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Incorporating Technology with Response to Intervention by Jim Wheelin

Article published on February 23rd 2012 | Education

School teachers and administrators employ many different strategies in an effort to bring the best possible education to each student. The modern response to intervention (RTI) method is designed to monitor student progress and provide proper differentiated or individualized instruction as necessary for academic success. When it comes to potentially difficult subjects such as math, having technological tools including virtual manipulatives and online games can make it easier to implement this complex teaching model.

Intense Adaptive Instruction

One of the hallmarks of response to intervention is differentiated instruction. Depending on where and how much a student is struggling, it may be necessary to tailor his or her educational experience to better address difficulties. To that end, RTI employs three tiers, each designed to focus instruction based on student performance and progress. Sometimes labeled as Benchmark, Strategic, and Intensive, each tier involves progressively more concentrated instruction, ranging from the classroom level to one-on-one instruction conducted outside of a classroom setting. Online games and learning tools fit right in to this model with a targeted teaching approach based on each individual studentâ€™s learning pace, level of comprehension and need for help. Using these tools can make it easier for teachers to address the individual needs of each student, as the programs are designed to automatically adapt to a childâ€™s personal skill level.

Engaging Virtual Environments

Response to intervention techniques wonâ€™t work at all if the targeted students have a hard time paying attention or simply arenâ€™t interested in learning. Online educational games help to solve this problem by taking difficult subjects such as math and presenting them in ways that are fun and engaging. When teachers can show kids that learning anything, even things that seem hard at first, can be fun, the response is often positive. Games are also beneficial to students whose learning styles make them better suited to an interactive environment. This is ideal for RTI since part of the model involves effectively targeting students in a way that will give them the greatest chance for academic success.

Essential Monitoring Tools for Teachers

In order to place kids in the proper response to intervention tier, teachers need a comprehensive understanding of the skill levels and academic progress of each of their students. Though traditional progress monitoring methods such as benchmark testing are often used to determine tier placement, these can be time consuming and detract from studentsâ€™ overall learning experience. Online tools can automate this process by compiling data on each student in real time and forming detailed reports from the results. Instead of having to individually test every child, teachers can use these virtual reports to monitor their classes and identify at-risk students before they fall too far behind.

Response to intervention is meant to meet the needs of students at every level who require help to succeed academically. Internet-based educational games and progress monitoring tools aid teachers in proper placement of students and can be used to present intense individualized instruction that might not otherwise be possible in the classroom. By incorporating technology into the standard model of instruction, teachers can more easily tailor the day to day learning environment to better serve each student.

Article Source:
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Jim Wheelin writes about many different educational topics for parents, kids and teachers. Lately, he has been on the lookout for learning programs that offer a a response to intervention strategy to support his kids' development. Jim also encourages other to test educational games such as the ones offered at a http://www.dreambox.com/math-intervention.

Article Keywords:
response to intervention

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