

Simple Solutions for Special Education

***Simple Solutions* Products as Part of Response to Intervention**

Simple Solutions Math was created for use as a supplement to a standards-based elementary mathematics curriculum, and it continues to be used very successfully for this purpose. Subsequently, the strategy has been extended to other subject areas such as language arts, science, and study skills.

The *Simple Solutions* Approach is a flexible strategy that can be used in a variety of ways with all students, including any who may struggle (whether or not they have IEP's). It is most appropriate for use as guided or supported practice in Tier I and Tier II within a Response to Intervention model. Two of the strongest features of RTI are **early and ongoing intervention** and **ongoing assessment** (known as progress monitoring). Both are essential components of the *Simple Solutions* Approach.

Beginning as early as kindergarten and first grade, children complete the *Simple Solutions* lessons on a daily basis. Older students can do the lessons independently and check their own work. Teachers then immediately focus on items that are difficult or are done incorrectly. By following this simple daily routine, teachers are able to provide high-quality, specific feedback in a timely manner. Additionally, the *Simple Solutions* daily routine and weekly quizzes give teachers the data they need to plan instruction for the next few days or the next week.

By connecting assessment to instruction, as recommended by RTI practices, the *Simple Solutions* Approach allows teachers to quickly identify and immediately address any areas of difficulty. Teachers are then able to use precious classroom time for intervention, as well as to provide standards-based instruction.

Early and Ongoing Intervention Paired with Ongoing Assessment

At the **Tier I level**, the *Simple Solutions* Approach, along with solid instruction, is designed to allow even struggling students to remain in the general education population. Here's why:

- Information is given in small bits, and concepts are revisited systematically. This makes the content less intimidating and easier for students to grasp.
- Daily distributed practice strengthens the core curriculum by enabling students to permanently retain what they have learned.
- The strategy has a built-in assessment component which drives instruction, helping teachers to identify students who need intervention and pinpoint areas that need to be addressed.
- *Simple Solutions* provides age-appropriate, purposeful practice for students at their independent level.
- Using *Simple Solutions* increases students' self-confidence and helps them to make the connection between their effort and their achievement.

Some students will need additional levels of intervention. As part of the **Tier II level** of intervention, teachers can individualize daily practice by assigning the level of *Simple Solutions* that best matches the ability level of each student. Students should be tested, using a curriculum-based measure, to determine the most appropriate starting level.

- *Simple Solutions* is flexible. Students in special education classes can use a range of levels of *Simple Solutions* in a variety of subject areas. For example, a fourth grade student may be reading below grade level but computing math problems at grade level. That student may be given a Level 2 Science or English Grammar book and Level 4 Math.
- To increase the intensity of support, the daily practice can be done in teams, with peer tutoring, or in small groups with adult assistance.
- Students who need more scaffolding and additional direct instruction also need extra practice that will enable them to retain what they are learning. *Simple Solutions* provides that practice.
- The daily routine and weekly quizzes provide assessment that drives instruction. When academic performance is measured on a weekly basis, the data can inform teachers about the efficacy of methods of instruction as well as the progress of students with regard to mastery of material.