SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES
UNIT 15
INTERVENTIONS FOR LITERACY SKILLS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Trainees will:

- Understand the key points for effective teaching of basic literacy skills
- Understand how interventions for pupils who find learning literacy skills difficult should be designed
- Understand the issues of intensity and frequency in delivering interventions effectively
- Know how to judge the effectiveness of literacy interventions
- Know how pupils with literacy difficulties could be supported in the general classroom.

ONLINE RESOURCES
The content and tasks throughout these PDFs are supported by online resources that are designed to facilitate and supplement your training experience.

Links to these are signposted where appropriate. The resources use graphics and interactive elements to:

- Highlight salient points
- Provide at-a-glance content summaries
- Introduce further points of interest
- Offer visual context
- Break down and clearly present the different stages and elements of processes, tasks, practices, and theories

The online resources offer great benefits, both for concurrent use alongside the PDFs, or as post-reading revision and planning aids.

Please note that the resources cannot be used in isolation without referencing the PDFs. Their purpose is to complement and support your training process, rather than lead it.

You should complete any learning or teaching tasks and additional reading detailed in this PDF to make full use of the Advanced training materials for autism; dyslexia; speech, language and communication; emotional, social and behavioural difficulties; moderate learning difficulties.

To find out more about the resources, how they work, and how they can enhance your training, visit the homepage at: www.education.gov.uk/lamb

The first resource for this unit can be found here:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/intro

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER
Whilst there has been a great deal of research into the outcomes of specific interventions, there has also been research into the teacher characteristics that are associated with the best pupil outcomes. The quality of the delivery of a programme is much more important in explaining outcomes than the content of the programme itself. The more skilled the teacher, the better pupil outcomes will be. The greater the pupil's difficulties the more skilled the teacher needs to be (Brooks 2007).

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/quality-teaching

Snow and Juel (2005) identify several effective teacher practices regarding teaching reading:
- Spending more time on academic tasks
- Making learning goals clear
- Providing feedback to students
- Maintaining a warm, co-operative atmosphere
- Responding to individual differences among pupils with individualised amounts and kinds of instruction
- Responding with explicit instruction to children in need
- Promoting independent reading
- Organising lively engaging discussions about texts being read
- Holding pupils accountable for reading with meaning
- Asking open ended questions
- Holding high expectations

TEACHING READING
The teaching of reading must take into account the simple view of reading (Hoover and Gough 1990). See unit 1 for details. This view states that to be a good reader a pupil must be able to both decode the words and understand the meaning of the text. Thus both aspects must be taught. In unit 1 you learned that decoding depends upon phonological skills, and comprehension upon language skills. Teaching decoding skills will be addressed first in this unit.

The first step in learning to read in English is acquiring the alphabetic principle (see unit 1). Practically this means learning how speech sounds map onto

letters, in schools this is the learning of 'phonics'. This is the learning that dyslexic pupils usually find most difficult. Brooks (2007) says

> 'systematic phonics teaching within a broad and rich language curriculum enables both normally developing children and those at risk of failure to make better progress in reading accuracy (word identification) than unsystematic or no phonics teaching.' Pp27

A good phonics programme is synthetic, structured, sequential and cumulative, with a focus on learning through multisensory methods at all ages.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/good-phonics-programmes

Synthetic phonics refers to the method for teaching word reading in which sounds (phonemes) associated with particular letters (graphemes) are pronounced in isolation and blended together (or synthesized) in order to read (decode) words. Synthetic phonics for writing reverses this sequence. Children learn to say the word they wish to write, segment it into phonemes, say them in turn and then write a grapheme for each phoneme and thus spell (encode) the word. See the DfE materials below for further information regarding good quality synthetic phonics programmes.

Here are some examples of phonics programmes that are commonly used to teach beginners in literacy in UK primary schools:
- Letters and sounds (DCSF)
- Jolly Phonics (Jolly learning)
- Read write inc (Oxford University press)

There are of course many published schemes some which aim to address the needs of pupils experiencing specific difficulties, for example: Alpha to omega, Toe by toe, Sound linkage, RAPID and Literacy acceleration. Many of these published programmes are discussed in the document 'What works for pupils with literacy difficulties?' (Brooks 2007). This gives an idea of which programmes are thought to effective. This document is now available at the website listed at the end of the unit and is currently being updated.

ACTIVITY 1

Collect information regarding which published schemes are being used in your schools to support pupils with literacy difficulties. Look the programme up in Brooks' (2007) document. Are the programmes you are using known to be effective? What evidence do you have at school level that the programme is effective (school pupil data)? Make notes in your learning log.

Schools should take care to ensure that any phonics teaching scheme that they use is approved by the DfE. The DfE has published the following set of criteria regarding phonics programmes:

'The programme should:

1. present high quality systematic, synthetic phonic work as the prime approach to decoding print, i.e. a phonics 'first and fast' approach

2. enable children to start learning phonic knowledge and skills using a systematic, synthetic programme by the age of five, with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of key stage one

3. be designed for the teaching of discrete, daily sessions progressing from simple to more complex phonic knowledge and skills and covering the major grapheme/phoneme correspondences

4. enable children's progress to be assessed

5. use a multi-sensory approach so that children learn variously from simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities which are designed to secure essential phonic knowledge and skills

6. demonstrate that phonemes should be blended, in order, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading

7. demonstrate how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending phonemes to read words

8. ensure children apply phonic knowledge and skills as their first approach to reading and spelling even if a word is not completely phonically regular

9. ensure that children are taught high frequency words that do not conform completely to grapheme/phoneme correspondence rules

10. provide fidelity to the teaching framework for the duration of the programme, to ensure that these irregular words are fully learnt

11. ensure that as pupils move through the early stages of acquiring phonics, they are invited to practise by reading texts which are entirely decodable for them, so that they experience success and learn to rely on phonemic strategies'

This list is taken from the DfE website listed at the end of the unit. You should note that fidelity to any programme used is important since taking a 'mix and match' approach can lead to muddled sequences of learning and insufficient

rehearsal. This has the consequence of potentially diluting the effectiveness of a programme.

If you work in a primary school, find out what phonics teaching programme is used in your school. Go to the DfE website listed below and see if it is an approved programme.

When a pupil struggles to acquire literacy skills despite a thorough phonics based programme, individualised interventions should be considered. Individualised in this context does not imply one-to-one teaching, but a planned approach to teaching based on careful assessment (see units 2 and 4 of this module). This planned approach is likely to include small group or one-to-one intervention but would *always* include modified approaches in the broader classroom setting. Since no one programme or strategy works for everyone (Brooks and Weeks 1999, Brooks 2007), it is essential to begin with thorough assessment of the strengths and difficulties of an individual pupil experiencing difficulties. Any teaching and learning strategies then introduced would aim to both build on strengths and work on weaknesses. See units 2 and 4 for guidance on assessing reading and spelling.

Teaching pupils to read irregular words is also of vital importance in English since 'sounding out' only allows decoding of about 60% of any text (Vousden, 2008). In the programme Read Write Inc. these 'tricky' words are coloured red in early reading books and presented on pale red flash cards. This helps to ensure that pupils know when not to use phonics to decode a word. Teachers should also seek to ensure that pupils are aware that some words can be fully phonically decoded and some cannot. Obviously what counts as an irregular word will depend upon what letter sound correspondences the pupil knows. If the pupil does not know 'ow', then a word such as 'down' will be temporarily irregular.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/irregular-words

TARGET SETTING
After assessment the first step should be agreeing appropriate targets with the pupil and parents. All those who work with the pupil should be aware of targets. Targets set should be SMART (specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and time limited); you should decide exactly what the pupil will be learning and by when, and the target should be possible for the pupil to achieve given your knowledge of their learning. SMART targets direct teaching well. Here are some examples.

SMART	NOT SMART
By (date) Noah will be able to pick out the correct wooden letter when prompted with its sound, from the following group: a, e, i, o, u (all short vowel sounds).	Joe will learn all his letter sounds.
By half term Karim will be able to blend to read cvc words containing the following letters: s, n, t, a, p, i. Accurate to 8/10 offered.	Oliver will develop more confidence in reading and be willing to 'have a go' at a new book.
By the end of this week, William will be able to spell the root word 'play' and add suffixes correctly to make played, plays and playing.	Abdul's reading age will improve by 6 months.
By the end of this week Jill will be able to read 8 out of the following 10 high frequency words offered, without a prompt: was, said, she, he, go, is, they, the, my, are.	Jane will be able to read a level three book.

ACTIVITY 2

1. Show the targets from the table above to a colleague. Discuss the targets and agree what is missing from the targets which are not SMART.
2. Now select targets written for a small group of pupils with literacy difficulties in your school. Examine them carefully and decide whether any changes should be made to make them 'SMARTer'.
3. Plan how you will share this understanding with other colleagues.

THE PRINCIPLES OF LITERACY INTERVENTION

'Ordinary teaching (no intervention) does not enable children with literacy difficulties to catch up', Brooks (2007) pp 31.

The aim of all teaching is to reduce cognitive demand (the amount of effort you have to put in) by achieving automaticity (being able to do something almost without thinking about it). Precision teaching (described below) is one good way of achieving this. Learning should always be planned in a sensible sequence that gradually builds skills. Learning should be cumulative; the teacher does not 'drop' rehearsal of skills or knowledge until she is satisfied that it has become automatic; each step builds upon and includes previous learning. The best learning occurs when experiences are multisensory; they involve hearing, seeing and touching.

Teaching should focus on phonological skills to improve reading accuracy, but phonics based approaches work best when embedded within a broad

approach (Brooks 2007). This broad approach should address phonic teaching alongside reading for meaning, writing (spelling) and irregular word learning.

The following principles of good practice are identified by Carroll et al (2011):

1. *Little and often:*
   Pupils learn best when they are taught in short sessions and often, this ensures that learning is revised regularly and that knowledge is applied in new contexts.
2. *Use all your senses:*
   Pupils learn most effectively when they use all their senses; teach new concepts through sight, hearing, speaking and feeling.
3. *Avoid learning confusion:*
   Teach one thing at a time – one letter, word or skill. Two items learned at the same time are more likely to be confused later.
4. '*Shape' complex behaviour*
   Move from simple to complex in a series of steps. Model the behaviour yourself and provide prompts to encourage the behaviour. Praise the pupil for gradual movement towards a learning goal.
5. *Encourage 'deep' learning*
   Encourage pupils to work out rules for themselves, and support them in correcting their own errors. Give examples and encourage pupils to work out the rules.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/good-practice

ACTIVITY 3

After reading through the discussion above create a checklist for examining the quality of literacy interventions. Now with a colleague look at the planning for a reading intervention used in your school and check the approaches used against your checklist. If possible observe the intervention being taught. Make a judgement about the quality of the intervention using your checklist, observation and records of pupil outcomes. How will you ensure that all literacy interventions in your school are best quality?

PRECISION TEACHING APPROACHES
Precision Teaching is a method developed in the 1960s, at Harvard University, by Ogden Lindsley (Lindsley, 1990). It grew out of the tradition of behaviourism. A timer, record charts and self-monitoring are some of the crucial components of Precision Teaching, a method which stresses the need for the learner to become automatic, fluent and effortless in what he does.

Precision Teaching offers tools for practice to the point of fluency, criterion-referenced assessment, and decision-making.

ACCURACY + SPEED = FLUENCY

An example of precision teaching used to increase sight vocabulary recognition:

1. Provide the learner with a set of 10-15 target words on cards. The choice of targets should be carefully made, ensuring success early on.
2. Set the timer to 20 seconds
3. Pupil reads the words aloud to the teacher. If the word is unknown it is put to one side.
4. When the timer sounds, reading stops and the number of words read in the time allowed is recorded on the chart.
5. The result is compared to the session goal. If the goal has not been reached the timer is reset and reading begins again.
6. When the session goal is reached the pupil is praised.
7. Records of performance over time are kept so the pupil can compare and celebrate their learning.

Precision teaching complements the learning that goes on in any session. It is a way of developing fluency; the quick and accurate recall of the required information. It can be used for all curriculum areas. In the context of literacy skill building it could easily be used to rehearse letter sounds, sight words and spellings that are known but the pupil would benefit from fluent and speedy recall of them. There are many websites that offer ready made precision teaching 'probes' (record sheets relating to specific activities).

See online resource:

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/precision-teaching

ACTIVITY 4

1. Following your work in unit 2 on assessing pupils experiencing difficulties with reading, identify a pupil and set up a precision teaching activity like the one described above. Keep careful records of this intervention for daily sessions over at least 2 weeks.
2. Analyse your results.
3. Show a group of colleagues how to set up a precision teaching activity.
4. Support your colleagues in monitoring pupil outcomes
5. Discuss the effectiveness of this learning strategy on the pupils concerned and consider how you might use this approach in future.

DEVELOPING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

Some pupils experience difficulties not in decoding the words on the page, but in understanding what message the words are conveying. These pupils could be characterised as experiencing specific difficulties in comprehension. Some pupils with decoding difficulties, including dyslexic pupils, may experience comprehension difficulties as well. Sometimes comprehension difficulties arise because of reduced experience in reading, at other times because of underlying language difficulties. Comprehension skills can be improved if they are directly targeted. Broadly this involves engaging the pupil in collaborative processes around exploring the meaning of a text, exposing pupils to a range of text types and expanding their vocabulary. For pupils with moderate to severe language difficulties underlying their comprehension difficulties it is useful to have advice from a speech and language therapist.

View the video clip entitled 'Interventions to support children with SpLD' for a useful approach to developing reading comprehension in children who struggle to comprehend a text because they have to make a lot of effort to decode the words.

See this clip:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/interventions-video

Another approach is termed reciprocal teaching and was developed by Palinscar and Brown (1984). Reciprocal teaching involves the teacher instructing pupils in the four skills of summarising, questioning, clarifying and predicting. The teacher then models the function of each role, and then group activities such as that below could be embarked upon.

1. Put students in groups of four.
2. Identify each pupil's role.
   a. summariser
   b. questioner
   c. clarifier
   d. predictor
3. Pupils read a few paragraphs of a text. Encourage them to use note-taking strategies such as selective underlining or sticky-notes to help them better prepare for their role in the discussion.
4. At the given stopping point, the summariser will highlight the key ideas up to this point in the reading.
5. The questioner will then pose questions about the text:
   o unclear parts
   o puzzling information
   o connections to other concepts already learned
   o motivations of the agents or actors or characters

o   and so on

The clarifier will address confusing parts and attempt to answer the questions that were just posed.

The predictor can offer guesses about what the author will tell the group next or, if the text is a narrative, the predictor might suggest what the next events will be.

The roles in the group then switch one person to the right, and the next section of text is read.

Pupils repeat the process using their new roles. This continues until the entire text is read.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/reciprocal-teaching

TEACHING SPELLING

No one intervention works for all and this is particularly so in spelling. Spelling is known to improve where pupils are taught a range of strategies and supported in finding out which strategy/ies suit them best. The approaches described below are some examples of strategies supported by research evidence (Brooks and Weeks 1999).

THE SPELLING TOOLKIT:
Phonics first
1. Ask the pupil to write the target spellings.
2. For each word that is wrong, spell out the word using plastic or wooden letters or letters written on small pieces of card.
3. Say each sound in the word such as b-i- g (big), s-t-ay in (stay).
4. Say the whole word.
5. Ask the pupil to say the sounds in the word and the whole word just as you have done.
6. Ask the pupil to write the word.
7. Check it is right.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/phonics-first

Look, cover, write, check
Procedure as follows:
1. Ask the child to write the target spellings
2. For each word that is wrong, write the word correctly. Ask the child to look at it carefully - allow about 10 seconds. Cover the word.
3. Ask the child to write it out.

4. Ask the child to check his/her spelling with the correct spelling and talk about any mistakes.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/look-cover-write-check

Neurolinguistic programming
Procedure as follows:
1. Get the child to think visually. Start this by saying that we all have a camera in our heads which lets us remember things as if a picture was taken. Ask the child to see his/her bedroom in his head. Ask the child to see and tell you details such as where the bed is, the shape of the window, how it opens.....
2. You need only do this "seeing work" the first time.
3. Ask the child to write the spellings for this week.
4. For each word that is wrong, write the word correctly on a piece of paper about A5 size. Hold the word 3 feet in front of the child so he/she can see it, about 1 foot to the left of the child's face and about 1 foot above the child's face.
5. Talk about the word while it's held there - its meaning, its shape, bits that stick up or down (e.g. like long),words that are in the word (like or in word) beginnings or ends of the word (like playing).
6. Ask the child to write the word and check it is right.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/neurolinguistic-programming

There is a procedure called 'magical spelling' which uses a similar technique but includes the use of colour, see the website at the end of this chapter for further details.

Simultaneous oral spelling
For 'teacher' in this activity it could be a parent helper, study buddy or teaching assistant. Each would have to be trained how to support correctly.
1. Ask the pupil to write the target spellings
2. For each word that is wrong, the teacher writes the word correctly; saying each letter name as it is written.
3. Ask the pupil to write the word and say each letter's name as it is written.
4. Ask the pupil to say the whole word and check it is right against teachers writing.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/simultaneous-oral-spelling

View the video clip entitled 'Interventions to support children with SpLD' for a version of this approach in action.

See this clip:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/simultaneous-oral-spelling-video

Cued spelling
The speller needs a practice buddy for this approach.

1. Speller chooses word
2. Check right spelling and put in diary
3. Read the word, together and alone
4. Choose cues (what do you notice about the patterns in the word, any rule that might apply, a mnemonic etc)
5. Say cues together
6. Speller says cues. Helper writes word
7. Helper says cues. Speller writes word
8. Speller says cues and writes word
9. Speller writes word *fast*
10. Speller reads word

Remember:
- Helper covers previous tries
- Speller checks own try
- If try is wrong, do step before again.
- Helper praises

Daily speed review
Speller writes *all* words for the day *fast* and checks
Wrong words – do the 10 steps again.

Weekly – Mastery review
Speller writes *all* words for the week *fast* and checks
Decide what to do about wrong words.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/cued-spelling

Mnemonics
1. Ask the pupil to write the target spellings.
2. For each word that is wrong, write the word correctly.
3. Talk through a saying each word of which starts with each of the letters in the spelling. For example, with 'said' we might use the saying *sally anne is dancing.*
4. The pupil repeats and learns the saying to help remember the word's spelling.
5. The pupil then spells the word using the saying.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/mnemonics

Many examples of mnemonics are available on the internet. Sometime pupils enjoy inventing their own.

Own voice
1. Ask the pupil to write the target spellings
2. For each word that is wrong, the pupil records the whole word on a dictaphone or similar, (house), then the individual letter names, not sounds (h-o-u-s-e), and again the whole word (house).
3. The pupil listens to the recording and writes the word again.
4. Pupil and teacher then check the spelling and repeat the process as necessary.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/own-voice

Morpheme training
Children's difficulties with the spelling of many words can be reduced by making them aware of the morphemes that compose the words (Nunes and Bryant 2006).

Making children more aware of morphemes has a positive effect on their vocabulary growth. Teaching about morphemes is also a good strategy to promote spelling and language development in the classroom.

Once a pupil knows basic phonics and can use these to spell regular words it is essential that a good spelling programme then goes on to teach morphological approaches. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in a word. A word such as unforgettable has 3 morphemes un-forget-able, running has 2 run(n)-ing. Words have roots, and affixes: 'run' is the root, 'ing' is the

affix. Words are often morphemically regular even when they are not phonically regular, for example 'magic' and 'magician'.

At present spelling schemes tend to make insufficient reference to using morphemes to spell. Letters and sounds (DSCF) has a small section on morphological spelling in phase 6, its main focus is on inflexional suffixes such as 'ed' and 'ing'. Trainees could view the materials on the Oxford university website listed below for access to additional materials to support teachers when teaching more broadly about morphemes.

Precision teaching approaches
Precision teaching can also be applied to spelling. See the section above.

ACTIVITY 5

Create a file or booklet of information on the spelling toolkit strategies for teachers and teaching assistants in your school. At a short staff meeting demonstrate their use and explain how pupils need to experience them all and be supported in deciding which strategy/ies work well for them. Remember to ask colleagues to evaluate the session and summarise this in your learning log.

Supporting with handwriting difficulties
For younger pupils alongside direct instruction in handwriting including pattern making and attention to writing posture and pencil grip, you could also consider using a scribe, teaching keyboard familiarity and ultimately touch-typing.

See online resources:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/handwriting-support

www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/handwriting-pattern

In general, being able to name a letter seems to prompt a motor memory for writing it. However, overtly verbalising steps to letter formation (handwriting jingles etc) often does not work for students with SEN possibly because it has the effect of overloading the student with things to remember.
See the video clip entitled 'Interventions to support children with SpLD' for some examples of useful multisensory approaches to teaching handwriting and improving fine motor skills with younger pupils.

See this clip:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/handwriting-support-video

Some strategies that you might put into place for older pupils:
- Tape record lessons to reduce the need for note taking
- Teach older pupils to use structured note taking strategies:
    - Leave the right hand margin open for questions, review notes, and text reinforcements
    - Date, number and write the subject at the top of each set of lesson notes
    - Leave the bottom two inches blank for a summary (3-5 key points)
    - Underline headings and questions that you have in different colour(s)
    - Number main points and sub points (e.g. 1 a, b, c … 2 a, b, c….)
    - Leave a lot of white space in order to read notes easily
    - Use pictures, charts and diagrams to illustrate concepts
    - Write at the top of the page what chapter in the textbook responds to the lecture

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/note-taking

Adaptations:
- Note taker
- Get a copy of overheads and lesson PowerPoint's ahead of time
- Dictate/scribe written assignments and tests
- Arrange to write tests with extra time and in a different room
- Use a computer for tests and essays

Whole class strategies to support those finding literacy difficult
Pupils experiencing literacy difficulties will need support across the curriculum and beyond any intervention designed to improve literacy skills. It is vital that class teachers know each individual well: what specific difficulties they have and what support strategies work for them. In a secondary school a 'dyslexia working party' of effected pupils might be set up to help inform teachers about supportive practice.

The following approaches may help.
- Teach subject specific vocabulary and spellings overtly
- Offer alternatives to writing such as:
    - Word processing

- o Writing frames
- o Mind mapping
- o Story boards
- o Graphic organisers
- o Cloze procedure
- o Multiple choice
- o Scribe
- o Discussion
- o 'Use videotaping to record learning activities'
- Break reading tasks up into small chunks, simplify sentences and vocabulary
- Use larger clear fonts on worksheets and presentations (avoid fancy fonts)
- Reduce visual clutter on any worksheets or texts; double line space and ensure that diagrams and tables are clearly separated from text
- Print out homework onto labels so it can be stuck into homework diaries.
- Never force a pupil to read aloud in class, always ask for volunteers
- Where scribes and readers might be used in examinations these should be approaches used in class.
- Allow more time when it is needed

ACTIVITY 6

Now view the video clip 'Supporting SpLD in the general classroom'. Make note of the following:
- How is the lesson structured to support learning?
- How are vocabulary learning and language development supported?
- How is Dani's independence being developed?
- How does the use of ICT support Dani?
- Which of the strategies that are used for Dani benefit other pupils?
- What approaches does this teacher use to encourage all the pupils to improve?
- What steps are used to support Dani when preparing to write?

See this clip:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/spld-support-video

Issues of frequency and regularity
Torgesen (2005) investigated the range of research available regarding outcomes of intervention for pupils with specific difficulties in learning to read.

He found that:
- Interventions were not equally successful with all students, and
- In the majority of cases gains made during intervention were not maintained after the intervention.
- Rate of gain decelerates significantly after the first 12 hours of instruction
- The pupil variables that predicted poor response over time were:
    o Attention difficulties
    o Poorer receptive language skills
    o Lower socio-economic status
- Early intervention (in the first 3 years of schooling) is much more likely to be effective than later intervention
- Ongoing difficulties in reading lead to reduced reading experience, which exacerbates reading difficulties and widens the learning gap between those with reading difficulties and those without.

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/gains-data

'Success with some children with the most severe problems is elusive, and this reinforces that need for skilled, intensive, one-to-one intervention for these children', Brooks (2007) pp 32. This is particularly so for older pupils with severe difficulties. In Torgesen et al's (2001) study of older pupils (10 – 13 year olds) with severe reading difficulties, pupils were given two intervention sessions of 50 minutes every day for eight weeks. Instruction focussed on phonemic awareness and phonic decoding. This approach dramatically increased reading accuracy and comprehension, and gains were maintained for 2 years after the intervention. This demonstrates the level of intensity necessary for success with severely effected older pupils.

Interventions lasting more than one term should be particularly carefully monitored to ensure that pupil gains are maintained and developed.

The gold standard for successful intervention for pupil's experiencing difficulties is daily intervention. Many interventions can be successfully delivered three times per week for those with less severe difficulties. It is always better to deliver intervention a little and often rather than in one or two long sessions.

What constitutes good progress? Ratio gains and doubling…
How should intervention be evaluated and adjusted? It is vital that those who are responsible for interventions select interventions that are known to be

effective. Brooks (2007) presented research evidence that was available at the time regarding a number of different programmes for reading, spelling and comprehension in both primary and secondary aged pupils. There are more programmes available to primary schools, and consequently much less evidence about what works for the secondary age group. Research evidence is also much broader for reading interventions than for spelling/writing or comprehension.

Effectiveness of interventions should always be measured and monitored in school. Standardised tests, monitoring targets and criterion references tests such as APP (assessing pupil progress), spelling tests and SATs can all be used. Perhaps most effective is the use of a standardised test. An increase in standardised score indicates that the gap between the pupil and his or her peers in closing. Tests often give rise to reading 'age' or spelling 'age'. These can be used to calculate 'ratio gain' (RG). Ratio gains can be calculated with the formula:

$$\frac{\text{average reading age in months at post-test} - \text{average reading age in months at pre-test}}{\text{time elapsed in months}}$$

For example:

$$\frac{96 \text{ months} - 81 \text{ months}}{6 \text{ months}}$$

= RG of 2.5 (useful impact)

RG of 4 or above	=	remarkable impact
RG between 3 and 4	=	substantial impact
RG between 2 and 3	=	useful impact
RG between 1.4 and 2	=	modest impact
RG of less than 1.4	=	impact of doubtful educational significance
RG of 1.0	=	exactly standard progress

(Source: Brooks, 2007)

See online resource:
www.education.gov.uk/lamb/spld/literacy-interventions/ratio-gain-calculator

Brooks found that ratio gains of 2 could be achieved with the majority of pupils. This relies on the intervention being a close match to the pupil's needs and teachers having the requisite skills to deliver responsive teaching. Those pupils with the severest need benefit from a 'highly-trained teacher working through an intensive and wide-ranging scheme using powerful ongoing diagnosis based on close observation' (Brooks 2007 pp 32).

ACTIVITY 7

Find out what pupil data is available in your school to support judgements about the effectiveness of literacy interventions. Take a sample of this data and consider if it demonstrates sufficient progress for each pupil. Are there any interventions that do not have the expected impact on pupil outcomes?

Find out why this might be:
- Is the intervention known to be effective with other groups of pupils in your school?
- Is the intervention delivered frequently enough? Do pupils attend well?
- Is there 'fidelity' to the programme? (fidelity: programme is delivered exactly as designed)
- Has the person delivering the programme been trained appropriately?
- Do the pupils in the group have particularly severe or complex needs?

Are there any literacy interventions in place in your school that have no outcome data on effectiveness? If so, how could this data be generated and collected? Make a note in your learning log and discuss the issues you have identified with the SENCO.

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Useful websites
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/a0010240/criteria-for-assuring-high-quality-phonic-work

http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/7/news/32/what-works-for-pupils-with-literacy-difficulties/

http://www.magicalspellinglimited.com/index.htm

http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/research/child-learning/resources-2/ Oxford university website has free resources for teachers to use to help teach spelling using morphemes. These are copyrighted to Terezina Nunes and Peter Bryant.