

RTI Approach & Plan For Intervention

Chelsea Fought

Case Study

Morgan is a three-year-old in a 14 student class in an “elite” kindergarten academy in South Korea. To enter this academy, the students must pass two tests with high scores—one testing their understanding of Korean, and one testing their English capability across reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Morgan entered class with very clear skill with listening and speaking English with his teachers and classmates. While he is gifted in these areas, over the course of the first three months of school, Morgan has displayed behaviors indicating signs of ADHD. These behaviors range from sudden bursts of noise, impatience (more than the average three-year-old typically exhibits), sensory issues, poor impulse control (again, more so than the “typical” three-year-old), and at times he can be aggressive with his teachers and his classmates.

I have been following through on the **behavior management plan** I created previously in Module 4 to try and help him grow behaviorally and emotionally. This is an ongoing effort I have been undertaking with Morgan and the other special class teachers, though little progress has truly been made just yet. Because he has not learned how to self-regulate and curb his impulses even a little, it is evident his skills and abilities are falling behind his peers.

While his classmates' work stamina has continued to grow, Morgan continues to fall behind. He is easily fatigued by the academy's workload, and has trouble working independently. His books and worksheets often get destroyed either literally by being ripped or crumpled, or covered in scribbles. His writing skills have not shown growth in the three months where his peers have grown, and now, he is showing signs of his phonetic skills falling behind the others in the class.

Screening, Observing & Identifying Needs

As Morgan is only three-years-old, and the stigma surrounding ADHD (and many other neurodivergencies) in South Korea is incredibly difficult to navigate, it is unlikely he will be tested, even after he turns four (which is the youngest age that typically children with ADHD may initially get diagnosed).

Using a universal screening method would help create benchmarks for each student in order to track how their skills are developing. This would create data for me to be able to measure Morgan's process, giving me data to backup my observations. That being said, in this situation, and how my academy is organized, the screening and identification of Morgan's needs are based primarily on observations from myself and the special class teachers (i.e art, science, gym, etc).

Observations would include keeping track of how much work Morgan is capable of in a class. Looking at what he finds enjoyable and what he finds difficult/uninteresting. Watching for where he decides to tune out of the classes, and what his stress points might be. This will also include monitoring his understanding of the lessons, tracking his answers when he is actively participating in the games/conversations, as well as the work he does in his books, seeing where his gaps in understanding are revealing themselves (i.e he has difficulty understanding what is being asked when looking for middle vowel sounds vs. beginning sounds).

Additionally, working with Morgan, asking him how he is feeling directly will help understand the situation more clearly during the screening and observation stages. These are some questions that I have asked Morgan (or his mother), as well have thought of when trying to navigate his ongoing development going forward:

- What do you like about G***?
- What do you not like about G***?
- What does your head feel like when you make noises?
- How are you feeling when you scribble in your books?
- What do you think is hard?
- What do you think is easy?
- What do you want to do at G***?
- Did you sleep a lot?
- What do you do after G***?
- What are some of your favorite things?
- Do you see differences between you and your friends?

Using answers from Morgan (and the answers his mom may give) can help us better understand Morgan and what he finds difficult, as well as possibly identify triggers that we can work on in the classroom to help best support him going forward.

RTI Model

In Morgan's case, because it is evident that his skills (particularly in phonics and in writing) are falling behind his peers, and that there are factors impacting his ability to learn beyond the teaching/classroom environment, using tier two intervention, and possibly tier three, may be necessary.

While tier one intervention is sufficient in building his speaking and listening skills, tier two interventions should be used in order to best serve his growth, and try to bridge the gaps before they get bigger and then need additional intervention. Because Morgan understands the material orally, and is able to speak the content back with apparent understanding, using tier two intervention methods may be able to sufficiently bring his other skills back up to the same level as his speaking and listening.

While I believe tier two intervention should be sufficient, I do believe it is likely that Morgan will need tier three interventions (particularly with writing), as added distractions (such as his classmates) tend to derail his learning abilities.

Intervention Strategies

Tier One

Differentiated/Adjusted instruction will be provided to the entire class provided that the 80% target proficiency is not reached. This will primarily take the form of changing my language and the difficulty of the material to ensure that the majority of the class has indicated understanding of the phonetic and writing skills we are covering in the lesson(s).

Those who are not achieving proficiency at this level will move into tier two.

Tier Two

Students who have achieved proficiency with the material in tier one will be provided with individual work while those who are in need of additional help will be put into groups to work on the material with their teacher.

The work given to the students who are entering tier two will not be receiving lessons that are that different from what they experienced in tier one, just with more targeted help and guidance as they go through the material.

In Morgan's case, he will work on his handwriting targeting specific letters he has difficulty writing independently, along with his classmates who are also targeting letters they have difficulty writing correctly. This includes letter proportions or general letter formation. Similarly, with phonics, the students (such as Morgan) who are not understanding the phonetic skills we are covering (example: identifying short "a" CVC words) will be brought together to engage in an additional activity to try and bridge the gap. This may take the form of going over previous work we did as a class, or similar materials. The methods would be similar to those seen in tier one, just more targeted and possibly scaffolded differently depending on the group's capabilities.

If understanding is not achieved after additional tier two instruction, the students will move into tier three.

Example Tier Two Activities

- Letter Tracing Worksheets
- CVC Boom Cards
- Vowel Vocab Flashcards

Tier Three

In tier three, more collaboration will be involved between myself, our academy's academic advisor, as well as our directors. This will involve discussing the student's behaviors and overall academic ability at this stage, and what might be able to be done to help them succeed. This will also result in bigger conversations with their parents, to get a fuller picture

of the student as well as see how willing and understanding their parent is in order to make it a collaborative effort (in my experience, there are times parents refuse to acknowledge that there are bigger issues that need to be addressed beyond the classroom, and purely push blame on the teacher, unwilling to discuss behavior issues in particular).

In Morgan's case, I don't think he will need tier three interventions for his phonetic skills. I think tier two intervention will be enough to bridge the gaps I see forming in his work and understanding. I do think that tier three interventions may be necessary in terms of building his motor control and overall focus/work stamina due to the fact that he has such a hard time with self-regulation. I do think a specialist may be needed (hence the need for cooperation with his parents) to help him learn the best ways to regulate his impulses and emotions.

Once routines have been established with Morgan to help him regulate these emotional and energetic outbursts, we can work with him to help him improve his work.

In the event these skills are not introduced to Morgan, continued one-on-one instruction when time is available will take place, working with him to directly hold his hand and help him learn how to write correctly will take place when time allows it. As the academy does not provide room for true tier three instruction, it would ultimately fall on the parents to try and provide additional help at the advice of the academy's advisor and directors.

Additional Notes

Throughout the lessons, there are ongoing informal formative assessments taking place in the form of class conversation and games. Observations being made by myself and the other special instructors help track the students' growth over time. This is how we can identify the students who are showing signs of being outliers in terms of hitting the targeted benchmarks, and how we can address their issues using RTI.

In terms of progress monitoring, I do use a tool (and a notebook) in order to try and track the behavior and academic growth of my class in order to better see trends in their development. Any progress (or at times regress) seen in their skills is documented.