

# Fountas & Pinnell's Blog

Resources for reading intervention, teaching guided reading, leveled books, and K-12 professional development.

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## Guided Reading for Reading Recovery, Balanced Literacy, and Special Needs Students

By [Gay & Irene](#) at June 17, 2010 08:15

Filed Under: [Benchmark Assessment System](#), [Guided Reading](#), [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#), [Reading Recovery](#), [Response to Intervention \(RTI\)](#), [special education](#), [balanced literacy](#), [special needs](#), [autism](#), [dyslexia](#)

While not developed specifically for [Reading Recovery®](#), balanced literacy, and special needs students, teaching systems such as [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#) and the [Benchmark Assessment System \(BAS\)](#) are often used with them. The effectiveness of reading and literacy development programs is determined by the ongoing interaction between the student, the instructor, and the instruction being presented. Fountas & Pinnell teaching systems combine research-based instructional models with developmentally-appropriate reading materials and a common language of instruction to assure that students' learning experiences are consistent and well-structured - regardless of who is doing the teaching.

Here are answers to questions about using [guided reading instruction](#) and assessment with Reading Recovery, balanced literacy, and special needs student populations.

\*\*If you would like to present your own findings or opinions on this topic, please feel free to contribute to the [Balanced Literacy, Reading Recovery, and Special Needs forum](#) hosted by Heinemann Publishing.

**Question:** *I am a Reading Recovery trained teacher and as I watched the video of the program, it looks like RR for groups. After teaching RR for 10 years, I went back into the classroom as a kdg. teacher. I adapted my training in RR to teach to small groups with much success.*

**Answer:** The design of the reading Recovery Lesson and the design of the LLI lesson are different, though they are both built on Clay's complex theory of the reading process. As you know, when you work with a small group you must address broader needs and use techniques that build on the group interaction. You will see some similar instructional procedures that we have identified as highly effective with low-achieving readers such as the sound and letter boxes from the Russian psychologist Elkonin. You will also find many other instructional procedures that are very different from Reading Recovery. You may be interested in reading a paper we wrote on this subject called "The Advantages of Using Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) and Reading Recovery® Together to Serve More Low-Achieving Children in Schools."

**Question:** *LLI and Balanced Literacy – How do they mesh? Our county is moving into a Balanced Literacy framework, guided by the principles in your publications. We fortunately have teachers and literacy coaches who have been trained as Reading Recovery and [Literacy Collaborative](#) teachers to help us think through our learning and implementation. Will the LLI framework provide the same sort of theory and implementation so that our EIP and Special Ed children not be involved in a different framework - very concerned for our first grade kids!*

**Answer:** The LLI teaching will fit well with the theoretical foundation of [Literacy Collaborative](#) and Reading Recovery and will be highly effective with second language learners and many special education students. There may be a few special education students who after evaluation may need a specialized approach that differs from LLI. For more information on this subject, you may want to read a paper we wrote on LLI and Reading Recovery.

**Question:** *I have heard that LLI is being used with SPED students. Is there a research article available that summarizes these results? How the pacing of the lessons may differ, etc? Is there any data out there for use with ELL students?*

**Answer:** LLI is not especially designed for SPED although many SPED teachers are finding it very helpful. At this time, LLI is so new that we do not have results on its use with SPED students, however we are in the process of collecting data from a number of districts and will soon have reports to share on our website in the [LLI Research and Data Collection](#) area. Informal reports from SPED teachers indicate that their students do make good gains and that they are able to use the lessons as designed. For most, the pacing is about the same although some teachers report that they provide more lessons on a level. This is easy to do by using both Green and Blue Systems or by using the framework with more leveled books that are teacher selected.

**Question:** *We are working with a group of 3 special ed students. They have come out of a self contained program to a mainstreamed class. We are providing reading service to them. We did the benchmark assessment and they came out at level J. We are using LLI with them. We are finding that they are reading fluently at that level, but the comprehension is limited. They did level J last year in the blue kit and now have completed the green level J lessons with limited comprehension. Where should we proceed next?*

**Answer:** Are you are using the Recording Forms from LLI to evaluate the comprehension conversation? When you see the children are having continued difficulty with comprehension it is important to first think about the teaching in the lessons. How

## About the Authors



[Irene C. Fountas bio](#) | [Gay Su Pinnell bio](#)



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well are you introducing the texts? Are you helping them think within, beyond, and about the text? How effective is your discussion?

We would also refer you to Chapter 17 in [When Readers Struggle](#) for many specific suggestions for improving comprehension. This book is included in your LLI system.

Ultimately, if you decide you need to spend more time at the level pull in more level J books from your leveled book library and use the LLI lesson structure and the [Continuum](#) goals for guided reading included in your lesson guide to plan for your lessons.

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**Question:** *I recently attended your LLI training in Houston and am planning on implementing the systems in our school. I am the principal of a school that serves many students who find literacy learning difficult. I am wondering if you would recommend using a lesson structure in guided reading groups that is similar to the odd/even structure of the LLI lessons. I think there is an advantage to having a Reading Recovery teacher return to the classroom so that RR strategies can be used with more children in the classroom. I wonder if using the LLI lesson structure(s) in guided reading would also enhance student growth.*

**Answer:** We do not recommend the LLI format for classroom groups. Guided reading is a powerful structure for children's literacy learning in groups in the regular classroom program. In the guided reading lesson, the teacher does use the same facilitative language we discussed related to strategic activities. The language is not specific to Reading Recovery™ or LLI. The Prompting Guide we used is a tool for all literacy teachers. The theoretical knowledge that underlies Reading Recovery, LLI, and guided reading is similar. However, the LLI structure is more intense for the lowest achieving children.

**Question:** *Is LLI an appropriate program for use with students labeled as having the characteristics of dyslexia? Dyslexia is a term I do not see in the body of your work nor that of Marie Clay, at least that I can find. However, school districts are bound by law in our state to provide programs for dyslexia. There are strict guidelines and specific tests, such as the GORT and CTOPP, used for diagnosis. The typical dyslexia program in the surrounding school districts seem to be phonics-based programs which I shall not name. I, along with many of my reading facilitators, am Reading Recovery trained. I feel that the LLI kits are very well suited and more well-balanced for most students who receive the dyslexia diagnosis. I found one blog entry in which you spoke about the IEP and making sure the kit matched the accommodations prescribed. The guidelines in our state dyslexia guide provide for students to be categorized dyslexic in RtI Tier 3. Only if a student does not make adequate progress in 18 weeks is he tested for Special Education. The 504 guidelines also give leeway to label a child dyslexic in Tier 2. Could you please comment to the extent you can on how your program works with students who have the label as well as your own understanding of dyslexia?*

**Answer:** Dyslexia is an umbrella term that covers a variety of learning disabilities. LLI was not specifically designed to meet the needs of students who have been tested and determined to have learning disabilities and been given an I.E.P. In general, it is an early intervention designed to be used when the teacher's assessment shows that the student has difficulty and is not able to meet grade level standards. It's broad base allows for acceleration across reading, writing, and phonics, and the combination of research-based instructional actions meets the needs of most students.

LLI can be used with learning disabled students after a team meets and determines that the components of LLI are consistent with the student's I.E.P. Many students have been served in this category.

**Question:** *I am a reading intervention teacher and I have enjoyed using the LLI programs with my 1st and 2nd grade struggling readers this year I have seen much progress. My district has decided that pulling groups out of the classroom is a no-no and that coteaching is the way to go for next year.*

**Answer:** Your district is setting up a completely different delivery design than the one suggested for LLI, so it is a problem. We believe skipping around to different groups and giving struggling readers only occasional help will not have instructional power and is not supported by research.

It is a little hard to understand exactly what will be happening. Will there be two teachers in the classroom at the same time for a morning or a day? Or, will you move from class to class taking groups? LLI has been very successfully used in a "corner" or small designated space in a classroom so that children do not leave. It seems a major challenge you have is in providing a sequence of lessons that allow children to build momentum. You might try to make a case for the most struggling readers to have at least four lessons per week (realizing that you will not get the acceleration possible with five lessons) With two teachers present, you would be able to allow 30 minutes. Perhaps you could present your administrator with a systematic plan that allows for you to do the co-teaching they want and at the same time work intensively with one or two groups. It will be very important to collect student data and analyze it.

If all of this fails, be sure to gather your results from this year and prepare a concise written report that also includes how you implemented LLI. This is a responsible thing to do in any case and you will have a written record that you can come back to as you evaluate results for next year.

**Question:** *I would like to know more about why this reading program is not designed for students w/ dyslexia. Is it designed for students w/ language learning disabilities? Thanks. Is any part of the Fountas Pinnell reading program specifically designed for dyslexia/language learning disabled children?*

**Answer** (submitted by the Fountas & Pinnell Team): Although Fountas & Pinnell programs such as BAS and LLI are not

specifically designed for students with autism/dyslexia or other learning disabilities, many people do use them in such circumstances. ([see this forum thread for an example](#)). Some research has been done on using guided reading with autistic children ([this article for example](#)), but for the most part the programs are used in regular education classrooms. While many people use Fountas & Pinnell guided reading programs for special needs students, there hasn't yet been a large-scale study on this topic, and the programs themselves are not specifically designed for special needs populations.

All evidence available at this time indicates that the instructional principles of guided reading are appropriate for use with special needs students, and this is something that Fountas & Pinnell hope to address more closely in their upcoming work.

Here are a few more articles that you might find helpful:

[Supporting Literacy With Guided Reading](#)

[Strategies for Teaching Reading to Visual Learners](#)

The [Council for Exceptional Children \(CEC\)](#) also has several articles on using guided reading with special needs students, but many of them are available to members only.

Tags: [guided reading](#), [balanced literacy](#), [reading recovery](#), [special needs](#), [special education](#), [autism](#), [sped](#), [dyslexia](#)

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## Video Clips for Teaching Guided Reading Programs

By [Gay & Irene](#) at May 25, 2010 06:04

Filed Under: [Guided Reading](#), [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#), [Reading Recovery](#)

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One of the best ways to learn how to teach guided reading is to watch video clips of teachers delivering guided reading instruction to real students. There are already many clips of teaching guided reading on our websites such as [www.FountasAndPinnellLeveledBooks.com](#) and [www.FountasAndPinnell.com](#) as well as the [Guided Reading Videotapes](#) series available from [Heinemann](#), but here are also some free clips we have posted on websites such as [YouTube](#) and [TeacherTube](#). These clips provide more insight into how a typical guided reading lesson is structured, as well as some of the benefits experienced by schools who have implemented guided reading successfully.

Please enjoy!

***Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) - Green System, Lesson 41***

***Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) - Green System, lesson 42***

*An introduction to the Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) guided reading system*

*A testimonial from a principal about the success her school experienced using the Leveled Literacy Intervention guided reading teaching system*

Tags: [teaching guided reading](#), [guided reading videos](#), [guided reading in the classroom](#), [teaching leveled literacy intervention](#), [effective reading intervention](#)

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## Professional Development for Teaching Guided Reading

By [Gay & Irene](#) at May 12, 2010 06:25

Filed Under: [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#), [Professional Development](#), [Guided Reading](#), [Benchmark Assessment System](#), [Reading Recovery](#)

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Guided reading is quickly becoming one of the most widely-used strategies for delivering effective reading instruction. Because teaching and supporting guided reading systems uses a different approach than traditional reading programs, it is important to have teaching staff that is properly trained. We are regularly contacted by teachers, principals, and reading coaches who want to know what training opportunities are available for guided reading and assessment systems such as Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) and the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS). Below are some of the questions we have received about training for guided reading and our answers. If you would like to ask a question of your own, please visit the [professional development forum thread](#) or use the [contact](#) link at the top of this blog.

### Questions about professional development for teaching guided reading:

**Question:** In order to use the new Leveled Literacy Intervention, do you have to have formalized training?

**Answer:** Of course, professional development is essential to support teachers in all of their work with readers, especially those who are having difficulty. We thought very hard about this issue when we constructed the LLI systems. There are a variety of options available from [Heinemann's Professional Development group](#). Nevertheless, we also know that many teachers cannot be released for formal professional development; and, today many districts do not have resources for travel and even modest fees. We wanted LLI to reach as many children as possible. Therefore, no additional formal training is required. You will find that professional development is built right into each of the systems and each is different in terms of the content. In the [Orange](#), [Green](#), and [Blue](#) systems, you will find the following items: a [Program Guide](#) with detailed information about how to implement LLI; [Lesson Guides](#), which provides text analyses and suggestions for preparing and for assessing learners; [The Prompting Guide](#), which is a flip chart that gives you specific and precise language to use while working with readers and writers; a professional book called [When Readers Struggle: Teaching That Works](#) that has extensive examples and theoretical rationales for the approaches in LLI; Finally, a [Professional Development DVD](#) that contains an extensive tutorial for taking and analyzing reading records as well as 3 to 4 sample LLI lessons from the system that you are using. All of the above material can be used by an individual for self-study, by a study group, or by a district staff-developer. And you can always post questions in the [professional development forum](#)!

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**Question:** If a school can send only a few teachers (classroom/resource) to your training, can those teachers then do turnaround training back at the school to implement the LLI system at the school or should all the teachers have some of PD from you? My concern is that in the turnaround there may be some misinformation shared.

**Answer:** It is wonderful if you have the resources to send at least one team to one of our [institutes](#). Alternatively, you can bring a [Heinemann Professional Development](#) consultant to your district. If some teachers do get training at our institute, they can train other teachers. Our institute does not focus on how to train other teachers but they can observe how we work with the group and conduct the same kind of learning experiences.

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**Question:** I am a trained [Reading Recovery](#) teacher but have been working as a reading specialist for several years in

CO. Would you recommend that I do the training program for LLI to get best results? Could I easily get the gist of the program and easily implement it with support from a colleague (RR trained) who will be attending the training? Also, what do you have within the program to support ELL learners?

**Answer:** The materials are designed to include a great deal of professional learning. We do believe however that the more professional development you have with the system the better so we would highly recommend it. We will be in Westminster, Colorado for an LLI institute on October 28–30, 2009. Perhaps you could attend.

You will find specific ELL suggestions in every lesson in the [LLI Lesson Guides](#) as well as material in the professional book [When Readers Struggle: Teaching That Works](#).

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**Question:** Do you recommend training only certified teachers? What about training paraprofessionals?

**Answer:** We believe the children with the most difficulty need the most expert teachers. However, some districts have trained paraprofessionals to use LLI and are seeing progress with their students. We suggest that you collect data and evaluate your results.

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Tags: [guided reading](#), [reading recovery](#), [professional development](#), [staff development](#), [training](#), [seminar](#), [institute](#)

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## Using Guided Reading Programs for Response to Intervention (RTI)

By [Gay & Irene](#) at May 04, 2010 05:43

Filed Under: [Assessment and Progress Monitoring](#), [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#), [Guided Reading](#), [Response to Intervention \(RtI\)](#), [Benchmark Assessment System](#)

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The [Response to Intervention \(RTI\)](#) framework is helping change the way schools approach intervention and remediation. Guided reading instructional programs and assessments such as [Leveled Literacy Intervention](#) and the [Benchmark Assessment System](#) have embedded features to enable their use in the RTI framework. Below are answers to some typical questions about using the LLI and BAS guided reading programs in RTI systems. For more information about using guided reading instruction to support the Response to Intervention framework, please see the following:

- Audio Podcast: [Principles for Success with Response to Intervention \(RTI\)](#)
- Document (.pdf): [Benchmark Assessment System and Leveled Literacy Intervention in Your Response to Intervention \(RTI\) Plan](#)
- Document (.pdf): [10 Month Progress Monitoring by Instructional Text Reading Level](#)

### Questions about using guided reading instructional programs for Response to Intervention:

**Question:** How does the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System address RTI compliance?

**Answer:** With the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, you can monitor reading level three times each year. This assessment will yield level (with equivalent grade levels), accuracy, fluency, and detailed information and scores on comprehension. This system has been extensively [field tested](#). You can have students complete a writing prompt to further assess comprehension. You can use optional assessments to monitor progress in phonemic awareness, phonics, letter learning, and high frequency word knowledge. You can establish expectations in each of these areas based on your own district's requirements. A grid is currently in development to establish criteria for each grade level, beginning, middle, and end.

**Question:** We are looking very seriously at purchasing the Benchmark Assessment System for our K - 8 grade teachers (198 total), however, I was curious as to how/if other school districts are using these materials for bi-weekly progress monitoring. (RTI Tier 3) Since the materials are limited in regards to repetitive assessment, would the results gleaned from using these assessments 2x/month be valid? I look forward to your response.

**Answer:** You would not want to use the Benchmark Assessment System as often as every two weeks. You can, however, select Optional Assessments included in BAS which can provide valuable diagnostic information. On this website, you will find Instructional Level Expectation Charts that will be useful for RtI progress monitoring. Another strategy is to take regular reading records using leveled books. You can take these records as a regular, integral part of small group instruction or intervention groups.

The schedule below indicates the way one school district has made this practice operational. Optional assessments could vary by grade level. For example, K and Grade 1 students could use Phonemic Awareness, Letter Knowledge, Word Writing, and High Frequency Word Recognition. Older readers could use assessments like the Word Features Assessment.

Week 1 -- Full Benchmark Assessment system, including text-reading level and selected optional assessments (four selected)

Week 2 -- Text reading level using any leveled book

Week 3 -- BAS Optional Assessments #1 and #2

Week 4 -- Text reading level using any leveled book

Week 5 -- BAS Optional Assessments #3 and #4

Week 6 -- Text reading level using any leveled book

Week 7 -- BAS Optional Assessments #1 and #2

Week 8 -- Text reading level using any leveled book

Week 9 -- BAS Optional Assessments #3 and #4

Week 10 -- Text reading level using any leveled book

Week 11 -- BAS Optional Assessments #1 and #2  
Week 12 -- Text Reading Level using any leveled book  
Week 13 -- BAS Optional Assessments #3 and #4  
Week 14 -- Benchmark Assessment Text Reading Level

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**Question:** We are already implementing LLI. Some of our teachers are questioning the idea of doing the informal running records on children after they have read the book previously. They are used to doing the DRA with children on a cold read. Could you share the philosophy behind doing the assessments after children have read the book?

**Answer:** Tools like our Benchmark Assessment System and ongoing progress monitoring (running records) are similar procedures with two different purposes.

Benchmark Assessment is conducted at specific intervals throughout the school year (e.g., beginning, middle, end of year). It is always conducted in a highly standardized way and the results are recorded. These results provide a starting point for instruction and also measure achievement over time. Reading records are taken on a first reading of a previously unseen text, with a highly standardized introduction. This reading provides a very conservative estimate of what a child can do without teaching.

Ongoing running records (or reading records as we use them in LLI) are taken at regular intervals as an integral part of instruction. They provide an assessment of a child's performance on the second reading of a text. We would expect a child to demonstrate more effective reading on a level after he has experienced teaching and a first reading. This gives us an ongoing check on what we are teaching him to do as a reader. It informs ongoing teaching as well. So, the teacher is getting immediate feedback on the effectiveness of her teaching. She is always working for greater and greater independence so that the student will ultimately demonstrate those effective behaviors on higher levels during Benchmark Assessment.

Both are standardized, and both provide information about reading behaviors and the appropriateness of the level. Ongoing running records have the additional value of showing us what the reader can do with teaching. Often, the teacher is working on the child's benchmark tested instructional level and finds that on the second reading, the child is demonstrating accuracy and comprehension as if this is the independent level. That, in fact, is what we want. The teaching has made the difference--making it possible for the child to be an extremely proficient reader on a level that would be a little harder without the teaching.

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**Question:** We are looking to successfully implement RTI while philosophically maintaining the balanced literacy approach--being sure to continue to place value on all areas of reading. Will the new LLI system allow for intervention as well as weekly progress monitoring that can be shown as data?

**Answer:** LLI is an intervention system. It is designed to be used with readers who need extra help to learn to read up to level N (first part of grade 3). It can be used with any kind of literacy curriculum, but it is certainly compatible with a balanced approach since each 30-minute lesson includes a great deal of reading continuous texts (really good books!), phonics/word study, and writing about reading. There is an intensive focus on teaching comprehension, but you will also find daily phonics lessons. In the guide you will find plans for implementing LLI within a layered, comprehensive literacy curriculum. Teachers use lesson guides with 300 specifically designed lessons to guide teaching. The system has a Data Management CD that makes it easy to track progress. Students' scores on text reading would be taken and record every 6 days (for a group of 3). You will also be advised on "check up" assessment of phonics skills and word knowledge. Please take a look at the RTI Charts we've developed for further information on this subject.

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**Question:** It seems like this system fits best as a Tier I intervention. In the field study districts that implement an Rtl model, at which tier(s) did they implement the program? Are there different implementation guidelines/suggestions for different tiers?

**Answer:** LLI can be implemented as a Tier 1, 2, or 3 intervention and various school districts have made their plans in different ways. A classroom teacher can provide more intensive small group instruction with LLI. The most common use is as a supplementary tier two or three intervention as it involves close diagnostic work for the short term. You will find many RTI documents on this website so you can review various options.

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**Question:** I have a question about the grade-level specific [Expectations for reading charts](#) for the Benchmark Assessment System. The charts show, for each grade level, in the Fall, Winter and Spring, which Tier (1, 2 or 3) students would fall under based on their scores on several assessments (leveled text, Word Features tests, etc.). What information were these levels based on? Is there any data available about what percentage of students in a grade are likely to fall in Tier 1, 2 or 3? More information on the development of these charts would be useful, as we would like to use this data to implement RTI in our schools.

**Answer:** Beginning and ending grade level expectations are based on typical levels at each time period. They are consistent with state standards. If they are met, then student should be assured of making adequate progress across grades. (Note, that text levels are based not only on accuracy but on satisfactory comprehension.) Expectations at time points within grade levels have been created for the purposes of RTI monitoring. They provide a guide for constantly checking to see whether students are making satisfactory progress towards the end-of-year goal. This progress monitoring gives the teacher information on when and how much intervention might be needed. The percentage of students at each tier will vary greatly depending on the overall achievement in the school. We do not have numbers because of this variation. However, your expectation should be that when you have excellent classroom instruction and layers of effective interventions in place, about 80% of the students will fall into tier 1; that is; they will make sufficient progress with good classroom instruction. About 20% would need intervention (possibly a choice of several tier 2 interventions); and only about 5% would need intensive tier 3 interventions. When you are initially developing your literacy program, you may find many more students needing intervention. As you work together over time, you should find that the percentages change.

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**Question:** Am I correct in understanding that these LLI kits were developed to use for Tier 2 & 3 instruction, not for classroom teachers to use for Tier 1?

**Answer:** LLI was designed to supplement good classroom teaching. This intervention can serve to close the achievement gap and bring children to grade level because they are getting something extra. Your district can decide how to use it as supplementary, intensive support for the children below grade level. Many schools use it for tier 2 or 3, though some schools have managed to provide coverage for the classroom teacher to provide extra lessons beyond the regular classroom instruction before school, after school, or even during the day while someone else works with the other children.

Tags: [guided reading](#), [response to intervention](#), [rti](#), [leveled literacy intervention](#), [benchmark assessment system](#), [teaching guided reading](#), [instruction](#)

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## Research on the Effectiveness of Leveled Literacy Intervention

By [Gay & Irene](#) at April 15, 2010 07:43

Filed Under: [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#), [Research](#), [Field Studies](#)

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With the limited funding available for purchasing classroom materials today, more and more teachers and educational administrators are relying on research to help guide them to the best programs to invest in.

[Fountas & Pinneil](#) Leveled Literacy Intervention was developed over a five-year period during which it was implemented in 70 districts in 15 states. You can refer to the [Research Base document](#) for more information. During the development of LLI, a field study was conducted at sites around the United States to assess the LLI framework. Please refer to the [field study](#) for more information about the research connected with the development of LLI. Additionally, the student data from three of the sites that participated in the field study (Newark OH, Boston MA and Manchester NH) was analyzed for a pilot research project that examined student progress. Please refer to the [pilot study](#), for the results from this study.

"I am interested in finding out more about any research that has been done demonstrating LLI effectiveness. Are you aware of any independent research that has been done with LLI?"

In the 2009-2010 school year, an independent LLI Efficacy Study is being conducted in two low-performing U.S. school districts. The LLI Efficacy Study is being conducted in the 2009-2010 school year by an independent research group, the [Center for Research in Education Policy \(CREP\)](#) at the University of Memphis. This study will involve two U.S. school districts and will examine the impact of LLI instruction on struggling readers. A control group will allow the researchers to assess what the LLI uniquely contributes to student growth. An [evaluation of year 1 of the LLI Efficacy Study](#) is currently available from the CREP. A final report will be published in late 2010 and will be available through [Heinemann](#).

"Will there be a request to the What Works Clearinghouse to have your research studies of this program reviewed. It would be helpful to districts wanting to implement LLI if there was a positive review of LLI research available?"

Although [What Works Clearinghouse \(WWC\)](#) has not yet approved LLI, an LLI Data Collection project is also underway to look at progress of students in schools that have implemented LLI. Many districts have volunteered to participate and the data coming in is very exciting.

Tags: [crep](#), [leveled literacy intervention](#), [guided reading](#), [independent](#), [research](#), [field study](#), [efficacy](#), [pilot](#), [what works clearinghouse](#), [fountas and pinneil](#)

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## Using Leveled Literacy Intervention for English Language Learners

By [Gay & Irene](#) at April 12, 2010 03:43

Filed Under: [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#), [English Language Learners \(ELL\)](#)

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One of the most frequently asked questions about the [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#) guided reading program is how it can support English Language Learners (ELL) and non-native English speakers.

Recently [this question](#) came to us from a teacher using Leveled Literacy Intervention in a school with a high ELL population:

"We are having challenges determining which students to target for intervention for Kindergarten. Our understanding was that LLI for kinder would best benefit students at risk for retention who may be able to move to grade 1 after intensive intervention. We have students who are slightly struggling and then we have groups whose English is still very limited. Teachers are wondering whether the ELL students who are still so far behind would really benefit. Has anyone else out there encountered and resolved this? My initial reaction is the teacher should work with those who are slightly below and the struggling ELLs should go to LLI, even if their English is very limited. Any suggestions or helpful information would be appreciated!"

LLI is an intervention for the lowest achieving children in Kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 2 and has sometimes been used in grade 3. Each school district must go by their language policy in providing reading instruction to children for whom English is a second language. It is of course a good idea for the child to have some control of oral English to benefit from instruction in reading in English. Many LLI children have been in ELL and made significant progress because of all the language support.

As far as kindergarten, we do not reference retention. We suggest that about mid year all of the children begin reading little books with the goal of all children reading at least instructional level C by the end of kindergarten. Any child who needs LLI



support to achieve that goal would benefit from participation.

We also regularly receive requests to produce an edition of Leveled Literacy Intervention for teaching Spanish language students:

"We need a Spanish literacy intervention for our dual language school, and we love LLI. Is it available in Spanish or are there plans to make it available?"

We are in the process of creating a Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark System 1 in Spanish, called Sistema de evaluación de la lectura (SEL) which will be published later this year. Also, the [Prompting Guide in Spanish](#) is available now. Presently we are also working on the development of LLI for grades 3-8 in English, which will take some time. No decision has been made yet as to whether to create LLI in Spanish though it is something we would love to do.

Tags: [teaching](#), [english language learners](#), [ell](#), [literacy](#), [intervention](#), [LLI](#), [guided reading](#), [fountas and pinnell](#), [benchmark](#)

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## Are Leveled Literacy Intervention Guided Reading Lessons Scripted?

By [Gay & Irene](#) at March 30, 2010 05:48

Filed Under: [Leveled Literacy Intervention \(LLI\)](#)

Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) is one of the foremost guided reading intervention programs available today. One of the biggest misconceptions about the LLI program is that the lessons are scripted.

LLI is the antithesis of a script. Rather, it is a system for enhancing teacher expertise and supporting children's improvement in literacy. We have designed our materials to help teachers learn more about making the most effective decisions for their children, helping them become better observers of reading and writing behaviors. The most powerful teaching fits the precise needs of the learners. The [LLI Lesson Guides](#) provide teachers with background information, suggestions, and tools for making good decisions specific to the children they teach. We provide a variety of tools to support effective teacher decision making.

We find that some teachers need more support and others less support depending on their experience and knowledge of the reading process. We provide a predictable lesson framework within which the teacher needs to make decisions that fit the children. We begin with an analysis of text characteristics so teachers can learn about and think about the features of the text as they support and challenge readers. We include behaviors and understandings to notice, teach for, and support at every level so the teacher can consider the specific strengths and needs of the readers in relation to the suggestions given in the Lesson Guide. In addition, we provide professional development suggestions and information specific to consider in teaching English Language Learners in each lesson. There are other tools to support decision-making provided in the system as well. The [Prompting Guide](#) is a tool for the teacher to use in making decisions about supporting each reader and in selecting teaching points. The [Continuum](#) page at the end of each level provides the competencies the teacher will keep in mind as she teaches within each lesson and makes the decision to move a child to the next level. In addition, there is an extensive professional resource, *When Readers Struggle: Teaching That Works* that supports the teachers' knowledge, and a Professional Development DVD to support teacher expertise in coding, analyzing reading behaviors, using the information to inform teaching, and teaching effective lessons.

In sum, LLI provides a powerful system of [professional development](#) so that teachers can learn more about teaching through using it and have a structure for teaching that promotes the differentiation of instruction so students can make accelerated progress and reach the competencies of grade level readers. We hope you will take a look at the materials to understand this description more fully.

You will find that the books that come with the system should be adequate. If you find that you need for than the number of books at each level you can move to the other system to get more books and lessons at that level, but that would be rare.

If a student is not making progress with excellent teaching and consistent daily lessons in LLI in addition to small group classroom instruction the student may need an evaluation to diagnose any type of processing difficulties.

The components are available separately but it is far more economical to buy the system. See the LLI order form for [ordering information](#).

It is not ideal to share a system as you may need some of the same levels at the same time. Also the other components that come with the system are designed for one teacher. If you find you must share at first you may get additional components separately.

You can read about the existing and ongoing [research on LLI](#) by checking in on our website frequently.

Tags: [guided reading](#), [lll](#), [literacy](#), [fountas](#), [pinnell](#), [leveled](#), [intervention](#)

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