



Fidelity Statement

Reading by Design

Region 4 Education Service Center's dyslexia intervention, *Reading by Design: An Individualized Reading Intervention*, is a systematic, multisensory approach aligned with research-based practices for developing literacy and is designed for students with basic reading difficulties, such as dyslexia. This intervention follows an intensive, explicit, and cumulative design for remediation of reading and writing skills at all grade levels.

Implementation of *Reading by Design* with fidelity is critical to the success of students. Fidelity of implementation is defined in *The Dyslexia Handbook* as "the commitment to implement a program, practice, or service as the designers or developers of the program intended." (Texas Education Agency 2018, 135)

The Dyslexia Handbook also states, "...because effective intervention requires highly structured and systematic delivery, it is critical that those who provide intervention for students with dyslexia be trained in the program used and that the program is implemented with fidelity." (Texas Education Agency 2018, 42)

Student progress should also be considered. Progress monitoring should include measuring and recording growth. Decisions about student placement and increasing intensity of program participation should be made by the Section 504 or Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) Committee.

Reading by Design Fidelity Components:

- I. Groups meet 4 to 5 days per week.
- II. Groups meet for 30–45 minutes per session.
- III. Groups should not exceed six students in elementary settings and eight students in secondary settings.
- IV. Teachers must be trained by a regional education service center to utilize the program. They could also receive training from a trainer certified by Region 4 who is in good standing.

Fidelity Component Research:

I. Groups meet 4 to 5 days per week.

*Reading instruction must be delivered with great intensity. Optimally, a child who is struggling to read should be in a group no larger than four to five students with an instructor. The child should receive this specialized reading instruction **4 to 5 days** a week. A larger group will greatly undermine the possibility of success, since they will have far fewer opportunities to interact with their teacher and therefore will often lose interest or attention during the long pauses between being called on. (Shaywitz 2020, 282; *The Dyslexia Handbook* 2018, 50)*

II. Groups meet for 30–45 minutes per session.

Although the amount of instructional intervention a student requires to make progress varies, research suggests the following ranges for elementary students:

Length and frequency of intervention: 30–120 minutes per day. Secondary students who struggle with reading might need more time in intensive intervention to make progress. (Vaughn et al. 2012)

III. Groups should have a maximum number of six students in elementary settings and eight students in secondary settings.

*Reading instruction must be delivered with great intensity. Optimally, a child who is struggling to read should be in a group **no larger than four to five students with an instructor**. (Shaywitz 2020, 282; *The Dyslexia Handbook* 2018, 50)*

Research shows smaller teacher-to-student ratios (such as 1:3) are more effective than large groups (such as 1:10). (Vaughn and Linan-Thompson 2003; *The Dyslexia Handbook* 2018, 49)

IV. Teachers must be trained by a regional educational service center to utilize the program. They could also receive training from a trainer certified by Region 4 and is currently in good standing.

*In addition, because effective intervention requires highly structured and systematic delivery, it is critical that those who provide intervention for students with dyslexia be **trained in the program** used and that the program is implemented with fidelity. (Texas Education Agency 2018, 42)*

*Professional practitioners, including **teachers or therapists**, should have had specific **preparation in the prevention and remediation of language-based reading and writing difficulties**. Teachers and therapists should be able to state and provide documentation of their credentials in the prevention and remediation of language-based reading and writing difficulties, including program-specific training recommended for the use of specific programs. (International Dyslexia Association 2009; Texas Education Agency 2018, 52)*

*In order to provide effective intervention, school districts are encouraged to employ **highly trained individuals** to deliver dyslexia instruction. Teachers, such as reading specialists, master reading teachers, general education classroom teachers, or special education teachers, who provide dyslexia intervention for students are not required to hold a specific license or certification. However, these educators must **at a minimum have additional documented dyslexia training** aligned to 19 TAC §74.28(c) and **must deliver the instruction with fidelity**. (Texas Education Agency 2018, 43)*

Additional Guidance from *The Dyslexia Handbook*:

Shaywitz outlines the following essentials for a successful reading intervention and effective early intervention program:

One of the most common errors in teaching a child with dyslexia to read is to withdraw prematurely instruction that seems to be working. Dyslexia is a lifelong condition and requires ongoing intervention and support to ensure that not only the child's accuracy, but also their fluency improves enough that they are reading accurately as well as rapidly and with good prosody. CAUTION: A child who is reading accurately but not fluently at grade level still requires intensive reading instruction. (The Dyslexia Handbook 2005, 50; Shaywitz 2020, 282–283)

49. What does Texas require in terms of scheduling standard protocol dyslexia instruction?

Scheduling of standard protocol dyslexia instruction is a local district decision. School districts and charter schools should consider the impact of standard protocol dyslexia instruction occurring when required core curriculum is being provided. While scheduling can be difficult, school districts and charter schools should maintain recommended program intensity. The Section 504 or ARD committee, as appropriate, must participate in scheduling decisions. (Texas Education Agency 2018, 89)

51. May a dyslexia program be delivered in a manner that is different from the way it was designed?

No. A dyslexia program must be delivered in accordance with the way the program was designed to be delivered. Therefore, when a district or charter school has purchased a program, the amount of time for instruction/intervention reflected in the author's/publisher's program mandates the amount of time required to deliver the instruction. (Texas Education Agency 2018, 89)

Virtual Instruction Guidance

*Although teaching dyslexia intervention lessons in a virtual environment is not ideal, students must receive intervention regardless of their current setting. Furthermore, *The Dyslexia Handbook* outlines the standards for implementation of dyslexia intervention programs with fidelity. The criteria for Standard Protocol Dyslexia Instruction are listed as:*

- *“evidence-based and effective for students with dyslexia;*
- *taught by an appropriately trained instructor; and*
- *implemented with fidelity.” (Texas Education Agency 2018, 39)*

Please note that the introduction to new material from *Reading by Design* is only possible with the explicit, systematic instruction from an appropriately trained instructor. Fidelity of instruction necessitates teacher and student interaction for active engagement of the student and immediate feedback and progress monitoring from the teacher. Therefore, when teaching *Reading by Design* lessons remotely, every effort should be made to maintain the fidelity of the lesson through live sessions on virtual platforms and, when necessary, incorporating the use of digital tools to provide multisensory and engaging lessons.

Recorded lessons, including recordings of teachers using the reading deck, are not recommended since the necessary interaction with students would be missing, therefore nullifying the fidelity of the program.

For additional information, please contact your regional education service center or e-mail R4Dyslexia@esc4.net.

References

- The International Dyslexia Association. 2009. *Position Statement: Dyslexia Treatment Programs*. Retrieved from [http://dyslexiaida.org/EWEBEDITPRO5/UPLOAD/IDA_POSITION_STATEMENT_DYSLEXIA_TREATMENT_PROGRAMS_TEMPLATE\(1\).PDF](http://dyslexiaida.org/EWEBEDITPRO5/UPLOAD/IDA_POSITION_STATEMENT_DYSLEXIA_TREATMENT_PROGRAMS_TEMPLATE(1).PDF)
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