

# Orton-Gillingham in the Elementary Classroom

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STERN CENTER FOR LANGUAGE AND LEARNING**

**EVERYONE READING ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
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# Stern Center for Language and Learning



[www.sterncenter.org](http://www.sterncenter.org)

- Orton-Gillingham Institute
- Housed within the Cynthia K. Hoehl Institute for Excellence
- Grant funding for 1st-3rd grade classroom teachers
  - Grant from AOGPE



# Why is O-G needed in the elementary classroom?



## National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

- **32%** of the nation's public school students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade performed at or above grade level (NAEP, 2011)
- Of low-income 4<sup>th</sup> graders, **50%** read below basic level (NAEP, 2011)
- Nationally, there is no significant change in 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores from 2011-2013 (NAEP, 2013)

# Why is O-G needed in the elementary classroom?



- O-G teachers have a deep understanding of language
  - Better able to teach the **CCSS Reading Foundational Skills**
- Reduces curriculum casualties and false positives for LD in special education.
- Improves overall class instruction
- Expands tier 1 and 2 intervention



# CCSS Reading Foundational Skills

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RF/introduction>



- “These standards are directed toward fostering students’ understanding and working knowledge of **concepts of print**, the **alphabetic principle**, and other basic **conventions of the English writing system**... **Instruction** should be **differentiated**: good readers will need much less practice with these concepts than struggling readers will. The point is to **teach students what they need to learn and not what they already know**...”



# CCSS Reading Foundational Skills K-3

<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RF/introduction>



Kindergarten	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
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## Print Concepts:

Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

[ELA-Literacy.RF.K.1](#)

[ELA-Literacy.RF.1.1](#)

## Phonological Awareness:

Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

[ELA-Literacy.RF.K.2](#)

[ELA-Literacy.RF.1.2](#)

## Phonics and Word Recognition:

Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

[ELA-Literacy.RF.K.3](#)

[ELA-Literacy.RF.1.3](#)

[ELA-Literacy.RF.2.3](#)

[ELA-Literacy.RF.3.4](#)

## Fluency:

Read emergent-reader texts with purpose and understanding.

[ELA-Literacy.RF.K.4](#)

[ELA-Literacy.RF.1.4](#)

[ELA-Literacy.RF.2.4](#)

[ELA-Literacy.RF.3.4](#)

# Classroom Educator Certification



- Rationale: O-G instruction benefits ALL literacy learners.

## O-G Academy Requirements:

- 30 hours of coursework
  - Homework: readings and summaries
- 50-hour yearlong practicum
  - Minimum of 5 observations across the school year
  - Detailed record keeping and lesson log



# 12 O-G Principles

<http://ortonacademy.org/approach.php>

1. Direct and Explicit
2. Diagnostic and Prescriptive
3. Multisensory
4. Structured (yet flexible)
5. Sequential and Incremental
6. Cumulative
7. Individualized
8. Cognitive
9. Teaches to Automaticity
10. Systematic phonics and linguistic competence
11. Continuous Feedback and Positive Reinforcement
12. Emotionally Sound

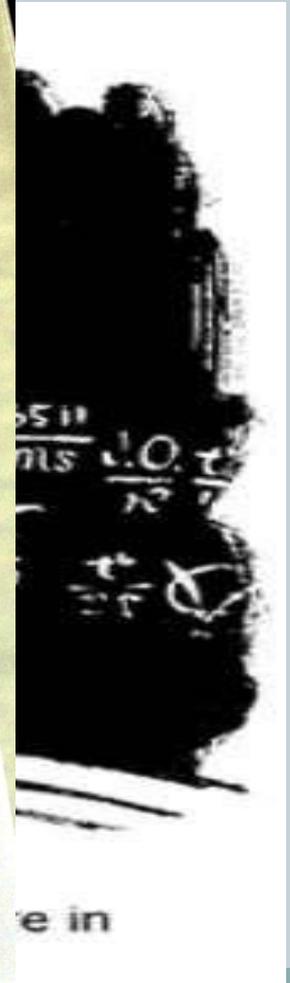
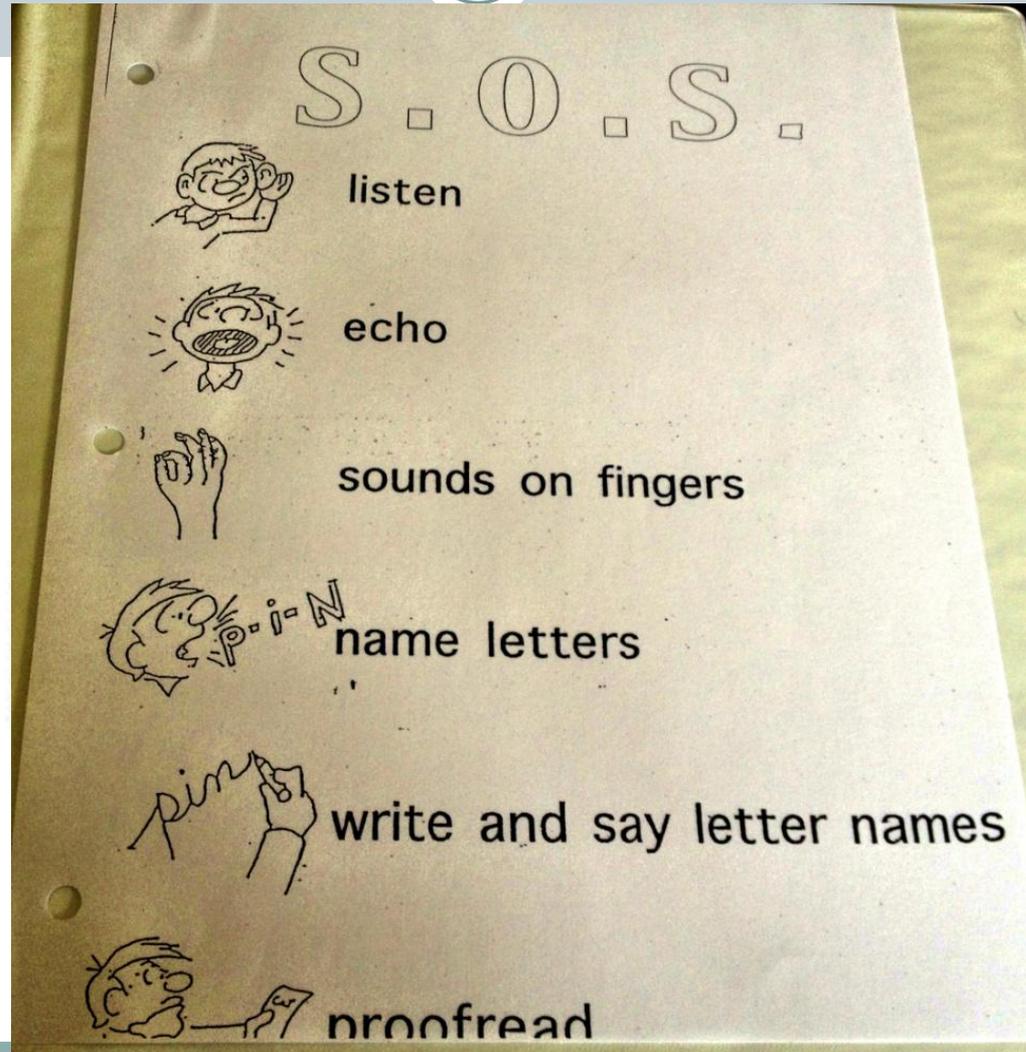
# Who developed this approach?



- Samuel Torrey Orton - neuropsychiatrist & pathologist
  - June Lyday Orton – psychiatric social worker
  - Anna Gillingham - psychologist
  - Bessie Stillman – classroom teacher
- From the beginning, O-G was and is multidisciplinary



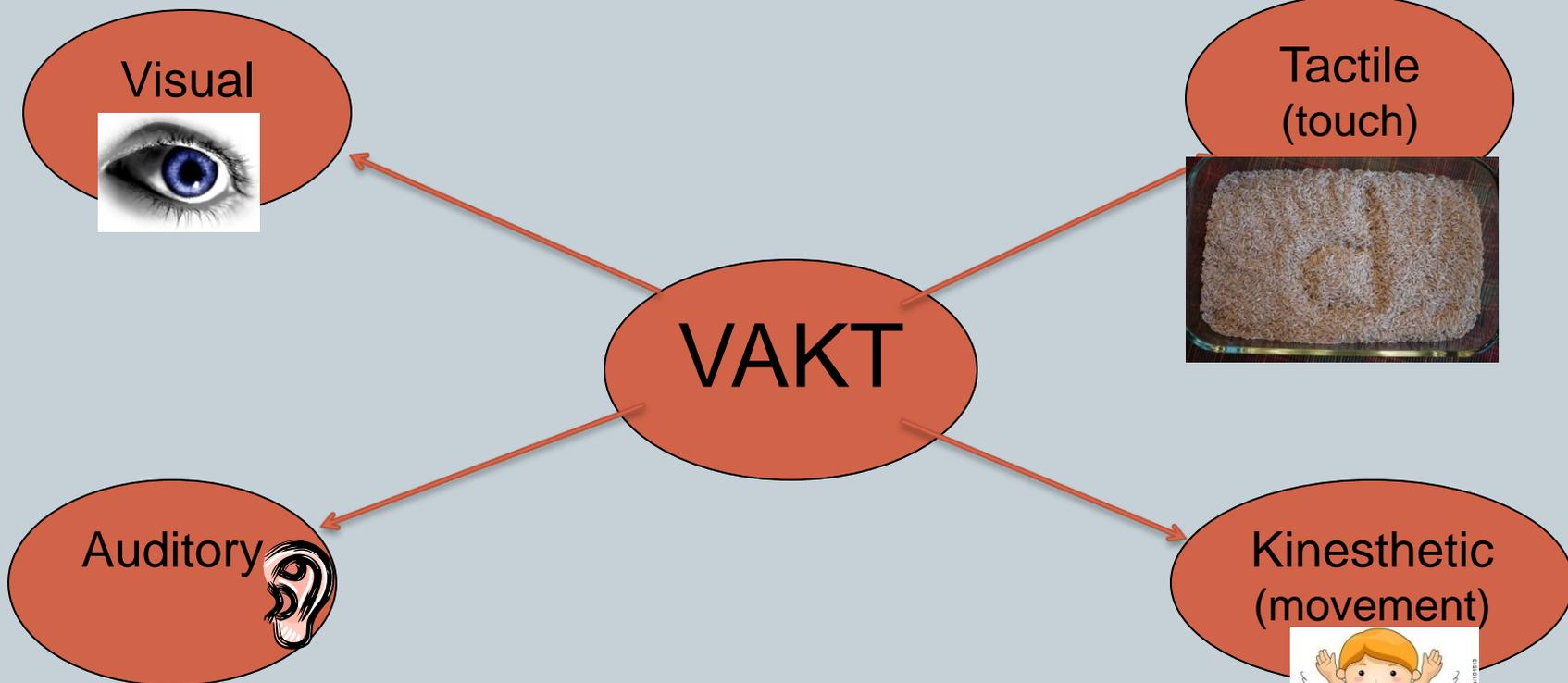
# O-G Direct & Explicit



# O-G Diagnostic & Prescriptive



# O-G is multisensory



# O-G is Sequential & Incremental



- simple to complex**
- known to unknown**
- predictable to unpredictable**

1. Crawl

2. Walk

3. Run

4. *Marathon!*



# O-G is Cumulative & Integrated



**continually spiral back**



# O-G is Cognitive



## Teaches to the intellect



“We can never teach them all they need to know, but we can teach them to **think.**”

~Beth H.  
Slingerland

# O-G is Emotionally Sound



## The Formula...

$$\frac{\text{Effort x Ability}}{\text{Manageable Task}} = \text{Success}$$



# O-G is...



- NOT rigid
- NOT scripted
- NOT a program
- NOT “drill and kill”
- NOT devoid of rich vocabulary and literature instruction
- Offers endless opportunities for teacher creativity

# O-G Fosters Teachers' Critical Thinking



Always ask yourself...

- 1. What** am I doing?
- 2. Why** am I doing it?
- 3. How** is it helping my students?

~Sheila Costello, F/AOGPE



# A Tale of Two Schools

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## Hyde Park, Vermont

**N = 6**

- 3 classroom teachers 1-4
  - two **1**/2 grade
  - one **3**/4 grade
- 3 special educators

## Montpelier, Vermont

**N = 7**

- 7 classroom teachers K-3
  - three **K**/1 teachers
  - two **1**/K grade
  - one **2**/3 grade
  - one **3**/2 grade

Looping model at both schools

# O-G increases Teacher knowledge

## Pre and post scores **Inventory of Teacher Knowledge Test**

### Assesses:

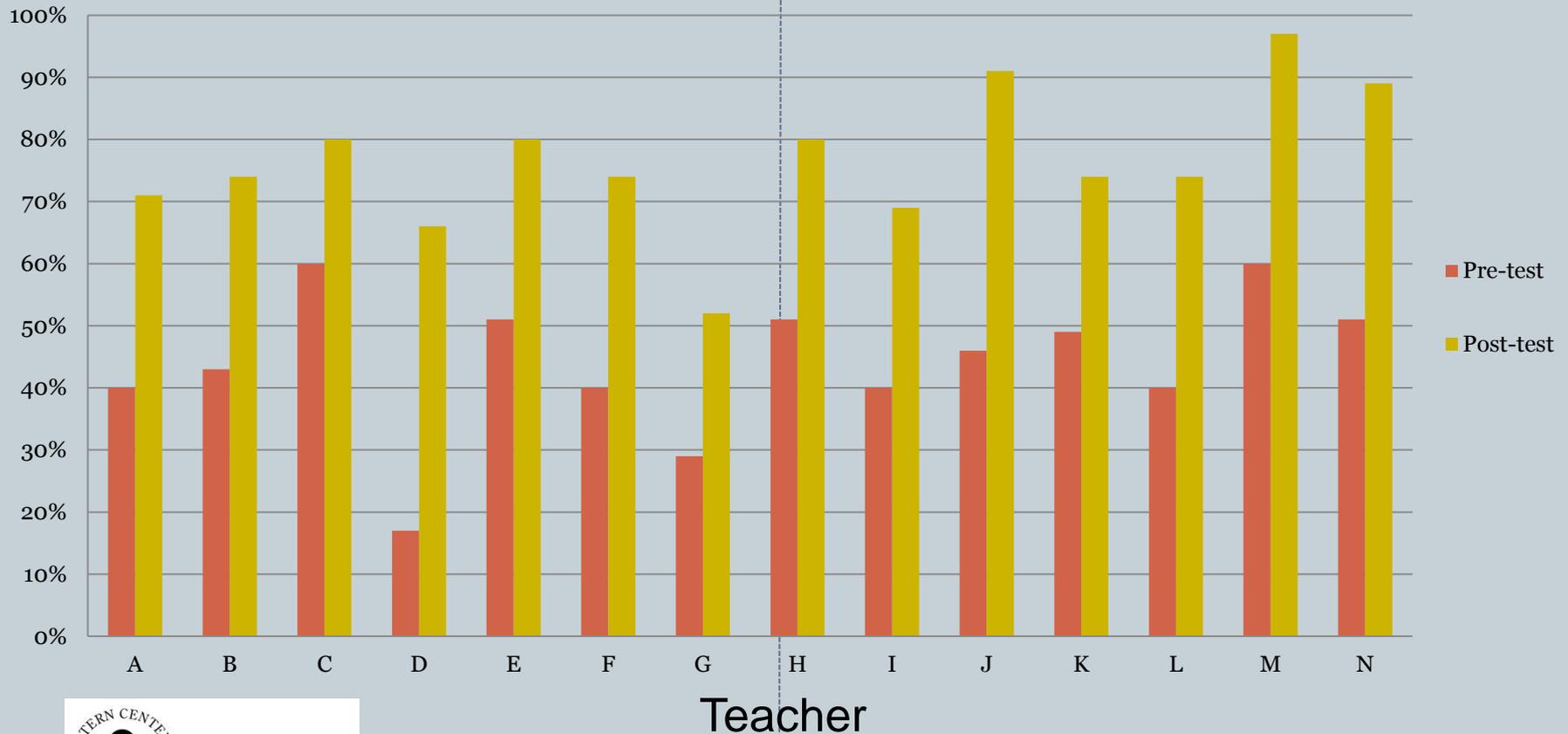
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Syllable types
- Word origin
- Research on decoding, fluency, and comprehension



# O-G Increases Teacher Knowledge



## Percentage Correct on Teacher Knowledge Inventory Test



# How is O-G being integrated into the classroom?



## Whole Group: (tier 1)

- 45 minute -1 hour daily lessons 4-5x a week

## Small Group: (tier 2)

- Focused Instructional Time (FIT)
- Cross-class, flexible grouping
- 30 min 4-5x a week

## Special Education Support: (tier 3)

- Support during whole group instruction
- Pull-out small group and 1:1 instruction



# Challenges and Solutions

## 1. Scheduling

- Reading and small group after whole group lessons
- Only 30 min a day? Break lesson in  $\frac{1}{2}$  across two days
  - ✦ 4 days = 2 complete O-G lessons
- Combination of whole group and small group for O-G lesson
- Start small and really build lesson routines
  - ✦ Do not try to teach a whole O-G lesson to 20 students on the first day.

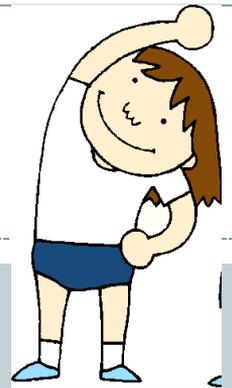
# Challenges and Solutions

## 2. Behavior management

- Clear signals for each part of lesson:
  - ✦ visual and auditory signals
- Let your students help you:
  - ✦ “Table managers”
  - ✦ “Student teacher” writing on overhead
  - ✦ Design materials in your O-G lesson that students can take out and put away
- *Incredibly clear, explicit directions*
- Class-wide token economy/ reinforcement



# Challenges and Solutions



## 3. Transitions

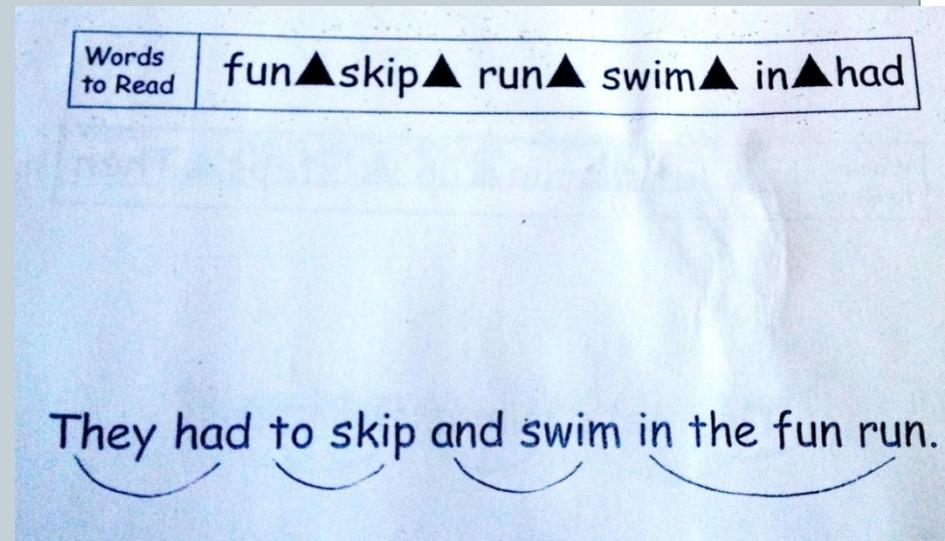
- Build in movement (e.g., carpet to table), stretch breaks
- Rearrange lesson order for efficiency
  - ✦ Keep all pencil and paper writing activities together (e.g. auditory drill, SOS, learned words, sentence dictation)
  - ✦ Keep all writing within a single lesson organized on one sheet of paper

# Challenges and Solutions

## 4. Differentiated instruction within whole class

### O-G lessons

- Oral Reading
- Sorting word activity (“backpack”)
  - ✦ Differentiate words
- Sentence dictation
  - ✦ Struggling students
  - ✦ Early finishers
- Use your paraeducators!



# Benefits

Now the classroom teacher...

1. Has tools to remediate struggling readers *immediately* within the general education classroom
2. Can reinforce O-G strategies and concepts throughout the school day, outside of the O-G lesson
  - Struggling students often don't generalize strategies across contexts and content areas
3. Better error analysis
  - Differentiate reading and writing instruction
4. Understands the rationale and flexibility to use O-G in conjunction with other school-wide literacy

programs

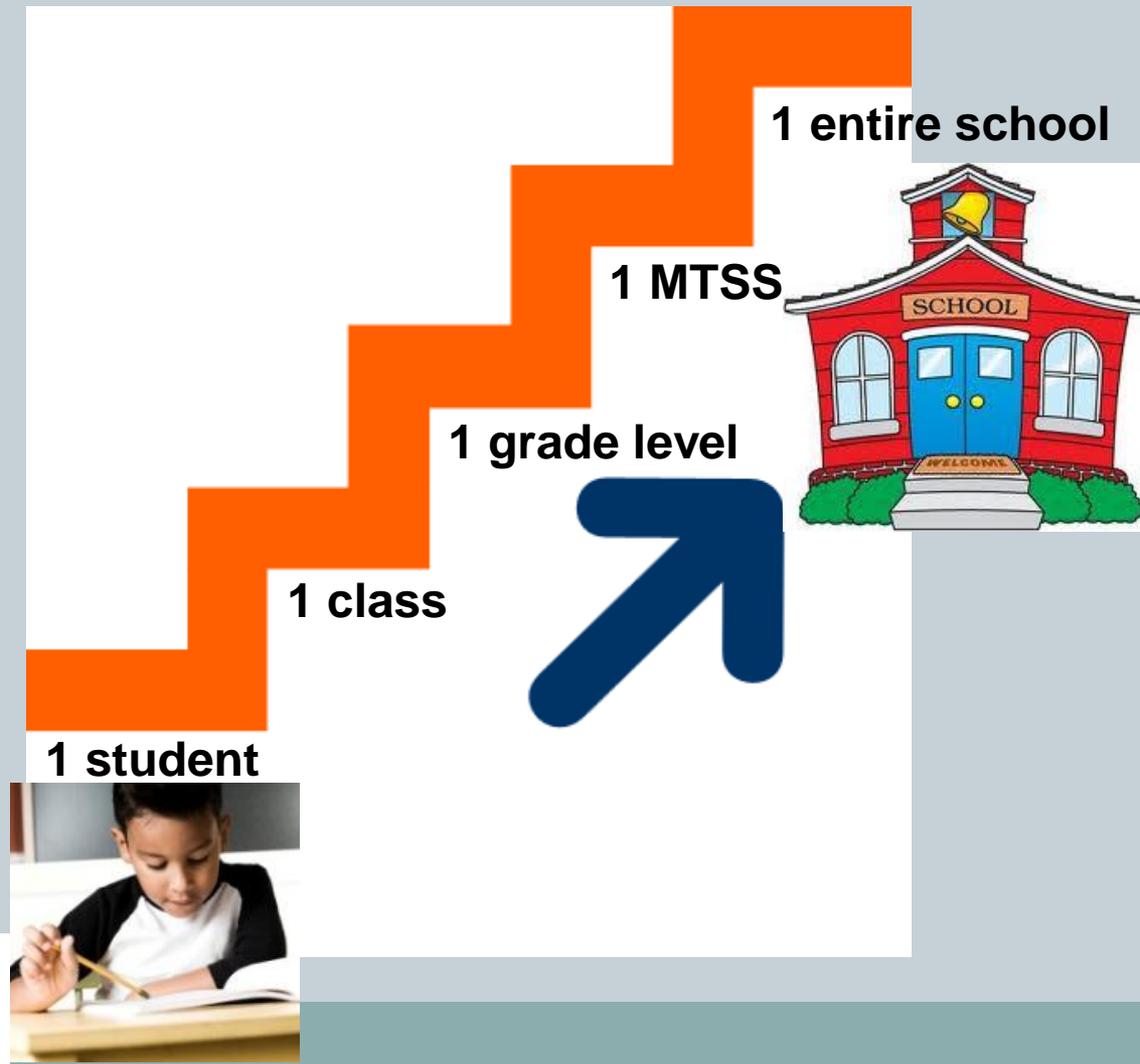
# Unanticipated Results



- Improved teacher satisfaction
- Heightened teacher introspection
- Change in school culture
  - Increased collaboration
  - Increased opportunities for paraeducators
- Contagiousity
  - Other teachers
  - School administration



# Micro to Macro Change



# Caution



- Whole group O-G instruction will not be the solution for all students.
- Many students will require 1:1, intensive, individualized instruction
  - ✦ These students will still benefit from being in an O-G class because it helps reinforce skills being taught in tier 3



# Extra Caution



- Proficiency and fidelity develop during the course of the practicum.
- **The practicum is where it's at.**





# Testimonials



"I see my first graders talking to themselves as they read, asking themselves if a word is a closed or open syllable. Parents stop me in the hallways and at parent teacher conferences to ask about the linguistic terms their first graders are discussing at home, such as digraphs and syllable types! We aren't even half way through the school year and I see progress on my students' AIMS Web scores!"

***~Jean Foss-Pratt, first grade teacher***



# Testimonials



"I am working with a small group of third grade students who are not receiving any special-education services, but were identified last June as struggling readers. If I did not have this training and practicum, these four students would not be receiving this crucial support. They look forward to our O-G lessons, as do I! O-G has given me great insight into my students' strengths and weaknesses in a way I wouldn't have the opportunity to see in my daily classroom instruction. What I have found the most beneficial is that I can remind them to use the strategies from our small group O-G lessons throughout the school day, when they are in writers' workshop, reading, etc. I am reinforcing O-G all day long!"

***~Corrine Gardiner, third grade teacher***



# Testimonials



It should be "OMG" not "OG" because it works! Top 5 things I love about this training:

1. It's ongoing; not a one shot.
2. There's accountability, on both ends. Peggy is quite the taskmaster. She expects commitment, excellence, and organization. Conversely, she gives you 110% support, excellent feedback, like to call her "The Little General." Her feedback is wildly helpful- not hurtful.
3. Early Intervention! This could be started in Kindergarten, in class!
4. K/1 and 2/3 Training Perfect for continuum and collaboration and support.
5. It makes learning accessible to kids, who have historically gone on through school thinking themselves as not smart and unable to learn or worse, dropping out.

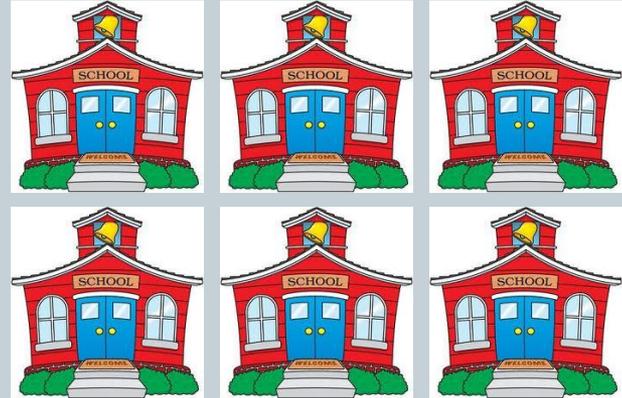
*~Paulette Fiorentino-Robinson, K-1st grade teacher*

# Looking Ahead



- District-wide training for:

- general education
- special education
- support staff



- How can we improve collaboration and consistency across grade level and within all levels of MTSS?

- How can we improve teacher education?

- IDA's Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading:

<http://www.interdys.org/ewebeditpro5/upload/KPSJul2013.pdf>

# Final Note



“What we need instead of one well-grounded, teacher-proof method is a universe of **well-grounded, method-proof teachers.**”

~Miriam Balmuth



# Questions? Thoughts?



Contact Peggy Price at [PPrice@sterncenter.org](mailto:PPrice@sterncenter.org)



[www.sterncenter.org](http://www.sterncenter.org)

