduced.

Comprehension activities are primarily conducted orally to take advantage of the students' receptive and expressive vocabularies. Comprehension Strategies instruction takes place before reading, during reading, and after reading, depending on the strategy being taught.

Comprehension strategy instruction teaches students to process text strategically, to organize concepts and information for retrieval, and to monitor their own understanding. In *SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura*, comprehension activities are conducted both orally and independently to help students use expressive and receptive vocabularies and to apply the comprehension strategies they have learned.

While "[r]eaders normally acquire strategies for active comprehension informally," the National Reading Panel cautioned, readers "who are not explicitly taught these procedures are unlikely to learn, develop, or use them spontaneously" (NICHHD, 2000, p. 4-40).

Like tools in a toolbox, the key to the usefulness of these strategies is the proper application of each to suit a purpose. Students must learn to actively employ a variety of comprehension strategies when they read for information.

CRITICAL CONTENT IN *SRA INTERVENCIONES TEMPRANAS DE LA LECTURA*

SRA Intervenciones tempranas de la lectura has the content critical to a quality early intervention.

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

- Phoneme discrimination
- Phoneme segmentation and blending
- Segmenting individual sounds
- Blending sounds back into words
- Spelling sounds in the order students hear them

LETTER-SOUND CORRESPONDENCES STRAND

- Letter-sound correspondences introduced every few lessons, starting in the first lesson
- Auditory segmenting and blending activities before learning symbols for phonemes.
- Daily cumulative review of letter-sound correspondences.
- Multiple ways to represent phonemes, if applicable.

WORD RECOGNITION AND SPELLING STRAND

- The instruction includes both phonetically regular words and high-frequency words.
- Students learn a strategy for sounding out syllables and words.
- Words are presented in lists in the Teacher's Editions, on Interactive White Board displays, or in Student Activity Books.
- Students learn to decode unknown words representing the nine syllable types of the Spanish language.
- Students spell words by applying knowledge of letter-sounds and word parts.

FLUENCY STRAND

- Practice and application of word-recognition strategies
- Connected text read in each lesson, starting in Lesson 7
- Fluency is built through repeated, timed readings.

COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- Set a reading purpose
- Make and verify predictions
- Sequence
- Learn story grammar
- Share prior knowledge and read to learn about a topic
- Summarize passages
- Identify the main idea

Almitra L. Berry, Ed.D. is a nationally recognized speaker, author, and consultant on the topic of culturally and linguistically diverse learners at-risk. Her research focuses on academic achievement in majority-minority, high-poverty, large, urban school districts. Dr. Berry authored the book *Effecting Change: Intervention for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners* and several journal articles. Dr. Berry is a graduate of the University of California, Davis holding a B.A. in political science/public administration. She holds a M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction, and an Ed.D. in educational leadership with a specialization in curriculum and instruction. She was credentialed in California for both single and multiple subjects, as a language development specialist (LDS), and with a bilingual/cross-cultural language acquisition and development (CLAD/BCLAD) for Spanish language instruction. Dr. Berry has taught, trained, and supervised reading/language arts implementations (regular, intervention, bilingual/dual immersion, and special education) throughout the United States. She has presented at scores of state, national, and international conferences on the topics of leadership, curriculum reform, and meeting the needs of students at-risk.

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