2

A Snapshot of the Response to Intervention Process

■ THE THREE TIERS (SOMETIMES FOUR)

"RTI is the practice of providing high quality instruction/intervention matched to students' needs and using learning rate over time and the level of performance to make important educational decisions to guide instruction" (National Reading Panel, 2000, p. 87).

Because Response to Intervention is typically considered a three-tier model, this book operates on that premise. However, some school districts and states, such as Georgia, employ a four-tier model (Bender & Shores, 2007). Most of the literature on Response to Intervention does not refer to Tier Four.

Let's review the three-tier model: Tier One of RTI requires consistent high quality classroom instruction that incorporates three nonnegotiable components:

1. A standards-based core curriculum

2. Differentiating instruction so that all students can learn

3. A variety of authentic assessments geared to monitoring student progress and guiding instruction.

TIER ONE ■

Tier One of RTI requires the use of best practice, research-based teaching methods. As Robert Marzano discusses in *Dimensions of Learning* (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001), research-based strategies implemented in the differentiated classroom reduce the need for interventions.

My experience teaching at the high school level as both a special education teacher and a co-teacher working within the inclusion model, as well as my experience coaching in middle and high schools around the country, convinces me that every secondary classroom needs to begin at Tier One: differentiating instruction so that all students can learn.

Differentiated instruction is teaching to different learning preferences and using a variety of teaching methods to reach all students. It sometimes encompasses using multiple levels of instruction during the same lesson plan. Examples might include using materials at three different reading levels so that all students can read, having two or three choices of activities based on multiple intelligences, or having three levels of a test. Essentially, differentiating instruction means using a variety of methods in any lesson plan to reach all learners. When teachers differentiate instruction, 80% to 90% of students successfully meet achievement benchmarks (Hanson, 2009). Consider the following realities:

- The verbal, linguistic, auditory delivery of information, in which students are expected to passively sit in their seats and absorb information while copying notes at rapid speed, does not work for all students.
- The students it does not work for are those who do not respond well to education and are doing poorly in the classroom as well as on state tests. While this method may work for some teachers and students, it is unproductive for the majority of our struggling student population.
- A consequence of the lack of differentiation at the secondary level is that students who move on to college, whether to engineering coursework or a technical school, primarily know only one mode of studying. When they become college students and meet challenging coursework, they may lack the study skills they need in the more rigorous academic environment. This is why our most successful high school students sometimes do not meet expectations at the college level.

> The reality is that until we differentiate instruction at the secondary level, a basic requirement of Tier One RTI, we are shortchanging all our students: English language learners, students with special needs, trade-bound students, and students heading off to college.

How do we differentiate instruction?

- By using teaching strategies that support all intelligence styles and modes of learning, as well as challenging ourselves to implement center activities such as Fitzell Acceleration Centers™, station teaching, and flexible grouping within our pedagogy.

- By not trying to cover it all, but instead looking critically at the standards-based core curriculum and focus on what is most important, thereby allowing time for meaningful teaching, repetition, and student practice.
- By incorporating multiple modes of assessment. RTI requires authentic assessments—a variety of measures that clearly identify what the student knows and what the student does not know.

*Again, the most important concept to take away from this chapter is that Response to Intervention is simply "**R**eally **T**errific **I**nstruction. . ."*

> There are times when students will fail to learn despite the best efforts of the teacher. Master teachers who differentiate instruction and respond to student needs still encounter students who struggle to learn the content required by the curriculum. As teachers take note of the student who is failing to respond to the teaching methodology, they need to consider how to reapproach the subject and intervene so that students will become successful.

■   TIER TWO

Using curriculum-based measurement practices, teachers determine where the student is lacking and then seek Tier Two interventions that might be appropriate for that student. Often, Tier Two interventions can be research-based practices used in Tier One, but with three modifications:

1. Specific students receive more intense instruction and application of the strategies.

2. Students are given more time to practice and implement the strategies.

3. The intensity of implementation may increase.

> It may be appropriate, at times, to provide Tier Two interventions in a flexible grouping situation in the general classroom. This may prevent students from being pulled out of the classroom, which would cause them to miss critical instruction (Wright, 2007).

If teachers routinely implemented small group work, flexible grouping, or center teaching, then interventions in Tier Two would fall right into place in the lesson plan.

Having adequate time to implement interventions is often the greatest challenge faced at the secondary level. When students need more intervention than can be provided within the general classroom, they should receive an additional class for Tier Two interventions. If the time is not available during standard school hours, the interventions need to be provided outside of the

school day. Typically, students are encouraged or required to attend after-school tutoring programs so that Tier Two interventions may be implemented.

An option that works well for students at the secondary level (Grades 6 through 12) is a tutored study hall. This is neither a resource room nor a special education resource; it is a study hall where content-area teachers, specialists, or support staff are available to implement interventions. This class can be built into the students' schedules just as a study hall would be. Ideally, the content-area teachers engage in professional development, mentoring, or team learning that supports their efforts in implementing those strategies in the classroom. Providing students with additional instructional time that incorporates intervention strategies increases the possibility that they ultimately will be successful (Shores & Chester, 2009).

At the elementary level, many teachers use published programs providing intervention solutions available to them. Although these published programs are highly touted and profitable for publishing companies, they are not the panacea some would like to believe. However, they provide a level of comfort to school districts trying to implement Response to Intervention because these programs are often scripted and are very clear about what to do to address a student's difficulties. Rarely are these programs available at the secondary level. Scripted middle school and junior high math programs are one of the few exceptions.

This is better for students and teachers in the long term. Rather than forcing teachers to follow a script from a published program, teachers are encouraged to use their professional skills, experience, and an understanding of student needs in order to determine appropriate interventions. Teachers simply use a problem-solving model to hone in on possible interventions.

TIER THREE   ◼

Tier Three is not as delineated as Tiers One and Two in literature on Response to Intervention. School districts define Tier Three requirements as follows:

- Interventions are more intensive, based on problem-solving models, and implemented through a combination of means including classroom instruction, outside-of-school instruction, or in-school instruction outside of the general classroom.
- A combination of intensive interventions implemented in general education as part of a wrap-around approach to meeting a student's needs.
- Some school districts, as well as books on the topic of RTI, consider special education to be part of Tier Three.

In this book, Tier Three interventions are considered part of the general education process that is implemented before students may be referred for special education services. Tier Three is neither a place nor a program. It is a level of intervention services. Once a student is identified as being able to benefit from special needs services, that student is no longer considered part of the Response to Intervention protocol. "In most schools, Tier Three is not special

education but is more intensive intervention to try to improve the progress and avoid the necessity of placement in special education" (Hall, 2008, p. 68).

Tier Three is the most intensive phase of the RTI three-tier system. At Tier Three, students receive intervention instruction with greater frequency, with more intensity, and for a longer time. Students who have not responded to Tier One or Tier Two efforts and who have significant difficulty being successful in the general curriculum might receive one-to-one, one-to-two, or small group intensive instruction.

At the secondary level, Tier Three interventions pose the greatest challenge for implementation.

At the elementary level, Tier Three would typically incorporate two 30-minute intervention periods every day. This schedule is logistically challenging, if not impossible, at the middle and high school levels. Intervention teams must think outside the box in order to come up with realistic intervention schedules.

General classroom teachers will rarely have time to implement Tier Three interventions, but may instead choose to use intervention strategies in their lesson plans in the following ways:

- Intervention strategies are implemented by specialists, tutors, and support staff.
- Instructional labs are set up as part of the school schedule.
- Often, intervention schedules at the secondary level for Tier Two and Three must be implemented outside of the school day.

Here again is where the role of the general education teacher is critical. At the secondary level, much can be accomplished in the general education classroom if the teacher is (1) incorporating differentiated instruction strategies in the classroom, (2) making an effort to incorporate interventions for specific students in lesson plans so that all students might also benefit, and (3) willing to use a variety of research-based strategies as a means of scaffolding to support student learning outcomes.

If the secondary general education teacher is also willing to implement flexible grouping and center teaching such as Fitzell Acceleration Centers to support the learning process, many interventions can be supported, enhanced, and implemented directly in the classroom.

■ HOW DOES RTI FIT INTO A SECONDARY EDUCATION MODEL?

There is very little research on implementation of Response to Intervention at the secondary level (Shores & Chester, 2009). RTI was initially implemented as an early intervention program focusing on literacy at the lower elementary level. It is becoming increasingly apparent, however, that schools need to address students who are not successful in Grades 6 through 12 with something other than the traditional pattern of referring them to special education.

Some consider Response to Intervention to be primarily a pullout or afterschool initiative. This pullout approach is difficult to implement at the secondary level because

- pullouts for a particular subject area should not take place during the class time regularly scheduled for that subject: Pullouts for English interventions should not be during English class, and pullouts for math interventions should not be during math class. An intervention requires extra time, not replacement time.
- schools are short-staffed and lack after-school resources and time;
- it is difficult to find a class from which students can be pulled in order to implement an intervention plan;
- at the middle school level, a pullout program often requires a student to be pulled from his or her exploratory classes, thereby causing the student to miss valuable hands-on learning experiences; and
- at the high school level, students with a study hall could be pulled for interventions. However, this requires that a teacher be available to implement the intervention during that period.

Other effective options include

- implementing RTI in the general classroom by the general education teacher or a co-teaching team; and
- using a push-in model that takes advantage of the skill sets of specialists (for example, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, and intervention specialists).

> Interventions then become, primarily, the responsibility of the general classroom teacher. The advantage to this approach is that all students benefit from the use of best practices, thereby making overall classroom teaching that much more effective.

GENERAL EDUCATION VERSUS SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RESPONSIBLE INCLUSION ■

You may be questioning whether students who need Tier Three interventions, and in some cases Tier Two interventions, should be in the general classroom as opposed to receiving special education services. Because some districts and authors are calling Tier Three "special education," there are two schools of thought. After co-teaching in inclusive classrooms and witnessing the benefits of inclusion done well in schools and school districts around the country, I am convinced that most students achieve more in the general classroom with an environment of excellent teaching.

A small percentage of students are best served within the framework of special education and special classrooms. However, the reality is that this is a small group. In many school districts, special education caseloads are overwhelming. If we properly implement RTI, we allow special education teachers to work more intensely with the students who have the greatest needs.

Response to Intervention provides general educators with the tools to reach most learners while allowing special educators to more effectively meet the needs of the student with special needs.

With a system for Response to Intervention in place, secondary teachers can provide instruction that reaches a variety of learning styles, gives additional

time where necessary, and monitors progress. The classroom teacher adjusts interventions based on student performance, as determined by progress monitoring. With RTI, classroom teaching is data driven and differentiated.

RTI calls upon teachers to break away from the traditional mode of verbal linguistic and auditory teaching, especially at the middle and high school levels. It embraces differentiated instruction that responds to varying student learning styles. Teachers will get the satisfaction of seeing students become more successful than they ever imagined because they intervened with student-centered strategies.

The High School Tiered Interventions Initiative (HSTII) is a partnership between The National High School Center, the National Center on Response to Intervention, and the Center on Instruction. The initiative's focus is to find secondary RTI models currently implemented, to ascertain what might work or not work with those models, and define the key characteristics of best practices at the secondary level.

Because there is no textbook model currently available for implementation of RTI at the secondary level, there is no *one* way to implement the process. It is up to school districts to figure out how best to meet the needs of their learners.

I recently interviewed several school districts to see where they were in the RTI implementation process. The following are examples of RTI strategies in place.

Community High School District 155 of Illinois has an RTI team composed of teachers, counselors, psychologists, building administrators, principals, and vice-principals. Still in the early stages of RTI development, they began the process in a logical place: establishing a strong foundation at Tier One. All secondary teachers in the district receive extensive training in differentiating instruction. The expectation is that those teachers will implement differentiated instruction in their classrooms daily. With a solid footing at Tier One, they are developing Tier Two; yet, they did not leave Tier One behind. They continue to improve upon Tier One, researching high quality best practices and exploring co-teaching. An important step they took was to research measurement and data collection options to identify a fitting measurement device for the many initiatives already implemented.

Southland Independent School District in Texas also has an RTI team in place, which includes an administrator, a reading specialist, and a dyslexia coordinator. At Tier One, all teachers regularly differentiate instruction. At Tier Two, general education teachers use flexible grouping three times a week. They also implement peer tutoring. At Tier Three, middle school students are pulled from their noncore classes for interventions that support core classes.

Southland utilizes a variety of tools to complement their RTI plan. The following are highlights of these tools:

- AIMSweb (http://www.aimsweb.com) is used to perform diagnostic assessment and progress monitoring.
- Read Naturally (http://www.readnaturally.com) supports students' Tier Three fluency and comprehension needs.
- Kent State University professor of literacy Tim Rasinski's set of high-fluency phrases provides both an assessment tool and an intervention. The high-fluency phases are words that students will frequently encounter when reading. The students are encouraged to read the sheet as fast as they can, and to repeat the process for practice.

- Every Day Edits (http://www.educationworld.com) is a site that builds language skills, increases test scores, and improves cultural literacy. Students are given a short paragraph with ten errors in it. As a Tier Three intervention strategy, the students practice finding and correcting the errors. This causes the students to ask a question about what it is that makes errors wrong, which leads to a teaching opportunity and deeper understanding.
- Minimystery CDs, which can be listened to by students while reading along. After listening to the story, the students answer a question, which assesses their reading comprehension and critical thinking abilities.

Southland's eighth graders achieved a 100% passing rate on their state tests in 2010. Teachers feel this was a direct result of the RTI process. It is interesting to note that at Southland, none of the students receiving Tier Three interventions are students with special needs. They don't even have a special education teacher on the RTI team.

Havana High School of *Havana Community Unit School District 126 (Illinois)* employs the mantra *Every Child, Every Day,* and says they are at the "What do we need now?" stage of RTI implementation.

The sole high school in the district, Havana has only 350 students. Their RTI team consists of a social worker, a psychologist, a teacher, the principal, a school counselor, and an RTI specialist.

All teachers are expected to differentiate. Every freshman is assigned an adult mentor who checks in with the student every day.

If a student is earning lower than a C, the RTI team and the student's mentor pull the student's grades and meet with the student to discuss his or her learning. Consequently, no student slips through the cracks. Someone is always checking in with each student.

If a student is failing a class, or in danger of failing a class, then that student is assigned to Academic Learning Support, a structured study hall. A skilled paraprofessional monitors the study hall room for the entire day at Havana. The paraprofessional has a list of students receiving RTI team assistance. Instead of covering a study hall, teachers are now available during that time for academic assistance.

As a Tier Three intervention, Havana High offers struggling readers a reading class, which counts as an elective. Students in the class receive direct reading instruction from the teacher, read novels, and use LEXIA reading software (http://www.lexialearning.com). Students who are struggling in math can take a double-block math class, which provides them with one math credit and one elective credit.

The administration is changing the evaluation system for professional development so that it focuses more on teacher instruction.

Midland High School of *Midland Community School District 7 (Illinois)* is in the early stages of RTI development. Their RTI teams include co-teaching teams from the English and math departments as well as the principal. The entire teaching staff is expected to differentiate instruction at Tier One regardless of whether students are receiving RTI interventions.

Midland is using The Key to Tracker learning assessment software (http://www.keypress.com) to monitor students' learning progress. The co-teaching team divides their block-scheduled class, with two 20-minute interventions scheduled into each two-hour block, one at the beginning of the period and

one at the end. Each intervention session targets a different set of students. There is an intense focus on the freshman class because being successful as a freshman sets a student up for three more years of success.

These school districts differ drastically in their process and progress. Any one of them could serve as a model for a starting point at your school or in your district. My goal in sharing these vignettes is to reinforce the message that, at this point in time, there is no one right way to implement RTI at the secondary level. I recently worked with a high school that believed they were making a mess of RTI. I disagreed. The school diligently worked at assessing what they already had in place, evaluating next steps, and bringing in support to help them move forward. That's a positive start.

Start the process, assess, adjust, and reassess. Most important, once the process is started, support teachers and intervention specialists with hands-on examples of how to plan lessons for RTI.

■   ASSESSMENT? WELL, I QUIZ EVERY FRIDAY . . .

How we assess students to determine their understanding of content is critical to the Response to Intervention process. Schools are becoming more and more locked into using

- summative assessment;
- standardized measures of student achievement;
- multiple-choice tests; and
- other traditional forms of written assessment.

> Although teachers may use these methods because these are the measures required for state testing, it is truly an inaccurate, and I would argue an unethical, means of evaluating students.

The only true evaluation is authentic assessment. Authentic assessments incorporate a variety of measures into the evaluation process and focus on formative assessment. Types of authentic assessment include

- rubrics;
- exit cards;
- curriculum-based measurement;
- student self-evaluation; and
- documented observations.

> When assessing with a variety of measures, teachers build a portfolio of data that provides a more accurate picture of the student as a learner. With this authentic, data-driven student portrait, teachers have the necessary information to do the problem-solving and detective work required for determining appropriate interventions.

For example, when students draw what they've learned (a nonlinguistic learning strategy), the teacher can walk around the room holding an observation record sheet and assess student understanding by looking at their drawings and asking questions for clarification. Documenting those observations will provide a form of authentic and immediate ongoing assessment.

In RTI, three types of assessments are used for three different purposes: universal screening, diagnostics, and progress monitoring.

Universal Screening

Universal screening is used to determine which students need closer monitoring, differentiated instruction, or a specific intervention (three or more times a year). Resources for universal screening include

- AIMSweb through Grade 8
- EdCheckup through Grade 8
- STEEP—http://www.isteep.com/datatools.html#prod—through Grade 12:
  - Middle school oral reading fluency and maze (comprehension)
  - High school oral reading fluency and maze
  - Secondary math concepts and application fundamentals
- http://www.thinkgate.net/ (a framework for setting up assessments)
- Alternate screening tools at the high school level:
  - Grades—failing core academics (especially freshmen)
  - Analyze attendance records for student absences: Missed 10 of the first 30 days of school
  - Identifying students who are overage for their grade level
  - State standardized assessments

Diagnostics

Diagnostics determine what students can and cannot do in important academic areas. Diagnostic assessments can include preassessments, measures of a student's prior knowledge, baseline data, documented observations, or probing questions to assess student understanding.

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring is simply assessing a student's progress on an ongoing basis as opposed to assessing at the end of a unit or in a manner that does not allow teachers to catch students before they fail. As a means to monitor progress, teachers use quick one- to three-minute assessments several times per week to determine if it's appropriate to move forward with instruction, reteach to the whole group, or reteach to a few (see table). It's a step above the pop quiz because rather than just using the quiz data to enter a grade for students, the data is used to drive instruction.

Progress Monitoring Versus What We Have Done Historically

Traditional Assessments	Progress Monitoring
• Typically lengthy and time-consuming • Administered infrequently or at the end of a unit • Typically, students do not receive immediate feedback • Feedback may not inform instructional planning	• Easy and quick method for gathering student performance data • Administered frequently • Students and teachers receive immediate feedback to adjust instruction • Students are compared to peers and local norms

Following are some common methods of progress monitoring:

Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM)

Curriculum-based measurement is one form of a scientifically based method for monitoring progress. CBMs describe academic competence, track academic development, and improve student achievement. The three purposes of CBMs are screening, progress monitoring, and instructional diagnosis.

Rubrics

Rubrics are performance-based assessment tools used to evaluate student performance on a task, a set of tasks, or a learning outcome. Rubrics use specific criteria, in the form of narrative descriptions, as a basis for evaluating student performance. Most rubrics use a tabular format that identifies the level of student achievement, from low-to-high or high-to-low, based upon the proficiency that the student is able to achieve. Rating scales may be numerical, qualitative, or both.

The sample lesson plans in this text employ rubrics in order to clearly illustrate performance goals and assist in identifying the level of intervention necessary for different students with each activity. They are also a valid example of a progress-monitoring tool.

Exit Cards

Exit cards are a simple assessment tool. Each card will have a set of just two or three questions for students to answer after you teach a lesson. Students answer the questions before the bell rings. It is the last thing they do in class. They must hand the card to the teacher before they walk out the door, hence the name *exit cards*. It's ongoing, immediate assessment in action. Exit cards (a.k.a. *tickets to leave*) are used to gather information on student readiness levels, understanding of concepts just taught, interests, and learning profiles.

Exit cards can be used to form intervention pairs, triads, and groups.

After a lesson, use exit cards to assess student understanding or interest. Keep the items on the cards short and to the point. Keep it simple!

When reviewing the cards that are implemented as an assessment tool, score them with a 1 if the student does not understand the concept, got the answer wrong, or needs reteaching. Score them with a 2 if the student understands but needs more practice. Score them with a 3 if the student understands the concept and is ready to move on (see Figure 2.1).

Then use the cards to group students.

You might put all the students who received a 1 together and reteach that group (or small groups). Put those who received a 2 together (or in small groups) and give them a practice activity. Put those who got a 3 together and assign them an enrichment activity, or an investigation.

Alternatively, you might put a 1, a 2, and a 3 together in a triad to practice the skill (see Figure 2.2).

Other possible uses for the data from the exit cards are to determine student interest or strengths in a topic or to group students by learning style. (see Figure 2.3).

Grouping by student or interest is another option that might be explored by using exit cards to determine a student's preferred learning style, interests, and strengths (see Figure 2.4).

Examples of possible exit cards are shown in Figures 2.6 (see page 19) and 2.7 (see page 20). It might even be more effective to simplify the questions to a greater degree. The exit cards shown in Figure 2.6 (see page 19) could be broken up into four exit cards rather than two. The key is knowing your goal. What do you want the exit card to show? Keep it simple and effective.

Additional quick assessments might include:

- High-fluency phrases from *The Fluent Reader* by Timothy V. Rasinski (Rasknski, 2003). Do an Internet search on a paper titled "Phrases and Short Sentences for Repeated Reading Practice."
- Every-Day Edits are also effective as both an assessment and an intervention. Search for Every-Day Edits at http://www.educationalworld.com.

Figure 2.1   Exit Card Grouping: Mixed-Ability Level Triads

EXIT CARD GROUPINGS - Small Groups

Student who is struggling with the concept or skill

Student who understands the concept or skill well enough to peer-tutor

Student with enough understanding of the concept or skill to practice the skill independently

Mixed-Ability Level Triads
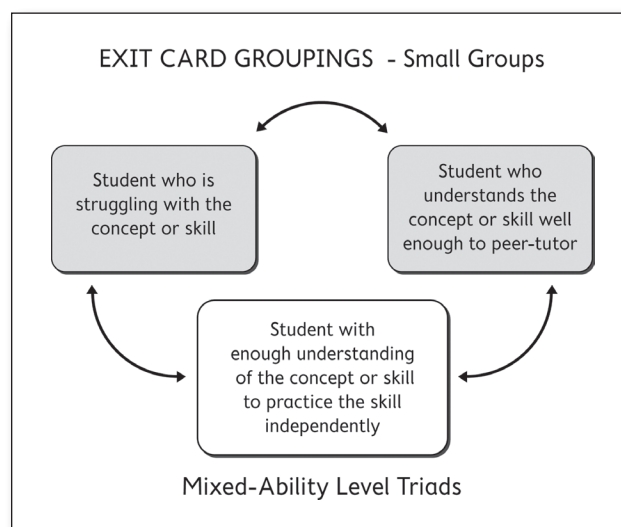
Figure 2.2   Exit Card Grouping: Ability Level Groups

EXIT CARD GROUPINGS - Small Groups

Group 1

Students who are struggling with the concept or skill

Group 2

Students with enough understanding of the concept or skill to practice the skill independently

Group 3

Students who understand the concept or skill & are ready for higher-level activities
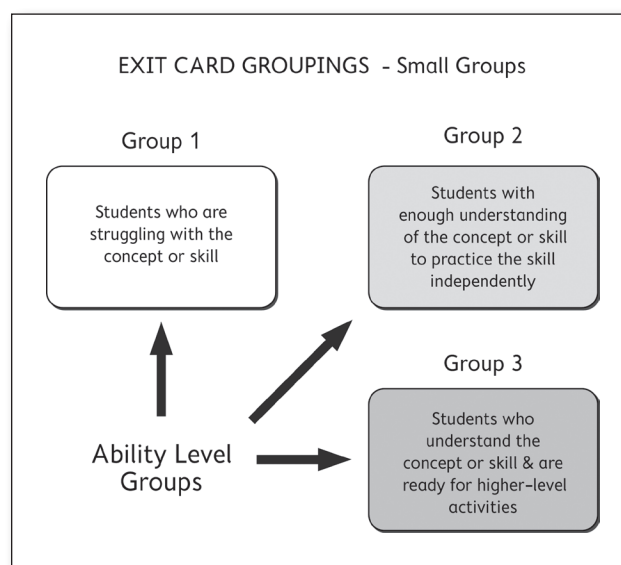
Ability Level Groups

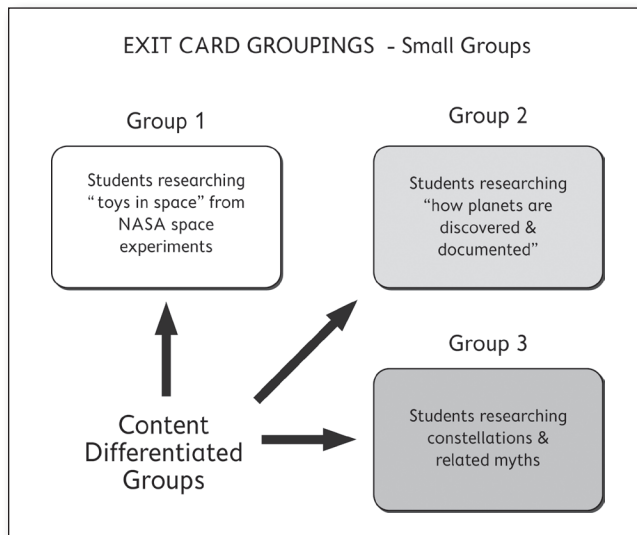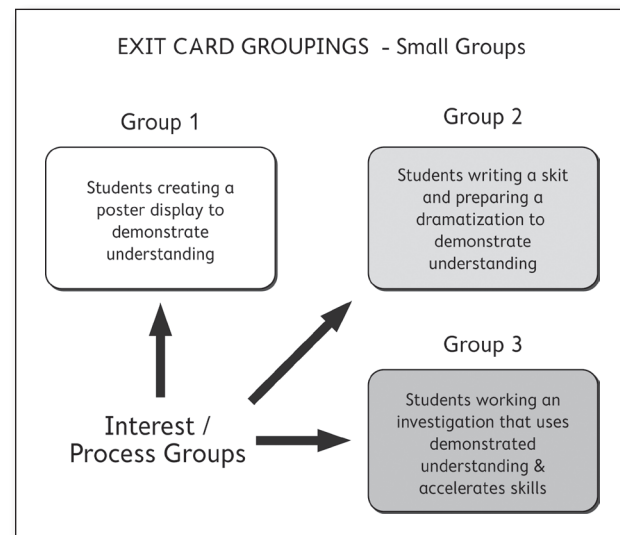**Figure 2.3**   Exit Card Grouping: Content Differentiated Groups

Figure 2.4   Exit Card Grouping: Interest or Process Groups

■   RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES INCORPORATED IN THIS BOOK

The requirement to use only research-based strategies for interventions initially troubled me. Having spent years teaching and working directly with students, whether one on one or within inclusive classrooms, I conclude that there are successful strategies that are used with students that do not have a research study to back them up. To assume that a strategy or method is not effective simply because one cannot find a study to validate its use seems disrespectful of many teachers' skills—skills that rely upon their good judgment. Consequently, I investigated the concept of acceptable research and in doing so discovered *single-subject experimental design*.

Learning about single-subject experimental design alleviated my angst. I could use a strategy that I knew worked for many of the students that I and others have taught over the years, as long as I collected data and used the protocol for single-subject experimental design. *"Single subject experimental designs involve evaluation of a single person or a small group before, during, and following the implementation of the intervention. Single subject experimental designs control for threats to the internal validity of the study"* (Brown-Chidsey & Steege, 2005, p. 40; emphasis added). An excellent resource that provides a clear explanation of the process for single-subject research design is *Response to Intervention: Principles and Strategies for Effective Practice* by Rachel Brown-Chidsey and Mark W. Steege. Chapter 5 of that book explains single-subject experimental design well.

Most of the interventions referred to in this book have their research base documented in two sources: *Classroom Instruction That Works* (Marzano et al., 2001) and *A Mind at a Time* (Levine, 2003). I am pleased that because of the excellent work of these two authors I can go to one book for most of my academic research and another book for research on how memory works and impacts learners. These two texts are not the only sources for research,

however, in my efforts to keep it simple for the reader, it makes sense to me to cite the texts that present the most research in one place and in an easy-to-read format.

ALL RIGHT! IF I *HAVE* TO DO THIS, WHAT DO I *REALLY* HAVE TO DO? AND HOW? ■

Keep reading this book and you will be told, in teacher-friendly language, how to implement RTI easily, with many practical, research-based Tier One, Tier Two, and Tier Three Interventions for secondary classrooms.

The sample lesson plans provided in this text model ways to adapt any lesson plan in your current curriculum to the three tiers of intervention. It is hoped that the reader will be challenged to rethink long-held myths about what is appropriate at the high school level. Many high school students are denied effective learning tools simply because they "look" elementary, even though research and practice say otherwise.

Every strategy in this book begins at Tier One as a differentiated instruction strategy. Then I demonstrate how it might be used at Tiers Two and Three in a typical lesson plan. Consider the three-tier chart that follows.

Lesson Plan Application to Response to Intervention Tiers

Tier One	Tier Two	Tier Three
Teacher introduces the lesson to the entire class using a variety of strategies to differentiate instruction.	Students apply specific learning strategies within the content area to internalize the skill by working with a peer tutor, a specialist, or in a coaching session with the classroom teacher. Tier Two interventions are implemented at least twice per week until the study strategy is mastered.	Students work with a specialist one on one for an additional 60 to 90 minutes per week, using this intervention as a strategy to facilitate proficiency.

When breaking down each sample lesson plan, one might visualize the three tiers as illustrated in this chart. The lesson plans indicate what strategies are to be used at each tier, essentially meeting the guidelines presented in the chart.

At the secondary level, it is important for students to make these strategies their own. Consequently, strategies are presented as they might be used by the teacher, as well as by students.

OPTIONS FOR DETERMINING WHICH STUDENTS SHOULD BE IN WHICH GROUPS ■

All of the lesson plan samples in this text include group work or paired learning. There are several methods teachers can use to form groups. Assessment

data can be used; for example, teachers might use standardized test scores, curriculum-based measurement, progress monitoring, or informal assessments such as classroom observations, exit cards, action research, observation, and student self-assessment.

Teachers might also group students based on targeted areas of instruction. Students doing poorly on a specific state standard or struggling to understand a curriculum concept might be grouped together to accelerate growth or to deliver an intervention.

Students might also be grouped in mixed-ability groups, so that in every group there are peer tutors and supports in place for students who are struggling. Sometimes we may simply want pairs. The diagram below demonstrates the High with Middle, Middle with Low method of pairing students. Sort your class roster by grades, then divide the class in half and pair students as illustrated. This process ensures that you never pair the highest student with the lowest and provides different pairs each week, based on student averages (see Figure 2.5).

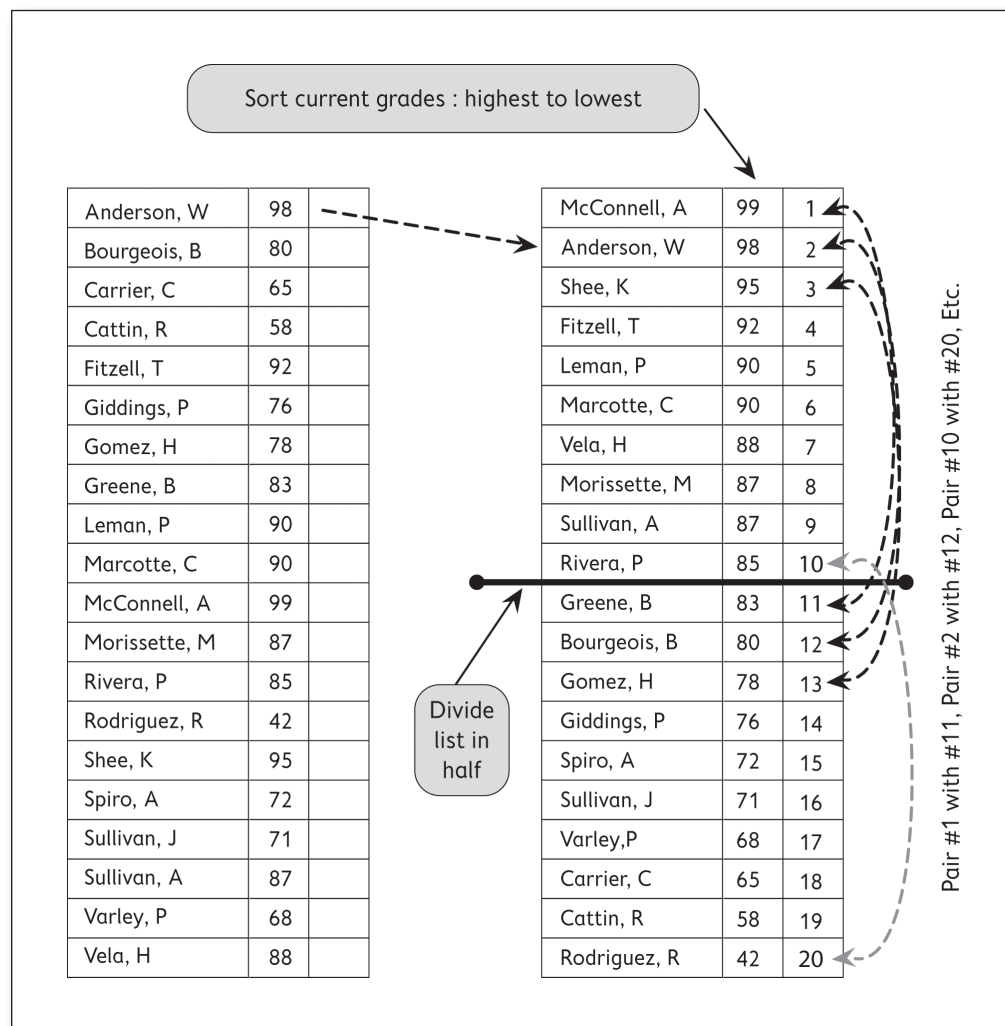**Figure 2.5**   High With Middle, Middle With Low Grouping Technique

Figure 2.6   Exit Card Examples

Name: _____ Date: _____

Today, you began to learn about _____
List three things you learned:

1._____

2._____

3._____

Write at least one question you have about this topic.

_____

_____

_____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Today, you began to learn about _____

What area gave you the most difficulty today?

_____

_____

Something that helped me in my learning today was:

_____

_____

_____

Figure 2.7   More Exit Card Examples

Name: _____ Date: _____

Explain the difference between _____ and

_____. Give some examples of each as part of your explanation.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name: _____ Date: _____

We used the following learning strategies in this lesson:

1.   _____

2.   _____

3.   _____

What learning strategy or strategies seemed to work best for you ?

_____

_____

_____