



Copyright © 2015 by Dwayne D. Williams
www.tier1education.com
dwayne@tier1education.com

Case Study on Skill-Focused and Process Focused Interventions

When considering culturally relevant interventions to implement within your RTI model, it is important to differentiate between skill-focused interventions and process-focused interventions. Skill-focused interventions address skill development, whereas process-focused interventions seek to engage students at their highest level, using entertaining approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill-Focused Interventions

Jason, a third grade student in Mrs. Robinson’s classroom, has consistently scored below the 25th percentile on CBM probes. To be exact, his most recent progress monitoring R-CBM data revealed that he scored at the 10th percentile, in which he read, on average, 56 words per minute (Winter benchmark). His teacher and the school’s reading specialist have administered a host of interventions to increase his reading fluency skills, including repeated reading and listening while reading (LWR). These strategies are research-based, but have been ineffective at increasing his fluency skills.

Process-Focused Interventions

After learning about culturally relevant approaches to implementing interventions, Mrs. Robinson and the reading specialist began to interview Jason and his parents to learn more about their cultural values. From speaking with Jason and his parents, they learned that Jason’s family values communalism—in which Jason is required to work interdependently with his siblings in the home, to reach common goals; they also learned that Jason and his siblings are encouraged to express their emotions, and are encouraged to depend on one another while working around the house.

Mrs. Robinson and the reading specialist also learned that Jason is in the children’s choir and enjoys singing and dancing within the home and his community; they learn that Jason is often chosen to entertain the family during family gatherings, because of his “amazing gifts and talents” surrounding kinesthetic movement and singing. Jason is also fearless when it comes to speaking publically in which he often recites poems at his local church on Sunday mornings. Mrs. Robinson and the reading specialist were astounded to learn

about Jason's gifts and talents because he does not show these skills in the classroom. Mrs. Robinson hypothesized that one reason Jason does not reveal these abilities is because she does not create opportunities that allow for Jason to demonstrate such talents.

Consistent with process-focused interventions, Mrs. Robinson and the reading specialist began to integrate communalistic and movement expressive activities with instruction to increase Jason's academic motivation and interest to engage in the classroom. Instead of requiring Jason to work in isolation of his peers, she integrated cooperative learning as much as possible, communalistic groups, class-wide peer tutoring (CWPT), planned movement activities, and allowed Jason to dance and perform for his classmates to emphasize instructional content. From these experiences, Jason was able to rely on his strengths and cultural values to connect with his peers and more willing to engage himself in the classroom. Mrs. Robinson also integrated buddy reading activities along with repeated reading to increase Jason's motivation to read in the classroom.

After rounds of interventions, Mrs. Robinson provided progress-monitoring measures and found that Jason's fluency scores began to increase. In the above example, Mrs. Robinson did not rely on skill-focused interventions only, but she also considered process-focused interventions to increase Jason's engagement levels in the classroom. Notice that Mrs. Robinson did not "create" a new model. Rather, she used a problem solving approach in which she integrated Jason's strengths and cultural values to increase engagement and performance.