Tier 3 DBI Hypothesis Guide

Once you have identified a probable hypothesis, using the ORTII Tier 3 DBI Protocol, use this guide to help you identify: (1) additional data you can collect to confirm or disconfirm your hypothesis, and (2) instructional adaptations linked to your hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: The intervention curriculum is not fully aligned with the student's needs. **2**
Hypothesis 2: The instruction is not explicit enough. **3**
Hypothesis 3: The dosage of the instruction is not sufficient. **4**
Hypothesis 4: The student is not transferring skills learned in the intervention to other environments. **5**
Hypothesis 5: The student has behavior needs that are not supported in some settings. **6**

This hypothesis guide has been adapted from the Data-Based Individualization Hypothesis Development Tool from the National Center on Intensive Intervention.

Hypothesis 1:

The intervention curriculum is not fully aligned with the student's needs.

Data to Collect: A lack of progress may indicate that the intervention is not well aligned with the student's skill needs. Consider the following data collection activities to inform decisions about improving the alignment of the intervention:

- Conduct error analysis or informal diagnostic assessments (e.g., phonics inventory or intervention placement test) to identify specific skill needs.
- Review intervention and core curriculum to determine if the skills targeted in the intervention and small groups match the skills the student needs to master.
- Review language acquisition data (for multilingual learners) to determine if lack of progress is related to English language development.
- Assess behavior/social-emotional needs (if needed).

Summary of collected data:

Next Steps: If data show that the intervention ***is aligned with the needs of the student***, review Hypothesis 2: Explicit Instruction. If data show that the intervention ***is not aligned with the needs of the student***, adapt the intervention using one or more of the following strategies.

Suggested Adaptations

- Increase instructional time in the target skill(s).
- Place the student at a different level in the current intervention program.
- Supplement the intervention program with additional materials.
- Ensure instruction at the right level of the instructional hierarchy.
- Use an alternative intervention program that addresses the student's needs more fully.
- For multilingual learners, enhance language support in the intervention.

Resources

Literacy Sample Lessons to Support Intensifying Intervention
Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Multilingual Learners: Using Culturally and Linguistically Aligned Practices (see PLUSS framework p. 4)

Hypothesis 2:

The instruction is not explicit enough.

Data to Collect: Explicit instruction that includes modeling and guided practice is critical for students with intensive needs. Students who have not yet acquired a skill may need more explicit instruction, with increased modeling, guided practice, and feedback. Consider the following data collection activities to inform decisions about improving the explicitness of the intervention:

- Observe the student during intervention and core reading for:
  - Amount of modeling and guided practice provided by the instructor
  - Use of consistent routines and teacher language across instruction
  - Number of opportunities to respond (OTRs) (ideally 6-12 opportunities per minute)
  - Amount of immediate corrective feedback that the teacher provides
- Assess behavior/social-emotional needs (if needed)

Summary of collected data:

Next Steps: If data show that the teacher **is providing sufficiently explicit instruction,** review Hypothesis 3: Dosage**.** If data show that the instruction **is not explicit enough**, adapt the intervention using one or more of the following strategies.

Suggested Adaptations

- Provide additional modeling and guided practice.
- Use simple, direct language
- Break lesson sections into smaller, simpler chunks.
- Increase the number of opportunities to respond during the intervention.
- Increase the use of specific and immediate corrective feedback.
- Use visual aides, graphic organizers, manipulatives, and other scaffolds.

Resources

Features of Explicit Instruction Self-Paced Module
Features of Explicit Instruction Course Content

Hypothesis 3:

The dosage of the instruction is not sufficient.

Data to Collect: Dosage refers to the number of opportunities the student has to respond to instruction and receive feedback from the teacher. Research suggests students who struggle to retain a skill may benefit from increased opportunities to respond to instruction and receive immediate corrective feedback. Consider the following data collection activities to inform decisions about improving the dosage of the intervention:

- Observe the student during intervention and core reading for:
  - Number of opportunities to respond (OTRs) (ideally 6-12 opportunities per minute)
  - Amount of immediate corrective feedback that the teacher provides
- Review total intervention or instructional time spent on target skills
- Assess behavior/social-emotional needs (if needed)

Summary of collected data:

Next Steps: If data show that the **dosage of the intervention is sufficient,** review Hypothesis 4: Attention to Transfer**.** If data show that the **dosage of the intervention *is not* sufficient**, adapt the intervention using one or more of the following strategies.

Suggested Adaptations

- Increase student opportunities to respond (OTRs) during intervention.
- Increase minutes per intervention session or frequency of sessions.
- Decrease the group size.
- Embed additional practice and feedback throughout the day.
- Individualize behavior and social-emotional supports (if needed)

Resources

Strategies for Scheduling: How to Find Time to Intensify and Individualize Intervention
Self-Paced Features of Explicit Instruction Course (see Module 2)
Assessment of Use of Opportunities to Respond

Hypothesis 4:

The student is not transferring skills learned in the intervention to other environments.

Data to Collect: When the student demonstrates success in the intervention but has difficulty applying skills in other settings, it may be a transfer issue. In this case the teacher may need to support the student with applying the skill across settings. Consider the following data collection activities to inform decisions about improving the dosage of the intervention:

- Review specific actions taken to increase transfer and generalization of skills across setting
- Observe the student outside of the intervention for:
  - Number of opportunities to respond (OTRs)
  - Amount of immediate corrective feedback that the teacher provides
  - Alignment of routines and teacher language across settings
- Interview teachers to determine common understanding of student needs and routines

Summary of collected data:

Next Steps: If data show that the **support for transfer is sufficient**, review Hypothesis 5: Behavior Support. If data show that the **support for transfer *is not* sufficien**t, adapt the intervention using one or more of the following strategies.

Suggested Adaptations

- Align instructional routines and language across tiers.
- Explicitly teach students when and how to use learned strategies across the day.
- Provide visual scaffolds to help students apply skills across environments.
- Embed guided practice on target skills in core instruction and other environments.
- Individualize behavior and social-emotional supports (if needed)

Resources

Self Assessment of Generalization Practices

Hypothesis 5:

The student has behavior needs that are not supported in some settings.

Data to Collect: When the student is making progress in intervention but having difficulty in other settings, it may be that the student has behavioral needs that are not supported in those settings. Observe classroom management and instruction across settings to identify the following::

- Use of effective classroom management strategies
- Student engagement and time on task
- Antecedents and consequences of behavior
- Possible function of student's behavior

Summary of collected data:

Next Steps: Based on the data, consider adapting the intervention using one or more of the following strategies.

Suggested Adaptations

- Increase the use of effective classroom management strategies (e.g., clear expectations, routines and procedures, specific praise).
- Adjust the setting (e.g., change a student's seat, use small-group instruction).
- Use reinforcers to acknowledge the student's use of appropriate behavior.
- Add behavior management strategies based on the function of the student's behavior.

Resources

Behavior Strategies to Support Intensifying Intervention
Behavior Support for Intensive Intervention Course Content
Classroom Management Strategies to Support All Learners