



Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies

A One-on-One Program Designed to Improve Students' Reading Fluency

HELPS - scientifically-validated to improve students' reading skills, including comprehension.

HELPS - requires no more than 10-12 minutes per day, 2-3 days per week.

HELPS - has been used successfully by numerous types of educators.

See back cover for additional benefits...



John C. Begeny, Ph.D.

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Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS): A One-on-One Program Designed to Improve Students' Reading Fluency

The HELPS One-on-One
Program Teacher's Manual

John C. Begeny, Ph.D.



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Introduction to the Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) One-on-One Program

The overall purpose of the Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) One-on-One Program is to assist students with their reading development. In particular, the HELPS One-on-One Program (henceforth referred to simply as the *HELPS Program* or *HELPS*) is intended to strengthen students' reading fluency. As students improve reading fluency, they are better able to focus on and improve upon other important reading skills, including comprehension. Because all students must develop reading fluency in order to become more successful readers, HELPS can be used with students of all reading-ability levels as long as they are developmentally ready to improve their reading fluency. This HELPS Program Teacher's Manual will describe how HELPS was originally designed for first through fourth grade students, but how it may also be beneficial for older students.

Over the past few decades, an extensive amount of reading research has identified specific instructional strategies that improve students' reading fluency, with many of these strategies also strengthening students' reading comprehension. As described throughout the Manual, this existing research was used to develop the HELPS Program and HELPS can therefore be considered an *evidence-based* program. Ultimately, the HELPS Program includes each of the most important research-based instructional components that are known to improve students' reading fluency. In this way, a primary goal of the HELPS Program is to provide educators with an easy-to-use and affordable reading program that integrates research-based strategies that are not commonly used in educational practice. In essence, the HELPS Program aims to bridge reading research with educational practice.

More importantly, the HELPS Program has been scientifically evaluated across multiple studies over the past several years. The primary findings from this research show that HELPS meaningfully improves students' reading fluency, and often improves students' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the HELPS Program has been effective with below-average, average, and above-average elementary-aged students. The purpose, benefits, and research related to the HELPS Program are more thoroughly described elsewhere in this Manual.

Of course, the information found in this Manual will also train teachers how to implement HELPS with their students. The Manual describes all relevant procedures and terminology, and includes numerous training exercises that will assist teachers with efficiently learning how to implement HELPS. After reading this Manual, teachers will know who the HELPS Program should benefit, when they should use HELPS with a student, why it benefits students, and of course, how they can use it most effectively.

To successfully learn the content in this Manual, teachers should read each of the subsequent chapters in order. The steps for implementing the HELPS Program are not described until Chapter 3, but teachers should read the information prior to this chapter to learn why HELPS should be implemented and who HELPS should be implemented with. In addition, to best understand the information described throughout the Manual, teachers should regularly refer to the Glossary of Key Terms and Abbreviations (pp. xi-xiv). Likewise, when specified in this Manual, teachers should refer to the relevant implementation materials found throughout the Appendices (pp. 101-137).

Glossary of Key Terms

The Glossary of Key Terms below is important to review and remember because it should allow for a clearer understanding of all information provided in this Manual. This glossary is also included because some of the terms used in this Manual (e.g., *curriculum*, *session*, *passage*) are used inconsistently in educational books, magazines, journals, and other instructional manuals.

Note: The definitions and descriptions of the terms listed below sometimes contain words that are underlined. An underlined word indicates that it is also defined in the Glossary of Key Terms.

assessment – An evaluation of a student’s skills. In this Manual, words such as *evaluation* and *measurement* are generally used synonymously with *assessment*. As part of the HELPS Program, an assessment usually refers to a quantitative evaluation of a student’s reading skills and assessments are used to measure various reading behaviors, such as a student’s WCPM and WIPM.

curriculum-based measures of reading (CBM-R) – A progress monitoring assessment system that allows teachers to formatively evaluate their reading instruction with individual students on an ongoing basis. The primary relevancy of CBM-R with the HELPS Program is (a) the procedural similarities between CBM-R and the HELPS Timed Reading procedure (pp. 26-27), and (b) the potential use of HELPS as both an instructional tool *and* a type of CBM-R progress monitoring assessment tool (pp. 75-76). When discussed in the context of reading, some teachers may be familiar with the generally synonymous abbreviation, *CBM*.

evidence-based instructional practice – Briefly defined, a practice or program that integrates one or more instructional strategies that have convincing research support as being effective. Given the complexity and controversy regarding this term, it is more thoroughly defined and described throughout portions of the Manual (in particular, see pp. 3-6 and pp. 68-69).

Goal Assessment – During each session, the student’s first oral reading of a passage. It is only during the Goal Assessment that a teacher will determine whether the student meets the Reading Goal for that session. The Goal Assessment is always conducted with the passage the student read at the end of the previous session.

HELPS Program or simply, **HELPS** – The Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies One-on-One Program, which is described throughout the Manual. For purposes of concision, the “One-on-One” portion of this title is excluded.

HELPS Curriculum – The series of passages a student should read when a teacher implements the HELPS Program with that student. The full name of the HELPS Curriculum is *The Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) Curriculum: Instructional Passages Developed for use with the HELPS Program*. Detailed information about the HELPS Curriculum can be found on pp. 16-18.

HELPS Placement Assessment – The assessment procedures used to determine the specific HELPS Curriculum passage a student should read first when starting the HELPS Program.

implementation integrity – The degree with which a person implements an instructional program as designed. In this Manual, implementation integrity is typically discussed as the degree with which a teacher implements the HELPS Program, as dictated by the HELPS Implementation Protocol (Appendix A, p. 101). Teachers may be familiar with related terms used in educational literature, such as *treatment integrity*, *implementation fidelity*, *treatment fidelity*, *procedural reliability*, *treatment plan*

implementation, and related terms. In this Manual, *implementation integrity* will be used to describe this concept.

inflection – Alteration in pitch or tone of the voice.

Manual – The *HELPS One-on-One Program Teacher’s Manual*. The full name is shortened to *Manual* or *Teacher’s Manual* for purposes of being concise.

oral reading fluency (ORF) – A person’s ability to read aloud with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. Typically, ORF is assessed by obtaining a student’s WCPM and WIPM score, usually with CBM-R. Thus, an assessment of ORF may not necessarily evaluate a student’s ability to read aloud with proper expression. The issue of assessing proper expression is discussed in the Manual on pp. 46-47.

passage – The text that a student reads as part of the HELPS Program implementation procedures. Each passage in the HELPS Curriculum is titled. Some passages are written as narrative stories, and some contain expository text, such as factual information about a person or a country. Each passage in the HELPS Curriculum was purposefully written to be approximately 150-200 words in order to facilitate implementation brevity of the HELPS Program. However, these short passages were also developed to be age-appropriate, interesting, and instructionally meaningful for the students who read them. Because the word *passage* may be unfamiliar to many students, the HELPS Program directions given to students usually use the word *story* instead of *passage*.

Progress Tracking Form – The information recording sheet that a teacher uses to (a) record important session information and (b) track a student’s progress throughout the HELPS Program. See Appendices B-E (pp. 103-110) for examples of first through fourth grade Progress Tracking Forms.

proper expression – A student’s ability to attend to punctuation and story content while reading a passage aloud. For example, when reading aloud with proper expression, a student should attempt to stop at periods, pause at commas, and change voice inflection when reading sentences that end with a question mark or an exclamation point. Reading with proper expression is also illustrated when a student changes his or her voice inflection given the content of a story. For example, good expression is evident when a student uses a different tone of voice when reading a sentence in quotation marks compared to a sentence not embedded within quotation marks.

reading fluency – A person’s ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression. In this Manual, the use of *fluency* refers to *reading fluency*, unless otherwise specified. Assessment of reading fluency (and ORF), as part of the HELPS Program, is described throughout this Manual.

Reading Goal (Goal) – A specific criteria for WCPM, WIPM, and a Retell Check that the student tries to meet during the Goal Assessment. A student has the opportunity to meet the Reading Goal only one time per session. The Reading Goal is sometimes simply referred to as the *Goal*.

research-validated instructional program – Briefly defined, an instructional program that has experimental research evidence *specifically* validating the program’s effectiveness. Given the complexity and controversy regarding this term, it is more thoroughly defined and described throughout portions of the Manual (in particular, see pp. 68-69).

response-to-intervention (RTI) – An increasingly popular model of data-based decision-making that schools are using to better ensure students’ educational success. At its foundation, RTI involves (a) school-wide assessment, (b) systematic use of assessment data to determine which students need additional assistance, and (c) use of evidence-based instructional practices. An extended description of

RTI, and its relationship with HELPS, is discussed on pp. 11-14. Teachers may also be familiar with terms such as *response-to-instruction* or *intervention-alignment*, which are generally synonymous with RTI.

Retell Check – A mostly qualitative assessment to ensure that a student can retell at least some meaningful information from a passage that was read during a HELPS Program session. A student's performance on the Retell Check is one of the three criterion measures that teachers use to determine whether the student meets the Reading Goal. The Retell Check should not be confused with a more meaningful and comprehensive assessment of a student's comprehension. See pp. 45-46 for additional information about the Retell Check.

session – The 7- to 12-minute period during which a teacher implements all HELPS Program procedures with a student. For a given student, no more than one session should occur each day, and it is best that the student receives two to three sessions per week (for example, one session every other day).

Star Chart – The chart used as part of the HELPS Program Motivational (Reward) strategy (see Appendix F, p. 111). Based on student effort and performance, students earn written stars in the squares displayed on this chart. After accumulating enough stars, students earn a small reward.

Student Graph – The uniquely designed graph that is used as part of the HELPS Program Performance Feedback procedure. A student's WCPM and WIPM scores are plotted on this graph each session by the teacher. See Appendices G-J (pp. 112-115) for examples of first through fourth grade Student Graphs.

student passages – The HELPS Curriculum passages with larger font sizes. Also, student passages do not have number counts at the end of each line. As part of the HELPS Program, a teacher asks the student to read a student passage during a Timed Reading.

teacher – The person who implements the HELPS Program procedures with a student during a given session. To list some examples, teachers may include: regular classroom teachers, special education teachers, librarians, school psychologists, reading specialists, teacher assistants, school volunteers, and parents. As described in this Manual, the HELPS Program allows for multiple teachers to implement sessions with a given student.

teacher passages – The HELPS Curriculum passages that include number counts at the end of each line. Teachers use these passages to score students' WCPM and WIPM during Timed Readings.

Timed Reading – The reading activity that occurs when a teacher asks a student to read a passage aloud and then records the student's WCPM and WIPM. As part of the HELPS Program Implementation Protocol, multiple Timed Readings of a given passage defines the HELPS Program Repeated Reading procedure (see pp. 26-42 for additional information). For most Timed Readings that occur in a session, teachers need to record a student's WCPM and WIPM scores on the Student Graph and Progress Tracking Form.

words read correctly per minute (WCPM) – The number of words a student reads correctly in one minute when asked to read a passage aloud during a Timed Reading. A student's WCPM is one of the three criterion measures that a teacher uses to determine whether the student meets the Reading Goal for each session. See pp. 27-42 for information about how to determine a student's WCPM.

words read incorrectly per minute (WIPM) – The number of words a student reads incorrectly in one minute when asked to read a passage aloud during a Timed Reading. A student's WIPM is one of the three criterion measures that a teacher uses to determine whether the student meets the Reading Goal for each session. See pp. 27-42 for information about how to determine a student's WIPM.

Abbreviations

CBM-R	curriculum based measures of reading
DIBELS	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
DORF	DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency
e.g.,	This abbreviation represents, <i>for example</i> or <i>such as</i> and comes from the Latin words, <i>exempli gratia</i> . To illustrate, consider the following sentence: <i>This Glossary is also included because some of the terms used in this Manual (e.g., curriculum, fluency, and passages) are used inconsistently in other educational books...</i> The use of “e.g.,” in this way indicates that <i>curriculum, fluency, and passages</i> are relevant examples of terms used inconsistently in other educational literature, but there are other examples that were not listed.
ELL	English language learner
ESL	English as a second language
et al.,	This abbreviation represents, <i>and others</i> .
Etc.	This abbreviation represents, <i>and so forth</i> , and comes from the word, <i>etcetera</i> .
HELPS	Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies. Unless otherwise specified, <i>HELPS</i> refers to the <i>HELPS One-on-One Program</i> throughout this Manual.
i.e.,	This abbreviation represents <i>that is</i> and comes from the Latin words, <i>id est</i> . To illustrate, consider the following sentence: <i>With sufficient and well-structured practice opportunities, one learns to perform basic skills accurately and quickly (i.e., with fluency)</i> . The use of “i.e.,” in this way means that one learns to perform basic skills with fluency, which is the same as performing the skills accurately and quickly.
NRP	National Reading Panel
ORF	oral reading fluency
PD	phrase-drill error correction
RR	repeated reading
RTI	response-to-intervention
TWR	total words read, usually written in the context of <i>total words read per minute</i>
WCPM	words read correctly per minute
WIPM	words read incorrectly per minute

Comments about Writing Style

GENDER-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE

Throughout this Manual, the use of masculine and feminine pronouns such as *him, her, he, she, his, hers,* are used only to be succinct and to avoid the wordiness of using, for example, *he/she*. Text throughout this Manual that uses a masculine or feminine pronoun should not be interpreted as only being relevant to males or females. In all cases, the pronoun should be interpreted with the gender-neutral *he/she, him/her, his/hers,* etc.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

This Manual is primarily intended for busy teachers who are interested in learning how to implement HELPS and need to know basic background information that will support their understanding and implementation of this Program. For this reason, the Manual mostly consists of directions and recommendations for HELPS implementation, as well as relatively concise research summaries and background information.

At times, however, relevant background information is expanded upon. Also, a fair number of research references are integrated throughout. These features of the Manual may be useful for teachers learning to implement HELPS, but are primarily included for potential researchers and university students (graduate and undergraduate) who would benefit from this additional information. As teachers read the Manual for the purposes of learning how to implement HELPS, they should ultimately read and attend to the information in each section, but it is recognized they will probably focus most of their efforts on learning why, when, how, and with whom they should implement HELPS. To support this effort, Tables, lists, and Appendices in the Manual direct teachers' attention to this information.

Lastly, this Manual is written knowing that readers will have varying levels of knowledge about (and interest in) the educational terms, practices, and research described throughout. For this reason, cross-references are frequently made between pages in the Manual so that topics can be elaborated upon and connected without including all relevant information within each section of the Manual. (All references to page numbers refer to pages within this Manual, unless otherwise indicated). It is not always imperative for readers to immediately explore or review cross-referenced pages, but the references provide that option and readers should know when elaboration is needed. As a general rule, referenced Appendices should be reviewed immediately unless the reader is certain she knows all of the content in the referenced Appendix.

Why Teachers Should Use the HELPS Program

This chapter summarizes the most pertinent background information so that teachers understand why they should use HELPS. First, educational statistics from the U.S. are described so that teachers can fully appreciate how many struggling readers are found in elementary classrooms throughout this country. Next, the importance of reading fluency is described, along with statistics, definitions, and related information. Research with reading fluency instructional strategies is then discussed, including a brief section on what it means for an instructional strategy (or program) to be *evidence-based*. The following section describes why the HELPS Program is evidence-based. This chapter concludes with a list of strengths and benefits associated with the HELPS Program.

A CRISIS IN THE UNITED STATES EDUCATION SYSTEM

Over the past two decades, a substantial amount of research has been conducted in the area of reading. As a result, most reading researchers agree that the essential components of early elementary reading instruction should target phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary (Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn 2001; National Reading Panel [NRP], 2000). Yet, in spite of the advances in knowledge about effective reading instruction, a large number of students in the U.S. still experience great difficulties learning to read. For example, The Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) reported that approximately 3.5% of students in U.S. schools receive services for a reading disability, and the NRP (2000) reported that nearly 20% of U.S. students (i.e., over 10 million students) will experience reading problems within their first 3 years of school. Furthermore, in the most recent large-scale evaluation of U.S. students' reading achievement, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that 33% of fourth grade students are reading *below* a basic level. In other words, when reading fourth-grade text, these students are unable to “demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read” and are unable to make “relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences and [cannot] extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences” (Lee, Grigg, & Donahue, 2007, p. 20). Collectively, national reports of U.S. students' reading achievement suggest the imperative need to improve students' reading development (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). This need is particularly important at the early grade levels, because at least 75% of third grade students identified with reading difficulties continue having reading difficulties in middle and high school (e.g., Francis, Shaywitz, Stuebing, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1996; Lee et al., 2007; Shaywitz, Escobar, Shaywitz, Fletcher, & Makuch, 1992).

READING FLUENCY: WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

In the area of reading fluency (commonly defined as an individual's ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression), a recent, nationally representative study of 1,779 fourth-grade students suggests that 40% of U.S. students are “nonfluent” readers (Daane, Campbell, Grigg, Goodman, & Oranje, 2005) and would thus benefit from programs that help them develop reading fluency. Other important findings from this study revealed a strong correlation between reading fluency and comprehension, as well as a strong correlation between reading fluency and students' overall reading ability. These findings were commensurate with findings from numerous other reading researchers. In

particular, although reading fluency development is critical for early reading success (e.g., Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, & Tarver, 2004; Chard, Vaughn, & Tyler, 2002; Kame'enui & Simmons, 2001), reading fluency is widely neglected as part of a core reading program in U.S. classrooms (Allington, 1983; Fuchs, Fuchs, Hosp, & Jenkins, 2001; Rayner, Foorman, Perfetti, Pesetsky, & Seidenberg, 2001).

At the most basic level, reading fluency is important in the same way that fluency is important in learning nearly any skill a person wants to be successful with. To list some examples, most individuals recognize the importance of fluency when trying to become skilled with a type of dance, a particular sport, a new language, playing a musical instrument, acting a new role in a play, or learning a brand new set of procedures for work. Upon first exposure to any one of these skills, a person first attempts to learn the “basics” (e.g., learning the chords on a guitar or learning vocabulary and word pronunciation in a new language). When first learning these basic skills, the person is generally slow, but strives toward doing the basic activities accurately. Later, with a substantial amount of practice across a range of “basic” activities associated with that skill, the person can now perform these basics both accurately and quickly. In this sense, the person has become fluent with those activities (e.g., learning the chords on a guitar fluently enough to play one or more songs well). Once the person is fluent with those skills, she is now able to focus on more complex activities related to the skill (e.g., playing more complicated songs on the guitar, creating new songs, and/or singing lyrics to the song while simultaneously playing the guitar). Of course, obtaining this level of fluency usually makes the activity more enjoyable and therefore makes the individual want to pursue the activity more often.

These basic descriptors of learning stages can be applied to almost any skill. First, one must acquire basic skills and learn how to do them accurately. Next, with sufficient and well-structured practice opportunities, one learns to perform basic skills accurately and quickly (i.e., with fluency). Now, because basic skills are accomplished with little to no effort, those skills can be generalized and adapted to form new and more sophisticated skills. Decades ago, Haring, Lovitt, Eaton, and Hansen (1978) described this type of *learning hierarchy* based on their extensive educational research conducted at the University of Washington's Experimental Education Unit. As described by Haring and colleagues at that time and by numerous other educators since then, these same principles of learning apply to reading development. In particular, reading researchers began to describe why fluent reading is *necessary* for strong reading comprehension.

For example, in their information-processing model of *automaticity*, LaBerge and Samuels (1974) proposed that mastering sub-skills of reading (e.g., processing letter-sound correspondences rapidly), will, in essence, allow the reader to think more about what he is reading. In other words, when reading words becomes automatic, the individual can then simultaneously engage in processing the meaning of the words being read. Extending this notion of automaticity, Perfetti (1977, 1985) suggested that slow word reading is also a hindrance for reading comprehension because it consumes working memory, which should otherwise be available for understanding the content being read. Since this time, the importance of reading fluency for reading comprehension, and for overall reading success, has been described by numerous reading researchers and educators (Carnine et al., 2004; Fuchs et al., 2001; Kame'enui & Simmons, 2001).

Developing reading fluency is also important because fluent readers are more likely to choose to read (Daly, Chafouleas, & Skinner, 2005; Skinner, 1998). As described previously with the skill of learning to play the guitar, for most people, performing any skill with fluency is more enjoyable, rewarding, and less effortful than performing it non-fluently. Of course, most individuals generally like to engage in activities that are enjoyable compared to those that are less enjoyable (Mace, McCurdy, & Quigley, 1990). Therefore, as a student becomes a fluent reader, this fluency positively influences the likelihood that he will choose to read.

In summary, reading fluency is important because (a) improving reading fluency is necessary to improve reading comprehension, and (b) fluent readers are more likely to choose to read. Also, as previously mentioned (and described in more detail on pp. 75-76), a student's reading fluency assessment scores help teachers predict that student's scores on other meaningful measures of reading, such as end-of-grade tests and comprehensive assessments of reading comprehension.

EVIDENCE-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES IN READING FLUENCY

As was just described, becoming fluent with any skill requires practice, which also requires motivation to continue practicing. However, as most individuals know from learning a variety of different skills, some practice strategies are much more effective than others. Thus, effective practice strategies lead to more rapid fluency development with that skill. Conversely, ineffective practice strategies lead to slow fluency development (at best) or frustration and non-fluency (at worst).

Given the importance of identifying effective and efficient practice strategies that improve children's reading fluency, decades of research have clarified which strategies work, and which strategies are most effective. Because there are so many well-conducted studies evaluating different types of fluency-building strategies, many of these strategies can now be considered *evidence-based* practices. These strategies (and the supporting research) will be described in this Manual, but the following section will first help readers understand what it means for a practice to be evidence-based. Understanding this is particularly important because (a) U.S. legislation now calls for schools and teachers to use evidence-based (or research-based) instructional practices; (b) there is confusion and controversy surrounding the term, *evidence-based*; and (c) there are numerous publishing companies that claim their reading program is evidence-based, but that claim often does not hold true by acceptable definitions of the term.

Defining Evidence-Based Practice

Despite recent U.S. legislation calling for schools and teachers to use evidence-based (or research-based) practices (e.g., the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001, the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* of 2004), there is frequent debate and/or lack of consensus regarding the definition of an *evidence-based practice* (Kratochwill, 2007; Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, & Harris, 2005). One controversy that fuels this debate is the question of what type of scientific information is considered acceptable evidence (Odom et al., 2005; White & Smith, 2002). For example, reports from the National Research Council suggest that different research methodologies are needed in education to address different research questions (Shavelson & Towne, 2002). However, other educational agencies endorse more of a "gold standard" of educational research, suggesting that the strongest evidence-based research in education is supported with one type of methodology: randomized, experimental group designs (e.g., What Works Clearinghouse, 2009a). Unfortunately, companies that publish reading programs sometimes take advantage of this debate and have labeled their program *evidence-based*, even when the program does not meet any of the common definitions of this term (Hauser, 2009). For these reasons, it is important for teachers to understand why the HELPS Program is described as an *evidence-based practice*.

Based upon well-documented and well-supported definitions of evidence-based practice (and related terms, such as research-based practice), the following definition of an evidence-based practice will be used for the purposes of this discussion. The below definition was derived from the definitions used by credible professional agencies and committees (e.g., American Institutes for Research, American Psychological Association, Institute of Medicine, Society for the Study of School Psychology, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services).

An **evidence-based practice** utilizes one or more instructional strategies that have convincing research support as being effective. A strategy with *convincing research support* means that research data have shown the practice to meaningfully improve educational outcomes for school-age children with and/or without learning difficulties. The research supporting the strategy must: (a) be replicated; (b) utilize scientifically based, rigorous research designs (i.e., randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity designs, quasi-experiments, and/or single-subject designs); (c) measure educational outcomes with validated assessments that are educationally meaningful; and (d) provide evidence of effectiveness in educationally significant (i.e., not only *statistically* significant) ways.

Of course, the above definition still invites ambiguity and should therefore be conceptualized across a continuum. For instance, an instructional strategy that has particularly strong research support as being effective has been replicated more often, evaluated across broader school-based contexts (e.g., with students in different grade levels), evaluated with larger samples of students, evaluated with stronger experimental designs, and/or has been summarized as effective through well-conducted research reviews (such as meta-analyses). Likewise, *strong* evidence-based practices are those that include one or more instructional strategies that have strong research support.

Reading Fluency Instructional Practices with Research Support

Several research studies over the past 25 years have described effective strategies for increasing students' reading fluency, and in many of these studies, fluency-based strategies have also enhanced other important reading abilities, including comprehension (e.g., Begeny & Martens, 2006; Chard et al., 2002; NRP, 2000). Of the various reading fluency instructional (and motivational) strategies reported in the research literature, the following list indicates the fluency-based strategies most associated with improved reading outcomes. Also, using the aforementioned definition of evidence-based practice, the listed strategies can be considered to have adequate to strong research supporting their effectiveness.

The below list was derived from six separate studies that quantitatively (i.e., through meta-analysis) or qualitatively summarized all of the available research in the area of reading fluency instruction (Chard et al., 2002; Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; Meyer & Felton, 1999; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006; NRP, 2000; Therrien, 2004). Of course, because there are more than 200 studies in the area of reading fluency instruction, the research summaries cited above compartmentalized this research-base in order to address more specific questions (e.g., what are the effects of fluency-based interventions with low-performing readers, what are the specific effects of one particular strategy). Collectively, the outcomes from the research summaries apply to students at various grade levels (particularly elementary-aged students) and are relevant for low-, average-, and high-performing readers.

List of Fluency-Based Strategies Most Associated with Improved Reading Outcomes

1. Repeated Reading (RR) of ability-appropriate text
2. Model reading (i.e., having students listen to a more skilled reader read aloud, such as an adult)
3. Systematic error-correction procedure
4. Verbal cues for students to read with fluency
5. Verbal cues for students to read for comprehension
6. Goal-setting (i.e., practicing text until a pre-determined performance criterion is met)
7. Performance feedback, combined with graphical displays of student progress
8. Use of systematic praise and a structured reward system for student reading behaviors and accomplishments

Some of the comprehensive summaries of the reading fluency research have also sought to identify variables that can influence the effectiveness of fluency-based strategies. For example, Therrien (2004)

examined subcomponents commonly used with the repeated reading (RR) strategy. RR is the most well-supported fluency-building instructional strategy and it requires a student to re-read a short passage a designated number of times or until a certain criterion is met. In addition to finding that RR improves reading fluency and comprehension skills for students with and without learning difficulties, Therrien also reported that certain variables may influence the effectiveness of RR. Therrien suggested that RR may be most effective when students (a) read passages out loud to adults, (b) are provided with a cue during instruction (e.g., to read with comprehension, fluency, and/or speed), (c) read passages three or four times, (d) receive corrective feedback as part of instruction, and (e) read until a performance criterion is met. Similarly, Morgan and Sideridis (2006) conducted a meta-analysis that included participants identified with (or at risk for) a learning disability. Key findings from this study highlighted the effectiveness of fluency strategies that integrate goal-setting, feedback, reinforcement, and instructional components such as RR and modeling. (A brief research summary for each specific strategy listed above can be found in Chapter 4).

Overall, although there is a strong body of research to support using the aforementioned instructional *strategies*, especially when combined, the research lacks evidence of *programs* that integrate all of what is known about effective fluency-building strategies into one, well-structured and easy-to-implement instructional protocol. This need served as a primary reason for developing HELPS.

HOW THE HELPS PROGRAM IS EVIDENCE-BASED

Using the aforementioned definition of an evidence-based practice, the HELPS Program is considered a program that is strongly evidence-based because it integrates multiple instructional strategies that meet rigorous scientific standards for being efficacious (i.e., strategies shown in more “laboratory-structured” settings as being useful) and/or effective (i.e., strategies shown in more “field-based” settings as being useful).¹

Important to note, however, some of the strategies integrated into the HELPS Program do not have sound research support if used *independently* from other instructional strategies (e.g., the verbal cueing strategies). Rather, some strategies have sound evidence of effectiveness only when used in *combination* with other fluency-based instructional strategies. As noted above, it is the integration of the most important fluency-based instructional strategies in the HELPS Program that makes it unique, solidly evidence-based, and likely to be more effective than the aforementioned instructional strategies that are sometimes used independently.

Also important to note, some strategies integrated within the HELPS Program are specifically designed to improve students’ reading skills (e.g., RR, Modeling, Phrase-drill Error Correction). Other strategies are designed to increase students’ motivation to stay academically engaged with structured practice activities over extended periods of time (e.g., Goal-setting, Performance Feedback, the Star Chart Reward procedure). Collectively, the integration of strategies designed to improve reading skills and academic motivation is critical for fluency development (e.g., Haring et al., 1978; Martens & Witt, 2004).

Overall, the HELPS Program is an evidence-based practice because it integrates what are currently known (through sound research) as the most useful procedures for improving reading fluency development. As will be described in Chapter 6, *Research with the HELPS Program*, HELPS can also be considered a *research-validated* program.

¹ For a more detailed differentiation between efficacy and effectiveness in educational research, readers should see Chambless and Hollon (1998) or Nathan and Gorman (2002). For the purposes of this Manual, the term *effectiveness* is used throughout to reflect either or both *efficacy* and *effectiveness*.

STRENGTHS AND BENEFITS OF THE HELPS PROGRAM

There are very few instructional programs that exist to address students' reading fluency development. However, of those that exist, the HELPS Program offers numerous strengths and benefits not found in existing programs. Some strengths and benefits of the HELPS Program are listed below.

Feasibility for Teachers

1. HELPS procedures can be easily learned by numerous educators (e.g., regular education teachers, teacher assistants, special education teachers, school psychologists, reading specialists), as well as school volunteers. It can therefore be implemented by more than one teacher in order to increase implementation feasibility.
2. HELPS is also feasible to implement because it requires no more than approximately 10 minutes per day, three days per week.
3. HELPS was developed so that it could be used effectively with students in all primary grades. Thus, teachers working with students across multiple grade levels do not need to obtain new materials to use the Program with older students, nor do they need to learn new implementation procedures.
4. As part of its development, HELPS includes a HELPS Curriculum so that teachers do not need to develop reading materials to use as part of the instructional program.
5. As is true with learning any new task, learning the HELPS Procedures will require some time. However, learning the HELPS procedures is easily facilitated with (a) a systematic implementation protocol, (b) a Teacher's Manual that provides training exercises and considerable amounts of implementation guidance, and (c) a HELPS Program Training Video.

Research, Development, and Educational Policy

6. National policy in education continues urging schools and teachers to use instructional practices that are, at minimum, *evidence-based* (i.e., practice is *based upon* strategies found in educational research to be effective). As described in detail above, the HELPS Program integrates the primary instructional strategies supported by reading fluency research evidence.
7. More importantly, national policy urges schools and teachers to use specific programs that are *validated* by research as effective. The studies conducted with the HELPS Program (summarized in Chapter 6) have begun to validate its effectiveness with a range of student populations, and this research evidence already exceeds the evidence (or lack thereof) behind a large number of educational programs currently being used in U.S. schools (for more information, see Begeny, Laugle, Krouse, Lynn, Parker, & Stage, in press).
8. Given the above strengths, the HELPS Program can be used as an instructional program within a Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model of instructional delivery. (More about this can be found on pp. 11-14).
9. HELPS also shows preliminary evidence as being a useful tool for monitoring student reading progress within the context of receiving HELPS instruction (see pp. 75-77 for more details). In other words, HELPS integrates instruction and progress monitoring assessment. As such, this assessment component should be useful for all educators, including those using a RTI model, because only through ongoing assessment can a teacher best determine a student's instructional needs.
10. Also relevant for implementing a RTI model (and for appropriate instructional practices, more generally), HELPS procedures and materials assist teachers with monitoring implementation integrity. These procedures and materials are important because educators cannot evaluate the true effects of an instructional program if they are not certain the program is being implemented as intended.

11. Based on four years of research and development (as of September, 2009), acceptability evidence suggests that teachers and students enjoy using HELPS.

Additional Benefits

12. Students typically feel good about what they accomplish during the HELPS Program, which is particularly important for struggling readers. For struggling readers, reading is (or eventually becomes) a frustrating and undesired activity. This frustration often leads students to avoid reading and develop an overall unfavorable attitude toward reading. Such an attitude can unfortunately last throughout schooling, if not an entire lifetime (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). With the HELPS Program, even struggling readers should feel successful. For example, HELPS is designed so that students receive one-on-one attention from a caring adult who provides specific praise and feedback regarding the student's reading. Also, students can visualize daily (through the Student Graph) that practice *does* improve their reading. Furthermore, HELPS is designed so that students regularly meet their Reading Goal, which also helps students feel successful and increases their positive experiences with reading.
13. Although designed as a structured reading program to target the development of students' reading fluency, HELPS passages and procedures allow for (under unique circumstances) "implementation flexibility." In essence, this allows teachers the option to more specifically address student difficulties in areas such as vocabulary and comprehension (see pp. 66-67 for more details).
14. **The HELPS Program and the HELPS Curriculum are free to all educators.** There are important reasons and implications related to teachers' free access to HELPS, including how free access to this Program can help address the learning needs of students who need the most support. Sometimes, individuals are inclined to believe that the cost of an item always indicates the item's quality. Of course, this reasoning is true in some cases, where more expensive items are of better quality than less expensive items. In the case of the HELPS Program and its relative effectiveness to other reading programs, this reasoning is not true. Teachers should read Chapter 8 to better understand the overall mission and premise that underlie offering the HELPS Program for free. Chapter 8 also describes *The HELPS Education Fund*, the non-profit foundation that is used to support free access to HELPS and promote overall educational success for students, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Students Who Should Benefit from the HELPS Program

Of course, not all students will benefit from receiving the HELPS Program. However, evidence indicates that at least some students from nearly all first through fourth grade classrooms should benefit from this Program. Older students with poor reading abilities may also benefit from receiving HELPS. This chapter provides teachers with important information and guidelines for using HELPS to improve students' reading skills. Sections within this chapter should help teachers decide whether HELPS may be implemented (a) with students as part of a core reading curriculum; (b) with struggling or at-risk readers; (c) with students in grade five or above; (d) with English language learners; and (e) as part of a data-based decision-making model of instruction, such as Response-to-Intervention. Ultimately, deciding when to implement HELPS should rely on the information and guidelines presented in this chapter, in combination with a teacher's knowledge of each student's instructional needs.

USING HELPS TO SUPPLEMENT ALL STUDENTS' CORE READING CURRICULUM

As will be described in more detail in Chapter 6, *Research with the HELPS Program*, HELPS was originally developed to supplement students' core reading curriculum. Many reading researchers suggest that all early readers should develop fluency with grade-appropriate, connected text sometime between first through third grade, with second grade identified as the approximate time during which most readers should develop this skill (Chall, 1996; Speece & Ritchey, 2005; Vaughn et al., 2000). Because instructional strategies designed to improve reading fluency are often neglected in teachers' core reading curricula (Allington, 1983; Fuchs et al., 2001; Rayner et al., 2001), and because HELPS can be implemented by numerous types of educators (including school volunteers) in approximately 10 minutes, HELPS was first developed and implemented as a supplemental reading program for all second grade students (Begeny, 2009; Begeny et al., in press). Using this same logic, HELPS is equally appropriate to use as a supplement to a core reading curriculum for mid-year first grade students or with third grade students.

Without specifically targeting reading fluency in the early grades, some students will develop adequate reading fluency skills. As noted previously, U.S. data suggest that approximately 40% of fourth grade students in the U.S. are nonfluent readers (Daane et al., 2005). Of the 60% who are considered fluent readers, it is probable that many did not receive a structured fluency program as part of their core reading curricula. Furthermore, using HELPS as part of a core reading curriculum for all students in a first, second, or third grade classroom may not be possible. Many teachers have insufficient time or assistance to achieve class-wide implementation of the HELPS One-on-One Program. For this reason, early stages of HELPS development and research began investigating its impact on first through fourth grade students who experienced reading difficulties.

USING HELPS WITH STRUGGLING OR AT-RISK READERS

Using HELPS with Struggling or At-Risk Readers in Grades 1 - 4

Because current HELPS research has focused on students in the elementary grades, Table 1 is provided to help teachers identify first through fourth grade students who would likely benefit from receiving the HELPS Program. Because HELPS primarily targets students' reading fluency, oral reading fluency (ORF) benchmark norms (i.e., WCPM scores) are used in Table 1. ORF benchmark assessments typically require

students to read three grade-appropriate passages for one minute each. The median WCPM score of the three passages is considered the student's benchmark score for that assessment. Use of this assessment procedure is commonly referred to as curriculum-based measures of reading (CBM-R). Currently, the two most popular assessment systems that utilize CBM-R are the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS; Good & Kaminski, 2002) and AIMSweb (2008) systems. Both of these systems advocate for elementary school teachers to complete benchmark assessments at least once in the fall, winter, and spring.

Because teachers would likely begin implementing HELPS with a student during the fall or winter of a school year, Table 1 indicates fall and winter benchmark scores across grade levels 1-4. If, for example, a teacher completes a fall benchmark assessment with a third grade student who scores between 20-81 WCPM, this student would likely benefit from the HELPS Program—assuming, of course, the teacher believes the student's nonfluent reading is unrelated to some other factor (e.g., neurological impairment, speech deficit). In the above example, 20 WCPM represents the “lower limit” of the WCPM range, and 81 WCPM represents the “upper limit.”

The upper limits of the ranges shown in each cell of Table 1 are derived from Hasbrouck and Tindal's (2006) ORF norms (see p. 639 of their publication). Based on the norms they developed from approximately 11,000 to 20,000 children per grade, Hasbrouck and Tindal suggested that students reading “more than 10 WCPM above the 50th percentile [are likely] making adequate progress in reading (unless there are other indicators that would raise concern)” (p. 642). Thus, the WCPM ranges shown in Table 1 ultimately reflect scores of students who are not making adequate progress in their reading, according to the norms presented by Hasbrouck and Tindal. Therefore, students scoring between the WCPM ranges shown in Table 1 may benefit from the HELPS Program. The norms provided by Hasbrouck and Tindal are generally consistent with the norms provided through AIMSweb and DIBELS. Therefore, teachers would be using Table 1 correctly by first obtaining a student's fall or winter ORF benchmark score with AIMSweb or DIBELS—or a similar set of ORF assessment materials, such as those from Easy CBM(2009)—and then comparing that ORF score to those shown in the Table.

The lower limits of the ranges shown in each cell of Table 1 are derived from various sources of ORF data, including several years of research with the HELPS Program and related intervention studies. In essence, the lower limits approximate a minimal level of ORF that a student must have to likely benefit from the HELPS Program. These lower limits also take into consideration the student's specific grade level and probable stage of reading development. The ranges listed in each cell are research-derived estimates and should serve as a valid means for selecting struggling readers who should benefit from HELPS.

As noted above, however, teachers should always make final decisions about the appropriateness of a student receiving the HELPS Program. Based on HELPS research and development, students scoring in the ranges listed below should benefit from HELPS, but teachers must always consider other factors that may hinder a student's reading performance. For example, deficits in any of the following areas may contribute to a student's reading difficulties and may need to be addressed with intervention (in addition to, or instead of, HELPS): speech, English as a second language, motivation, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and/or comprehension. Additionally, students scoring above or below the listed ranges may also benefit from HELPS, and those scoring within the ranges may, for some reason, not benefit from HELPS. If in doubt, a teacher can implement HELPS and observe the student's level of progress with the Program. There is ample amount of guidance and recommendations offered throughout this Manual that should clarify for the teacher whether HELPS is benefitting a particular student.

Table 1

Benchmark Assessment WCPM Scores That May Suggest a Student’s Need for the HELPS Program

Note: A student who obtains a fall or winter benchmark WCPM score within the specified WCPM range may benefit from receiving the HELPS Program. Teachers must read all information in this section to understand the appropriate use of this Table.

Student’s Grade Level	Fall WCPM Benchmark Range	Winter WCPM Benchmark Range
First	*(see note)	20-33
Second	25-61	40-82
Third	20-81	35-102
Fourth	35-104	50-122

* (Beginning of year, first grade students with reading difficulties are unlikely to benefit from a fluency-based intervention because they likely need assistance with decoding, phonics, phonemic awareness, etc.).

Using HELPS with Struggling Readers in Grades 5 - 12

At the time of publishing this Manual, research has shown positive effects of the HELPS Program for struggling readers in first through fourth grades. However, it is quite possible that HELPS can be used successfully with students in later grades because previous research with fluency-based interventions has found positive effects with students from kindergarten through college (Begeny, Whitehouse, Ross, Easton, Atlas et al., 2009; NRP, 2000). Future research is needed to examine whether the HELPS Program can also benefit students at these grade levels, but until such research is available, teachers can use the HELPS Program with students in grades 5-12 if they find this to be a suitable intervention option. In particular, implementing HELPS with students in fifth and sixth grades seems very logical, considering the types of reading deficits many fifth and sixth grade students have.

Regarding the HELPS Curriculum and its appropriateness for older students, many of the HELPS passages (particularly passages 50-100) were written in ways that would make them age-appropriate for students through middle school (and possibly through high school). Prior to using HELPS with middle or high school aged students, teachers should remember to do the following, in addition to learning the HELPS Implementation Protocol:

Important Tasks before Using HELPS with Middle or High School Students

1. Evaluate each passages in the HELPS Curriculum and consider excluding any passage that is clearly age-inappropriate.
2. Consider whether the Start Chart reward system is age-appropriate. If teachers do not use the specific Star Chart, they are encouraged to use a reward-based procedure that integrates the same motivational principles found in the Star Chart system.
3. Determine an appropriate Reading Goal for the student. Using information from the HELPS Placement Assessment (described on pp. 53-54), one suggestion is to establish a Goal that is within 20-30 WCPM above the average score that determines the student’s starting point in the HELPS Program.
4. Modify the Student Graph and Progress Tracking Form to reflect the student’s actual grade level and determined Reading Goal.

(List continues on following page)

5. Explain to students in detail why they are practicing passages repeatedly. There should be plenty of content within this Manual (e.g., see Chapter 1) to help explain to older students why the HELPS practice strategies are important for reading development.
6. Consider adding other intervention components to the HELPS procedures. Suggestions for this are described on pp. 66-67.

USING HELPS WITH ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Preliminary evidence suggests that, on average, English Language Learners (ELLs) benefit as much from the HELPS Program as non-ELLs. When evaluating the small subset of HELPS Program research participants who received English as a Second Language (ESL) services, ELLs who received HELPS tended to improve their reading much more than ELLs who did not receive HELPS. Furthermore, differences between these groups were evident across a range of different reading skills, including comprehension. Unfortunately, as of September 2009 the sample size of ELL students in the HELPS Program research is too small for specific statistical analyses, but preliminary findings support teachers' use of HELPS with ELLs. Until more research evidence is available and specific recommendations can be made for using HELPS with ELLs, teachers who use HELPS with ELLs should adhere to the procedures and recommendations described throughout this Manual. By doing so, teachers should observe reading improvements similar to the improvements of non-ELLs who receive HELPS.

USING HELPS WITH A RESPONSE-TO-INTERVENTION MODEL

Overview of Response-to-Intervention (RTI)

In 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act stated that a local education agency “may use a process that determines if the child responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the evaluation procedures” (P.L. No. 108-446, 614 [b][6][A]; 614 [b][2 & 3]). Due to these revisions in recent U.S. legislation, as well as a long history of educators calling for changes in how we identify and assist students with learning difficulties, schools are increasingly adopting models of data-based decision-making to better ensure educational success for all children. Response-to-Intervention (RTI) is the most widely adopted of these models. At its foundation, RTI involves (a) school-wide assessment, (b) systematic use of assessment data to determine which students need additional assistance, and (c) use of evidence-based (i.e., research-based) instructional practices. Combined, the goal of RTI is to improve all students' learning and more efficiently allocate school resources. As described by Burns and Gibbons (2008), “RTI emerged as a viable method for preventing academic failure and reducing the learning disability prevalence rate through universal screening for achievement difficulties, early intervention and prevention programs, and accountability for results through frequent progress monitoring” (p. 2).

Although various models of RTI have been proposed, a common conceptualization of RTI is the three-tiered model, with increased intensity of service and assessment at each tier (Burns & Gibbons, 2008; Glover & DiPerna, 2007). At Tier 1, all students receive an evidence-based, core reading curriculum in the general education classroom. Also, all students are assessed at least three times per year with ORF benchmark assessments such as DIBELS and/or AIMSweb (which were also described on pp. 8-9). Students identified through benchmark assessments as performing below expected levels (i.e., Tier 2 students) receive targeted intervention in their general education classroom (e.g., small-group intervention or brief one-on-one intervention a few days per week). In a relatively good situation, no more than approximately 15% of students would be identified for Tier 2 services. At Tier 2, students' academic progress should be monitored at least monthly.

Students who do not show sufficient academic progress through Tier 2 intervention (ideally, no more than 5% of the total population of students) receive more intensive, specialized interventions, which may eventually include special education services. Academic progress for these Tier 3 students should be monitored at least weekly. In the area of reading, CBM-R is the most commonly used measure for benchmark assessments and progress monitoring, especially for students in grades two and above.

How HELPS Can Be Used With RTI (or Other Models of Data-Based Decision-Making)

Although a student with reading difficulties will not always require (or benefit most from) a program to improve that students' reading fluency, reading scholars and national reading achievement data suggest that large percentages of students will benefit from such targeted instruction (e.g., Daane et al., 2005). Again, this finding served as a primary purpose for developing the HELPS Program. Another primary purpose of developing HELPS was to create a program that could be efficiently used within a school that promotes research-based instruction and data-based decision-making (e.g., a school that uses a RTI model). Although research is needed to specifically evaluate the effectiveness of HELPS within a school's functional RTI model, the following information describes how HELPS can be used within the three-tier system described above. Teachers should note that HELPS may be integrated at each tier because schools have varying levels of resources. As noted below, schools with high levels of resources may be able to include HELPS as part of their Tier 1 instruction. Schools with very low levels of resources (and high student needs) may only have resources to implement HELPS at Tier 3. On average, the majority of schools would likely benefit from using HELPS as part of their Tier 2 supplemental instruction.

Using HELPS at Tier 1

Because Tier 1 calls for a research-based core curriculum, and because core reading curricula often neglect students' fluency development, a school with sufficient resources (e.g., teacher assistants, well-trained school volunteers) may be able to implement HELPS as a supplement to students' core reading curriculum. As described on pp. 69-71, initial research with HELPS used the program as a supplement to a core reading curriculum for entire classrooms of second grade students. If used as part of Tier 1 core reading instruction, it is primarily recommended for students in third grade, second grade, and/or the middle of first grade.

Using HELPS at Tier 2

Many schools will not have sufficient resources to implement HELPS for all students as part of a core reading curriculum. In this case, HELPS may be best implemented as part of Tier 2 intervention for students who need to improve their reading fluency. These students would likely score in the WCPM ranges displayed in Table 1 (p. 10). Depending on the school and the needs of students, this population of students could include all elementary-aged students. As described in Chapter 6 (i.e., Studies 3, 4 and 7), more recent research has used HELPS with struggling readers and has found it to be effective in improving reading fluency, reading comprehension, and more basic skills associated with phonics.

Teachers should note that some RTI models broadly summarize Tier 2 interventions as small-group interventions of 3-5 students. However, the overall structure of a Tier 2 intervention is one that does not require the intervention intensity and need for resources that are required in Tier 3 intervention. As such, because HELPS requires only 10 minutes of instruction approximately every other day, this is typically feasible as part of a school's Tier 2 intervention options.

Using HELPS at Tier 3

As described above, research with HELPS has typically been in the context of Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction/intervention. However, research with HELPS has included students that are considered "Tier

3” students. Sometimes these students received supplemental reading programs in addition to HELPS, but sometimes these students did not. In both cases, students with more severe reading difficulties benefitted from HELPS. As such, until additional research can address the effectiveness of HELPS as a Tier 3 intervention (either independently of, or in addition to, other reading interventions), preliminary evidence suggests that many Tier 3 students could benefit from HELPS. However, these students should probably receive other targeted interventions in addition to HELPS. Particularly for schools that have high percentages of Tier 3 students in need of reading assistance, HELPS may be a reasonable intervention option (as a supplement to other reading interventions) because it can be implemented quickly and by numerous types of teachers (e.g., teacher assistants, school volunteers, and possibly parents). Table 2 illustrates a common three-tiered RTI model and shows how HELPS may be used as part of that model.

Table 2
A Three-Tier Model of RTI and How HELPS Can Be Used Within this Model

	General Reading Instruction Strategy	General Reading Assessment Strategy	Ideal Percentage of Students Supported¹	How HELPS can be used within the RTI Model
Tier 1	Students receive an evidence-based, core reading curriculum in the general education classroom	Students are assessed at least three times per year with ORF benchmark assessments (e.g., DIBELS, AIMSweb)	85%	If resources are high, HELPS can be implemented as a supplement to 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd grade students’ core reading curriculum
Tier 2	Students receive targeted intervention in their general education classroom (e.g., brief one-on-one intervention a few days per week)	Students’ academic progress should be monitored at least monthly	10%	If resources are at least average, HELPS can be implemented as a targeted intervention approximately every other day for 10 minutes each day
Tier 3	Students receive more intensive, specialized interventions, which may eventually include special education services	Students’ academic progress should be monitored weekly	5%	If resources are average to low, HELPS can be implemented as a targeted intervention, possibly in combination with other targeted interventions

¹ Based on the actual percentage of students in this column, and the amount of resources within a particular school, HELPS can be used at any one of the three tiers in the model.

Additional Benefits of HELPS as Part of a RTI Model

As described earlier, a critical component of RTI requires more frequent progress monitoring of students who are identified as Tier 2 or Tier 3 students. Also noted, CBM-R is the most common method of evaluating students’ reading progress. Typically, CBM-R progress monitoring passages are administered separately from students’ Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention, which obviously requires additional teacher time (e.g., time for administering the assessment, time for scheduling the assessment period) and possibly

additional time needed for CBM-R training. With the HELPS Program, however, CBM-R is integrated into the instructional procedures in a way that implementing the program also results in CBM-R progress monitoring assessment (for additional information as to how this is achieved, see pp. 26-27 and pp. 75-76). Not only does this result in greater ease of CBM-R progress monitoring, but it also results in a larger amount of progress monitoring passages. The latter advantage may help to address many researchers' concerns about variability in CBM-R progress monitoring data (Ardoin, 2006; Ardoin & Christ, 2008; Christ & Silbergitt, 2007; Poncy, Skinner, & Axtell, 2005). At the present time, initial research supports the use of HELPS as a valid means for obtaining CBM-R progress monitoring data (in addition to it being effective in improving students' reading skills). However, additional research is needed to better understand how HELPS instructional procedures can be simultaneously used for assessment purposes.

Finally, HELPS has important practical implications for RTI because, as part of the effort to make data-based decisions after students receive evidence-based interventions, a RTI model ultimately fails if the evidence-based interventions are not really being implemented in the ways intended (i.e., if they are implemented with poor implementation integrity). This situation represents a critical hurdle in the effectiveness of RTI because key educational decision-makers (e.g., teachers, principals, school psychologists, parents) are often unable to monitor the extent to which all intervention procedures are implemented with integrity. In the absence of observing a teacher's implementation integrity each and every time the intervention is carried out (which is usually impossible), the HELPS Program was designed to offer educational decision-makers several means by which they can feel more certain this program is implemented correctly. First and foremost, if teachers follow the training procedures described throughout this Manual, HELPS research suggests that teachers should be able to implement the program with 100% implementation integrity approximately 95-100% of the time. Furthermore, teachers are specifically taught to monitor and record their implementation integrity after every session in a way that is systematic, easy, and fast. As a result of teachers recording their implementation integrity, this allows for one form of evidence that implementation procedures occurred as intended. Lastly, given the recommendation for teachers to periodically observe other teachers as they implement HELPS, this provides yet another mechanism for understanding and evaluating a teacher's implementation integrity.

Implementing the HELPS Program (Part 1)

Materials and Training

The following chapter includes the preliminary information and primary training exercises that teachers will need to effectively implement the HELPS Program. First, teachers will read about the materials needed for HELPS implementation. Because the HELPS Curriculum is a comprehensive and integral set of implementation materials needed for the HELPS Program, teachers will learn important characteristics of the Curriculum. Next, teachers will follow the training steps that will ultimately guide them through the remaining portions of this Manual, and thereby prepare them to successfully implement the HELPS Program.

When reading this chapter and completing the various practice exercises, teachers will regularly need to refer to HELPS implementation materials (e.g., the HELPS Curriculum teacher passages, the HELPS Implementation Protocol, Flow Chart, Scripted Directions, etc.). Also, as part of training steps described in this chapter, teachers will ultimately learn when they should read the subsequent chapters in this Manual. As such, to ensure adequate training in the HELPS Program, teachers must read this chapter thoroughly and carefully.

OVERVIEW OF MATERIALS NEEDED FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In order to implement the HELPS Program, teachers need to have the following materials prior to starting each session:

1. **Stop watch.** A stop-watch with a “silent-beep” is usually less distracting for students and thus better to use during HELPS sessions.
2. **Teacher passages** (i.e., the HELPS Curriculum passages that include number counts at the end of each line).
3. **Student passages** (i.e., the HELPS Curriculum passages with larger font sizes and exclude number counts at the end of each line).
4. **Dry-erase marker.** A teacher uses this to score Timed Readings on the teacher passage. All types of dry-erase markers will work, but teachers sometimes prefer markers with a smaller tip and an eraser at the other end. Dry-erase markers are used so that information can be erased after each session, thereby allowing teachers to “re-use” the teacher passages with all students.
5. **Pencil.** A teacher must use a pencil to record information on the Student Graph, Start Chart, and Progress Tracking Form. Pens are discouraged because information may need to be erased at times.
6. **Student’s Progress Tracking Form.**¹ The respective Progress Tracking Form for first, second, third, and fourth grade students is shown in Appendices B-E (pp. 103-110).
7. **Student’s Star Chart.**¹ The Star Chart is shown in Appendix F (p. 111).
8. **Student’s Graph.**¹ The respective Student Graph for first, second, third, and fourth grade students is shown in Appendices G-J (pp. 112-115).
9. **Bonus Bag.** A teacher uses this as part of the Reward procedure, as described on pp. 48-52.

(List continues on following page)

10. **Implementation Flow Chart.** A teacher should refer to this each session to best facilitate HELPS implementation (see Appendix K, p. 116). Each session, teachers also need to review the Flow Chart to record whether they implemented all HELPS procedures numbered in the Flow Chart.
11. **Scripted Directions.** A teacher should refer to this each session to best facilitate HELPS implementation (see Appendix L, p. 117). Because the Flow Chart and Scripted Directions are needed each session, these materials are provided in a plastic page-protector for teachers in the front of the book of teacher passages (for those who purchased the pre-assembled HELPS Curriculum and Teacher’s Manual). The page-protected Flow Chart and Scripted Directions should always be placed on the table in front of the teacher during each session.
12. **Prize Box.** This refers to the box (or bag) of prizes from which a student selects a reward after earning enough stars on her Star Chart. The Prize Box is also described on pp. 48-52.

¹For organization purposes, each student who receives the HELPS Program should have his own folder. Within the folder, teachers should place the student’s Graph, Progress Tracking Form, Star Chart, and perhaps any additional pages relevant to the student’s performance with HELPS. Using a folder with pockets is recommended. Because teachers will likely implement HELPS with multiple students, each student receiving HELPS should have his own folder, which should assist teachers with organization and preparation.

THE HELPS CURRICULUM

The HELPS Curriculum (Begeny, Mann, Cunningham, & Tsuen, 2009) was developed with numerous considerations in mind, all of which were guided by a goal to create a large set of reading passages that can be effectively used with elementary-aged students in the context of fluency-based instruction (in particular, for use with the HELPS Program). When creating the HELPS Curriculum, the authors set out to develop a set of passages that:

1. Are age-appropriate and interesting for a range of elementary-aged students, with at least 50 passages that seem age-appropriate for older students (see p. 10 for related information).
2. Range in topic area.
3. Have readability levels that are appropriate for the students who will likely receive the HELPS Program.
4. Contain both expository and narrative text.
5. Include a full story (for narrative passages) or meaningful set of information (with expository passages) with no more than approximately 150-200 words per passage. This word-count range was set so that students can read a meaningful story/passage within the brief amount of implementation time needed for HELPS. (The final word-count statistics for the HELPS Curriculum passages are as follows: $M = 181.9$; $SD = 15.4$; $range = 147-209$).
6. Contain stories with both first-person and third-person narratives.
7. Contain stories with past, present, and future tenses.
8. Contain topics with cultural diversity.
9. Contain a “moral” within some stories. These “morals” could then be discussed with the student after a HELPS session, as teachers find appropriate.
10. Contain a balanced proportion of male and female names/characters, as well as several names that are common of individuals living outside of the United States.
11. Contain several words from the Dolch High Frequency Word Lists (Dolch, 1948/2007), including the Dolch Word-List of Nouns. Additional information regarding the importance of including words from the Dolch lists is described below.
12. Do not contain pictures, as pictures contain cues for word-reading. For the purposes of developing a student’s reading fluency, pictures weaken the opportunity for this type of reading development.

Each of the above considerations are important for a variety of reasons, all of which relate to developing instructional passages that will help teachers improve students' reading fluency development. Table 3 summarizes characteristics of the HELPS Curriculum.

Table 3
Characteristics of the HELPS Curriculum Passages

N = Total number of passages; NA = Not Applicable; AVG = Average value across all 100 passages

Category	Relevant Characteristics to the Category (and Values)				
Type of Passage	Narrative N = 66	Expository N = 26	Mixed N = 8		
Type of Narrator	First-person N = 50	Third-person N = 24	NA N = 26		
Primary Verb Tense	Past N = 61	Present N = 31	Future N = 3	Equal Mix of > 1 Type N = 5	
Clearly Includes Diversity ¹	Yes N = 17	No N = 83			
Clearly Includes Moral from Story	Yes N = 26	No N = 74			
Percentage of Unique Dolch Words ²	Pre-primer AVG = 15.0% Range = 8-22%	Primer AVG = 14.4% Range = 6-22%	1 st Grade AVG = 9.5% Range = 3-15%	2 nd Grade AVG = 5.8% Range = 2-12%	3 rd grade AVG = 4.1% Range = 0-10%

¹ The passage contains at least some content that clearly describes something (or someone) outside of typical U.S. culture.

² The data displayed in this row represent the average number of Dolch words found per HELPS Curriculum passage. Data are reported separately for the five primary Dolch Word Lists (e.g., Pre-Primer, first grade, second grade, etc.). Ranges indicate the lowest and highest percentage of Dolch words found in a HELPS passage. Across all HELPS Curriculum passages, 100% of the Dolch High Frequency Words are found in at least one passage, with most words appearing numerous times throughout the HELPS Curriculum. In addition, 97.9% of all words from the Dolch Word List of Nouns appear at least once in the HELPS Curriculum.

Importance of Including Words from the Dolch High Frequency Word-Lists

The words from the Dolch High Frequency Word-Lists (Dolch, 1948/2007) represent the most frequently occurring service words (e.g., pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs) in text, particularly in children's literature. As children develop their reading skills, they need to learn and recognize these words in order to attain proper reading fluency (Dolch, 2007). Many of the words from the Dolch Word-Lists cannot be sounded out or represented by pictures. Therefore, repeated practice with these words is essential for early reading success. Considering these factors, the HELPS Curriculum integrates 100% of the words from Dolch's High Frequency Word Lists to best ensure that students receiving HELPS are able to fluently read all words from the Dolch lists.

Vocabulary and Comprehension Instruction with the HELPS Curriculum Passages

As described more fully in the section on modifying HELPS procedures to strengthen vocabulary and comprehension (pp. 66-67), the HELPS Curriculum passages were also developed with the knowledge that some teachers may want to supplement the HELPS Implementation Protocol by implementing interventions to improve students' comprehension and vocabulary skills. For example, HELPS Curriculum passages primarily contain words of which most students will know the meaning, but the majority of passages contain 2-6 words that are probably unknown to most students. Although research suggests that students can build vocabulary simply by receiving fluency-based interventions such as HELPS, the HELPS Curriculum passages allow teachers to specifically address vocabulary development (via supplemental intervention) when needed. Likewise, given the content of passages in the HELPS Curriculum, teachers should find it easy to develop meaningful comprehension questions if they wish to supplement the HELPS Program with interventions that specifically target comprehension skills.

Grade Levels of the HELPS Curriculum Passages

As described elsewhere in the Manual, the *age-appropriateness* of the HELPS Curriculum passages are suitable for elementary-aged students, with the latter part of the Curriculum probably age-appropriate for students as old as fifth and sixth grade, and possibly appropriate for older students with reading difficulties.

However, at this time, there is no research to suggest a consistently reliable and valid way to assess the reading fluency *difficulty level* of a passage (e.g., Ardoin, Suldo, Witt, Aldrich, & McDonald, 2005) and assign that passage a fitting "grade level." Perhaps the best measure of passage difficulty level in fluency is to simply have students read the passage aloud. As summarized on pp. 72-73, this was the measure used to sequence the passages in the HELPS Curriculum. Therefore, on average, the passages in the HELPS Curriculum have evidence of becoming increasingly more difficult for the students most likely to read the passages (i.e., those students described throughout Chapter 2). For example, for most early elementary-aged students, Passage 15 should be more difficult than Passage 1, Passage 30 should be more difficult than Passage 15, and so forth. Within a range of approximately 15 passages (e.g., Passages 1-15), the passage difficulty should also become increasingly (though slightly) more difficult, but individual factors of each student will influence this (e.g., the student's relative knowledge of the content in the passage, her relative amount of exposure to the specific words in the passage, her vocabulary of words in the passage). Therefore, it would be impossible to create a sequence of 100 passages in which each passage is slightly more difficult for *every* student. It is therefore inappropriate to assign a specific "grade-associated difficulty level" to each passage in the Curriculum.

With this said, there is good evidence to suggest that the passages in the beginning part of the HELPS Curriculum are well suited for first and second grade students, the middle portion of passages are ability-appropriate for second and third grade students, and the latter part of the Curriculum should be appropriate for fourth and fifth grade students who have at least some reading fluency difficulties. Of course, this provides only general estimates of grade-level for the passages. In short, it is not necessary to know the specific grade level of each passage, because the HELPS Program and Curriculum are designed (and research-validated) to be effective when implemented in the ways described throughout the Manual (including use of the HELPS Placement Assessment, as described on pp. 53-54). In this way, the HELPS Curriculum is associated with the grade and ability level of the students for whom the Program is intended (i.e., the students described in Chapter 2).

Occasionally, researchers in the area of reading fluency assess reading fluency difficulty with a supposed measure of comprehension difficulty (i.e., with readability analyses). This makes some sense, but researchers have sometimes found readability analyses to be poor to moderate predictors of ORF

difficulty level (e.g., Ardoin et al., 2005). However, for teachers interested in knowing the readability levels of the HELPS Curriculum passages, they generally range from first to fifth grade (depending on the specific readability formula used) and fit the grade-level appropriateness described above. Additional information about readability levels can be obtained from the author, if requested.

TRAINING NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT THE HELPS PROGRAM

One way for teachers to learn the HELPS Program is to participate in a live workshop (i.e., a HELPS Workshop). HELPS Workshops are hosted by one or more certified HELPS Program Trainers. Certified HELPS Trainers have attended a full-day HELPS Workshop (or completed an equivalent form of training), implemented at least 15 HELPS sessions, and received additional training and materials needed to host HELPS Workshops. Teachers interested in attending a HELPS Workshop can inquire about this via the HELPS Program Website (www.helpsprogram.org) or by email contact (helpsprogram@gmail.com). Often, HELPS Workshops are hosted for free and teachers working in public school systems typically receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs) by attending the workshop. Also, as described in Chapter 8, some schools are eligible to receive a free HELPS workshop and related consultative services.

Teachers who are unable to attend a HELPS Workshop should be able to successfully learn the HELPS Implementation Protocol by carefully reading this Manual, watching the HELPS Program Training Video, and completing all training exercises associated with the Manual and Video. Teachers are unlikely to implement HELPS in the most effective way possible if they do not read all sections of this Manual and complete all training exercises from the Manual and Video. **For teachers to effectively implement the HELPS Program, they must correctly implement all procedures from the HELPS Implementation Protocol (Appendix A, p. 101) and the HELPS Program Tips and Reminders (Appendix M, p. 118).**

Listed below are the steps a teacher must complete to effectively implement the HELPS Program. The required training steps were developed from years of training teachers to use HELPS. These steps should therefore represent the most effective and efficient method of training.

This section of the Manual is sub-divided into two primary areas: training for teachers who did attend a live HELPS Workshop, and training for those who did not. Furthermore, the training steps for teachers who did not attend a HELPS Workshop will also include three exercises from the section, *The HELPS Program Training Video Exercises* (pp. 22-25). In this way, teachers will be required to refer back and forth between the present section and the section titled, *The HELPS Program Training Video Exercises*. This is not meant to confuse teachers. These sections are separated because of the detailed nature of the Training Video exercises and because the Training Video exercises are usually unnecessary for teachers who already attended a HELPS Program Workshop.

HELPS Program Training Steps for Teachers Who Did Not Attend a HELPS Workshop Overview

The amount of time needed for a teacher to learn the HELPS procedures will vary depending on each teacher's prior familiarity with procedures. Overall, a teacher will likely need 5 to 9.5 hours of training prior to implementing the HELPS Program comfortably with students. This amount of training will result in the teacher completing HELPS Training Steps 1-9 (of the 12) listed below. Integrated within the HELPS Training Steps, teachers will also complete each step in the HELPS Program Training Video (described separately on pp. 22-25 because of the detailed nature of the Training Video exercises). **For clarity, please note that the HELPS Training Steps are not the same as the steps in the HELPS Training Video.**

Upon completing HELPS Training Step 9, teachers should be able to implement the Program (i.e., implement both the HELPS Implementation Protocol and the HELPS Program Tips and Reminders) with

approximately 90-100% accuracy each session, and they should continue to become more fluent with their implementation. During Step 10, teachers should be implementing HELPS in approximately 10-12 minutes each session, and will likely continue implementing the procedures more quickly over time.

Training Steps

1. Read *The HELPS Program Training Video Exercises* (pp. 22-25) and complete Exercise 1 of the Training Video. **Do not begin Exercises 2 or 3 of the HELPS Training Video until completing the appropriate HELPS Training Steps listed immediately below.**
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 20-30 minutes.
2. Read each preceding section of this Manual (pp. x-19) to (a) better understand the rationale and intended use of HELPS and (b) become familiar with the brief Glossary of Terms listed on pp. xi-xiii. The Glossary is important to reference while reading the HELPS Manual because the Manual and implementation materials include terms and names teachers may be unfamiliar with. If you have already read all the previous pages of this Manual, proceed to Step 3 below.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 30-45 minutes.
3. Read pp. 26-42 of Chapter 4 and complete the associated training activities. In this step, you should learn how to implement and score a Timed Reading.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 15 minutes-1.5 hours (duration will vary considerably, depending on the teacher's prior familiarity with the Timed Reading procedure)
4. Complete Exercise 2 of the HELPS Training Video. Prior to watching the associated vignettes, be sure to read the information about the exercise on pp. 23-24.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 15-30 minutes (duration will vary depending on the teacher's familiarity with the Timed Reading procedure)
5. Read pp. 42-55 of Chapter 4 and complete the associated training activities. In this step, you should learn how to implement the remaining HELPS procedures and should start reviewing the various Tips and Reminders (Appendix M) associated with each HELPS procedure.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 30 minutes-1.5 hours (duration will vary depending on the teacher's familiarity with the HELPS procedures)
6. Complete Exercise 3 of the HELPS Training Video. Prior to watching the associated vignettes, be sure to read the information about the exercise on pp. 24-25.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 1.25-1.75 hours (duration will vary depending on the teacher's familiarity with the HELPS procedures)
7. Finish reading the remaining chapters and sections of this Manual. This step is important because it should answer frequently asked questions about HELPS implementation and allow you to better understand the research and development of HELPS. Chapter 8 will also provide information about how teachers and schools may be eligible to obtain free educational materials and services.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 1-1.5 hours.
8. Practice implementing the HELPS Program at least 2-3 sessions (with students).
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 40-60 minutes.
9. Take the HELPS Quiz (see Appendix W, p. 130). This quiz should assist you in better understanding what you do and do not know well about the HELPS implementation procedures.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 20-30 minutes.

(Steps continue on following page)

10. Implement the HELPS Program 4-8 more times. Before and after these sessions, regularly consult with the Manual regarding questions that arise during the process of implementing the Program.
To enhance the effectiveness of this step, available teachers who have completed HELPS Training Steps 1-11 should observe you periodically to answer questions you have and provide feedback about your implementation. Sometimes teachers dislike this step because they do not like being observed by others while teaching. However, over the four initial years of developing HELPS and training teachers to implement the procedures, nearly 100% of teachers said they benefited from being observed and receiving feedback about implementation. Thus, like the students you work with as part of the HELPS Program, practice and feedback regarding your HELPS implementation will improve your implementation fluency. For the teacher observing your HELPS implementation, she should use the Implementation Integrity Recording Form located in Appendix Y, p. 137.
11. Continue implementing HELPS, receiving periodic observations and feedback from others (similar to the ways described in Step 10) to best ensure implementation accuracy.
As needed, consult the HELPS Manual for guidance. If questions cannot be answered with the HELPS Manual, submit your question at helpsprogram@gmail.com or through the *Contact Us* link on the HELPS Program website (www.helpsprogram.org).
12. Upon completing Steps 1-11, you should be qualified to help other teachers learn the HELPS Program, serving as an observer and feedback provider in the ways described in Step 10.
If you are interested in becoming a certified HELPS Trainer (which may involve hosting workshops to train teachers in the HELPS procedures), please indicate your interest at the HELPS Program website or by email contact.

HELPS Program Training Steps for Teachers Who Attended a HELPS Workshop Overview

After completing 3 to 6 hours of training during one or more HELPS Workshops, teachers will likely need to devote another 1.5 to 3 hours completing additional HELPS Training Steps. This amount of training will result in the teacher completing HELPS Training Steps 1-4 (of the 7) listed below. As such, including training that occurs during the HELPS Workshop and the subsequent activities, teachers will likely need a total of 5 to 7.5 hours of training prior to implementing the HELPS Program comfortably with students. The total amount of time needed for a teacher to learn the HELPS procedures will vary depending on each teacher's prior familiarity with the procedures.

Upon completing HELPS Training Step 4, teachers should be able to implement the Program (i.e., implement both the HELPS Implementation Protocol and the HELPS Program Tips and Reminders) with approximately 90-100% accuracy each session, and they should continue to become more fluent with their implementation. During Step 5, teachers should be able to implement HELPS in approximately 10-12 minutes each session, and will likely continue to implement the procedures more quickly over time.

Training Steps

1. After attending a 4-7 hour HELPS Workshop, review the HELPS Program Training Video and the HELPS Manual as needed to answer any questions that were not covered in the Workshop.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 15-60 minutes.
Note: HELPS Workshops conducted in less than 4 hours will likely require you to review and complete (as needed) the HELPS Training Steps described on pp. 20-21.

(Steps continue on following page)

2. Finish reading the portions of this Manual that were not thoroughly covered during the Workshop. For example, frequently asked implementation questions (e.g., where do students begin in the HELPS Curriculum, what should be done if a student does not meet his Goal regularly) should be read or reviewed. Chapter 8 will also provide information about how teachers and schools may be eligible to obtain free educational materials and services.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 30-60 minutes.
3. Practice implementing the HELPS Program at least 2-3 sessions.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 30-40 minutes.
4. Take the HELPS Quiz (see Appendix W, p. 130). This quiz should assist you in better understanding what they do and do not know well about the HELPS implementation procedures.
Approximate time needed to complete this step: 15-20 minutes.
5. Implement the HELPS Program 4-8 more times. Before and after these sessions, regularly consult with the Manual regarding questions that arise during the process of implementing the Program. To enhance the effectiveness of this step, available teachers who have completed HELPS Training Steps 1-6 should observe you periodically to answer questions you have and provide feedback about your implementation. Sometimes teachers dislike this step because they do not like being observed by others while teaching. However, over the four initial years of developing HELPS and training teachers to implement the procedures, nearly 100% of teachers said they benefited from being observed and receiving feedback about implementation. Thus, like the students you work with as part of the HELPS Program, practice and feedback regarding your HELPS implementation will improve your implementation fluency. For the teacher observing your HELPS implementation, she should use the Implementation Integrity Recording Form located in Appendix Y, p. 137.
6. Continue implementing HELPS, receiving periodic observations and feedback from others (similar to the ways described in Step 5) to best ensure implementation accuracy.
As needed, consult the HELPS Manual for guidance. If questions cannot be answered with the HELPS Manual, submit your question at helpsprogram@gmail.com or through the *Contact Us* link on the HELPS Program website (www.helpsprogram.org).
7. Upon completing Steps 1-6, you should be qualified to help other teachers learn the HELPS Program, serving as an observer and feedback provider in the ways described in Step 5.
If you are interested in becoming a certified HELPS Trainer (which may involve hosting workshops to train teachers in the HELPS procedures), please indicate your interest at the HELPS Program website or by email contact.

THE HELPS PROGRAM TRAINING VIDEO EXERCISES

To effectively learn how to implement the HELPS Program, teachers should watch the video segments (i.e., vignettes) in the HELPS Training Video and carefully read the HELPS Teacher’s Manual. As described in the HELPS Training Steps (pp. 19-21), teachers must read specific sections of the HELPS Manual prior to completing each Training Video exercise. **The HELPS Program Training Video is accessible from the HELPS website (www.helpsprogram.org). After logging in, the Training Video appears with the other downloadable materials associated with the HELPS One-on-One Program.**

The HELPS Training Video offers three basic training exercises. First, teachers watch Vignette 1 of the Training Video to gain an overall understanding of how the HELPS Program is implemented. Teachers then need to read more information from the Manual before beginning Training Video Exercise 2. After this reading, Training Video Exercise 2 helps teachers master the scoring procedures for Timed Readings. Following this exercise, teachers are again asked to read information from the Manual. After doing so, teachers complete Training Video Exercise 3, which will allow them to better learn the overall HELPS

Implementation Protocol. After completing this Video Exercise, teachers once again return to the HELPS Training Steps in order to complete steps unrelated to the Training Video.

To facilitate the effectiveness of each exercise in the HELPS Training Video, information about the exercise is described. For instance, the general content, training instructions, needed materials, and purpose of the vignettes are described. **Prior to beginning each exercise from the HELPS Training Video, teachers should read all information about the exercise so they know what to expect from the relevant vignette(s) and how to prepare.**

Note. Instructions and information in this section will use the term *teachers in training* to refer to teachers who are learning to implement the HELPS Program. This term is used throughout this section to distinguish teachers in training from the teachers shown in the HELPS Training Video.

HELPS Training Video—Exercise 1

Vignette 1: Demonstration of HELPS Procedures Implemented in a Complete HELPS Session

Content. Vignette 1 contains a sample demonstration of a teacher accurately implementing all procedures in the HELPS Implementation Protocol. In this vignette, the student meets his Goal. Therefore, the teacher follows the implementation procedures associated with a student meeting his Goal. (Teachers in training will soon learn that HELPS implementation procedures are slightly different when a student does not meet the Reading Goal).

Instructions and purpose. To gain an overall understanding of the HELPS implementation procedures, teachers in training should watch this vignette following along with their HELPS Implementation Protocol (Appendix A) and Scripted Directions (Appendix L).

Materials needed. HELPS Implementation Protocol; HELPS Scripted Directions; HELPS Curriculum teacher passages 4 and 5.

Note. As listed on p. 20 of the HELPS Training Steps, after watching Vignette 1, teachers should not proceed to Exercise 2 of the HELPS Training Video until they have read particular content from this Manual. Teachers should refer to p. 20 for specific instructions.

HELPS Training Video—Exercise 2

Important: Before watching these vignettes, teachers in training must have read the information and instructions on pp. 26-42 to learn how to implement and score Timed Readings.

Vignettes 2-6: Training Exercises for Scoring a Timed Reading

Content. Vignettes 2-6 show five different instances of a teacher implementing a Timed Reading. Sometimes the teacher uses the Scripted Directions and sometimes the teacher uses the Abbreviated Directions.

Instructions and purpose. When watching Vignettes 2-6, teachers in training should refer to the relevant teacher passage and should score the student's Timed Reading while the student in the video reads aloud. After each reading, the teacher in training should compare her scoring to the scoring key shown on the video at the end of each vignette. These exercises allow teachers in training to gain practice and feedback about scoring accuracy for Timed Readings.

Training information. A teacher in training is considered to have successfully passed the Timed Reading training exercises when she scores at least three vignettes with 100% Percentage Agreement (if needed,

review information about calculating Percentage Agreement on pp. 34-37). If a teacher in training does not achieve this after watching the five vignettes in the HELPS Training Video, she should practice scoring the Timed Readings that occur throughout Training Video Exercise 3 until this criterion is met.

Materials needed. HELPS Scripted Directions; HELPS Abbreviated Directions; HELPS Curriculum teacher passages 8 (Vignette 2), 71 (Vignette 3), 9 (Vignette 4), 35 (Vignette 5), and 33 (Vignette 6); For reference, also have available the Summary of Timed Reading Scoring Rules (Appendix O, pp. 121).

Note. As listed on p. 20 of the HELPS Training Steps, after completing Training Video Exercise 2, teachers should not proceed to Training Video Exercise 3 until they have read particular content from this Manual. Teachers should refer to p. 20 for specific instructions.

HELPS Training Video—Exercise 3

Important: Before watching these vignettes, teachers in training must have read the information and instructions on pp. 26-55 to learn how to implement all HELPS procedures.

Vignettes 7-10: Training Exercises for Implementing HELPS Procedures

Content. In each of the vignettes 7-11, teachers in the video implement a complete HELPS session. Vignettes 7, 9, and 10 show teachers following the set of procedures that occur when a student does not meet the Reading Goal. Vignettes 8 and 11 show teachers following the set of procedures that occur when a student meets the Reading Goal. For purposes of exposure, teachers in vignettes 10 and 11 use the HELPS Scripted Directions, whereas teachers use the HELPS Abbreviated Directions in vignettes 7-9. Important to note: vignettes 8-11 show teachers making some implementation errors. This is done for training purposes and the associated training activities are described below.

Instructions and purpose. Prior to watching these vignettes, teachers in training should first read and complete all practice exercises associated with the HELPS Program Core Procedures (pp. 26-55). When completed, teachers should watch vignettes 7-11 and follow along on their HELPS Implementation Flow Chart (Appendix K) and Abbreviated Directions (Appendix N) or Scripted Directions (Appendix L) while the teacher in the video implements the procedures. Teachers in training might also score the Timed Readings in order to obtain additional practice with this procedure. In vignettes 8-11, teachers in training should look for implementation errors made by the teachers in the video. Mistakes made by teachers in the video are purposeful and are shown so that teachers in training can identify correct *and* incorrect implementation procedures. When teachers in training identify an implementation error from the video, this should be noted as either a:

1. Major Implementation Error (e.g., the teacher fails to implement a core implementation procedure from the protocol), or
2. Minor Implementation Error (e.g., the teacher improperly implements a procedure that should be corrected in subsequent sessions, but the severity of the implementation error is unlikely to compromise the overall effect of that particular session). Minor Implementation Errors often occur when a teacher fails to implement the HELPS Program Tips and Reminders (Appendix M).

Training information. At the end of each vignette, the video screen will list all Major and Minor Implementation Errors made by teachers in the video. Additionally, the screen will show a list of General Considerations and Comments related to the respective session. This is primarily done so that teachers can consider the possible implementation nuances and student-related events that may occur in a HELPS session. If a teacher in training is unable to identify a Major and/or Minor Implementation error made by teachers in the video, this feedback should call attention to implementation procedures the teacher in training should review. In this way, teachers in training might want to review the relevant

portions of the vignette a second time so they better understand the reason behind the implementation error. Lastly, each vignette will conclude by showing a screen that depicts the Student Graph, Progress Tracking Form, and each Timed Reading score associated with that HELPS session. Teachers can skip the screens depicting the Timed Reading scores if they already passed the criterion described in HELPS Training Video Exercise 2. **Note: All of the aforementioned screens will appear for only 5 seconds. As such, each screen should be paused when it appears so that teachers in training can read the content and, as applicable, discuss that content with a HELPS Workshop facilitator.**

Materials needed. HELPS Implementation Flow Chart; HELPS Abbreviated Directions (Vignettes 7-9); HELPS Scripted Directions (Vignettes 10 and 11); HELPS Curriculum teacher passages 31 (Vignette 7), 37 and 38 (Vignette 8), 71 (Vignette 9), 25 (Vignette 10), 25 and 26 (Vignette 11); For reference, also have available the HELPS Implementation Protocol and the Summary of Timed Reading Scoring Rules.

After completing all Steps of the HELPS Training Video, teachers should return to the HELPS Training Steps listed on p. 20.

Implementing the HELPS Program (Part 2)

Core Procedures

The following chapter describes the core procedures needed to implement the HELPS Program. Each section within this chapter begins by describing the overall purpose of the procedure and relevant background information, including key research related to the procedure. Next, implementation rules of each procedure are described, sometimes referring the teacher to other portions of the Manual as needed. At the end of this chapter, teachers learn how to use the Student Graph, Star Chart, Progress Tracking Form, and HELPS Placement Assessment. Training exercises are also included throughout the chapter, including numerous exercises to help teachers learn one of the more complicated implementation procedures: the Repeated Reading/Timed Reading procedure.

IMPLEMENTING THE REPEATED READING (AND TIMED READING) PROCEDURE

Overall Purpose and Relevant Background Information

The overall purpose of the HELPS Repeated Reading (RR) procedure is to allow students to receive structured, repeated practice opportunities to orally read ability-appropriate text. By using a RR procedure in combination with other fluency-based instructional strategies, students not only become better readers of the text they practice, they also develop skills that allow them to read *new* text more fluently and often with better comprehension (Begeny & Martens, 2006; Chard et al., 2002; NRP, 2000; Therrien, 2004).

The design and structure of the RR procedure used in HELPS is purposeful and was developed from information obtained across numerous research studies that investigated the effects of RR under different situations and with a range of student populations, such as those with and without learning difficulties (e.g., Kuhn & Stahl, 2003; Meyer & Felton, 1999; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006; Therrien, 2004). For example, it is important that students read each passage in the HELPS Curriculum at least 4 times, and that they receive feedback about their reading from a teacher. Teachers will also note that the RR procedure in HELPS is separated by other instructional strategies (described in detail later). This sequence of strategies is also purposeful. For instance, by interspersing Modeling and Phrase-drill Error Correction procedures throughout the HELPS Implementation Protocol, students should maximally benefit from each of the separate instructional procedures, including the RR procedure.

Relationships between Repeated Reading, Timed Reading, and Curriculum-Based Measures of Reading

At the most basic level, the HELPS RR procedure requires that students orally read a given passage multiple times across at least two sessions. Put another way, the HELPS RR procedure involves several Timed Readings of the same passage (refer to the Glossary for a definition of Timed Reading if needed). Therefore, the following rules for the HELPS RR procedure will describe the steps and scoring rules for implementing a Timed Reading.

The rules for implementing and scoring the Timed Readings are in most cases identical to the curriculum-based measures of reading (CBM-R) administration rules that many teachers are familiar

with. For teachers unfamiliar with the acronyms, *CBM* or *CBM-R*, they may be familiar with related acronyms such as CBA (Curriculum Based Assessment) and/or progress monitoring assessment systems such as: (a) The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS; Good & Kaminski, 2002) and the related DIBELS measure known as DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (DORF), (b) AIMSweb (2008) Oral Reading Fluency assessments, or the more recent (c) Easy CBM (2009).

For teachers who have regularly used any of the above assessment systems, they should be able to learn the HELPS Program Timed Reading implementation rules (and therefore the RR procedure) very quickly. This is because the Timed Reading implementation rules are highly similar—if not identical—to the typical CBM-R administration procedures. However, even teachers who are highly familiar with CBM-R should still review the following implementation rules, as they may differ somewhat from previously used CBM-R procedures.

Given the strong overlap between the HELPS Program Timed Reading procedure (intended for *instructional* purposes) and CBM-R procedure (intended for *assessment* purposes), **teachers should be clear that the primary purpose of the HELPS Program is for instructional purposes.** However, as described in other sections of the Manual (e.g., pp. 26-27, pp. 75-76), a unique component of HELPS is that it integrates an important assessment component *within* the instructional program. Thus, by using a Timed Reading instructional procedure that is consistent with the CBM-R assessment procedure, a student's reading skills can be both strengthened and assessed.

Implementation Rules (Timed Reading Procedure)

As shown in the HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions (Appendix L), implement the following steps during a Timed Reading:

1. Place the teacher copy of the passage in front of you but shielded so the student cannot see what you record. The teacher copy of each passage contains word counts at the end of each line.
2. Place the student copy of the reading passage in front of the student, but cover the beginning portion of the passage until you are ready for Step 4 below. (Do this so the student does not begin reading while you provide directions).
3. Say to the student, **“Here is a story that I would like you to read. When I say ‘Begin’, start reading aloud at the top of the page and read across the page. Try to read each word. If you come to a word you don’t know, I’ll tell it to you. Do you have any questions? Be sure to do your BEST reading.”**
4. Say, **“Begin!”** and start the stopwatch when the student says the first word.
5. Score the student's WCPM and WIPM according to the Timed Reading Scoring Rules (see below).
6. At the end of one minute, place a closed bracket (**]**) after the last word.
7. If the student reads so fast that no expression is given, remind the student that when he/she reads the next story, you want him/her to read at a comfortable rate (i.e., with good expression, like when you read).
8. Remove both copies of the reading passage.

Within a given session, the student will ultimately receive three to four Timed Readings. As such, during a HELPS session the teacher can use the HELPS One-on-One Program: Abbreviated Directions (Appendix N, p. 120) during Timed Readings two, three, and (when applicable) four.

Timed Reading Scoring Rules

Overview

While a student reads a passage aloud, the teacher is expected to mark on the teacher passage all WIPM. As noted on each teacher passage, the teacher will use different codes to mark WIPM during the

three different Timed Readings a student completes with a passage in a day's session. The following indicates how teachers should mark WIPM during the three different readings: Reading 1 (mark WIPM with a diagonal slash); Reading 2 (mark WIPM with an underline); Reading 3: (mark WIPM with a circle around the word).

At exactly one minute, the teacher should draw a bracket (i.e., **J**) just after the last word read at one minute. The bracket represents the Total Words Read (TWR) per minute. The teacher then subtracts the total number of WIPM from the TWR to get the total number of WCPM. For example, if the student scored: TWR = 88 and WIPM = 3, the student's WCPM for that reading would be 85 (i.e., $88 - 3 = 85$).

The following sections (divided into Parts A-G) detail how to score Timed Readings and compute data related to Timed Readings (e.g., TWR, WIPM, WCPM). Most sections include practice exercises to help teachers learn the scoring rules. All exercises should be completed before teachers attempt the training exercises found in the HELPS Training Video. Answers to the practice exercises from Parts A-E are on pp. 41-42.

Organization of Timed Readings Scoring Rules:

- ❖ Part A lists and illustrates types of reading errors that should be scored as a WIPM.
- ❖ Part B lists and illustrates instances that should be considered a WCPM.
- ❖ Part C lists and illustrates unique types of scoring rules.
- ❖ Part D illustrates how teachers compute WCPM from a scored passage.
- ❖ Part E describes the purpose and computation formula for Percentage Agreement calculations.
- ❖ Part F provides sample passages and practice exercises which integrate all Timed Reading scoring rules.
- ❖ Part G describes additional tips and common mistakes related to scoring and implementing Timed Readings.

Part A: Scoring WIPM

The following list indicates all types of reading errors that should be scored as a WIPM:

1. Mispronounced words
2. Substituted words
3. Omitted words
4. Reversals
5. Adding or omitting endings to words
6. Hesitations

Mispronounced words are counted as errors.

Example 1

Why don't you get lost, Seth?

WCPM = 6

read as:

"Why don't you get last, Seth?"

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2

Then we walked over to the hard candy.

WCPM = 8

read as:

"Then we waked over to the hard candy."

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Substituted words are counted as errors.

Example 1

Jenna and I ran inside my house.
read as:
"Jenna and I ran into my house."

WCPM = 7

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2

In class we read our books aloud.
read as:
"In class we read our stories aloud."

WCPM = 7

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Omitted words are counted as errors. (Note: Omitted lines or multiple words within a line are described in Part C).

Example 1

She likes to play in the mud, climb trees, and build things.
read as:
"She likes to play in the mud, climb, and build things."

WCPM = 12

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2

We looked at the ground and saw lots of bugs.
read as:
"We looked at the ground and saw bugs."

WCPM = 10

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Reversals. When a student reverses (i.e., transposes) the words in a passage, this is counted as one error as long as the transposed words were read correctly. (Note: this scoring rule may differ slightly from some CBM-R scoring rules).

Example 1

Mrs. Mellon smiled softly, but waited a moment to respond.
read as:
"Mrs. Mellon softly smiled, but waited a moment to respond."

WCPM = 10

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2

Dad said there are other fun things that we can do.
read as:
"Dad said are there fun other things that we can do."

WCPM = 11

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Adding or omitting endings (e.g., -ed, -ing, -s) to words are counted as errors.

Example 1

First, I ask Mom or Dad to turn on the oven.
read as:
"First, I asked Mom or Dad to turn on the oven."

WCPM = 11

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2

Plants needed the right amount of water.
read as:
"Plants need the right amount of water."

WCPM = 7

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Scoring tip. Dialect occasionally influences whether a student reads the ending of some words. If dialect seems to influence this reading error, teachers should continue to score words read without proper endings as a WIPM. However, teachers should provide the student with specific feedback about this issue immediately after the Timed Reading. Also, to ensure the student is able to pronounce words with endings (e.g., *-ed*, *-s*), teachers should say one or more of the words the student read without the proper ending and have the student repeat the word. If the student cannot repeat the word correctly, it is possible the student may struggle with a speech-related difficulty rather than a reading-related difficulty.

Hesitations. If a student struggles on a word for more than 3 seconds (even if trying to sound out the word), the teacher should provide the word after 3 seconds and mark the word as an error. In the below examples, “...(3 sec)” means that the student struggled to read the word for 3 seconds and then the teacher provided the word.

Example 1

He would be squished!
read as:
“He would be ...(3 sec)”

WCPM = 4

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2

He would be squished!
read as:
“He would be sqq-uuu ...(3 sec)”

WCPM = 4

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 3

It is believed that avocados originated in Mexico.
read as:
“It is believed that av-o...(3 sec) originated in ...(3 sec).”

WCPM = 8

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Scoring tip. Very commonly, teachers wait too long to provide the word (i.e., 4 or more seconds), or they provide the word too quickly (i.e., in 1 or 2 seconds). Providing the word after exactly 3 seconds of a student struggling with a word can be challenging, but waiting too long or providing a word too quickly compromises the student’s *actual* Timed Reading score. To best implement this 3-second scoring rule, a teacher should not look at the stopwatch when a student struggles with a word. This makes scoring the Timed Reading much more difficult. Instead, the teacher should use a 3-second training strategy (such as the one that follows) to help recognize when 3 actual seconds pass.

Training tip. To learn when 3 actual seconds pass, the teacher should first look at a stop watch for one full minute, counting to herself with the stopwatch in 3-second intervals (e.g., the teacher may count to herself, “one-one-thousand, two-one-thousand, three-one-thousand” and then repeat while continuing to watch the stopwatch). Next, the teacher should start the stopwatch from zero (not looking at it) and count to herself to 3 seconds. When she reaches 3 seconds (mentally), she should stop the stopwatch and look to see if it actually reads 3 seconds. When the teacher can do this accurately 5-10 consecutive times, it is probable she can accurately count to 3 seconds mentally. When implementing a Timed Reading in a HELPS session, the teacher should immediately begin counting (mentally) to 3 seconds when a student begins to struggle reading a word. If she reaches 3 seconds, she should provide the word to the student.

Part B: Scoring WCPM

The following list indicates all instances that should be considered a WCPM. Teachers should note that some types of WCPM may seem like reading mistakes, but they are not scored as WIPM during Timed Readings.

1. Words pronounced correctly
2. Self-corrected words
3. Repeated words
4. Mispronounced words only because of dialect
5. Inserted words

Words pronounced correctly. Clearly, when a student reads/pronounces a word correctly, this is not counted as a WIPM. However, words must always be pronounced correctly given the context of the sentence.

Example 1

I think all magicians should dress that way.

WCPM = 8

read as:

“I think all magicians should dress that way.”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2 – The word “r-e-a-d” must be pronounced “red” when presented in the context of:

“She read them all by herself!”

WCPM = 6

not as:

“She reed them all by herself.”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Self-corrected words. A mispronounced word corrected within 3 seconds is not counted as a WIPM.

Example 1

“She saw what was scaring them.”

WCPM = 6

read as:

“She saw what was scary...(2 sec)...scaring them.”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Repeated words. A word read multiple times is not scored as a WIPM.

Example 1

“Mom looked at her garden.”

WCPM = 5

read as:

“Mom looked at... looked at her garden.”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Mispronounced words because of dialect. A pronunciation of a word that is accepted by local language norms should not be counted as a WIPM.

Example 1

Today, they are buying their very first car!

WCPM = 8

read as:

“Today, they are buying their very first cah!”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Inserted words. If a student “reads” a word that is not actually in the text, this is not scored as a WIPM.

Example 1

I don’t think Mom will let me have a penguin.

WCPM = 10

read as:

“I don’t think Mom will ever let me have a penguin.”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Part C: Unique Scoring Rules

The following list indicates unique types of scoring rules:

1. Omitted lines or multiple words within a line
2. Numbers written as numerals
3. Hyphenated words that can stand alone
4. Hyphenated words that cannot stand alone
5. Abbreviations

Omitted lines or multiple words within a line are not scored as errors, but they should always be deducted from the student's number of Total Words Read (TWR) because omitted lines (or multiple words within a line) should not be scored as WCPM. With respect to skipped words within a line (but not skipping all words in the line), use the above scoring rule if students skip 4 or more words within that line. If a student skips only one, two, or three consecutive words, count each skipped word as one WIPM. (Note: this scoring rule may differ slightly from some CBM-R scoring rules).

Example 1

My new baby brother likes to sleep.

He does not want to play.

He only wants to sleep.

WCPM = 18

read as:

"My new baby brother likes to sleep.

He only wants to sleep."

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2

Today I am going camping with my family. When I got to my house, my mother and father were putting everything in the van. Father said I could be in charge of the checklist.

WCPM = 34

read as:

"Today I am going camping with my family. When I got to my house...Father said I could be in charge of the checklist.

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 3

My new baby brother likes to sleep.

He does not want to play.

He only wants to sleep.

WCPM = 18

read as:

"My new baby brother likes to sleep.

He does play.

He only wants to sleep."

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Scoring tip. If a student skips an entire line when reading, teachers should re-direct the student to read the skipped line *only* if able to do so immediately (within 1 second). Taking more than 1 second ultimately penalizes the student because he has less time to read the passage during the Timed Reading. Immediately re-directing a student to read a skipped line is usually difficult because it generally takes at least 3-4 seconds. Also, teachers should not attempt to stop the stopwatch when a student skips a line. Typically, this creates too much disruption in the Timed Reading and ultimately results in an inaccurate assessment of the student's WCPM and WIPM during the reading. The easiest way to transition from a skipped line is by simply noting the line skipped on the teacher passage (e.g., circling the line and/or words that were skipped) and then continuing to score WCPM and WIPM as the student reads aloud. If a student continues to skip lines while reading, the teacher should tell the student that he continues to

skip lines. The teacher should also encourage the student to use his finger while reading so that he can better keep his place in the story.

Numbers written as numerals. Numbers are counted as words and must be read correctly within the context of the passage.

Example 1

July 31, 1965

WCPM = 3

should be read as:

“July thirty first, nineteen sixty five.”

WCPM = 3

not as:

“July thirty-one, one nine six five.”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Example 2

After about 10 minutes, the cookies are done.

WCPM = 8

should be read as:

“After about ten minutes, the cookies are done.”

WCPM = 8

not as:

“After about one zero minutes, the cookies are done.”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Hyphenated words that can stand alone. Each morpheme separated by a hyphen counts as an individual word if it can stand alone. For example, “Go-karts” is scored as 2 WCPM.

Example 1

Chicken-pot-pie

WCPM = ____

Example 2

Eighty-seven years old

WCPM = ____

Hyphenated words that cannot stand alone. If one or more morphemes are separated by a hyphen, but the morpheme cannot stand alone as an individual word, the hyphenated word should be counted as one word. For example, “Non-productive” should be counted as 1 WCPM.

Example 1

Re-score

WCPM = ____

Example 2

Co-occur

WCPM = ____

Abbreviations are counted as words, and must be read correctly within the context of the sentence.

Example 1

At first, I did not know what Mr. Hadad meant by all this.

WCPM = 13

should be read as:

“At first, I did not know what Mister Hadad meant by all this.”

WCPM = 13

not as:

“At first, I did not know what M-R Hadad meant by all this.”

WCPM = ____ WIPM = ____

Note: A summary of the Timed Reading Scoring Rules is provided in Appendix O (pp. 121).

Part D: Computing WCPM from a Scored Passage

Teachers should examine the two scored passages below and, for each, compute the TWR, WIPM, and WCPM.

Symbols:

J = the bracket written by the teacher after the student read aloud for exactly one minute.

/ = the slash mark written by the teacher each time the student read a WIPM.

○ = the circle/oval written by the teacher when the student skipped a line or multiple words in a line.

Example 1

Helen Keller (1880 - 1968)

Helen Keller was born in a small town in Alabama. When Helen was one and a half years old, she got very sick. When she became well again, Helen could not hear or see. This made growing up very hard for Helen.

19
36
42

Total words read per minute (TWR): _____
Words incorrect per minute (WIPM): _____
Words correct per minute (WCPM): _____

Example 2

Waking Up in a Faraway Land

Today, Malcolm woke up naturally to the soft sound of forks and spoons chiming together in a sink. He rested comfortably in his bed as he slowly awoke, and he listened for additional signs to remind him he was far from home. He detected the faint, soothing sound of water filling a bucket. In the distance, he heard small motorcycles humming—first softly, then loudly, then softly again.

17
34
52
65
68

Total words read per minute (TWR): _____
Words incorrect per minute (WIPM): _____
Words correct per minute (WCPM): _____

Part E: Percentage Agreement Calculations

Purpose. Within the context of the HELPS Program, Percentage Agreement calculations are used to evaluate the extent to which two independent teachers score a Timed Reading in the same way. These calculations are meaningful to compute occasionally because it is important to know whether all teachers are scoring Timed Readings in a consistent and accurate way. In particular, when teachers first learn how to implement and score Timed Readings, computing Percentage Agreement allows teachers in training to ensure they are scoring Timed Readings correctly. Correct scoring is important because the scores ultimately dictate a teacher's decisions about how to implement the HELPS Program (e.g., whether a student meets his Goal or not) and may influence the progress monitoring assessment component of the HELPS Program (described on pp. 75-77).

Procedure. In order to obtain a Percentage Agreement calculation, two teachers independently score a student's Timed Reading. Both teachers should know the Timed Reading scoring rules prior to scoring the Timed Reading. After each teacher independently scores the Timed Reading, scores are compared between the teachers. For each word the student reads within one minute (i.e., the TWR score), teachers compare their scores to look for *Agreements* (i.e., a word that both teachers scored as correct or a word that both scored as incorrect) and *Disagreements* (i.e., a word that one teacher scored as

correct but the other scored as incorrect). The Percentage Agreement formula is then calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Agreements}}{\text{Total Words Read per Minute}} \times 100 = \text{Percentage Agreement}$$

Consider the following example where two teachers simultaneously scored a Timed Reading of the passage titled, "Morocco."

Scoring from Teacher 1

Morocco

Morocco is a country in North Africa. It is similar to the size of California and it borders both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Morocco is a country with diverse geography. There are beaches in the northwest, mountains in the northeast and central regions, and there are deserts in the southwest. 19 34 50 53

Morocco is a very old country. There have been people called Berbers living there since 8000 BCE. Even though the area was taken over by the Romans, Greeks, Arabs, and the French, the people with Berber ancestry still live there. 69 86 93

Scoring from Teacher 2

Morocco

Morocco is a country in North Africa. It is similar to the size of California and it borders both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Morocco is a country with diverse geography. There are beaches in the northwest, mountains in the northeast and central regions, and there are deserts in the southwest. 19 34 50 53

Morocco is a very old country. There have been people called Berbers living there since 8000 BCE. Even though the area was taken over by the Romans, Greeks, Arabs, and the French, the people with Berber ancestry still live there. 69 86 93

In this example, the student read a total of 87 words in the passage. The number in the denominator would therefore be 87, which represents all possible instances of an Agreement or Disagreement. To most quickly determine the number of Disagreements, teachers should compare the words each marked as a WIPM. Teacher 1 marked 3 words as a WIPM (*California, Atlantic, and Mediterranean*) and Teacher 2 marked two of the same words as a WIPM (*California and Mediterranean*). This would mean there was only 1 Disagreement (and therefore 86 Agreements) between the two teachers. The correct formula would then be:

$$\frac{86}{87} \times 100 = 98.9\%$$

Tips and recommendations for obtaining Percentage Agreement data. Note: Teacher 1 refers to the teacher who implements the full HELPS Program with the student (including the Timed Readings); Teacher 2 refers to the "observer" teacher who only scores the Timed Readings for the purposes of Percentage Agreement calculations.

1. When two teachers are scoring a Timed Reading, Teacher 1 should make sure the student is comfortable with having two teachers listen to him read aloud. A simple explanation that often helps a student feel comfortable could be something like the following: "Today we want to have two teachers listen to you read aloud. This is because [other teacher's name] and I want to make sure we both score your reading correctly. Is it okay with you that we both listen to you read today?"

2. When listening to the student read aloud, Teacher 1 should sit directly across from the student as is typically done. Teacher 2 should sit close enough to hear the student, but not in a location that is distracting to the student or allows her to view Teacher 1's passage.
3. Teacher 1 should always administer the Timed Reading directions to the student. Teacher 2 should be silent throughout the session to avoid distracting the student or influencing the student's reading performance.
4. Having each teacher use a stopwatch during the Timed Reading increases the utility of the Percentage Agreement calculation. Of course, each teacher should begin the stopwatch after Teacher 1 says, "Begin" and the student reads the first word. Although each teacher should draw a bracket after the last word read at 1 minute, minor differences in stopwatch speeds and/or start times may result in small differences between Teacher 1 and Teacher 2. To compensate for this minor difference, teachers should allow for a one-word difference (+/-) where the bracket is placed. This will henceforth be referred to as the +/- 1 Rule. For example, consider the following sentence, "Morocco is a very old country." If Teacher 1 draws a bracket immediately after "very" and Teacher 2 draws a bracket after "old," this should not be counted as a Disagreement because of the reasons just described. If, however, Teacher 1 draws a bracket immediately after "Morocco" and Teacher 2 draws a bracket after "old," this would be counted as a two-word Disagreement (i.e., the words "is" and "a" would be counted as Disagreements; "very" would not be counted as a Disagreement because of the +/- 1 Rule).
5. Regardless of differences in scoring between Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, WCPM and WIPM scores obtained by Teacher 1 should always be used as the scores to record on the student's Graph and Progress Tracking Form. Scores from Teacher 1 should also be used to determine if the student met his Goal.
6. Teachers should always strive for Percentage Agreement calculations of 90-100%. If teachers obtain Percentage Agreement scores below this range, they should discuss the possible reasons for scoring discrepancies, determine a way to minimize discrepancies, and then practice scoring Timed Readings as needed. Practice should continue until teachers reliably achieve Percentage Agreement calculations of 90-100%.

Practice exercise. Based on the below scoring, compute Percentage Agreement.

Scores from Teacher 1

<u>Morocco</u>	
Morocco is a country in North Africa. It is similar to the size of California and it borders both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Morocco is a country with diverse geography. There are beaches in the northwest, mountains in the northeast and central regions, and there are deserts in the southwest.	19 34 50 53
Morocco is a very old country. There have been people called Berbers living there since 8000 BCE. Even though the area was taken over by the Romans, Greeks, Arabs, and the French, the people with Berber ancestry still live there.	69 86 93

Scores from Teacher 2 are on the following page

Scores from Teacher 2

Morocco

Morocco is a country in North Africa. It is similar to the size of California and it borders both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Morocco is a country with diverse geography. There are beaches in the northwest, mountains in the northeast and central regions, and there are deserts in the southwest.

Morocco is a very old country. There have been people called Berbers living there since 8000 BCE. Even though the area was taken over by the Romans, Greeks, Arabs, and the French, the people with Berber ancestry still live there.

Part F: Sample Passages and Practice Exercises

The two sample passages in Part F are found on the following pages. **Teachers learning the Timed Reading procedure and scoring rules should not look at the following two pages until completing the exercises.** To complete the exercises, teachers should ask another adult (i.e., a Practice Reader) to read the sample passages aloud so the teacher can practice scoring Timed Readings. In addition, prior to the Practice Reader reading the sample passages, teachers should use the Timed Reading implementation procedures (and scripted directions) described on p. 27. Also for practice purposes, teachers should use a stopwatch during the practice readings. However, the Practice Reader will be instructed to stop reading at a specified point in the sample passage. Thus, using the stopwatch is only intended to get teachers practice with starting the stopwatch at the correct time. For teachers with no previous experience implementing and scoring a Timed Reading, the exercises in Part F should be completed before doing the exercises in the HELPS Training Video.

Directions for completing Part F practice exercises.

1. Teacher asks the Practice Reader to read the directions on the following page.
2. Teacher obtains teacher Passage 50, "Chocolate," for purposes of scoring the Timed Reading.
3. Teacher uses the implementation procedures and scripted directions shown on p. 27 to begin the Timed Reading.
4. Practice Reader reads the sample passage aloud and purposefully reads the mistakes shown on the sample passage (the teacher records mistakes on the teacher passage during this time).
5. Practice Reader stops when indicated on the sample passage and states the specified stopping point so the teacher can draw a bracket as needed.
6. Teacher calculates TWR, WIPM, and WCPM for the practice reading.
7. Practice reader tells the teacher each reading mistake that was made during the Timed Reading while the teacher checks scoring accuracy for each reading mistake.
8. Teacher reviews overall scoring accuracy and reviews Timed Reading scoring Rules as needed.
9. Teacher obtains teacher Passage 72, "History of Electricity," for purposes of scoring the second Timed Reading practice exercise. The teacher then completes Steps 3-8 above.

Adults reading the passage will purposefully read mistakes listed in the sample passages. It is the teacher's job to identify the mistakes as they would do when implementing a Timed Reading with a student. Mistakes made in the reading will represent all types of scoring rules explained in this section.

Instructions for Practice Readers

Thank you for your assistance with helping the teacher to learn the Timed Reading scoring rules. It is important for you to carefully read the instructions *and* the Sample Passages below prior to starting the practice activity. The teacher does not need to know the following instructions.

The sample passages below have content that differs somewhat from the teacher's version of the passage. This difference in content is so that you will purposefully make "reading mistakes." The teacher has asked you to read the passages aloud and he/she does not know when you will make reading mistakes. On his/her copy of the passage, there are no mistakes inserted in the passage. Thus, it is the teacher's job to identify the mistakes that you read and score them accurately as part of the Timed Reading scoring procedures.

Each part of the passage that differs from the teacher's passage is noted with a small number or X just above the mistake (these notes will be referred to as superscripts). Do not read the superscripts; they are inserted only for you to help review the teacher's scoring accuracy after he/she has scored your reading. Also, do not pause or otherwise signal to the teacher that you are about to make a reading mistake. Read the sample passages at a rate that is typical for elementary-aged children. Do not "speed-read," but do not read so slowly that you are pausing between words. It should take you 1 to 2 minutes to read each passage.

Read the following rules carefully so that you read the Sample Passages exactly as intended:

1. Bolded words should not be read aloud. Instead, bolded words instruct you to do something. You will see the following:
 - a. **[skip]** - If the text reads, "sugar is **[skip]** for the body," you should read, "sugar is for the body."
 - b. **[hesitate]** - If the text reads, "sugar is **[hesitate]** bad for the body," you should read, "sugar is ba-a-a-ba... for the body." When you hesitate, the teacher should tell you the correct word after exactly 3 seconds, and then score this as an error on his/her passage. If the teacher does not provide the word for you after 4-5 seconds, continue reading.
 - c. **[self-correct]** - If the text reads, "sugar is bad **[self-correct]** for the body," you should read something like, "sugar is bode (*pause for 1 second*) bad for the body."
 - d. **[STOP!]** - When you see this, stop reading aloud and tell the teacher to mark the one-minute bracket at the last word you read aloud.
2. Words that are written such as "cho-kit" should be read that way, or read more quickly by blending the parts together like, "chokit." These words are purposefully included in the passage to represent mispronunciations.
3. After you stop reading Sample Passage 1 aloud, tell the teacher to calculate the TWR, WIPM, and WCPM. The teacher should tell you those numbers and you should indicate whether he/she is accurate for each.
4. Next, the teacher should state the first scoring error he/she marked. The first error in the passage will be noted with a superscript "1." Continue having the teacher state all marked errors, each of which should correspond with the numbered superscripts. Superscripts with the letter "X" should not be scored as errors. The superscript "X" simply denotes a reading "flaw," but one that should not be scored as an error. Throughout this process, the teacher should not look at Sample Passage 1 or Sample Passage 2. After completing all the above steps for Samples Passages 1 and 2, the teacher can look at the passages.
5. Prior to reading each passage aloud to the teacher, please read the passage silently to yourself so you know when and where reading mistakes will occur.

Chocolate

There are three basic types of chocolate: dark chocolate, milk chocolate,¹ and white chocolate. Dark chocolate is not as sweet as the others. But dark chocolate has the **[skip]**² cocoa powder. Some scientists say that cocoa **[self correct]**^x powder is good for a person's heart.

Milk chocolate is dark chocolate with milk in it. Milk helps a person's bones grow strong and big.³

White chocolate is not real chocolate. It has cocoa butter and it^x does not have cocoa powder. Cocoa butter is the fat from ground up cocoa bean.⁴ There are two kinds of...kinds of^x white chocolate. One type is made from sugar, milk, and vegetable oil. The other type is **[hesitate]**⁵ ivory in color. It is made of sugar, milk, and cocoa butter. Many say that this type of white chocolate tastes better than the chocolate **[STOP!]** made from vegetable oil.

People all over the world love the taste of chocolate. However, eating too much chocolate can be bad for a person's body. This is because eating too much sugar is bad for the body.

TWR = 133 WIPM = 5 WCPM = 128

¹ Mispronunciation (score as 1 WIPM)

² Skipped word (score as 1 WIPM)

^x Self-corrected word within 3 seconds (do not score as a WIPM)

³ Reversal of *strong* and *big* (score as 1 WIPM)

^x Inserted word, *it* (do not score as a WIPM)

⁴ Omitted ending *-s* (score as 1 WIPM)

^x Repeated words (do not score as a WIPM)

⁵ Hesitation with *ivory* (teacher should provide word at 3 seconds and score as 1 WIPM)

History of Electricity

In 1752, Benjamin Franklin flew a kite during a light¹ storm so that he could show that lightning was extra-special.² He tied a metal key to the kite so that the lightning would hit the kite. He was happy to show that lightning was electric, but Mr. Franklin could have been **[hesitation]**³ seriously hurt when the electricity moved down the kite and gave him a big^x shock.

In one-eight-seven-nine,⁴ another man found a way to use electricity to make a light bulb. His name was Thomas Edison. M R⁵ Edison had been trying to make a light bulb for many months before he came up with a light^x.

Within 10 years, Edison had also designed electrical stations so that people could have electricity in their homes. By 1930, most people in cities had electricity, but it cost⁶ lots⁷ of money and few people who lived in the country had electricity.

President Roosevelt thought that everyone by then^x should have electricity. Because of this, he set up programs to help **[STOP!]** bring electricity to poor people in the country. Today, almost everyone in the United States has electricity in their homes.

TWR = 169 – 4 (skipped) = 165 WIPM = 7 WCPM = 158

¹ Substituted word, *light* (score as 1 WIPM)

² Mispronunciation (score as 1 WIPM)

³ Hesitation with *seriously* (teacher should provide word at 3 seconds and score as 1 WIPM)

^x Inserted word, *big* (do not score as a WIPM)

⁴ Numbers read as single numbers rather than as year (score as 1 WIPM)

⁵ Abbreviation was not read as mister (score as 1 WIPM)

^x Omitted line (do not score as a WIPM, but deduct 4 words from TWR)

⁶ Omitted word, *a* (score as 1 WIPM)

⁷ Added ending *-s* (score as 1 WIPM)

^x Inserted words, *by then* (do not score as a WIPM)

Part G: Additional Tips and Common Implementation Mistakes

The tips and reminders listed below were developed across several years of systematically observing teachers use the Timed Reading implementation and scoring rules described above. Generally, teachers learn to implement Timed Readings accurately and consistently with no more than a few hours of guided practice. However, to help facilitate teachers' implementation of Timed Readings, tips and common implementation mistakes are listed below as a means of (a) helping teachers troubleshoot a somewhat challenging event, and (b) "warning" teachers of implementation mistakes that are common when teachers first learn the Timed Reading procedure.

Additional tips for implementation.

1. Always use the prompt, "**Begin**" to signal that the student should start reading the passage. Sometimes teachers may be inclined to use a word such as "Go," or even more incorrect, they may say, "Ready, set, Go!" Using a word like "Go" is inappropriate because it may signal to the student the start of a race. The purpose of the Timed Reading is not for the student to *race* through the passage as fast as possible. Rather, students should be taught to read each passage quickly, but with accuracy and good expression.
2. For a student who begins reading a passage much too quickly (i.e., attempting to "speed read"), remind her to read with good expression and that "slowing down" will probably help her focus on each word in the story and help her read better.
3. After exactly 60 seconds of reading, it is usually okay to let a student finish reading the sentence, as long as the last word read at 60 seconds is marked accurately. Sometimes it just feels more natural to stop a student at a more natural stopping point, such as at the end of a sentence. For example, suppose at exactly 60 seconds the student read *sleep* in the following sentence: *Cats sleep twelve hours each day*. In this situation the teacher must put a bracket just after *sleep* to indicate the last word read in one minute, but the teacher may tell the student to stop reading after *day* to facilitate a more natural stopping point.
4. If a student is *clearly* distracted by something during a Timed Reading, it is sometimes okay to stop the stopwatch and redirect the student to the last word he read aloud before becoming distracted. In practice, however, this should be done *very rarely*. Contrary to what some teachers might suspect, the large majority of students never get distracted during Timed Readings (even when sessions are held in a potentially noisy location, such as a school hallway). In general, it is important to keep the stopwatch running for the entire minute. After implementing at least 6,000 Timed Readings over the past several years, our team of teachers found that less than 1% of the time a teacher should stop the stopwatch due to a student being distracted. The sound of a school fire alarm is a good example of when a teacher should stop the stopwatch during a Timed Reading.

Top 10 most common implementation mistakes.

1. Teacher provides the word for the student after 3 seconds of a student hesitation, but forgets to mark the word as an error on the teacher passage.
2. Teacher provides a word for the student too quickly or too slowly. (Remember, teachers should practice with the "3-second activity" described on p. 30).
3. Teacher does not cover the beginning part of the story when giving directions to the student. (To ensure a student does not start reading the story before the teacher says, "Begin," the teacher should cover the entire passage or the first few lines of the story with her hand while giving the directions).

(List continues on following page)

4. Teacher starts the stopwatch after saying, "Begin." (Remember, teachers must start the stopwatch after the student reads the first word of the story. If a student starts by reading the *title* of the story, the stopwatch should not start until the student reads the first *word* of the story.)
5. Teacher forgets to subtract (or incorrectly subtracts) any skipped lines from the Total Words Read per minute.
6. Teacher marks on the teacher passage in a way that allows the student to see the marks. (Overall, when marking on the teacher passage, this should be unknown to the student while she reads).
7. Teacher incorrectly records the Total Words Read per minute or incorrectly subtracts the number of WIPM from the Total Words Read in order to get the correct number of WCPM.
8. When a student adds a word, teacher scores this as a WIPM. (Remember, added words are not scored as a WIPM).
9. Teacher records a reversal of words as two WIPM. (For HELPS Timed Readings, this error is correctly scored as one WIPM).
10. Teacher forgets to mark the bracket after the last word the student read at 60 seconds.

Answer Key for Practice Exercises in Parts A – E:

Part & Descriptor	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Part A			
MISPRONOUNCED WORDS	WCPM = 5; WIPM = 1	WCPM = 7; WIPM = 1	
SUBSTITUTED WORDS	WCPM = 6; WIPM = 1	WCPM = 6; WIPM = 1	
OMITTED WORDS	WCPM = 11; WIPM = 1	WCPM = 8; WIPM = 2	
REVERSALS	WCPM = 9; WIPM = 1	WCPM = 9; WIPM = 2	
ADDING OR OMITTING ENDINGS TO WORDS	WCPM = 10; WIPM = 1	WCPM = 6; WIPM = 1	
HESITATIONS	WCPM = 3; WIPM = 1	WCPM = 3; WIPM = 1	WCPM = 6; WIPM = 2
Part B			
WORDS PRONOUNCED CORRECTLY	WCPM = 8; WIPM = 0	WCPM = 5; WIPM = 1	
SELF-CORRECTED WORDS	WCPM = 6; WIPM = 0		
REPEATED WORDS	WCPM = 5; WIPM = 0		
MISPRONOUNCED WORDS BECAUSE OF DIALECT	WCPM = 8; WIPM = 0		
INSERTED WORDS	WCPM = 10; WIPM = 0		
Part C			
OMITTED LINES OR MULTIPLE WORDS IN A LINE	WCPM = 12; WIPM = 0	WCPM = 24; WIPM = 0	WCPM = 15; WIPM = 3
NUMBERS WRITTEN AS NUMERALS	WCPM = 1; WIPM = 2	WCPM = 7; WIPM = 1	
HYPHENATED WORDS THAT CAN STAND ALONE	WCPM = 3	WCPM = 4	
HYPHENATED WORDS THAT CANNOT STAND ALONE	WCPM = 1	WCPM = 1	
ABBREVIATIONS	WCPM = 12; WIPM = 1		
<i>(Answers for Part D and Part E practice exercises are on the following page)</i>			

Part D			
COMPUTING WCPM FROM A SCORED PASSAGE	TWR = 32; WIPM = 3; WCPM = 29	TWR = 46; WIPM = 2 WCPM = 44; <i>Note, TWR = 60 - 14 due to skipped words</i>	
Part E			
PERCENTAGE AGREEMENT CALCULATIONS	Answer to Practice Exercise: TWR = 81. There are 79 agreements and 2 Disagreements (Disagreements = <i>Morocco</i> on line 2; <i>geography</i> on line 2). As described in Tip #4, note that the difference in bracket placement is not a “Disagreement” because of the +/- 1 Rule. Final Agreement Calculation: $79/81 \times 100 = 97.5\%$		

IMPLEMENTING THE MODELING PROCEDURE

Overall Purpose and Relevant Background Information

For many activities (e.g., dancing, playing a sport, cooking), having the opportunity to closely observe a more skilled person engage in the activity often helps an individual learn how to better perform that activity. In reading, this same principle of instruction helps students become better readers. More specifically, the modeling procedure helps to improve students’ reading ability because it allows students the opportunity to practice reading a particular piece of text by listening and reading along with a more skilled reader. By reading along with a more skilled reader (i.e., hearing the skilled reader and simultaneously seeing the text being read), students strengthen important skills needed for fluent reading (Adams, 1990; Ehri, 1991; Lewandowski, Begeny, & Rogers, 2006).

Numerous research studies have demonstrated how modeling (sometimes referred to as Passage Previewing) can improve children’s reading abilities, including their fluency (Begeny, Krouse, Ross, & Mitchell, 2009; Lewandowski et al., 2006; Skinner, Cooper, & Cole, 1997). Such studies have also demonstrated the positive effects of modeling for students with a wide range of academic abilities (Rose, 1984a, 1984b, 1984c; Rose & Sherry, 1984). Furthermore, research has highlighted the importance of combining modeling procedures with other fluency-building procedures, such as RR and error-correction procedures (Begeny & Martens, 2006; Daly & Martens, 1994; Therien, 2004). For these reasons, the HELPS modeling procedure is an important component of the overall HELPS Implementation Protocol and a necessary strategy to maximize the effectiveness of RR.

Although there is strong research support for the basic modeling procedure previously described, there is one relatively unique aspect of the HELPS Modeling procedure. This aspect requires the teacher to periodically pause while reading and then have the student read the next word in the passage (details of this “pause strategy” are described in the Implementation Rules below). For a modeling procedure to effectively improve a student’s reading skills, it is imperative that the student follow along (hearing and seeing) the text as the teacher reads aloud. Thus, this pause strategy is designed to better ensure that students are appropriately following along with the teacher. First, this pause strategy is designed to improve the student’s motivation: if the student does not know the word when the teacher pauses, he may not be attending closely enough, and this may result in a loss of stars on the Star Chart. Second, the pause strategy helps a teacher know whether she is reading at a pace that is too fast for the student. If the student seems attentive to the teacher’s reading but cannot read the next word when she pauses, the teacher may be reading too quickly. Furthermore, professional experience suggests that this pause strategy makes the Modeling procedure more fun for the students. For some students, it is like a game to see if they can follow along so closely that they always know the next word in the story when the

teacher pauses. Of course, when students do so, this shows that the Modeling procedure is working as intended.

Although most previous research has investigated the modeling procedure *without* this pause strategy, a few recent studies have found that using this strategy as part of a modeling procedure effectively improves students' WCPM (Begeny, Krouse et al., 2009; Begeny & Ross, 2009; Begeny & Silber, 2006). One study also shows that the pause strategy improves students' reading fluency as well as, and for some students better than, not including it (Begeny, Mitchell, & Whitehouse, 2009).

Implementation Rules (Modeling Procedure)

As shown in the HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions (Appendix L), implement the following steps during the Modeling Procedure:

1. Say to the student, **"Now I am going to read today's story to you. Please follow along with your finger, reading the words to yourself as I read them. Sometimes I will stop reading to make sure you are following along. When I stop, you need to tell me the next word in the story. If you read the correct word, this will show me you are reading along with me and doing your best."**
2. Read the passage at a comfortable reading rate and with good expression for approximately 1.5 minutes or until you read the entire passage. Make sure the student is following along with his/her finger and prompt the student to do this, if necessary.
3. While reading the passage, stop 5-7 times in order to have the student read the word that immediately follows the word you stopped at.
4. At the end of the activity, praise the student for his/her effort (as applicable).

Tips and reminders for implementing the Modeling procedure can be found in Appendix M, pp. 118-119.

As noted in the HELPS One-on-One Program: Abbreviated Directions (Appendix N), teachers can eventually modify the above phrasing somewhat.

IMPLEMENTING THE PHRASE-DRILL ERROR CORRECTION PROCEDURE

Overall Purpose and Relevant Background Information

Phrase-drill Error Correction (PD) is a procedure which involves the teacher (a) modeling the appropriate way to read a difficult word and phrase, and (b) asking the student to repeatedly practice a difficult phrase from text (typically a phrase which contains a word the student previously read incorrectly). There are three primary reasons PD can be an effective error correction procedure and an overall important strategy for improving students' reading fluency (Begeny, Daly, & Valleley, 2006; O'Shea, Munson, & O'Shea, 1984). First, reading *phrases* (as opposed to isolated words) provides contextual cues for students, and therefore helps them to read the words with greater ease. Second, PD may increase reading fluency because students are not practicing word-by-word reading, but rather are reading larger portions of text (i.e., larger linguistic units). Third, *repeated* practice of difficult text (rather than having only one opportunity to practice a difficult word or phrase) strengthens reading fluency due to the increased opportunities for practice.

Although there is relatively less research supporting the effectiveness of PD compared to RR or Modeling, an increasing number of studies suggest that PD can be a useful component in reading instruction that targets fluency and accuracy. For example, PD has been shown to be superior to other error correction procedures that provide fewer opportunities for practice (O'Shea et al., 1984) and in some cases the effects of PD can be similar to those of RR (Begeny et al., 2006). Most importantly, however, research has demonstrated that using an error corrections procedure, particularly PD, is an integral supplement to other strategies that target students' reading fluency development, such as RR

and Modeling procedures (Begeny & Yeagar, 2009; Daly, Martens, Dool, & Hintze, 1998; Therrien, 2004). For these reasons, the HELPS Program incorporates the PD Error Correction procedure as the primary strategy for helping students correct the errors they make when reading HELPS passages.

Implementation Rules (Phrase-drill Error Correction Procedure)

As shown in the HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions (Appendix L), implement the following steps during the Phrase-drill Error Correction Procedure:

1. Say to the student, **“Now we are going to practice some of the words you missed.”**
2. Point to the first error word, say the word, and then say, **“Read this after I do, <read the 2-8 word phrase containing the error word>. Again, Again.”** In essence, allow the student to read the phrase three times. *Make sure the student points to the words being read*; students will sometimes just “memorize” the phrase and repeat it. (Teachers want students to read, rather than recite).
3. Repeat the above procedure for all *unique* error words in the passage (up to 5 or until time permits).
 - a. If a student makes 1 or fewer errors, practice 1-3 phrases the student read less fluently. Use the procedure above, except the student should be told **“Now we are going to practice some words you read correctly, but they are difficult and we should practice them.”**
4. Praise the student for every two to three sets of phrase-drills.

Tips and reminders for implementing the PD Error Correction procedure can be found in Appendix M.

IMPLEMENTING THE VERBAL CUEING PROCEDURE

Overall Purpose and Relevant Background Information

Some research suggests there are benefits to telling students (i.e., “cueing” students) that they should read text for fluency, comprehension, and/or related purposes. Specifically, such cues may help to improve the effects of instructional strategies designed to improve fluency, comprehension, or other reading skills (O’Shea, Sindelar, & O’Shea, 1985, 1987; Therrien, 2004). Therefore, the HELPS Program utilizes findings from this research by integrating a brief statement that the teacher reads to the student at the beginning of each session. The statement has two main purposes. First, it provides a simple but clear introduction from the teacher to the student, and provides a concise set of expectations for the student. Second, as part of the scripted expectations, the student is cued to (a) read fluently (i.e., read quickly, accurately, and with good expression); (b) read for comprehension (i.e., remember what happens in the story); and (c) correct reading errors (i.e., after practicing them, read the difficult words correctly).

Implementation Rules (Verbal Cueing Procedure)

Implementing the Verbal Cueing Procedure simply requires the teacher to read the following introductory statement and expectations to the student at the very beginning of each session. This statement is also shown in the HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions (Appendix L):

<Student Name>, you’re going to be doing some reading with me today. As you read, I want you to do your best reading. This means I want you to read as quickly as you can without making mistakes, and try to read with good expression (like I do when I read to you). I also want you to remember what happens in the story and try to remember the difficult words that we practice.

As noted in the HELPS One-on-One Program: Abbreviated Directions (Appendix N), teachers can eventually modify the above phrasing somewhat.

IMPLEMENTING THE RETELL CHECK PROCEDURE

Overall Purpose and Relevant Background Information

The HELPS Program Retell Check procedure was adapted from the Oral Retell Fluency procedure described in the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2002). The overall goal of the Retell Check is to remind students that they must remember what they read, not simply read with fluency. As part of a fluency-based instructional program, this Retell Check (as part of the Verbal Cueing procedure) is included because previous research has evidenced its importance (see, for example, Therrien, 2004).

Implementation Rules (Retell Check Procedure)

As shown in the HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions (Appendix L), implement the following steps during a Retell Check:

1. Remove the student passage in a way to ensure student cannot review the passage during the Retell Check.
2. Say to the student, **“Now I want you to tell me everything you remember about the story you just read. Try to tell me what happened in the correct order.”**
3. Start your stopwatch and stop the retell activity in 30-45 seconds. Use prompts or follow-up questions as appropriate.
4. If student clearly struggles to remember parts of the story during his/her retell, note this on the student’s tracking sheet and use this information when determining whether the student met his/her Reading Goal.

Additional Rules and Comments about the Retell Check Procedure

The HELPS Retell Check is not intended to be wholly systematic or contain explicit, standardized scoring rules. Rather, teachers are simply asked to evaluate whether students can retell general or specific content from the previously read story for approximately 30–45 seconds. If students can do so (which should occur the large majority of time), students sufficiently meet this Retell Check criterion. Even if a student’s retell does not follow good sequential order, the student should be considered to have met this criterion as long as he retells the story for approximately 30 seconds.

With this said, it is important to always keep the individual student in mind when determining whether he meets the Retell Check criterion. A student who reads very little of a passage in one minute may be able to retell everything about the story, but not meet the 30-45 second criterion simply because he read very little of the story. In such an instance, the student should pass the Retell Check criterion. Also, some students speak very quickly, possibly resulting in a meaningful retell that occurs in less than 30 seconds. In contrast, some students may pause a lot when asked to retell the story, or may speak slowly—both situations may require a retell that lasts a little more than 45 seconds. In each of these situations, the teacher may judge the student to have sufficiently passed the Retell Check criterion. Overall, the emphasis for the Retell Check is to simply make sure the student can retell aspects of the story and does not only read for fluency. Of course, because students are asked to remember what happens in the story (as part of the Verbal Cuing procedure), it follows that students should, in fact, be asked what they remember about the story.

Although the rules for meeting the Retell Check criterion are loose, teachers are encouraged to give brief, specific feedback to students based on their retell. For example, a teacher might say, “Jennifer, you were able to tell me a lot about the story you read, but you did not always tell me the important events in order <possibly describe this with an example or two>. Next time I want you to work a little harder to tell me the important events in the correct order.” When teachers make comments such as this or otherwise notice difficulties in the student’s retell, this should be noted on the student’s Progress

Tracking Form. Strategies to address such difficulties may then be integrated within the typical school day, not specifically during the HELPS sessions unless determined necessary by the teacher.

Tips and reminders for implementing the Retell Check procedure can be found in Appendix M.

IMPLEMENTING THE GOAL-SETTING PROCEDURE

Overall Purpose and Relevant Background Information

The purpose of the HELPS Program Goal-setting procedure is to help motivate students to achieve a certain level of reading fluency with each passage they practice. Goal-setting has been shown in several research studies to improve students' motivation to learn and ultimately their academic performance (Coddling, Lewandowski, & Eckert, 2005; Martens, Eckert, Begeny, Lewandowski, DiGennaro, et al., 2007; Sweeney, Ring, Malanga, & Lambert, 2003). Because a primary component of a goal-setting procedure is to improve student motivation (and thereby improve student achievement), the HELPS Goal-setting procedure is purposefully designed so that students regularly meet the Reading Goal. In fact, if a student meets his Goal during every HELPS session, this is a sign that the program is effectively improving the student's reading fluency. In other words, a student's regular success with meeting the Goal does not mean the Program is "too easy" for the student. Based on a recent sample of 49 first through fourth grade students, the average number of sessions needed for students to meet the Goal was 1.44 (SD = 0.56). Further, across *all* passages each student read, 55% of the students never required more than two sessions to meet the Goal, and 94% of the students never required more than three sessions to meet the Goal.

How the HELPS Recommended Goal Levels Were Determined

The HELPS Recommended Goal Levels (as shown in Table 4 toward the end of this section) were determined with various sources of ORF data, including national benchmark data with ORF passages and four years of implementing HELPS with hundreds of different students. Ultimately, Goal levels were developed so that (a) students would regularly meet their Reading Goal when placed in the HELPS Curriculum according to the HELPS Placement Assessment (described on pp. 53-54), and (b) regularly meeting the Goal would build students' reading fluency to a level that is at or above grade level. More specifically, at each respective grade, all suggested Goal levels include WCPM criteria that range between 50th and 75th percentile of the spring ORF benchmark scores reported in the AIMSweb (2008) and Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006) norms. Also, all recommended Goal levels are just above the "Low Risk" ranges reported at each respective grade on the DIBELS Benchmark Goals and Indicators of Risk (Good & Kaminski, 2002). According to Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006), students reading at levels of "more than 10 WCPM above the 50th percentile [are likely] making adequate progress in reading (unless there are other indicators that would raise concern)" (p. 642). Thus, HELPS Program Goals require that students practice each passage until they read it at a WCPM level commensurate with children who are considered to be making adequate progress in reading.

Why the HELPS Reading Goals Exclude an Assessment of Expression

HELPS Goal levels include measures of oral reading speed (WCPM) and accuracy (WIPM), as well as a loose measure of retell ability (i.e., a basic component of comprehension). As part of the HELPS Program, a student's ability to read with proper expression is not measured as part of the Reading Goal. The two reasons for this are derived from previous research in the area of reading fluency, showing that (a) proper expression is sometimes difficult for teachers to measure consistently (Parker, Hasbrouck, & Tindall, 1989, 1992); and (b) measuring a student's WCPM is typically a reliable and valid way to measure overall reading fluency (Fuchs et al., 2001; Marston, 1989). As described elsewhere in this Manual, it is important for teachers to provide feedback (including praise) to a student regarding her

ability to read with proper expression, and to always encourage students to read with good expression. Although proper expression is not specifically *measured* as part of HELPS, teachers using this Program should encourage students to read with expression that is age-appropriate. One example of how HELPS emphasizes to students the importance of reading with good expression is through the routine introductory statement to each student (i.e., “...try to read with good expression, like I do when I read to you.”)

Implementation Rules (Goal-Setting Procedure)

The Goal-setting procedure is integrated within the overall HELPS Implementation Protocol. Therefore, the teacher does not provide specific directions to the student as part of this procedure. In essence, goal-setting requires the student to know the Reading Goal (e.g., a third grade student must know that her Goal is to read each passage with 120 or more WCPM, three or fewer errors, and adequately meet the Retell Check criterion). Also, the teacher must provide a consequence when the student does or does not meet the Goal. For example, student consequences for meeting the HELPS Reading Goal include immediate teacher praise, a transition to a new passage in the HELPS Curriculum, and a star earned on the student’s Star Chart. Again, the HELPS Implementation Protocol easily allows teachers to facilitate these procedures. Table 4 (which also appears in the HELPS Implementation Protocol and Flow Chart) should be used to determine a student’s Goal.

Table 4
Recommended Reading Goals According to the Student’s Grade Level

	WCPM with Passage A	WIPM with Passage A	Retell Check with Passage A
First Grade	80 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Second Grade	100 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Third Grade	120 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Fourth Grade	135 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*

*For example, a student retells parts of the story for at least 30 seconds or otherwise correctly states names of characters and major events in the story. Retell of the story in the correct sequential order of major events is encouraged but not required to pass the Retell Check.

Determining a student’s Goal with Table 4 will be appropriate for the large majority of students. However, on some occasions teachers may need to modify a student’s Goal. To determine when and how to modify a student’s Reading Goal, specific recommendations are provided in the section, *What to Do When a Student Does Not Meet the Reading Goal* (pp. 56-63).

IMPLEMENTING THE PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK (GRAPHING) PROCEDURE

Overall Purpose and Relevant Background Information

Similar to each of the other HELPS Program procedures, the Performance Feedback (Graphing) procedure is included because of substantial evidence suggesting that it improves students’ academic skills (Alber-Morgan, Ramp, Anderson, & Martin, 2007; Coddling et al., 2005; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006), particularly when combined with goal-setting and reinforcement. Although there are numerous ways a teacher may provide feedback to students about academic performance, research suggests that effective performance feedback usually involves the teacher doing the following: (a) accurately recording the student’s academic performance (e.g., WCPM and WIPM scores); (b) reporting those scores to the student; (c) providing the student with a visual representation of his performance (e.g., with a graph); and (d) explicitly telling the student (and preferably showing him with a graph) the extent to which his performance improved over time (e.g., saying, “after practicing the story with me today,

your score improved from 75 words correct in one minute to 103 words correct per minute!”). To produce maximal effects, performance feedback should also be combined with goal-setting (e.g., encouraging the student to meet or exceed a specified goal) as well as praise and other forms of reinforcement (Alber-Morgan et al., 2007; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006; Sutherland & Snyder, 2007). As part of the HELPS Program, performance feedback is primarily facilitated through the Student Graph and therefore can be referred to as the *Graphing procedure*.

Implementation Rules (Graphing Procedure)

Similar to the Goal-setting procedure, the Graphing procedure is integrated within the overall HELPS Implementation Protocol and therefore does not require the teacher to use scripted directions with the student. Overall, Graphing requires teachers to graph students' WCPM and WIPM (on the Student Graph) toward the end of each session. During this time, teachers should be showing the student where her scores are graphed (and connecting data points as appropriate) so she can see the improvements she made through reading practice with the HELPS Program. Also during this time, teachers should use specific, positive feedback when graphing the student's data. As just one of many examples, a teacher might say, “Sarah, you really improved your reading today. Look, <teacher points to one WCPM data point>, the first time you read this story you read only 84 words correct in a minute. Then, after practice, you just read 109 words correct per minute with this story <teacher points to the relevant WCPM data point and connects the lines between the two data points>. That was a fantastic improvement!” Of course, teachers should also provide feedback about WIPM and can offer various other forms of performance feedback, including reading improvements outside of WCPM and WIPM (e.g., reading expression, correctly reading words practiced during the Phrase-drill procedure, good responses during the Retell Check). The positive, specific feedback provided to students during the Graphing procedure tends to be a powerful method of increasing student confidence and enjoyment in reading. This is particularly important for students who typically have negative experiences with reading.

The specific steps for graphing student performance on the Student Graph are described on pp. 50-51. Teachers should also use the HELPS Training Video when learning the Graphing procedure. Lastly, teachers should consult Appendix P (p. 122) for examples of praise statements that may be used as part of offering students performance feedback.

Tips and reminders for implementing the Performance Feedback (Graphing) procedure can be found in Appendix M.

IMPLEMENTING THE MOTIVATIONAL (REWARD) PROCEDURE

Overall Purpose and Relevant Background Information

The overall purpose of the HELPS Motivational (Reward) procedure is to help students continually maximize their effort when practicing the instructional strategies contained within the HELPS Program. The Reward procedure is highly effective when used in combination with the other motivational strategies that are integrated throughout each session (e.g., Goal-setting, Performance Feedback, general use of teacher praise). Under no circumstances should teachers describe the Reward procedure as a *reason* that students should work hard during a HELPS session. Likewise, the Reward procedure should not be emphasized by teachers as a reason for students to enjoy the HELPS Program. When students earn stars (and ultimately rewards), these occasions should be fun. However, teachers' emphasis should always be placed on how a student has improved her reading through the practice strategies associated with the HELPS Program. For these reasons, students generally earn stars on their Star Chart each session, but 6-7 sessions (approximately 2 weeks) are often required for students to actually earn a small reward.

Decades of research have highlighted the beneficial outcomes of using rewards to increase desired behaviors (Cameron, Banko, & Pierce, 2001). Much of this research has demonstrated beneficial outcomes for students when teachers use rewards as part of classroom instruction (Alberto & Troutman, 2009; Fredrick, Deitz, Bryceland, & Hummel, 2000). Even more specifically, the use of rewards is common with reading instruction that targets reading fluency (Martens & Witt, 2004; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006). One primary reason using rewards is an integral component of fluency-based programs is because fluency requires structured and dedicated practice. As most individuals know first-hand, practice with any new skill is critical, but can sometimes feel tiring because of the amount of practice needed to become fluent with that skill. Under *some* circumstances (and depending on the specific individual), practice with a desired skill is by itself motivating (e.g., learning a new dance, learning a new language, learning a musical instrument). Yet, even skills that are generally enjoyable (e.g., teaching) often require structured, dedicated practice that by itself is not *always* enjoyable. Knowing this, learning theorists have argued for many years that using a reward program is one necessary component needed to improve fluency with a particular skill (e.g., Haring et al., 1978). This is true for a large range of skills, including reading, eating healthy, exercising, and thousands of others.

Although the importance and benefits of using reward programs is well-endorsed by most educators, some educators may have learned about (or experienced) some negative outcomes associated with using reward programs with children (e.g., competitive behavior among students or students seeming more interested in rewards than learning). Only under very specific situations can the use of rewards actually decrease a student's motivation (Alberto & Troutman, 2009; Cameron et al., 2001), and there is no known evidence to suggest that well-constructed reward programs harm students who need to improve their reading skills or that rewards will diminish the intrinsic value of reading at the present or in the future. Unfortunately, the occasional controversy of using rewards is often fueled by individuals (e.g., Kohn, 1999) who fail to recognize that a well-constructed, effective reward program usually integrates dozens of learning and motivational principles. Sometimes teachers can develop highly successful reward programs without having specifically learned the many principles needed to develop an effective reward program; but many reward programs lack these meaningful components—and such programs are understandably unsuccessful.

Overall, poorly designed reward programs and poor implementation procedures will probably be ineffective in increasing the desired behavior and *may*, in some cases, decrease the intrinsic value of the task. However, well-constructed reward programs are generally very effective and do not produce negative implications for intrinsic motivation (Alberto & Troutman, 2009; Cameron et al., 2001). When used as described below, the HELPS Reward procedure should maximize student effort without causing negative consequences for students or teachers.

Implementation Rules (Star Chart Reward Procedure)

The HELPS Reward procedure does not require the teacher to read scripted directions to the student. Instead, the primary components of the Reward procedure are integrated into the final parts of the HELPS Implementation Protocol. The basic rules for implementing the Star Chart Reward procedure are described on p. 52. (Teachers unfamiliar with those rules should review them now). In addition, the following list offers rules and considerations for better ensuring successful use of the HELPS Reward procedure. Given the many considerations sometimes needed to implement a highly successful reward program, the following list is not exhaustive. However, it should facilitate an effective reward program for most students.

Rules and Considerations to Maximize Use of the HELPS Reward Procedure

1. The “size” and cost of rewards earned can, and in most cases should, be minimal. Rewards used over the four years of developing the HELPS Program were generally bought in bulk from dollar stores and therefore a single reward often costs no more than 5-10 cents. Examples of rewards included plastic jewelry, sports trading cards (one per reward earned), pencils, erasers, stickers, bubbles, and various other inexpensive items. Almost always, teachers have great ideas for inexpensive rewards students will enjoy.
2. To increase the “fun” of earning stars it is sometimes helpful to allow the student to draw earned stars on his chart. If the resources exist, small stickers may also replace the drawn-in stars if it may further improve a student’s motivation.
3. Praise statements should be integrated throughout every HELPS session, including the time at which teachers deliver stars on the student’s Star Chart. It is therefore important that teachers use specific, honest, and varied praise statements so that the praise statements continue to carry meaning for the student. Obviously there are hundreds of ways a teacher may phrase his praise statements, but on occasion some teachers get into a habit of using the same types of phrases. To assist teachers who may have difficulty varying their statements, Appendix P lists some examples of praise statements.
4. If the HELPS Reward procedure does not seem to increase student motivation, consider the following:
 - a. Ensure the student has reward options that are appealing. Ask the student to confirm his interest in the possible rewards. Sometimes educators even use “wish lists” or “preference checklists” to determine what a student would like to work for.
 - b. Over the course of several months, students may become uninterested in the possible reward options if they never change. Teachers should ensure the student is consistently interested in earning the possible rewards.
 - c. It is important that the teacher allows each student to select a reward immediately after she earns a star in the final column of the Star Chart. This means the teacher should keep the Reward/Prize Box (or bag) near the HELPS implementation location.

Under the rare circumstance when the above suggestions do not result in an effective reward program, teachers may wish to consult resources such as *How to Use Token Economy and Point Systems* (Ayllon, 1999).

Tips and reminders for implementing the Motivational (Reward) procedure can be found in Appendix M.

STEPS FOR USING THE STUDENT GRAPH, STAR CHART, AND PROGRESS

TRACKING FORM

Student Graph

The standard rules for graphing student performance are as follows. At the end of this section, sample WCPM and WIPM data are provided, and Appendix Q (p. 123) illustrates how these data are correctly graphed.

1. The teacher should graph the student’s first and last Timed Reading of every passage practiced in a session. The teacher will record the student’s WCPM scores (with a dot) and the student’s WIPM scores (with an X).
2. When a student meets his Goal (as shown in the HELPS Implementation Protocol), this means the teacher should graph (1) the reading of Passage A, (2) the first reading of Passage B, and (3) the third reading of Passage B. When a student does not meet his Goal, the teacher should graph (1) the first reading of Passage A and (2) the third reading of Passage A.

(List continues on following page)

3. As described in the HELPS Implementation Protocol, when a student meets his Goal, scores should be graphed before the student reads Passage B aloud (Step 4a). Then, Passage B is graphed toward the end of the session (Step 10a). When a student does not meet his Goal, all graphing occurs toward the end of the session (Step 9b).
4. Each WCPM score that reflects the student's very *first* reading of that passage should be circled on the graph. The Timed Reading number (written just below the graph's horizontal axis) associated with that *first* reading of the passage should also be circled.
5. The teacher should connect WCPM dots (and WIPM Xs) only for scores of the same passage.
6. For the student's first Timed Reading of a day's session, the teacher should write the date immediately below the respective Timed Reading number written along the horizontal axis.
7. Teachers should note that the scaling of Words Per Minute (along the vertical axis) is not typical of a standard, equal-interval graph. The HELPS Program graphs were specially designed.
8. One side of a Student Graph page should allow teachers to graph 10-15 sessions with a student. Because the student will likely receive more than 15 HELPS sessions, teachers should simply continue graphing on a new Student Graph. To save paper, teachers might want to double-side each student's graph and use both sides before obtaining a new sheet. Fully used Student Graphs should be kept in the student's folder.
9. Additional rules and information about graphing student performance should be read on pp. 47-48.

Illustration of Graphing Rules

Using the rules above, the data in Table 5 are graphed correctly in Appendix Q (p. 123). Table 5 shows data for a second grade student (William) with standard Goal criteria for a second grade student.

Notes about Table 5.

1. These data will also be used to illustrate the correct use of the Progress Tracking Form (Appendix R). **Therefore, some information in Table 5 will be relevant for the Progress Tracking Form but not for the Student Graph.**
2. NA = Not Applicable. This is sometimes written because the student would not receive an additional Timed Reading with that particular passage.
3. Information from the same date is sometimes written in 2 separate rows to reflect the student's reading of a new passage.
4. An asterisk (*) next to a WCPM value indicates the student did not meet the criterion for the Retell Check during that session. Otherwise, assume the student met that Retell Check criterion.

Table 5
Sample Data for Training Exercises (Part A)

Session	Day-Date	Passage #	Timed Reading 1		Timed Reading 2		Timed Reading 3		Steps Forgotten
			WCPM	WIPM	WCPM	WIPM	WCPM	WIPM	
1	Wed-9/16	1	*71	5	80	4	90	4	0
2	Fri-9/18	1	91	3	96	1	98	0	0
3	Mon-9/21	1	107	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	See below #
3	Mon-9/21	2	82	5	88	3	94	3	0
4	Wed-9/23	2	98	4	110	2	115	0	1
5	Fri-9/25	2	110	2	NA	NA	NA	NA	See below #
5	Fri-9/25	3	70	6	70	4	72	3	0
6	Mon-9/28	3	75	2	80	3	88	2	0
7	Wed-9/30	3	86	2	88	2	91	0	0
8	Fri-10/2	3	95	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	See below #
8	Fri-10/2	4	76	4	77	4	85	2	0

Star Chart

The Star Chart is made up of 165 squares (15 squares per row, with 11 rows). This number of squares make it probable that the HELPS Program can be implemented an entire school year using only one Star Chart. The following information describes (a) the basic rules for using the Star Chart, and (b) the procedures for developing and using the Bonus Bag and Prize Box. Additional rules and information related to the Star Chart should be read on pp. 48-50.

Basic Rules

1. As described in the HELPS Implementation Protocol, the student has an opportunity to earn up to two stars on the Chart for reading performance. Stars are recorded on the student's Chart at the end of the session, just before the teacher records information on the Progress Tracking Form (i.e., Step 11a if the student met her Goal; Step 10b if the student did not meet her Goal).
2. When the student earns a star in the last square of each row (a total of 15 stars), the student earns one prize from the Prize Box (described below).
3. When the student earns a star in a shaded square, she gets to select a ticket from the Bonus Bag (described below). The number of stars written on the selected ticket should then be added to the Star Chart.

Clarification Points

1. If a student has 14 stars on a row at the start of the session, and then earns two stars during that session, the student should select a prize from the Prize Box *and* earn a star in the first square of the following row. In this way, the student does not need to "land on" the 15th square in order to earn a prize. The student simply needs to earn a star in that last square of the row.
2. Similarly, the student should select a Bonus Bag ticket every time a star is written in a shaded square. Again, the student does not need to "land on" a shaded square to select a Bonus Bag ticket.

Developing and Using the Prize Box

The teacher should develop a "Prize Box" (or "Prize Bag") that includes small items students in the class would enjoy earning. Students should be able to see the items in the Prize Box upon first starting the HELPS Program so they can see what prizes can be selected after earning 15 stars on the Chart. When a student gets to select a prize from the Prize Box, he should be able to look at the prizes while deciding which he will select (typically, students should be allowed approximately 1 minute to select the prize). Examples of items that may go in the Prize Box are provided on p. 50 (see item #1 on that list).

Developing and Using the Bonus Bag

The Bonus Bag could be made from a small brown sandwich bag. The words *Bonus Bag* should be written on the bag. Unlike the Prize Box, students should *not* be able to see what is in the Bonus Bag when selecting from it. Within the Bonus Bag, teachers should place 16 tickets that have information written on each ticket. Five separate tickets should say, *1 Bonus Star*; four tickets should say, *2 Bonus Stars*; three tickets should say, *3 Bonus Stars*; two tickets should say, *4 Bonus Stars*; one ticket should say, *5 Bonus Stars*; and one ticket should say, *Prize Box!* With this arrangement of tickets, the Bonus Bag functions as a type of lottery. When a student selects a ticket, it is most likely she will earn only one or two Bonus stars, but there is a small chance the student could earn as many as five Bonus Stars or even an immediate selection from the Prize Box. Like the Prize Box, The Bonus Bag is essential to the HELPS Reward procedure, as it integrates numerous motivational components to ensure an effective reward system.

Progress Tracking Form

There are several purposes of the Progress Tracking Form, such as: (a) helping multiple teachers plan for HELPS sessions and easily correspond when implementing HELPS with the same student; (b) facilitating discussion about student progress with other teachers, school administrators, and/or parents; (c) tracking implementation integrity; and (d) tracking any important notes regarding the student's performance with HELPS. Recording information in the Progress Tracking Form should be done at the end of the session, and can be done without the student present. WCPM and WIPM data are taken from the scored teacher passages from the day's session, and the remaining data are written according to what occurred during the session (e.g., student met or did not meet the Retell Check criterion).

The columns of the Progress Tracking Form should make it easy for teachers to understand what information is written in each column. Appendix R (p. 124) shows how the information in Table 5 is accurately recorded on a Sample Progress Tracking Form. Teachers should view that now, as well as review the additional tips and instructions below:

1. Remember to record the day and the date, which helps for organization and recall purposes.
2. All information for a session is written on only one row. Note that only one session per student should occur on a given day.
3. Only record student notes about things that likely influenced the student's performance during the session (e.g., the student was sick, it helped the student's accuracy to track lines with her finger).
4. To ease implementation between multiple teachers who implement HELPS with the same student, record the appropriate "1st story read" number on the row that follows the session just implemented. This is shown in the example on p. 124 (see Session 9). Note that Session 9 has not yet occurred, but the teacher (Jones) wrote a "4" in the correct column for Session 9 because this will help the other teacher (Smith) know which passage to start with when Session 9 occurs.

USING THE HELPS PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT TO DETERMINE WHERE A STUDENT SHOULD BEGIN IN THE HELPS CURRICULUM

The ideal starting point for a student in the HELPS Curriculum is one in which the student will regularly meet his Reading Goal, but in order to do so, the student will need the strategies used in the HELPS Implementation Protocol. Based on the first four years of research with HELPS, students generally increase their WCPM score by approximately 20-30 words after one practice session with a HELPS passage. Furthermore, students generally retain that improvement 2-3 days later when they read the same passage (i.e., during the Goal Assessment reading). Thus, as a general rule, a good starting point is when the student first reads a passage with approximately 20-30 WCPM *less* than what would be expected to meet his Reading Goal. Therefore, after practice, it is likely the student will meet his Goal after no more than 1 or 2 sessions.

To assist teachers with determining the appropriate starting point for students in the HELPS Curriculum, the HELPS Placement Assessment was developed (see Appendices S and T, pp. 125-127). The HELPS Placement Assessment was developed from a thorough assessment of all HELPS Curriculum passages and is intended to offer teachers a systematic procedure for identifying an appropriate starting point for students. Teachers should therefore use the materials and specific procedures found on pp. 125-127.

Research evaluating the utility of the HELPS Placement Assessment suggests that it is a valid procedure for determining an appropriate starting point for students. Based on a recent sample of 12 first, second, third, and fourth grade students (48 students total), average WCPM scores at each Placement Assessment Level progressively decreased. This systematic decrease in scores suggests that the Placement Assessment uses passages of increasing difficulty. Therefore, when passages become too difficult for students, the Placement Assessment helps teachers identify this occurrence and

recommends an appropriate starting point. Also important, of the 48 students who were placed at the starting point recommended by the HELPS Placement Assessment procedures, 45 students (93.8%) met the Reading Goal regularly after starting HELPS and did not obtain WCPM scores suggesting they should have started on passages later in the HELPS Curriculum. This result suggests that the HELPS Placement Assessment accurately identified a good starting point for these students. As such, of this sample of 48 students, only three needed to be moved back or forward in the HELPS Curriculum based on their reading performance of the first three to six passages. (Chapter 5 provides recommendations for when a student should be moved back or forward in the HELPS Curriculum). Collectively, there is good evidence to suggest that the HELPS Placement Assessment should identify the best starting point in the HELPS Curriculum for approximately 95% of students.

Of course, because the Placement Assessment is not 100% perfect in identifying the ideal starting point for students, information is provided on pp. 56-63 that should help teachers who may need to move a student back in the HELPS Curriculum. Similarly, pp. 64-65 offers recommendations for possibly moving a student forward in the HELPS Curriculum.

PRACTICE EXERCISES WITH THE STUDENT GRAPH, PROGRESS TRACKING FORM, AND HELPS PLACEMENT ASSESSMENT

To acquire additional practice using the Student Graph and Progress Tracking Form (and for additional understanding of the HELPS Placement Assessment), consider the below case example. Then, using the information provided, record the relevant information on a copy of a third grade Student Graph and Progress Tracking Form. After completing the entire exercise, the correctly recorded Graph (p. 128) and Progress Tracking Form (p. 129) are shown in Appendices U and V so that you may check your work.

Sam Pull is a third grade student struggling in the area of reading fluency. To assist Sam using the HELPS Program, his teacher starts the HELPS Placement Assessment by administering the Level 1 Passages (4 and 8). Sam's scores are as follows: Passage 4: WCPM = 105, WIPM = 1; Passage 8: WCPM = 103, WIPM = 2. Thus, Sam's average scores on Level 1 passages are: WCPM = 104, WIPM = 1.5. Given these average scores, Sam exceeds the grade level (Grade 3) target scores shown in the Placement Assessment Starting Point Criteria Table (that is, his average WCPM was *more than* 90-100 WCPM, and his average WIPM was 3 or less). As such, Sam's teacher administers the Level 2 Passages (23 and 27) and obtains the following *average* scores from these two passages: WCPM = 91, WIPM = 1. This time, Sam's average scores falls *within* the target score listed in the Starting Point Criteria Table; therefore, his teacher starts him with Passage 25 of the HELPS Curriculum.

Given the data obtained from the HELPS Placement Assessment, Sam begins the HELPS Program (i.e., HELPS Session 1) with Passage 25 from the Curriculum. Sam does not meet his Goal for Passage 25 during Session 1 and therefore continues with Passage 25 during Session 2. Sam meets his Reading Goal for Passage 25 at the beginning of Session 2, and during that same session he obtains his first practice session with Passage 26. Sam fails to meet his Reading Goal on Passage 26 during the next session. During Session 4, Sam meets his Reading Goal for Passage 26 and begins practicing Passage 27. At the beginning of Session 5, Mr. Li notes a concern about Sam being upset before the session, and Sam does not meet his Goal during this session. Using the information above and Table 6 below, record all information for Sam on a third grade Student Graph and Progress Tracking Form.

Table 6
Sample Data for Training Exercises (Part B)

Session	Day-Date	Passage #	Timed Reading 1		Timed Reading 2		Timed Reading 3		Steps Forgotten
			WCPM	WIPM	WCPM	WIPM	WCPM	WIPM	
1	Wed-9/16	25	82	2	94	3	100	3	0
2	Fri-9/18	25	122	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	See below #
2	Fri-9/18	26	99	4	99	2	101	2	1
3	Mon-9/21	26	102	3	120	4	130	1	0
4	Wed-9/23	26	125	0	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
4	Wed-9/23	27	72	3	75	2	81	0	0
5	Fri-9/25	27	*99	4	101	3	102	1	0

Implementing the HELPS Program (Part 3)

When and How to Modify the Core Procedures

Although the HELPS Implementation Protocol is purposefully structured and systematic, situations may arise when a teacher would benefit the student by slightly modifying the protocol or even terminating HELPS implementation with the student. This chapter addresses these situations by describing what a teacher can do (a) when a student consistently does not meet the Reading Goal, (b) when a student should be more rapidly advanced in the HELPS Curriculum, (c) when a student may no longer need HELPS as a form of remedial assistance, and (d) when a student may benefit from receiving vocabulary and/or comprehension instructional strategies in combination with the HELPS procedures. Only in specific circumstances should teachers consider modifying the HELPS Implementation Protocol, so this chapter specifies when modifications may be necessary and how to make appropriate modifications.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A STUDENT DOES NOT MEET THE READING GOAL

HELPS is purposefully designed to allow each student to regularly meet her Reading Goal. When placed appropriately using the HELPS Placement Assessment, the student typically meets her Goal within 1 to 3 sessions across all passages in the HELPS Curriculum. However, under some circumstances a student will continue practicing a passage for up to three sessions without meeting the Reading Goal. Teachers should not continue having a student practice the same passage for more than 3 complete sessions, as this may lead to student (and possibly teacher) frustration. Also, the cumulative benefits of practicing a particular passage likely diminish after 3 complete HELPS sessions using the same passage.

Described below are recommendations that teachers should use when a student does not meet her Goal. Because a student's Reading Goal consists of three main criteria (i.e., a WCPM, WIPM, and Retell Check criterion), each possible situation for not meeting the Goal will be described separately. Indeed, based on the scenario, different recommendations are more appropriate than others. Furthermore, recommendations for a student not meeting the WCPM criterion are further sub-divided so that teachers can best address the situation. In total, there are five primary types of situations that a teacher should consider when a student does not meet the Goal (described below as Situations A-E).

The Student Does Not Meet the Reading Goal Because of the WCPM Criterion

First, to clarify what is meant by a student practicing a passage for 3 complete sessions without meeting the Reading Goal, the following case example illustrates this. In this illustration, the hypothetical student (William, a second grade student with a 100 WCPM Goal criterion) fails to meet his WCPM criterion (and thus fails to meet his Goal) for HELPS Passage 3. For better clarity in understanding the below case example, read the illustration below while also referring to the Sample Progress Tracking Form (Appendix R, p. 124) and the Sample Student Graph (Appendix Q, p. 123), both of which correspond to the illustration below.

Case illustration

Given data obtained from the HELPS Placement Assessment, William begins the HELPS Program (i.e., HELPS Session 1) with Passage 1. William meets his Goal for Passage 1 during Session 3 and therefore

begins practicing Passage 2 during that same session. William meets his Reading Goal for Passage 2 at the beginning of Session 5 and during that same session he obtains his first practice session with Passage 3. During Sessions 6 and 7, William fails to meet his Reading Goal for Passage 3, and therefore practices Passage 3 during each of those sessions. At this point, William has now practiced Passage 3 a total of 3 consecutive sessions (Sessions 5, 6, and 7). During Session 8, William reads Passage 3 once again and he still fails to meet his Goal. At this point, teachers are encouraged to use one or more of the following recommendations and ultimately allow William to begin practicing Passage 4 during Session 8.

Described below are comments and recommendations related to three separate types of circumstances when a student does not meet the WCPM criterion of the Reading Goal after 3 complete HELPS sessions (i.e., the student does not meet his Reading Goal at the start of the 4th session with the same passage).

Situation A

The student meets the WIPM and Retell Check criteria, but reads **1 to 10 WCPM below** the WCPM criterion at the start of the 4th session with the same passage (e.g., if the WCPM criterion is 100 WCPM, the student reads between 90-99 WCPM at the start of the 4th session with the same passage). Of Situations A, B, and C, Situation A is most common.

Recommendations.

1. Move the student on to the following passage. With the Star Chart reward system, the student does not earn a star for meeting his Reading Goal under this circumstance, even though he moves to a new passage. However, the teacher is strongly encouraged to award the star for effort at the end of the session, as long as the student showed signs of effort. Thus, for this session the student would earn a maximum of one star. Equally important, the teacher should incorporate a substantial amount of praise and positive feedback throughout the session for both effort and reading improvements. The overall goal of using praise and positive feedback is to ensure the student does not become discouraged by failing to meet his Reading Goal.
2. Possibly in combination with the above recommendation, specifically tell the student that he is getting very close to meeting his Reading Goal, but that he needs to read just a little faster to do so. Also, it is often helpful for teachers to show the student the exact spot in the story that he needs to read to (within the one minute timing) in order to meet the Goal. For instance, if the student's Reading Goal is 100 WCPM, the teacher may point to the 100th word in the passage and say, "This is the 100th word in the story. If you can read quickly, accurately, and with good expression up to or beyond this point, you should meet your Reading Goal today." The teacher should NOT emphasize only reading with speed, as this will likely increase student errors and decrease appropriate expression.

Situation B

If Situation A occurs 3 or more times across 5 consecutive passages, the teacher should use one or more of the following recommendations. When using any of the below recommendations, this should be noted in the "Student Notes" column of the student's Progress Tracking Form.

Recommendations.

1. Alter the Reading Goal to 10 WCPM less than the originally determined Reading Goal and use this altered Reading Goal for the subsequent passages. For example, if the student is a third grade student, and her Reading Goal was originally set at 120 WCPM, her reduced Reading Goal should be 110 WCPM. If a student's Reading Goal is reduced, the teacher should explain this situation to the student by saying something such as, "I have decided to change your Reading Goal to <insert appropriate number> WCPM. I see that meeting your original Reading Goal is difficult for now, so

we will change the Goal just a little and then work our way back up to your original Reading Goal.” When the student demonstrates on three consecutive sessions that she can meet the original Reading Goal, re-adjust the Reading Goal back to the original level.

2. If the above recommendation is unlikely to result in the student regularly meeting her Reading Goal, consider moving the student back approximately 10 passages prior to the originally determined starting point. It is possible the starting point determined from the HELPS Placement Assessment was too high for that student’s ability. For example, if the student started on Passage 25 but failed to meet the Reading Goal within three sessions for Passages 27, 28, and 30, the teacher should move the student back to Passage 15 in the Curriculum. (Note: students starting at Passage 5 would simply move back to Passage 1). Assuming this strategy allows the student to more regularly meet her Reading Goal, the student should continue to advance through the HELPS Curriculum, but would skip any passages already practiced in a previous session. Using the above example, once the student meets her Goal on Passages 15-24, she should then practice Passage 31 because she would have already practiced Passages 25-30. If the student started at Passage 1 in the HELPS Curriculum (and it is therefore impossible to move the student further back in the Curriculum), the following recommendations may be helpful.
3. Have the student use her finger to follow along and keep her place in the story while reading aloud. Sometimes a student reads slower because of visual tracking problems that can be easily corrected by having the student use her finger to accurately track the words in the story. With this said, for a student who is an accurate reader and uses her finger to track words, it may actually slow her down because it may cause her to read word-by-word and with poor prosody. Therefore, the student’s primary teacher should observe her enough to know whether she will benefit from tracking words with her finger.
4. Consider whether the student is unable to meet the Reading Goal due to deficits in rapid naming. For a very small number of students, the ability to orally produce words at rates consistent with the suggested Goal levels may be due to deficits in cognitive processing more so than reading fluency deficits. One recommended way to assess students’ rapid naming abilities is with the Rapid Naming subtests of the Comprehensive Tests of Phonological Processing (CTOPP). Students reading approximately 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on the Rapid Naming Composite Score may benefit from a reduced Reading Goal. The mean score for the Rapid Naming Composite of the CTOPP is 100, so students scoring 77 or below on this assessment may benefit from a reduced Reading Goal. Reducing the Reading Goal for students with rapid naming deficits should still allow these students to obtain structured practice with ORF as part of the HELPS Program. Teachers unfamiliar with the CTOPP may get additional information about this assessment tool from the school psychologist and/or speech pathologist working in the student’s school.
5. Consider whether the student’s behavior and/or motivation are hindering his reading performance. If the teacher has strong reason to believe that a student’s motivation is the primary reason he fails to meet his Reading Goal, the teacher may try to strengthen the reward-based component of HELPS. For example, the teacher may specifically assess the student’s preferences for rewards and then use the preferred rewards as part of the Star Chart system. In addition (or alternatively), the teacher may provide one additional bonus star every time the student meets his Goal so that he earns rewards faster. Any behaviorally-based intervention strategies aimed to improve motivation would be appropriate. However, after using HELPS with hundreds of elementary-aged students, it was extremely rare that the Star Chart system was ineffective or disliked by students. Thus, altering the reward system should be done only when a careful analysis of the situation deems it necessary.
6. Consider whether a reading fluency program is appropriate for the child. If a student starts with Passage 1 of the HELPS Curriculum and consistently fails to meet his Reading Goals (especially after the Reading Goal has been lowered by 10-15 WCPM), it is possible the student needs additional

assistance and practice with lower level reading skills (e.g., phonics and decoding). In other words, if the suggestions above do not result in a student meeting the Reading Goal, the HELPS Program may be inappropriate until precursor reading skills improve.

Situation C

The student meets the WIPM and Retell Check criteria, but reads **11 or more WCPM below** the WCPM criterion at the start of the 4th session with the same passage (e.g., if the WCPM criterion is 100 WCPM, the student reads less than 90 WCPM at the start of the 4th session with the same passage).

Recommendations. In this situation, it is likely that the recommended Goal level is too high for the student and/or he started the HELPS Curriculum at a passage that it too difficult. To address this, the teacher should either (a) move the student back in the HELPS Curriculum (if applicable), or (b) immediately adjust the student's Goal. Each of these recommendations is described in detail below. When using any of the below recommendations, this should be noted in the "Student Notes" column of the student's Progress Tracking Form.

1. Move the student back in the HELPS Curriculum (if applicable). If the student started at Passage 1 in the HELPS Curriculum, this recommendation is not possible and the teacher should immediately adjust the student's Goal (details described in #2 below). If the student started at Passage 5 in the HELPS Curriculum, the teacher should move the student back to Passage 1. If the student began at Passage 25 or higher, the student should move back approximately 10 passages prior to the originally determined starting point. It is possible the starting point determined from the HELPS Placement Assessment was too high for that student's ability. For example, if the student started on Passage 25 but failed to meet his Reading Goal within 3 sessions for that passage, the student should move back to Passage 15 in the Curriculum. Assuming this strategy allows the student to more regularly meet his Reading Goal, he should continue to advance through the HELPS Curriculum, but would skip any passages already practiced in a previous session. Using the above example, once the student meets his Goal on Passages 15-24, he should then practice Passage 26 because he would have already practiced Passage 25.
2. Immediately adjust the student's Goal. If it is not possible for the teacher to move the student back in the HELPS Curriculum (that is, the student began the Curriculum at Passage 1), the student's Goal should be adjusted. Specifically, the teacher should adjust the Reading Goal to 15-25 WCPM higher than the very first reading of the passage the student is currently practicing. For example, if the student is a first grade student, his WCPM criterion should be 80 WCPM. If his first reading of Passage 1 was 53 WCPM (and he continued to read below 80 WCPM after 3 practice sessions), the adjusted Reading Goal should be 70 WCPM (in this case, 17 WCPM higher than the very first reading of the passage). If a student's Reading Goal is reduced, the teacher should explain this situation to the student by saying something such as, "I have decided to change your Reading Goal to <insert appropriate number> WCPM. I see that meeting your original Reading Goal is difficult for now, so we will change the Goal just a little and then work our way back up to your original Reading Goal." When the student demonstrates on three consecutive sessions that he can meet the original Reading Goal, the teacher should re-adjust the Reading Goal back to the original level. Note also, determining the new Reading Goal should take into consideration the first reading during each new session with that same passage. Using the above example, if the student read 53, 65, 73, and then 74 WCPM at each of the *initial* readings across the four sessions with Passage 1, an adjusted Goal of 70 WCPM would be appropriate because these data suggest the student is capable of meeting that Goal after only a couple practice sessions.

Other considerations and recommendations. In addition to the above recommendations, the teacher may wish to consider suggestions 3 to 6 described under Situation B. These considerations are

particularly relevant if the above recommendations do not result in the student regularly meeting his Reading Goal. When using any of the below recommendations, this should be noted in the “Student Notes” column of the student’s Progress Tracking Form.

The Student Does Not Meet the Reading Goal Because of the WIPM Criterion

Situation D

The student meets the WCPM and Retell Check criteria, but fails to meet the WIPM criterion. This situation sometimes occurs if the student tries to read too quickly and/or is highly distracted during the reading. Such behavior may result in the student making errors with words he previously read correctly. It is rare a student will continue making errors on the same words, because otherwise “difficult” words are explicitly practiced during the Phrase-drill procedure and then practiced again (in context) during the repeated reading and modeling activities. Thus, the recommendations below are for students who make errors as a result of reading too quickly and/or reading without sufficient attention to the story. When using any of the below recommendations, this should be noted in the “Student Notes” column of the student’s Progress Tracking Form.

Recommendations.

1. During the very first instance of a student meeting the WCPM and Retell Check criteria, but failing to meet the WIPM criterion, provide explicit feedback to the student that she did not meet her Goal because she read too many words incorrectly. When giving this feedback, the teacher should specify the exact number of errors made and remind the student that she needs to read no more than 3 words incorrectly as part of the Reading Goal. During this first instance of failing to meet the Goal solely because of the WIPM criterion, the student should continue practicing the same passage during that session. Within that same session, after the student reads the passage aloud for the second and third time, the teacher should tell the student how many mistakes were made and offer praise when the number falls below 4 errors. At the start of the following session (just prior to the initial student reading), the student should be reminded to make 3 or fewer errors as one part of the Reading Goal. It is likely the student will meet the WIPM criterion at this point. However, if she again fails to meet the WIPM criterion during that reading, the student should move on to the next passage as long as the WCPM and Retell Check criteria are met. As in the previous session, the student would not earn a star for meeting her Goal. As needed, these recommendations can continue and may be used in combination with the below suggestions.
2. Make sure the student uses her finger to follow along and keep her place in the story while reading aloud. Sometimes errors occur because of visual tracking problems that can be easily corrected by having the student use her finger to accurately track the words in the story.
3. If it seems a student is making errors because she is reading too fast and with no regard to errors or proper expression (e.g., stopping at periods, pausing at commas), remind the student to read with good expression and that “slowing down” will probably help the student focus better on each word in the story and help her read more accurately. Under no circumstances (whether Reading Goals are met or not) should a student be reading only for speed.
4. If missing only the WIPM portion of the Goal criteria is a persistent problem for the student, focus on this problem by using stars on the Star Chart to specifically reward reading accuracy. As described in Recommendation 1, a student should never practice the same story for more than 2 sessions due to only failing the WIPM criterion.
5. If none of the above strategies resolve the problem and the student continually fails to meet the WIPM criterion while meeting the WCPM and Retell Check criteria, it is likely that a more thorough (possibly formal) evaluation of the problem is needed. In this case the teacher should consult with other educational staff.

The Student Does Not Meet the Reading Goal Because of the Retell Check Criterion

Situation E

The student meets the WCPM and WIPM criteria, but fails to meet the Retell Check criterion. First and foremost, it should be reiterated that the overall goal of the Retell Check is to remind (or cue) students that they must remember what they read, not simply read with fluency. Thus, the Retell Check criterion is not intended to be wholly systematic or contain explicit, standardized scoring rules. Rather, teachers are simply asked to evaluate whether students can retell general or specific content from the previously read story for approximately 30–45 seconds (see pp. 45-46 for additional rules and comments).

Nevertheless, during those rare occasions when a student meets all Goal criteria except the Retell Check criterion, teachers may use the following recommendations. When using any of the below suggestions, this should be noted in the “Student Notes” column of the student’s Progress Tracking Form.

Recommendations.

1. During the very first instance of a student meeting the WCPM and WIPM criteria, but failing to meet the Retell Check criterion, provide “broad” verbal prompts (i.e., hints) to help the student recall additional aspects of the story. For instance, rather than a teacher saying, “April was a character in the story and she liked to play games that other girls like to play, can you tell me which games she liked to play?” the teacher would use a better, more “broad” prompt by saying, “Can you tell me the name of the main character in the story and something that character liked to do?” Alternatively, the teacher may simply state, “Tell me one or two more things about what you just read.” Even if a student needs a prompt to meet the Retell Check criterion, the student should meet his Reading Goal if both the WCPM and WIPM criteria were met. If frequent prompting is necessary, the teacher should read the below recommendations.
2. If the student requires regular, intensive prompting (e.g., 3 or more times within 5 consecutive sessions) to meet the Retell Check criterion, either (a) keep the student on that passage for no more than 1 additional session, or (b) allow the student to move to the next passage, but not reward the star on the Star Chart for meeting his Goal. (Recommendations 2, 3, and 4 of Situation E should be used in combination).
3. If the student requires regular, intensive prompting to meet the Retell Check criterion, provide specific praise and feedback during all instances when the student *does* meet the criterion. (Recommendations 2, 3, and 4 should be used in combination).
4. If the student requires regular, intensive prompting, emphasize to the student (immediately prior to the Goal Assessment) that he needs to remember what happens in the story, in addition to reading with speed, accuracy, and good expression. (Recommendations 2, 3, and 4 should be used in combination).
5. Persistent problems with a student only failing the Retell Check criterion may require more specific instructional programs and strategies to help the student. Although rare, this situation may also require a more formal, specific assessment of the student’s comprehension and memory abilities.

When a Student Does Not Meet the Reading Goal: Summary of Recommendations

Table 7 is intended to serve as a “quick glance” guide that should supplement the extended discussion of recommendations found on pp. 56-61. In other words, teachers should not use the below summary of recommendations until they have carefully read the detailed information associated with these recommendations.

The summaries of recommendations are categorized below by letters A-E, which correspond to the sections of text above (i.e., Situations A, B, C, etc.). Each letter specifies the situation that the student does not meet the Reading Goal. The second column in Table 7 summarizes the recommendations

associated with each situation, and are therefore numbered in correspondence with the appropriate letter (e.g., recommendations B1, B2, B3, etc. all correspond to Situation B). Lastly, Table 7 includes an area for teacher notes. When a teacher needs to use one of the above recommendations, it is suggested that the teacher re-read the extended discussion of recommendations and, while doing so, make notes about the recommendations that will assist with proper implementation.

Table 7
Summary of Recommendations for When a Student Does Not Meet the Reading Goal

Situation in Which Student Does Not Meeting Reading Goal	Suggested Recommendations for Teacher	Teacher Notes
A. Student meets the WIPM and Retell Check criteria, but reads 1 to 10 WCPM below the WCPM criterion at the start of the 4 th session with the same passage	A1. Move student on to next passage, but student does not earn star on Star Chart for meeting Goal. Incorporate a substantial amount of praise and positive feedback throughout the 4 th session (for effort and reading improvements), and give student one Star for those efforts.	
	A2. Before Goal Assessment of session 3 and/or 4 for that passage, tell student he is getting close to meeting the Goal, then show student exact spot in passage that reflects the WCPM criterion.	
B. Situation A (above) occurs 3 or more times across 5 consecutive passages	B1. Reduce student’s WCPM Goal criterion by 10 words. After 3 consecutive successful sessions with the reduced Goal, move back to original WCPM criterion.	
	B2. If possible, move student back 10 passages from where he started in the HELPS Curriculum. <i>(Only use if B1 is unlikely to be effective)</i>	
	B3. Have student use his finger to follow along to avoid visual tracking problems. <i>(Can be used with all other recommendations)</i>	
	B4. Consider whether the student has deficits with rapid naming. <i>(This is unlikely, but could help to explain why student does not meet Goal)</i>	
	B5. Consider whether the student’s behavior and/or motivation are hindering his reading performance. Strengthen the reward system to increase motivation. <i>(Only use when absolutely certain behavior is hindering performance)</i>	
	B6. Consider whether a reading fluency program is appropriate for the student. <i>(If none of the other recommendations resolve the problem, the student may need additional assistance and practice with lower level reading skills)</i>	

(Table 7 continues on the following page)

Table 7 (continued): Summary of Recommendations for When a Student Does Not Meet the Goal

<p>C. Student meets the WIPM and Retell Check criteria, but reads 11 or more WCPM below the WCPM criterion at the start of the 4th session with the same passage</p>	C1. If possible, move student back 10 passages from where he started in the HELPS Curriculum.	
	C2. If C1 is not possible, adjust the student’s WCPM Goal criterion to 15-25 WCPM higher than the very first reading of the passage the student is currently practicing (e.g. If the current WCPM criterion is 80, and the student read 53 WCPM the first time reading that passage, reduce the criterion to 70 WCPM). When the student demonstrates on 3 or more consecutive sessions that he can meet the original Goal, re-adjust the Goal back to the original level.	
	C3. See B3.	
	C4. See B4.	
	C5. See B5.	
	C6. See B6.	
<p>D. Student meets the WCPM and Retell Check criteria, but fails to meet the WIPM criterion (Note: A student should never practice the same passage for more than 2 sessions due to only failing the WIPM criterion)</p>	D1. Provide explicit feedback to the student that she did not meet her Goal because she read too many errors. Tell student the exact number of errors made and remind her she needs to make 3 or fewer errors.	
	D2. See B3.	
	D3. Be sure student is not reading only for speed. Remind him to read with good expression and that slowing down may decrease the number of errors. <i>(Can be used with all other recommendations)</i>	
	D4. Use Star Chart to specifically reward accuracy. <i>(Can be used with all other recommendations)</i>	
	D5. If none of the above recommendations resolve the problem, it is likely a more thorough evaluation of the problem is needed. Teacher should consult with other educational staff.	
<p>E. Student meets the WCPM and WIPM criteria, but fails to meet the Retell Check criterion (Note: A student should never practice the same passage for more than 2 sessions due to only failing the Retell Check criterion)</p>	E1. Provide “broad” verbal prompts to help the student recall additional aspects of the story. If student meets criterion with help from prompts, teacher may decide the student adequately met the Goal. If frequent prompting is necessary, follow the below recommendations.	
	E2. Keep student on that passage for one additional session, or move student to new passage without him earning a star for “meeting the Goal.” <i>(Must use with E3 and E4)</i>	
	E3. Provide specific praise and feedback during all instances when the student <i>does</i> meet the Retell Check criterion. <i>(Must use with E2 and E4)</i>	
	E4. Remind student prior to Goal Assessment that she needs to remember what happens in the story. <i>(Must use with E2 and E3)</i>	
	E5. If above recommendations do not resolve the problem, student may require a more formal and specific assessment, such as an assessment of memory ability.	

WHEN TO ADVANCE A STUDENT THROUGH THE HELPS PROGRAM MORE QUICKLY AND/OR WHEN TO STOP IMPLEMENTING HELPS

During the period of time in which a student receives the HELPS Program, the student should eventually improve her reading skills in ways that meet the teacher's expected goals for that student (e.g., to obtain a WCPM score at or above the 60th percentile with AIMSweb, grade-level passages). The following sections therefore offer recommendations for teachers who believe that (a) the student should advance through the HELPS Curriculum at a faster pace, or (b) the student should no longer receive the HELPS Program.

Unlike most of the other recommendations and procedures described throughout this Manual, the following recommendations are not specifically derived from data obtained through research. Most previous research with the HELPS Program was designed (primarily for research-related purposes) so that students would receive the HELPS Program until a specified date (usually until the end of the school year when the teacher would no longer be able to implement HELPS). Thus, additional research is needed to evaluate the validity of the following recommendations. Until that time, the following suggestions offer teachers some logical decision-rules that are derived from the research on overall reading instruction and reading fluency development.

Advancing a Student through the HELPS Curriculum at a Faster Pace

If a teacher believes the HELPS Curriculum passages are too easy for a student, the teacher may want to advance the student to passages later in the Curriculum. Passages can be considered too easy for the student if his very first reading of four consecutive, different passages result in WCPM and WIPM scores that surpass the student's Reading Goal criteria. **Note: the first reading of a new passage occurs at Step 5a of the HELPS Implementation Protocol, so this does *not* represent the Goal Assessment reading (i.e., Step 2).**

To illustrate the above situation, suppose a second grade student is currently reading Passage 36. Because he is a second grade student, his Reading Goal criteria (for WCPM and WIPM) would be 100 or more WCPM and three or fewer WIPM. Suppose the student obtained the following scores across the next five passages when reading the passage at Step 5a: Passage 36 (93 WCPM, 2 WIPM); Passage 37 (106 WCPM, 0 WIPM); Passage 38 (104 WCPM, 0 WIPM); Passage 39 (109 WCPM, 1 WIPM); Passage 40 (100 WCPM, 1 WIPM). In this case, the HELPS Curriculum is too easy for the student because he read four *consecutive* passages (upon the first exposure to the passage, during Step 5a) with WCPM and WIPM scores that met or exceeded the student's Goal criteria. Because the passages appear too easy for this student, the teacher should advance the student 12 passages in the Curriculum. Thus, after Passage 40 in the above example, the teacher would next use Passage 52. **Advancing a student 12 passages should be used as the guideline in this circumstance.**

With the very first reading of Passage 52, the student should be able to read at least 65-70 WCPM and should ultimately meet his Reading Goal within 1-2 sessions. Similarly, this situation should continue to occur with the passages that follow Passage 52. If this does not occur, the teacher should move the student back in the Curriculum to passages that were skipped (e.g., Passage 46). On the other hand, if Passages 52-55 are still too easy for the student, the teacher should again use the passage advancement recommendations detailed above.

Overall, the teacher is looking for a set of passages that are neither too easy nor too difficult for the student. Using the above guidelines is consistent with other recommendations made throughout the Manual (e.g., guidelines for the HELPS Placement Assessment) and should help the teacher determine passages that are ability-appropriate. Using the above guidelines is also consistent with the overall

HELPS Implementation Protocol. If passages become too easy for a student, passage selection (rather than session frequency) should be modified. In other words, for students to benefit from the HELPS Program, HELPS research suggests that students should consistently receive the Program 2-3 times per week. Modifying a student's session frequency to 1-2 times per week is not recommended.

Determining Whether a Student Should No Longer Receive the HELPS Program

As described on pp. 8-10, ORF benchmark assessments are a useful way for determining whether a student with reading difficulties may benefit from the HELPS Program. Likewise, Table 1 shown on p. 10 may also serve as a useful tool for identifying students who may no longer need the HELPS Program as a remedial form of instruction. Put simply, if a teacher suspects a student is now meeting her expected grade-level reading goals, the teacher should administer the seasonal ORF benchmark assessment (as described on pp. 8-9). If the student exceeds the scores shown in Table 1, this student should be "making adequate progress in reading (unless there are other indicators that would raise concern)" (Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006, p. 642). Under some circumstances, a teacher may want the student to continue with the program regardless of ORF benchmark assessment scores. Recall, all early readers benefit from developing strong reading fluency skills, and previous research with HELPS showed that below average, average, and above average second grade readers benefitted from HELPS. However, given the teacher's level of time and resources, the above "stopping rule" should be useful for determining whether HELPS is needed for a student suspected of being a struggling reader.

Related to this recommended "stopping rule," teachers should continue using HELPS with a student until the next seasonal benchmark assessment period. For example, if a student starts receiving HELPS in September because she was identified as a struggling reader with a fall ORF benchmark assessment, the teacher should continue implementing HELPS until the winter benchmark assessment period (usually in December or January) even if the teacher believes the student is no longer a "struggling reader." The continued use of HELPS throughout the fall should only serve to strengthen the student's reading abilities and better ensure the student scores at an average or above average reading level on the winter assessment. Furthermore, using the above example of a student who reads at an adequate reading level during the winter assessment, teachers are encouraged to monitor this student's reading level after the HELPS Program is discontinued. For example, this student may read a DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2002), AIMSweb (2008), or Easy CBM (2009) progress monitoring passage at least once every 2-4 weeks to ensure ORF scores continue to be average or above average. If consecutive scores drop back into the ranges shown in Table 1, the teacher can then determine whether the student should continue receiving supplemental reading assistance (e.g., continued use of HELPS or another program that may better target the student's specific reading difficulties).

Using ORF benchmark assessments should help teachers identify when a student should and should not receive supplemental reading programs such as HELPS. For a student who receives HELPS for multiple months but does not appear to show adequate levels of improvement during benchmark assessment periods, the teacher may determine the student needs another form of reading support—either in addition to, or instead of, HELPS. This type of decision-making is consistent with a data-based decision-making model of instruction, which includes models such as RTI (see additional information on pp. 11-14). A more thorough description of how to proceed with students who do not improve after receiving evidence-based interventions is beyond the scope of this Manual. However, teachers may find useful guidance in books such as, *Implementing Response-to-Intervention in Elementary and Secondary Schools: Procedures to assure Scientific-based Practices* (Burns & Gibbons, 2008).

MODIFYING HELPS IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES TO MORE SPECIFICALLY STRENGTHEN SKILLS SUCH AS VOCABULARY AND COMPREHENSION

Generally, teachers should avoid modifying the HELPS instructional procedures unless such modifications were specifically recommended in this Manual. A primary reason for avoiding major procedural modifications is because the alterations *could* actually decrease the effectiveness of the HELPS Program. At the time of this publication, research has not yet evaluated the effects of modifying the HELPS Implementation Protocol in order to combine HELPS procedures with other instructional strategies. Therefore, it is unknown whether procedural modifications to HELPS will increase, decrease, or not influence the effects of this Program with a given student.

With this said, HELPS was developed with teacher flexibility in mind, knowing that on some occasions a teacher may determine that a student would benefit from receiving HELPS in combination with other instructional strategies that address areas of reading development, such as vocabulary or reading comprehension. Overall, only in special circumstances should a teacher modify the HELPS Program in ways not specifically recommended in this Manual. However, the following information is intended to assist teachers during those unique instances when modifying HELPS procedures may benefit a student's reading development.

As described on p. 1, effective reading instruction in the primary grades should target 1) phonemic awareness, 2) phonics, 3) fluency, 4) comprehension, and 5) vocabulary (Armbuster et al., 2001; NRP, 2000). Typically, prior to students benefitting from a fluency-based instructional program such as HELPS, instruction should target and strengthen students' phonemic awareness and phonics. For students who do not experience reading difficulties, phonics skills and phonemic awareness typically develop throughout pre-school, kindergarten, and the early parts of first grade (Chall, 1996). When students are ready to develop reading fluency with age-appropriate text (which should start to occur from the end of first grade through the early elementary grades), it is likely that fluency-based instruction will work reciprocally with vocabulary (Biemiller, 2003; Shanahan, 2006; Torgesen & Hudson, 2006) and comprehension (Fuchs et al., 2001; LaBerge & Sameuls, 1974; Perfetti, 1977). In other words, as fluency develops, this should help students improve their vocabulary and comprehension, and as vocabulary and comprehension skills develop, students should be able to read more fluently.

Therefore, before a teacher believes that a fluency program such as HELPS should also target vocabulary and comprehension, the teacher might first implement only the HELPS Program, perhaps with separate classroom activities targeting vocabulary and/or comprehension. The teacher should then assess whether this approach sufficiently improved the student's vocabulary and/or comprehension. Under circumstances in which a teacher is certain that a student would benefit from an integrated intervention that addresses fluency, vocabulary, and/or comprehension, the teacher may then decide to implement the HELPS Program along with other research-based strategies that more specifically target vocabulary and/or reading comprehension. Fortunately, the HELPS Curriculum should facilitate teachers' ability to "add" components to the HELPS Program; but again, it is unknown how this may impact the beneficial effects of HELPS that has been shown in previous research.

It is beyond the scope of this Manual to describe specific vocabulary and comprehension strategies that may be used in concert with the HELPS Program, but teachers may find useful instructional ideas and strategies in the following resources (Armbuster et al., 2001; Baumann & Kame'enui, 2004; Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002; Daly et al., 2005; Minskoff, 2005; Pinnell & Scharrer, 2003; Shapiro, 2004). To provide further guidance in this area, the following two sections list (a) general recommendations for using the HELPS Program and HELPS Curriculum in conjunction with instruction that targets vocabulary and/or comprehension, and (b) concluding statements regarding the use of the HELPS Program with other instructional strategies.

General Recommendations

1. Implement supplemental vocabulary and/or comprehension procedures *after* implementing all steps in the HELPS Implementation Protocol. This sequence of procedures should increase the likelihood that the student will still benefit from the HELPS Program in the ways intended, even if a teacher decides to supplement HELPS with vocabulary or comprehension instruction.
2. For vocabulary instructional strategies, pre-select unknown vocabulary words from the student's current HELPS Curriculum passage. After the student practices that passage as part of the HELPS Implementation Protocol, use those vocabulary words as part of the vocabulary instruction.
3. For comprehension instructional strategies, develop questions based on the student's current HELPS Curriculum passage and ask the student to answer those questions. The HELPS Curriculum should allow teachers to develop a range of question types (e.g., inference, factual).
4. To potentially strengthen both comprehension and vocabulary, allow the student to independently search for information (e.g., via the Internet) that relates to his current HELPS Curriculum passage. For example, the HELPS Curriculum offers numerous expository and narrative passages about countries, people, sports, and other areas that students should easily find related, additional information.

Concluding Statements

1. Modifications (and additions) to the HELPS Implementation Protocol should be avoided because research has not yet evaluated the effects of modifying the Protocol. The effects of adding instructional components could be positive, but they *could* reduce the positive effects associated with the HELPS Program.
2. During a circumstance in which a teacher wants to combine instructional procedures with the HELPS Program, teachers should always use evidence-based (or research-validated) instructional strategies that have evidence of effectiveness with student populations similar to the teacher's student(s).
3. Under circumstances in which a teacher combines instructional strategies with the HELPS Program, attempts should be made to evaluate the specific effects of the combined strategy with each student. The following book offers teachers good suggestions for evaluating the effects of instruction with a smaller number of students: *Evaluating Educational Interventions: Single-Case Design for Measuring Response to Intervention* (Riley-Tillman & Burns, 2009).
4. Teachers who combine instructional components with HELPS procedures are highly encouraged to offer comments and feedback about those modifications via the HELPS Program website. These comments will add to the knowledge-base regarding the effectiveness of HELPS when combined with other instructional strategies.

Research with the HELPS Program

This chapter specifically describes all previous research (to date) that has been conducted with the HELPS Program. Prior to summarizing each of the seven initial studies evaluating the effectiveness of HELPS, the definition of a *research-validated* program is provided, as is an overall rationale for this chapter. Next, the chapter offers an extended (research-based) discussion about using HELPS as a progress monitoring assessment tool. Last, future research directions for the HELPS Program are discussed.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR A PROGRAM TO BE RESEARCH-VALIDATED

Earlier in the Manual a definition of *evidence-based practice* was discussed, as was an overview of the debate regarding the definition and use of this term. Possibly creating additional confusion about what it means for a program to be *evidence-based*, there are some instructional programs that *include* instructional strategies and practices supported by research evidence (therefore making the program *evidence-based*, as defined earlier); but this does not mean the program *itself* has research to support its effectiveness. To differentiate between an instructional program that is *evidence-based*, and one that has specific research validating its use, a program with experimental evidence specifically validating its effectiveness will be referred to as a *research-validated* program. To consider the degree to which a program is research-validated, the previously used definition for an instructional strategy with *convincing research support* (p. 4) can also be used to determine whether an instructional program is adequately research-validated.

Specifically, an instructional program with evidence of being research-validated means that research data have shown the specific program to meaningfully improve educational outcomes for school-age children with and/or without learning difficulties. The research supporting the program must (a) be replicated, (b) utilize scientifically based, rigorous research designs (i.e., randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity designs, quasi-experiments, and/or single-subject designs), (c) measure educational outcomes with validated assessments that are educationally meaningful, and (d) provide evidence of effectiveness in educationally significant (i.e., not only *statistically* significant) ways. Like the definition of an instructional strategy with convincing research support, the above definition should be conceptualized along a continuum. For instance, an instructional program that has particularly strong evidence of being research-validated has been replicated more often, evaluated across broader school-based contexts (e.g., with students in different grade levels), evaluated with larger samples of students, evaluated with stronger experimental designs, and/or has been summarized as effective through well-conducted research reviews.

RATIONALE FOR A RESEARCH SUMMARY ABOUT HELPS

For decades, instructional programs with little or no evidence of effectiveness have been used to educate students (see, for example, the discussion on pp. 82-83). This norm must be changed in order to prevent millions of students from academic failure. Although it is usually uncommon for Teacher's Manuals to summarize each study that evaluated the specific program, research summaries are provided in this chapter to inform teachers about the specific research that has been conducted with the HELPS Program (as of September, 2009). By providing descriptions of HELPS research and

development throughout this Manual, it is hoped that teachers will better understand how this program is both evidence-based (i.e., HELPS integrates instructional strategies shown in earlier research to be effective) and research-validated (i.e., HELPS has been specifically shown through sound research to be effective).

This distinction between *evidence-based* and *research-validated* programs should be important to teachers. When an instructional program is evidence-based, this suggests to teachers that it *should* be effective with at least some students and under at least some conditions. However, as described earlier in the Manual, the term *evidence-based* can be used very broadly, and sometimes inappropriately by companies that obviously aim to market and sell their educational products. Therefore, teachers should certainly understand the research evidence from which a program is hopefully *based*, but teachers should also understand whether (and to what extent) the program itself is research-validated. When teachers have access to specific research about an instructional program, this allows them to *best* understand for whom that program is effective, how effective it ought to be, under which circumstances it will be effective, and more. Overall, without some form of research-validation associated with a program, it is unknown whether the program is actually effective and under which conditions it should be effective. Similar concerns regarding this issue were raised on pp. 66-67.

With this rationale, the following summary of studies should help teachers understand the extent to which the HELPS Program is research-validated. With this said, research with the HELPS Program is by no means complete, as additional studies are currently underway.

SUMMARY OF COMPLETED RESEARCH AS OF SEPTEMBER, 2009

Below is a chronological summary of research that has specifically evaluated the HELPS Program during the initial period of research and development (September 2005 through September 2009). The research summaries below do not include the many other studies conducted by John Begeny (developer of the HELPS Program) and his colleagues prior to and during this time period. Although those studies evaluated the effects of fluency-based instructional strategies that are similar to the strategies used in the HELPS Program (and therefore influenced the development of HELPS), they are not summarized below because they did not *specifically* evaluate the HELPS Program. Of the studies summarized below, a full-length report of each study is now in the process of being submitted, reviewed, and/or published in a peer-reviewed professional journal. It is suspected that by 2011 or 2012 the full description of each study summarized below should be available in an educational journal. Those interested in knowing more about these studies should eventually be able to find the relevant journal articles by searching key words such as HELPS, fluency, reading, and/or Begeny.

Study 1: Comparison of the HELPS Program to the Great Leaps (K -2) Reading Fluency Program and to a Control Group

Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of the HELPS Program when compared to the Great Leaps (K -2) Reading Fluency Program and to a control group. HELPS and Great Leaps were used as supplements to second grade students' core reading curriculum. HELPS was compared to Great Leaps because Great Leaps is one of the most commonly used supplemental reading programs that targets students' reading fluency. To illustrate, over 100,000 copies of the Great Leaps program has been sold and it is reportedly being used in schools across all 50 U.S. states, all Canadian provinces, and in at least 40 other countries.

Description of Study Participants

Participants included 68 second grade students (22 received Great Leaps, 23 received HELPS, and 23 were in the control group). In each group, there were students with reading ability levels that were low, average, and high. Ethnicities of the participants were as follows: 55.9% were Caucasian, 23.5% were African American, 10.3% were Hispanic, 1.5% were Asian, and 8.8% were identified as “Other Ethnicity.” Throughout the participants’ school, 33% of the students received free or reduced-price lunch and 12% qualified for special education services. A small proportion of the students in this study received ESL services.

General Description of Procedures

Students were randomly assigned to one of the three groups. Three days per week, students in the “HELPS group” received the HELPS Program, whereas students in the “Great Leaps group” received Great Leaps. The control group received their typical reading instruction throughout the project. Volunteers from a local university were responsible for implementing the reading programs during students’ regularly scheduled classroom reading instruction. Programs were implemented for approximately three months, with implementation beginning in the winter part of the school year. To measure students’ reading performance (and to compare students’ performance across groups), various standardized measures of reading were administered to students immediately prior to, and at the very end of, the project (i.e., assessments were given pre- and post-project).

Primary Findings and Interpretations

Results indicated that students receiving the HELPS Program scored significantly better than students in the control group across several measures of early reading (e.g., subtests from the *Test of Word Reading Efficiency*, *Gray Oral Reading Test*, *Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement*, and *Curriculum-Based Measures*), with effect sizes ranging from medium to large. Conversely, students in the Great Leaps group did not perform significantly better than students in the control group on any of the reading assessments. These findings suggested that, on average, second grade students with a range of reading ability levels improve their reading skills significantly better as a result of receiving the HELPS Program three times per week. This finding was not true of those receiving the Great Leaps (K-2) Program.

Study 2: Effectiveness of HELPS When Implemented 3 Times per Week Compared to 1-2 Times per Week

Primary Purpose

There were three primary purposes of this study: (1) to examine the effects of the HELPS Program when implemented over the entire school year; (2) to examine the relative effectiveness of the HELPS Program when implemented 3 times per week (as was done in the preliminary evaluation) and when implemented half as frequently (i.e., 1-2 times per week); and (3) to provide a second evaluation of the HELPS Program when compared to students not receiving the program (i.e., a control group). Similar to Study 1, HELPS was used as a supplement to students’ core reading curriculum.

Description of Study Participants

Participants included approximately 90 second-grade students. Students were equally divided into three separate groups: those who received HELPS 3 times per week (i.e., the HELPS-3 group), those who received HELPS 1-2 times per week (i.e., the HELPS-1.5 group), and those who received their typical instruction (i.e., the control group). In each group, there were students with reading ability levels that were low, average, and high. Students’ ethnicity, eligibility for free- or reduced-price lunch, and qualifications for special education services were similar to participants in Study 1. A small proportion of the students in this study received ESL services.

General Description of Procedures

Students were randomly assigned to one of the three groups. Students in the HELPS-3 group received the HELPS Program three times per week, whereas students in the HELPS-1.5 group received HELPS 1-2 times per week, with an overall average of 1.5 times per week (i.e., exactly half as much as the HELPS-3 group). The control group received typical instruction throughout the project. Volunteers from a local university were responsible for implementing HELPS during students' regularly scheduled classroom reading instruction. The study took place across most of the students' school year (from October to April). To measure students' reading performance (and to compare students' performance across groups), common standardized measures of reading were administered to students immediately prior to, and at the very end of, the project (i.e., assessments were given pre- and post-project).

Primary Findings and Interpretations

Results indicated that students in both HELPS groups scored significantly better than students in the control group across measures of reading fluency; however, students receiving the program 3 times per week scored significantly better than control group students on a measure of reading comprehension. Students who received HELPS only 1-2 times per week did not perform significantly better than the control group on that measure of reading comprehension. These findings suggested that, on average, second grade students who receive the HELPS Program as a supplement to their core reading curriculum at least 1-2 times per week across the duration of a school year should improve their reading abilities significantly more than students who do not receive the HELPS Program. However, teachers will maximize the effectiveness of HELPS by implementing it approximately 3 times per week. For these reasons, it is recommended that teachers implement HELPS at least 2-3 times per week.

Study 3: Effectiveness of HELPS When Implemented with Second Grade Struggling Readers and Implemented by Students' Classroom Teachers

Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the HELPS Program when (a) implemented only with low-performing, second grade readers, and (b) implemented by students' classroom teachers and teacher assistants. A secondary purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of HELPS training and "coaching" on teachers' implementation integrity. Coaching consisted of on-site observation, support, and feedback for teachers by certified HELPS Trainers.

Description of Study Participants

Teacher participants included four second grade teachers and four second grade teacher assistants. Student participants included 59 students total. Twenty-nine students across 4 randomly selected classrooms received the HELPS Program, and 30 students from five other randomly selected teachers' classrooms served as control group students. Students' ethnicity, eligibility for free- or reduced-price lunch, and qualifications for special education services were similar to participants in Studies 1 and 2. None of the students in this study received ESL services.

General Description of Procedures

During regularly scheduled reading instruction hours, teacher participants implemented the HELPS Program with 6-7 students from their classroom approximately 3 times per week. Control group students received typical instruction throughout the project. For students in the HELPS group, students received HELPS from October to April. Teachers also received training and on-site observational feedback (i.e., coaching). After two half-day workshops, a coach met with each teacher for approximately 20 minutes per week, each week, for the first three weeks of teacher implementation.

After that time, a coach met with each teacher once every two weeks (or less), depending on teachers' need for feedback and support. To measure students' reading performance (and to compare students' performance across groups), common standardized measures of reading were administered to students immediately prior to, and at the very end of, the project (i.e., assessments were given pre- and post-project).

Primary Findings and Interpretations

Students who received the HELPS Program significantly outperformed the control group students on all measures of basic reading, reading fluency, and reading comprehension that were administered in this study. Also, teachers implemented the program with strong implementation integrity and reported that they liked and benefitted from the occasional coaching. Based on these findings, it appears the HELPS Program is highly effective for second grade students with reading difficulties, and that a systematic approach to training and coaching teachers is useful for ensuring implementation integrity. Findings from this study strongly influenced the training recommendations found throughout this Manual.

Study 4: Effectiveness of HELPS When Implemented with First Grade Struggling Readers and Implemented by Students' Classroom Teachers

Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was nearly the same as in Study 3, but the sample of teacher and student participants were from the first grade.

Description of Study Participants

Teacher participants included 5 first grade teachers and 5 first grade teacher assistants; student participants included approximately 60 first graders. Student participants generally had the same characteristics as the second grade students described in Study 3.

General Description of Procedures

The general procedures in this study were the same as those described in Study 3, with the exception that teachers in this study began implementing HELPS in December, rather than in October. This was done because struggling readers at the beginning of first grade are unlikely to benefit from instructional strategies specifically designed to improve reading fluency of grade-appropriate text.

Primary Findings and Interpretations

Preliminary analyses of the data from this study suggest that students who received the HELPS Program significantly outperformed the control group students on a standardized measure of reading fluency. Like study 3, teachers implemented the program with strong implementation integrity and benefitted from the occasional coaching. Based on these findings, it appears the HELPS Program should be effective for first grade students. However, findings from this study also revealed that some first grade readers are not ready for a fluency-based program such as HELPS in December of their first grade school year. Based on more individualized analyses from this study, the Manual integrates data-based recommendations for how to implement HELPS with first grade students.

Study 5: Development and Evaluation of the HELPS Curriculum

Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to systematically develop at least 100 passages for the HELPS Curriculum and then thoroughly evaluate the difficulty levels of those passages based on ORF scores. A primary goal of this study was to systematically sequence at least 100 passages from less difficult to

more difficult, and to sequence them according to appropriateness of grade level (e.g., passages in the beginning of the Curriculum are appropriate for first grade students, whereas passages toward the end of the Curriculum are more appropriate for older students). A secondary purpose of this study was to evaluate the passage difficulty levels of the “temporary” passages that were used in Studies 1-4. In studies 1-4, DIBELS progress monitoring passages were used as part of the HELPS Implementation Protocol. These DIBELS passages were considered “temporary” because the HELPS Curriculum was still in development. Therefore, this study sought to ensure that the HELPS Curriculum passages had similar content, characteristics, and difficulty levels compared to the temporary passages used in Studies 1-4.

Description of Study Participants

During some phases of the study, participants included approximately 190 first through fourth grade students from one large elementary school. In other phases of the study, there were fewer participants. Overall, characteristics of the participants were similar to those in Studies 3 and 4. To obtain this subset of below average readers, 35 teachers (approximately 8-9 per grade level) were asked to identify 6 or 7 of the lowest readers in their class. Then, CBM-R benchmark assessments were used to confirm students’ reading ability levels. Additional information about participants is described below.

General Description of Procedures

There were five main phases of this study. Phase 1 included systematic development of over 100 passages, with approximately one quarter of the passages written for first, second, third, and fourth grade students. As described on pp. 16-19, numerous considerations were given when writing the initial series of HELPS passages and this phase of the study lasted for more than 2 years. Phase 2 involved administering the developed passages with a sample of approximately 190 elementary aged students (approximately 40 first grade students, 60 second grade students, 60 third grade students, and 30 fourth grade students). Based on winter CBM-R benchmark assessments, the majority of these students read in the ranges listed in Table 1 (p. 10). This sample selection was purposeful knowing that most teachers will choose to implement HELPS with students who have ORF scores within the ranges shown in Table 1. Each of the students in this Phase of the study read 20-30 of the HELPS Curriculum passages within approximately two weeks in January.

Phase 3 of the study involved the Phase 2 students reading the temporary DIBELS passages that were used in Studies 1-4. This Phase occurred during the same time as Phase 2, and each student read 10-20 of the temporary passages. Using WCPM and WIPM data from Phase 2, HELPS Curriculum passages were systematically sequenced so that easier passages appeared toward the beginning of the Curriculum and then slowly but progressively became more challenging. Phase 4 then evaluated the sequence of the HELPS passages to confirm the passages did, in fact, progressively become more difficult, on average, across students. In this Phase, 26 students per grade level read every 10th passage in the HELPS Curriculum.

Finally, after confirming and finalizing the sequence of the HELPS Curriculum, Phase 5 was implemented. In this Phase, the HELPS Curriculum passages were used as part of the HELPS Implementation Protocol. A sub-sample of at least 12 struggling readers from each of the four grade levels participated in Phase 5. Each of the students received approximately 15 HELPS sessions as part of this Phase. Students in Phase 5 were also included in an assessment of the HELPS Placement Assessment procedures.

Primary Findings and Interpretations

Phase 2 helped to establish relative difficulty levels across the developed passages and helped to determine an appropriate sequence of the passages. Phase 3 confirmed that HELPS Curriculum passages were almost identical to the overall difficulty levels of the temporary DIBELS passages used with the

HELPS Implementation Protocol in Studies 1-4. Phase 4 confirmed an appropriate sequencing of the HELPS Curriculum passages. Phase 5 showed that the passages functioned as planned when they are used as part of the HELPS Implementation Protocol. Phase 5 also showed that the HELPS Placement Assessment functioned as intended. Collectively, this study confirmed the appropriate use of the HELPS Curriculum with the HELPS Program.

Study 6: Evaluation of the Progress Monitoring Assessment Components That Are Integrated Within the HELPS Program Instructional Procedures

Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the psychometric characteristics and predictive validity of the CBM-R progress monitoring methods that are built into the HELPS Program. This study was the first to investigate whether the HELPS Program can be used for both instructional *and* valid progress monitoring assessment purposes. Those unfamiliar with CBM-R (and how this is associated with the HELPS Program Timed Reading and Repeated Reading procedures) should review pp. 26-27 for additional information. Likewise, pp. 75-77 provide a more thorough discussion of this study, relevant terminology, and its purpose.

Description of Study Participants

Study participants were the students who received the HELPS Program in Study 3. Ongoing, daily HELPS implementation data were used for analyses in this study. Specifically, each student's WCPM scores during Goal Assessments and Timed Readings 1 and 3 of each session were used for analyses.

General Description of Procedures

Using multilevel modeling (MLM) statistical procedures, students' generalized passage gains, immediate passage gains, and retention passage gains were evaluated to determine if these types of gains significantly increased over time and whether they significantly predicted students' gains on standardized measures of fluency and comprehension. Fluency and comprehension standardized test scores were evaluated with the Gray Oral Reading Test, Fourth Edition (GORT).

Primary Findings and Interpretations

Preliminary findings from this study showed that, as predicted, students' generalized passage gains significantly increased over time. These data are consistent with the large amount of previous research showing that methods of CBM-R progress monitoring significantly model students' reading growth over time. The data also showed that students significantly increased their reading fluency as measured by non-practiced, CBM-R passages (again demonstrating the effectiveness of the HELPS Program for students' overall reading abilities). Furthermore, the generalized passage gains significantly predicted students' progress on the GORT Fluency subtest. These findings are also similar to earlier CBM-R research, showing that CBM-R data help to predict students' progress on broader, standardized measures of reading. Collectively, these data are important because they suggest that the HELPS Program may allow teachers to implement evidence-based instruction *and* validly assess students' reading with a meaningful measure of reading ability (CBM-R, as measured by HELPS Generalized Passage Gains). Such a procedure allows teachers to save a great deal of time using important progress monitoring assessment procedures and would likely increase teachers' use of these assessment procedures for instructional decision-making. Teachers may be able to use these data for decision-making related to HELPS implementation and a student's overall reading instruction.

Study 7: Evaluation of the HELPS Program When Used Within a Community-Based, After-School Program

Primary Purpose

The purpose of this study was to conduct a preliminary investigation of the effects of the HELPS Program with students across multiple grade levels (first through fifth), all of whom were identified with reading difficulties, came from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and attended a Boys and Girls Club after-school program.

Description of Study Participants

Ten first through fifth grade students participated in this preliminary pilot study. All students reported their ethnicity as Black, Hispanic, or a mix of Black and Hispanic. All students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch and all students were identified as having reading difficulties.

General Description of Procedures

The HELPS Program was implemented with each student up to 3 times per week for approximately 15 weeks. However, on many occasions students did not attend the after-school program and therefore attendance substantially weakened the consistency of implementing HELPS with most students. Volunteers from the after-school program and a local university were responsible for implementing HELPS. To measure students' reading performance, three standardized measures of reading were administered to students immediately prior to, and at the very end of, the project (i.e., assessments were given pre- and post-project).

Primary Findings and Interpretations

Results indicated that the HELPS Program was generally effective for most after-school program participants, though some students responded better to HELPS than others. Interpretations from this study are somewhat limited given many factors associated with trying to implement educational programming in an after-school program that is optional for students. Yet, considering the challenges associated with running the project as hoped, most participants showed meaningful improvements. Also, many of the students' teachers commented to project staff that they observed notable reading improvements from the participants who received HELPS. Because after-school program staff saw great value in students receiving the HELPS Program, they requested students to continue receiving HELPS as part of their after-school programming. Thus, additional data are being collected with after-school program students during the 2009-2010 academic year, and it is probable that HELPS will continue to be implemented in subsequent years.

USING HELPS FOR ORAL READING FLUENCY PROGRESS MONITORING

Initial research has sought to understand how the HELPS Program can not only function as an effective instructional tool, but also as a progress monitoring assessment tool. As detailed on pp. 26-34, the Repeated Reading and Timed Reading instructional components are implemented much like CBM-R assessment procedures. The following information will provide a brief background about CBM-R and then describe how the HELPS Implementation Protocol ultimately obtains CBM-R data.

Relevant Background Information about CBM-R

At the most basic level, CBM-R is used as a "progress monitoring" assessment tool that allows teachers to formatively assess their instruction with individual students on an ongoing basis. To monitor the effects of instruction over time, a CBM-R passage would be administered to a student once per week, once per month, or in the case of seasonal benchmark assessments, only once in the fall, winter, and

spring. As described on pp. 11-14, the frequency of CBM-R administration typically depends on whether the student is reading at grade level and whether the student is receiving specialized intervention in addition to a core reading curriculum. Students reading below grade level and/or receiving intervention should be assessed with CBM-R on a more regular basis, such as once per month, twice per month, or even once per week. Because variability in CBM-R assessment data is somewhat common (with significant variability decreasing the usefulness of CBM-R data for instructional decision-making), many reading researchers contend that more frequent administration of CBM-R helps to reduce problems with data variability, which thereby improves teachers' instructional decision-making (e.g., Ardoin, 2006; Ardoin & Christ, 2008; Christ & Silbergitt, 2007; Poncy et al., 2005).

CBM-R has at least 30 years of evidence supporting its ability to predict student scores on meaningful measures of reading, such as end-of-grade tests (Good, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 2001; Hintze, Ryan, & Stoner, 2003; McGlinchey & Hixson, 2004) and comprehensive tests of reading comprehension (Good & Jefferson, 1998; Marston, 1989). Furthermore, when teachers use progress monitoring assessment data to make instructional decisions for individual students, intervention effectiveness is better than when not using progress monitoring data (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1986). Overall, CBM-R has a substantial amount of research evidence supporting its use, and schools are increasingly using CBM-R data to identify students with reading difficulties. The DIBELS and AIMSweb systems of CBM-R are two of the most commonly used sets of CBM-R materials. As described on pp. 11-14, CBM-R systems such as these are increasingly being used as part of a school's RTI model (Burns & Gibbons, 2008).

How the HELPS Program Integrates CBM-R within the Instructional Protocol

The way in which the HELPS Program integrates CBM-R within its instructional procedures is simple. Each time a student meets her Reading Goal and then reads a new passage, this first reading of a new passage is essentially the same as a CBM-R assessment. Just like a typical CBM-R assessment, the student is reading a leveled reading passage without having practiced that passage. For the purposes of this discussion, if a student reads 68 WCPM the first time she reads Passage 5, reads 70 WCPM the first time she reads Passage 6, and reads 71 WCPM the first time she reads Passage 7, this observation of scores will be referred to as Generalized Passage Gains (GPGs). The gains are considered "generalized" because the student did not yet practice each new passage. Thus, her improved performance may be attributed to learning the student is able to generalize to new contexts (i.e., to new reading material).

Evaluating and Interpreting Generalized Passage Gains: Research Findings and Future Directions

For the purposes of evaluating each student's reading growth via GPGs, the first reading of each new HELPS passage is circled on the student's graph. Thus, teachers can use the WCPM scores on the graph to get a general sense as to whether the student is progressively increasing her reading fluency with each reading of a new passage. In essence, teachers are looking at the circled WCPM scores to observe for GPGs. Although there will still be variability in WCPM scores across passages, using the HELPS Program allows for up to three GPG scores each week. Thus, over the course of two or more weeks, teachers can look for increases in student performance over time.

Teachers should note, however, over the course of several sessions, they are likely to see GPG scores that fluctuate by 2-8 WCPM. This fluctuation is typical of CBM-R scores due to normal levels of variability with this type of assessment (Christ & Silbergitt, 2007). Also, large GPGs over the course of weeks or even months are not expected. On average, students are likely to improve their GPG score by no more than approximately 0.58 to 1.80 words per week (e.g., Deno, Fuchs, Marston, & Shin, 2001; Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006), and this level of increase will depend on various factors, such as the student's reading level when starting the HELPS Program, presence of a learning disability, quality of overall reading instruction, whether English is the student's first language, and others. Teachers must also consider the

passages the student is reading in the HELPS Curriculum. For example, a fourth grade student making rapid GPGs on passages in the beginning of the HELPS Curriculum is a good indicator of success, but such progress would be even more meaningful if the student was reading passages at the end of the HELPS Curriculum (i.e., passages that are more grade-appropriate for fourth grade students).

As was summarized on p. 74, preliminary research has evaluated the utility of using HELPS in a way that approximates CBM-R assessment procedures. Using a sample of low-performing students who received HELPS from their teachers over the course of a school year, the findings from this preliminary research showed that, on average, students significantly increased their GPG scores over time and GPG increases were reliably associated with students' increases on a standardized measure of reading achievement. However, at the present time there is insufficient research to instruct teachers how to *specifically* interpret a student's GPG scores throughout HELPS implementation. For example, it is currently unknown when teachers can expect to see GPG increases on the magnitude of one to two words per week and how such increases specifically predict students' success with HELPS. It is possible that some students who will ultimately benefit from HELPS will show meaningful GPGs after two or three weeks, whereas some students may not show these kinds of increases until several weeks of receiving HELPS.

As such (as of September 2009), teachers should not yet use GPG scores to determine how well a student is responding to HELPS and whether the student will obtain longer-term benefits from HELPS. As described on p. 65, the extent to which a student has made meaningful reading improvements as part of the HELPS Program is best interpreted with CBM-R (i.e., ORF) benchmark assessments and the individualized expectations a teacher has for a given student. A teacher who implements HELPS and observes meaningful GPGs over the course of several weeks should interpret such data as an indicator of reading improvement, but additional research is needed to elucidate exactly how teachers can use GPG scores for ongoing instructional decision-making and progress monitoring. The preliminary research in this area simply suggests that HELPS may serve as a promising tool for monitoring student reading achievement, and using HELPS in this way has practical advantages for teachers (e.g., teachers would not require additional time and resources needed for traditional CBM-R procedures). As relevant data and instructional recommendations become available with future research, those with registered contact information on the HELPS Program website will be updated periodically by email.

FUTURE RESEARCH WITH THE HELPS PROGRAM

As is true with all educational programs, many research questions related to the HELPS Program have not yet been fully examined. Thus, this section lists just some of the questions that interested educational researchers, graduate students, or teachers might attempt to answer. Because research with the HELPS Program has been ongoing and will likely continue for many years (by those both affiliated and unaffiliated with the development of HELPS), interested researchers are encouraged to contact John Begeny at helpsprogram@gmail.com prior to beginning new research with HELPS. This contact should assist researchers in knowing whether their proposed research question has been evaluated or is in the process of being evaluated. Furthermore, as new HELPS research information becomes available, the HELPS Program website will provide research updates, and periodically, the HELPS Teacher's Manual will be revised to include new research information. As noted in the login page of the HELPS website, contact information from HELPS users is obtained so that users can receive email updates about new research and development with HELPS Programs.

Sample of Research Questions That Have Not Yet Been Fully Evaluated

1. To what extent is HELPS effective with older students (e.g., grades five and up) and is HELPS an acceptable (e.g., age-appropriate, well-liked) intervention for these students and their teachers?
2. To what extent is HELPS effective when used as part of summer educational programs and/or after-school programs?
3. Under normal school conditions, how is HELPS used as part of a school's RTI model and to what extent is HELPS effective as part of that model?
4. As part of its use with RTI, to what extent is HELPS effective if used each day with Tier 3 students?
5. To what extent is HELPS effective when the implementation procedures and the HELPS Curriculum are combined with other evidence-based instructional strategies, such as those that more specifically target vocabulary and/or reading comprehension?
6. What are the most effective ways to utilize the HELPS Curriculum to improve students' vocabulary and comprehension?
7. What types of training models will maximize implementation of HELPS by teachers and school volunteers within a given school or district?
8. What are the most appropriate recommendations for teachers when they are determining whether to stop implementing HELPS with a student?
9. What are the most appropriate recommendations for teachers when they are determining whether to move a student through the HELPS Curriculum more quickly?
10. In which ways (and under what conditions) can HELPS be used as a progress monitoring assessment tool, in addition to its primary use as an instructional tool?

The above list is far from exhaustive. For instance, in addition to the questions posed above, there is also a need for replicating previous HELPS research and increasing the scope of prior research (e.g., increasing student, teacher, and school sample sizes; increasing project duration to multiple school years; including more ELLs; assessing students' performance on state-mandated reading tests). Overall, there are numerous research questions that can (and should) be investigated for any instructional program teachers will use with students. Only through continued research of educational programs can teachers make the most informed decisions about how to best address student learning needs.

Forthcoming HELPS Programs

The HELPS One-on-One Program described throughout this Manual is the first that was developed among a series of HELPS Programs that will aim to improve students' reading fluency. This chapter briefly describes forthcoming HELPS Programs. The upcoming programs will include most (if not all) of the instructional strategies included in the HELPS One-on-One Program, will be used in conjunction with the HELPS Curriculum, but will differ from the One-on-One Program in meaningful ways. For example, forthcoming programs will be designed so that teachers can implement HELPS with small groups or with Spanish speakers, and one will be designed so that parents can easily implement HELPS in the home. As such, forthcoming HELPS Programs will not "replace" or even improve upon the One-on-One Program, they will simply offer teachers (and parents) greater flexibility for using the fluency-based strategies integrated in the HELPS One-on-One Program. This chapter will conclude by informing teachers about the importance of their feedback in developing HELPS Programs, and will provide directions for how teachers can offer feedback about their use of HELPS.

THE HELPS PROGRAM FOR SMALL GROUPS

Although the HELPS One-on-One Program has been demonstrated to successfully improve students' reading skills, some teachers may have limited time or assistance to provide this Program to all students who might benefit from it. Therefore, recent research has begun to evaluate the effectiveness of fluency-based instructional procedures (e.g., RR, PD, modeling) that can be used with small groups of approximately three to six students (Begeny, Krouse et al., 2009; Begeny & Martens, 2006; Begeny & Silber, 2006; Kuhn, 2005). This early research shows that fluency-based instruction with small groups can effectively improve students' reading skills, with research also suggesting that *some* students benefit as much from small-group instruction as they would from one-on-one instruction (Begeny & Ross, 2009; Begeny, Lynn, Krouse, & Laugle, 2009; Ross & Begeny, 2009). Therefore, a HELPS Program for small groups of children is currently being developed. This small-group program will utilize each of the instructional procedures found in the HELPS One-on-One Program, but the strategies are being adapted for use with small groups of three to six students. The HELPS Program for small groups should be completely developed by 2011. Updates regarding the research and development of this Program will be available via the HELPS website, and those who register their contact information on the HELPS website will receive updates as the small-group program becomes available. Like the One-on-One Program, the small-group program will be available for free through the HELPS website.

THE HELPS PROGRAM FOR PARENTS' USE IN THE HOME

Throughout the development of the HELPS One-on-One Program, parents who learned of the Program often expressed interest in using HELPS with their children at home. Some parents even began to use HELPS in the home and reported that they used it successfully and that their children enjoyed it. Because of this interest, and because a large amount of research has shown how parents can significantly improve children's reading skills through the use of evidence-based literacy activities in the home, the HELPS One-on-One Program is being adapted so that parents can use this Program in the home. Of course, some parents may be able to successfully use the HELPS One-on-One Program described throughout this Manual. However, the HELPS Program for parents will be specifically designed

to make it easier for parents to use accurately in the home, especially for parents who have little to no background in literacy instruction. Updates regarding the research and development of the home-based program will be available via the HELPS website, and those who register their contact information on the HELPS website will receive updates as this program becomes available. Like the One-on-One Program, the home-based program for parents will be available for free through the HELPS website.

Parents' Possible Use of the HELPS One-on-One Program

For teachers interested in training parents to use the HELPS One-on-One Program at home, it is recommended that parents and teachers do not attempt to implement HELPS simultaneously (e.g., Monday and Wednesday at home, Friday at school). Normally, implementing the Program like this in multiple sites (e.g., home and school) would require too much coordination to transfer student materials (e.g., the student's Star Chart, Graph, and Progress Tracking Form) between the two sites. Furthermore, teachers would probably experience challenges with monitoring parent implementation integrity and sharing information about implementation effects.

However, parents who are properly trained to implement the HELPS One-on-One Program *could* use the Program successfully. Until the specific HELPS Program for parents becomes available, the following list offers suggestions for how parents and teachers could successfully work together to implement the HELPS One-on-One Program.

How Parents and Teachers Can Collaborate to Implement the HELPS One-on-One Program

1. A Teacher could implement HELPS in the school for several weeks, and during this time, take the opportunity to train the child's parent to implement HELPS. When the parent is properly trained, he/she could begin implementing HELPS at home. The parent should regularly share information about HELPS implementation effects, concerns, and/or problems with the teacher.
2. For parents who are able to volunteer time in the school, a trained parent could implement HELPS with his/her child one or more days per week as a school volunteer. Such parents may then be able to implement HELPS with other children, as well.
3. Sometimes parents want to engage their child with reading activities over the summer months when school is not in session. Given the brief implementation time needed for HELPS, a student would likely benefit from receiving HELPS over the summer, which should improve the child's transition into the next grade-level at the start of the following school year. With this in mind, teachers might train parents to use HELPS prior to the end of the school year, so that interested parents could implement the Program throughout the summer.

THE HELPS PROGRAM FOR SPANISH SPEAKERS

The HELPS One-on-One Program and the HELPS Curriculum are currently being translated into Spanish, with the hope that Spanish-speaking teachers and students can benefit from HELPS. Although there are numerous cultural and language-based variables that should be considered when translating and/or adapting an instructional program from one language to another (e.g., from English to Spanish), there are some meaningful similarities in the ways that reading development occurs for English and Spanish speakers. In particular, early readers in both languages benefit from developing strong reading fluency abilities, which therefore helps to facilitate reading comprehension. In addition, ELLs who speak Spanish as their first language may also benefit from reading instruction with materials written in Spanish (De la Colina, Parker, Hasbrouck, & Lara-Alecio, 2001), and may therefore benefit from the HELPS Program translated for Spanish speakers .

Preliminary research with fluency-based instructional strategies—like those used in HELPS—have been shown to improve Spanish speakers’ reading fluency (Begeny & Yeagar, 2009; Begeny, Paez, & Yeagar, 2009). However, additional research is needed to evaluate the effects of specifically using HELPS with Spanish-speaking students. The Spanish version of the HELPS One-on-One Program is expected by 2011 and the specific research with that program should begin shortly after that time. Updates regarding the research and development of the program for Spanish speakers will be available via the HELPS website, and those who register their contact information on the HELPS website will receive updates as this program becomes available. Like the One-on-One Program, the translated HELPS Program for Spanish speakers will be available for free through the HELPS website.

TEACHER FEEDBACK: AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Development of the HELPS One-on-One Program involved suggestions and feedback from numerous teachers who implemented HELPS. Although the One-on-One Program is now developed, additional suggestions and feedback from teachers will greatly assist with possible revisions to this Program and/or the associated materials. If teachers have suggestions or feedback about the HELPS implementation procedures, the HELPS Teacher’s Manual, the HELPS Curriculum, the HELPS Training Video, the HELPS website, and/or anything else related to the HELPS Program, comments and suggestions are welcomed and encouraged! Please submit comments and/or suggestions via the HELPS website (www.helpsprogram.org) or by email (helpsprogram@gmail.com).

Why the HELPS Program is Available for Free, and The HELPS Education Fund

In this chapter, teachers will learn why the HELPS Program is free and how the HELPS Program compares to other more expensive reading programs. Teachers will also learn about The HELPS Education Fund, the non-profit foundation used to support free access to HELPS and promote overall educational success for students, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Related to this, teachers will learn how they can contribute to and/or receive donations from The HELPS Education Fund.

WHY HELPS IS AVAILABLE FOR FREE

The HELPS Program is free to all teachers because of numerous social, cultural, and scientific reasons. In no particular order of importance, the reasons are summarized below.

Scientific Reasons

Because HELPS is free, this does not mean it is ineffective or even less effective than educational programs that cost hundreds of dollars. In fact, compared to hundreds of expensive educational programs that schools commonly use, there is already more research evidence supporting the HELPS Program.

To illustrate, consider the work done by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), an organization supported by the U.S. Department of Education. Since 2002, the WWC has been examining the effectiveness of educational programs and interventions, including programs and interventions in reading. The primary goal of the WWC is to summarize the scientific (i.e., research) evidence of educational programs so that schools and teachers can make evidence-based decisions regarding the programs they use with students. There are several topic areas of which the WWC summarizes educational research (e.g., beginning reading, elementary school math, English language learners, dropout prevention). For the purposes of this illustration, consider the following statistics of reading programs and interventions that are summarized in the Beginning Reading topic area.

As of September 2009, the WWC reviewed 170 instructional programs in Beginning Reading (WWC, 2009b). The large majority (if not all of the programs) are commercially available and sold to teachers, schools, and school districts—usually with costs exceeding hundreds of dollars for complete sets of materials. With each of the programs, the panel of WWC reviewers thoroughly looked for research that had been completed with the program. Of the 170 programs, more than 140 did not have a single research study that met the *minimal* scientific quality standards to even undergo the WWC review. In this way, more than 140 (82%) of the programs have either no research to evaluate the program or have no research meeting even minimal quality standards.

Of the 25-30 programs that had at least one research study meeting the WWC's minimal standards for a quality research study, the evidence of these programs' effectiveness was categorized into four domains: alphabets (i.e., phonics and phonemic awareness), comprehension, fluency, and general reading achievement. Of these programs, only 13 were evaluated for *possible* effects of improving students' fluency, as the other programs demonstrated no potential or attempts to improve students'

fluency. Of the 13 programs, five were summarized by the WWC review panel as having “no affirmative evidence of effects;” eight had “potentially positive effects;” and none of the programs had “positive effects: strong evidence of a positive effect with no overriding contrary evidence.” For all 13 programs, the extent of the research evidence was “small, indicating a small amount of evidence was available to determine the intervention [i.e., program] rating.”

The conclusions of this illustration are simple. First, hundreds of educational programs that have not been evaluated with even minimal research standards are being sold to schools and teachers. Such programs are unlikely to be effective in the ways intended by the program, and if they are effective, this effectiveness should be demonstrated with scientific research that meets minimal standards of methodological quality. Second, of the small percentage of studies that have been evaluated in research, most do not show evidence of effectiveness in the area of reading fluency. Third, of the even smaller number of studies (5 of 170) that have “potentially positive effects” in the area of fluency, all of these studies lack sufficient research to support those “potentially positive effects” and none of those programs demonstrate strong evidence of a positive effect.

Overall, adequate program evaluation in educational research is a challenging and time-consuming task (and generally not “profitable” by business standards). But this type of research is necessary for teachers to understand how to effectively improve students’ reading skills. Otherwise, teachers and schools are likely spending hundreds or even thousands of dollars on reading programs/interventions that have no evidence of effectiveness. In the area of reading fluency, there is a clear need to develop new and hopefully more effective programs, as determined through sound research. Although the HELPS Program already has more quality research evidence supporting its effectiveness than the vast majority of programs reviewed by the WWC, additional research is needed to better understand the full extent of its possible effectiveness. As such, one reason HELPS is free is so that other educational researchers can easily obtain this program and evaluate its effectiveness in school-based contexts not yet evaluated (see, for example, pp. 77-78).

Socio-Cultural Reasons

Equally important as the reasons described above, HELPS is free for teachers because of social, cultural, and sometimes even politically based reasons. Although the following list is not exhaustive, it provides three additional reasons why the HELPS Program is free to all teachers.

1. **All children**—regardless of race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, economic background, or presence of a disability—deserve a free and **effective** education. Therefore, cost should not prevent teachers’ access to effective instructional programs.
2. Teachers have one of the most important and challenging jobs in any society. Yet, in many countries, teachers’ salaries are often far too low to compensate for the task of educating the nation’s students. Even more disheartening, teachers commonly purchase teaching materials without financial support from their school or district. Once again, cost should not prevent teachers’ access to effective educational materials or programs.
3. National academic achievement data over the past several decades continually show that students from economically advantaged backgrounds significantly outperform students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This disparity undermines a highly functional economy, government, and society. There are numerous factors that influence this disparity, but such outcomes are not inevitable and are often perpetuated by systems-level inequities. As written by Gorski (2008):

Compared with their wealthier peers, poor students are more likely to attend schools that have less funding (Carey, 2005); lower teacher salaries (Karoly, 2001); more limited computer and Internet access (Gorski, 2003); larger class sizes; higher student-to-teacher ratios; a less-rigorous

curriculum; and fewer experienced teachers (Barton, 2004). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2004) also found that low-income schools were more likely to suffer from cockroach or rat infestation, dirty or inoperative student bathrooms, large numbers of teacher vacancies and substitute teachers, more teachers who are not licensed in their subject areas, insufficient or outdated classroom materials, and inadequate or nonexistent learning facilities, such as science labs" (p. 34).

Although economically disadvantaged students do not always attend schools with the above characteristics (there are, in fact, great examples of highly effective schools that serve large proportions of low-income students), reports from Gorski (2008) and others are compelling. Such reports, as well as personal observations of the educational conditions in numerous schools, highlight an important call for action among educators and those who develop educational products, programs, and policies. In essence, inequitable access to effective instruction contributes to the cycle of poverty. Educators cannot change things like poverty and home-life for their students, but they *can* focus on how to best ensure that a student achieves academically. If a teacher can help a student become a stronger reader with the use of the HELPS Program, all teachers and students deserve access to the Program. For these and related reasons, the HELPS Program is free to all teachers.

With this said, continuing to offer an effective instructional program for free is, in itself, not free. This is especially true when dissemination efforts include hosting workshops, academic consultation at school and/or district levels, and supporting schools with all needed HELPS materials (e.g., 3-ring binders, stopwatches, photocopies of materials, etc.). Thus, to support continued free-access and dissemination of HELPS (and related programs and services) Dr. John Begeny, developer of the HELPS Program, also created The HELPS Education Fund. Described below, teachers will learn how this non-profit educational fund seeks to improve education for all students. Such efforts include providing free educational materials and consultative services for teachers working in economically disadvantaged schools.

THE HELPS EDUCATION FUND

As described above, continuing to offer and actively disseminate educational materials and services, including the HELPS Program, obviously comes with associated costs. Therefore, teachers can help to support these costs (and contribute to students' overall academic learning) in two ways: (a) Purchase the HELPS Teacher's Manual and HELPS Curriculum from The HELPS Education Fund at the approximate price it would otherwise cost teachers to print and assemble these materials, and/or (b) donate to The HELPS Education Fund. As will be described below, 100% of proceeds from purchased HELPS materials and 100% of donations to The HELPS Education Fund will be used to improve educational outcomes for students within the U.S. and internationally, particularly students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Purchasing HELPS Materials from The HELPS Education Fund

As described throughout this chapter, teachers can access the HELPS Teacher's Manual and the HELPS Curriculum for free from the HELPS Program website. There are, however, associated costs with printing the Teacher's Manual, the HELPS Curriculum passages, and then assembling all HELPS passages into a 3-ring binder of teacher passages and a 3-ring binder of student passages. In addition, to increase the longevity of the paper materials, all teacher and student passages in the binders need to be inserted into a plastic page protector. Although these costs are relatively low, if prepared in the ways that best

facilitate use of the HELPS Program, they will cost approximately \$45. This cost estimate is based on the following purchases from a typical office supply store (as of September, 2009).

1. Two, three-ring binders = \$6.00
2. Plastic page protectors, box of 100 = \$13.00
3. Typical printing and/or copying costs for approximately 300 total pages (e.g., print toner/ink, paper, etc.) = \$8.00
4. Time required to print, purchase, and assemble all materials (approximately 1.5 hours) = at least \$15

As an alternative to the above purchases and material development needs, **teachers can purchase a high-quality, spiral-bound copy of the Teacher’s Manual and a pre-assembled set of teacher passages and student passages (complete with a sturdy, three-ring binder and plastic page protectors) for only \$45.00.** In addition, **teachers have the option of paying an additional \$20 (\$65 total) in order to receive the aforementioned materials *plus* a stopwatch, pre-made Bonus Bag, and the HELPS Training Video on DVD.** Teachers should consider these costs in comparison to other reading programs sold by publishing companies and related businesses for hundreds of dollars.

The reason HELPS materials are sold in this way is to support The HELPS Education Fund. As stated previously, 100% of all purchases are used by The HELPS Education Fund to support students’ educational achievement (described in detail below). With each purchase of HELPS materials for \$45, approximately \$25 is needed to pay for the sold materials and the remaining \$20 is used toward the education-based donations and services described below.

Note: The HELPS Education Fund can acquire all for-sale HELPS materials for \$25 because of community volunteers and donations (e.g., paper donations, volunteers assisting with assembling materials), and because materials are generally purchased in larger quantities.

Benefits of Purchasing HELPS Materials from The HELPS Education Fund

1. 100% of the proceeds are used to support students’ educational achievement.
2. Teachers do not need to spend time purchasing and assembling materials.
3. The HELPS Teacher’s Manual is printed with a durable book cover and high-quality pages.
4. The HELPS Teacher’s Manual comes with spiral binding, which allows for easy copying of all needed materials and forms.

To learn more about purchasing HELPS Materials and supporting The HELPS Education Fund, teachers should visit the HELPS Program website (www.helpsprogram.org) and look for the link to The HELPS Education Fund.

Donating to The HELPS Education Fund

How Donations Are Used

All individuals have free access to The HELPS Program (i.e., the HELPS Teacher’s Manual and the associated HELPS Curriculum). However, financial support (through donations) is needed so that HELPS can be more effectively disseminated to the schools and teachers that need it most. All donations to the HELPS Program are tax deductible. Also, **100% of donations are used to support teachers and students from low-income schools so that these students have stronger opportunities for educational success.**

Of the combined proceeds from purchased HELPS Programs and from direct donations to The HELPS Education Fund, approximately 75% of this money is allocated to support schools with a high percentage of low-income students (i.e., schools with at least 70% of its students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch).

Support for these schools includes:

1. Donations of materials teachers need to implement the HELPS Program (e.g., binders, plastic page-protectors, copies of the Teacher’s Manual and HELPS Curriculum, stopwatches, dry erase markers, etc.).
2. On-site training and consultation from a certified HELPS Trainer in order to support teachers’ implementation of the HELPS Program.
3. On-site consultation and workshops to assist schools with using evidence-based core reading curricula and/or starting a data-based instructional decision-making model, such as response-to-intervention (RTI). Consultation and workshops are provided by professionals with considerable expertise in academic instruction, assessment, and consultation.

The other 25% of the money in The HELPS Education Fund is allocated to support continued research, development, and dissemination of related educational programs, such as the HELPS Program for small groups, the HELPS Program for parents, and the HELPS Program for Spanish speakers (see pp. 79-81). Of course, these HELPS Programs will also be made available for free and, when available, will be donated in ways similar to the HELPS One-on-One Program described above.

How to Donate

Donations should be made to The HELPS Education Fund. The HELPS Education Fund was founded by John Begeny in 2009 for the purposes described above. This non-profit foundation is affiliated with, and located on the campus of, North Carolina State University (Dr. Begeny’s place of employment). All donations are tax-deductible. For more information about how to donate by check or credit card, please visit the HELPS Program website (www.helpsprogram.org) and click the link to The HELPS Education Fund. Or, please contact the HELPS Program staff at [<helpsprogram@gmail.com>](mailto:helpsprogram@gmail.com).

Receiving Donations from The HELPS Education Fund

Schools or individual teachers interested in receiving donations should visit the HELPS Program website. Here, educators will find application materials for requesting donations and/or educational support that is offered as part of The HELPS Education Fund. As noted above, donations are typically reserved for teachers working in schools with at least 70% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (documentation is needed to verify this eligibility requirement). Through The HELPS Education Fund, schools and/or individual teachers can receive one or more of the following:

1. Materials needed to implement the HELPS Program. Typically, material donations provide teachers with the complete set of materials needed to implement the HELPS Program (with the exception of the Prize Box and Prize Box items). This donation is designed to reduce the costs associated with purchasing materials needed for HELPS implementation (e.g., binders, page protectors, stopwatches, dry-erase markers, etc.) and printing the HELPS Program Teacher’s Manual and HELPS Curriculum from the downloadable files located on the HELPS Program website.
2. On-site training and consultation to assist groups of teachers in learning how to implement the HELPS Program. On-site training and consultation typically consists of at least 4-7 hours of teacher training workshops that are conducted by one or more certified HELPS Program Trainers. Although teachers can learn to implement the HELPS Program from the free-access materials located on the HELPS Program website, on-site training may facilitate more accurate and structured implementation efforts, and it may increase the likelihood of more teachers within a given school implementing HELPS. Consultative services are also provided to help teachers manage HELPS implementation aspects, such as feasible integration of HELPS as part of a core reading curriculum, systematic training to ensure accurate implementation across teachers, and use of HELPS as part of the school’s instructional delivery system (including integration of HELPS within a RTI model, as applicable).

(List continues on following page)

3. On-site consultation and workshops to assist schools with using evidence-based and/or research-validated core reading curricula. Many schools have large percentages of students with academic difficulties because of school-wide barriers such as (a) an ineffective model of identifying students with academic difficulties, (b) an ineffective core curriculum in reading, and/or (c) a strong need for staff development in areas such as reading assessment and instruction. On-site consultation and workshops are provided by professionals with considerable expertise in academic instruction, assessment, and consultation.

Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions are commonly asked when teachers are first learning to implement HELPS. The majority of these questions are addressed in the Manual, but teachers may find this list useful as a reference. Teachers who assist others with implementing the HELPS Program may also find the questions useful in clarifying HELPS procedures and the overall usefulness of this Program.

Questions Pertaining to HELPS Procedures and HELPS Curriculum

The Reading Goal and the Goal Criteria

1. What should I do if a student does not meet his Reading Goal?

There are various situations in which a student may not meet his Goal. Because of this, there are no simple answers to this question. Specific recommendations for the most relevant situations are described on pp. 56-63.

2. How were the Reading Goal criteria determined?

Goal levels were determined from years of research with students receiving the HELPS Program and from commonly used ORF benchmark scores published by other reading researchers. For an extended discussion, see p. 46.

3. Why does the Reading Goal exclude a criterion for the student to read with expression?

Although students are encouraged to read with good expression as part of the HELPS Implementation Protocol, and although teachers should provide feedback about students' ability to read with expression, there is no formal criterion for expressive reading. This is because (a) proper expression is often difficult for teachers to measure consistently, and (b) measuring a student's WCPM is the most reliable and valid way to measure overall reading fluency. For an extended discussion, see pp. 46-47.

4. Why is the Retell Check criterion less specific than the other reading criteria?

The Retell Check criterion is used to ensure that a student can retell aspects of the story and does not simply read for speed and accuracy. As part of a fluency-based instructional program, the Retell Check (or cueing) strategy is included because previous research has evidenced its importance. The "flexible" nature of this criterion is also described on pp. 45-46.

Implementing the HELPS Procedures

5. Is it okay to skip some of the procedures in the HELPS Implementation Protocol?

No. All procedures in the protocol must be implemented as described. All of the procedures are included in the protocol because there is sound research evidence suggesting that they help to improve students' reading. Specific evidence with the HELPS Program also suggests that students make meaningful reading improvements when all procedures are implemented. If a teacher accidentally skips a procedure on occasion, this should not weaken the overall effectiveness of the Program. However, teachers should attempt to implement all HELPS procedures 100% of the time.

6. Is it important to implement all the HELPS procedures in the exact order listed in the Implementation Protocol?

Yes. The HELPS procedures were sequenced in a particular way because of research-based, theoretical, and practical purposes. It is possible, of course, that a slightly different sequencing would not impact the effectiveness of the Program, but it is possible that a different sequence could reduce the effectiveness. Because research supports using this specific sequence, and for overall purposes of teacher training and consistency with implementation, the specific sequence of HELPS procedures should always be implemented. If on rare occasion a teacher accidentally implements the steps in a slightly different

sequence, this should not weaken the overall effectiveness of the Program. However, teachers should always attempt to implement the HELPS procedures in their exact sequence.

7. Why does the HELPS Implementation Protocol require me to use a different sequence of instructional strategies, depending on whether the student meets her Goal?

Like the answer to question #6, there are research-based, theoretical, and practical reasons for the different sequences of steps a teacher should follow when the student does or does not meet her Goal. Therefore, the same general reasoning in answer #6 also applies to this question.

8. Is it acceptable for a student to sometimes not earn any stars on his Star Chart?

Overall, students should generally earn 1-2 stars, and based on years of research with HELPS, this almost always happens because students put forth appropriate effort. The HELPS Motivational (Reward) procedure is an important element to the overall Implementation Protocol. Thus, for the reward procedure to be effective, students must earn 1-2 stars and ultimately earn rewards as dictated by the Star Chart Reward procedure. A teacher should refrain from giving a star for a session only when a student does not meet the Reading Goal and is blatantly not putting forth effort during the session. If a particular student continues to demonstrate behavior problems, teachers should consult the recommendations on pp. 56-60 instead of continually keeping the student from earning at least 1 star on the Star Chart.

9. Is it acceptable to give a student three or more stars on his Star Chart (not counting stars a student “wins” through the Bonus Bag procedure)?

Typically students should receive 1-2 stars per session. Only under very unique circumstances might a teacher give a student three stars. For example, if a student continually fails to meet his Goal (thus earning one star during most sessions) and then finally meets his Goal, this situation may be particularly special and the student might earn a third star along with a great deal of praise and feedback about his reading. In particular, students who may be losing motivation for some reason might benefit from an occasional “extra” star; but even in this case a teacher’s praise and encouragement should be more “powerful” than stars. Of course, if a student earns 1-2 stars from reading performance and then selects a ticket from the Bonus Bag, the number of stars written on the ticket from the Bonus Bag should be written on the Star Chart, in addition to the stars the student earned for reading.

10. By using the Star Chart Reward procedure, will this decrease my student’s interest in learning to read for pleasure?

No. There is no evidence students will decrease their interest in reading as a result of the HELPS Reward procedure. In fact, most students will probably increase their interest in reading because they will become better readers. For an extended discussion, see pp. 48-50.

11. Can I modify the HELPS Program to target other reading skills, such as vocabulary or comprehension?

Typically teachers should avoid any modifications to the HELPS procedures unless they are recommended in this Manual. However, pp. 66-67 offer an extended discussion of this issue and ways in which teachers may consider modifying (or supplementing) HELPS procedures.

The HELPS Curriculum

12. Where should I start a particular student in the HELPS Curriculum?

Starting points in the HELPS Curriculum are obtained using the HELPS Placement Assessment. See pp. 53-54 for procedural details.

13. Why do the HELPS Curriculum passages exclude pictures?

Although pictures can be useful in assisting students' reading development of other important reading skills (e.g., early comprehension, vocabulary, and phonics-based skills), fluency development is best assessed and improved with text that excludes pictures. The primary reason for this is that students must learn to fluently read words and text based solely on the letters and words presented to them. Thus, including pictures is likely to decrease a student's reading fluency development.

14. Why does the HELPS Curriculum not include grade levels for the passages?

The age-appropriateness of the HELPS Curriculum passages are suitable for elementary-aged students, with the latter part of the Curriculum possibly age-appropriate for older students with reading difficulties. However, there are numerous complexities with assigning a specific "grade-associated difficulty level" to each passage in the Curriculum. In short, it is generally unnecessary for teachers to know the specific grade level of each passage because the HELPS Program and Curriculum are designed (and research-validated) to be effective when implemented in the ways described throughout this Manual. In this way, the HELPS Curriculum is associated with the grade and ability level of the students for whom the Program is intended (i.e., the students described in Chapter 2). For an extended discussion, see pp. 18-19.

Questions Pertaining to General Use of the HELPS Program

15. What are the overall benefits of the HELPS Program?

The list of benefits can be found on pp. 6-7.

16. Must all students learn how to read fluently to become successful readers?

Yes. Reading fluency is a necessary and critical stage of reading development. For an extended discussion, see pp. 1-3.

17. How can I determine if a student in my class is having difficulties with reading fluency and would potentially benefit from the HELPS Program?

Chapter 2 (pp. 8-14) describes the various characteristics of students that would likely benefit from the HELPS Program. As described in that chapter, ORF assessment data are useful for determining whether a student may have difficulties with reading fluency.

18. Can I use the HELPS Program with any student from my class?

For teachers working with first, second, and third grade students, the simple answer to this question is "yes." As indicated in the answer to question #17, Chapter 2 describes the various characteristics of students that would likely benefit from the HELPS Program.

19. Can the HELPS Program be used with the Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model my school is using?

Yes. Research and development of the HELPS Program have strong implications for using HELPS as part of a RTI model. For an extended discussion, see pp. 11-14.

20. Can I use the HELPS Program as part of my small-group reading instruction?

No. The procedures for the HELPS One-on-One Program described throughout this Manual are not yet adapted for use with small-groups. However, as described on p. 79, a forthcoming HELPS Program is being designed for specific use with small groups of students.

21. Can parents or other school volunteers implement the HELPS Program with students in my school and/or classroom?

Yes. Any person who is appropriately trained to implement HELPS can implement it. It is only important that (a) any person who implements HELPS first completes the full set of training steps and exercises

described in Chapter 3 of this Manual, and (b) the student's classroom teacher is fully informed about the student's progress with HELPS over the course of its implementation.

22. Can I train other teachers in my school to use the HELPS Program?

Yes, but before training others in the HELPS Program, teachers should first fulfill the requirements needed to be a certified HELPS Trainer. The requirements to become a certified HELPS Trainer are not extensive and they do not need to cost the teacher anything financially. Also, completion of the HELPS certification requirements will actually make training easier because upon completion, certified HELPS Trainers will receive additional materials to support training activities. Those interested in becoming a certified HELPS Trainer should visit the HELPS website.

23. When should I stop using the HELPS Program with my student?

Research is still needed to best answer this question, but logical and research-based recommendations to address this question are described in detail on p. 65.

Other Commonly Asked Questions about the HELPS Program

24. How is the HELPS Program different from other strategies or programs that are supposed to improve students' reading fluency?

The list of benefits on pp. 6-7 provides a good starting point as an answer to this question, because no existing strategy or program can claim all of the benefits shown from that list. The detailed descriptions of the HELPS Program throughout the Manual should also show teachers how HELPS is different from other programs and strategies intended to improve students' reading fluency. In short, HELPS was developed because of the need for a new fluency-based program that would improve upon and be different from existing programs.

25. If a student improves her reading fluency, will she be better able to comprehend what she reads?

Yes. Strong research evidence shows that fluency and comprehension are closely related, and that improvements in fluency allow for better comprehension. For an extended discussion, see pp. 1-3.

26. Is the HELPS Program considered an evidence-based practice?

Yes. Perhaps even more importantly, HELPS can also be considered research-validated. For an extended discussion of this topic, see pp. 3-6 and Chapter 6.

27. Why is the HELPS Program offered for free?

There are many scientific, social, and cultural reasons why the HELPS Program is offered for free. Although it is available for free, HELPS has more research evidence supporting its effectiveness than hundreds of expensive reading programs that have been sold ubiquitously to schools and districts for decades. For an extended discussion, see Chapter 8.

28. How can I receive donations from the non-profit organization associated with HELPS?

A primary mission behind the development of HELPS Programs is to support students who need the most assistance. For an extended discussion and details about how to receive donations from The HELPS Education Fund, see pp. 86-87.

29. How can I make donations to the non-profit organization associated with HELPS, and how will those donations be used?

Although HELPS is available for free, the development, research, and donation efforts related to this program are not free. For this reason, teachers will hopefully consider donating to the non-profit organization associated with HELPS (i.e., The HELPS Education Fund). With each donation, 100% of the donation is used to support K-12 students' academic success. Details for how to make donations are described on pp. 84-86.

30. Can I provide suggestions and/or comments regarding my use of the HELPS Program, and will these suggestions assist with future development of the HELPS Program?

Yes, and yes! Feedback and suggestions are always welcomed from those who use HELPS because this ultimately improves the development of the Program. See p. 81 for additional information and directions for how to provide suggestions and/or comments.

Author Biography

In August, 2005, John Begeny began his role as an Assistant Professor in the School Psychology Program at North Carolina State University (NCSU). He received his B.S. in Psychology and B.A. in English at Western Michigan University (2000), and completed his M.S. (2002) and Ph.D. (2005) in School Psychology at Syracuse University. John completed his pre-doctoral internship at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Munroe Meyer Institute. Prior to and during his employment at NCSU, John obtained a variety of professional-practice experiences (e.g., school psychologist intern in elementary schools and a medical hospital, classroom teacher for a non-public school, paraprofessional for a public school, school and district consultant in academic instruction and assessment, clinician in a psycho-educational clinic), and he obtained these experiences in a variety of different settings (e.g., urban, suburban, and rural schools in the Northeast, Midwest, Northwest, and Southern United States; rural and urban schools in Latin America). John has also worked with hundreds of teachers and with a range of student populations (e.g., English language learners, children with diagnosed learning disabilities, children with autism, and children with severe behavior disorders).

Most of John's current research investigates (a) reading interventions that enable elementary-aged students to become better readers, (b) methods to identify students with reading difficulties and successfully monitor their progress when they receive intervention, (c) strategies to narrow the gap between research and practice, and (d) issues concerning effective education internationally. John has received several grants for his research activities, including an early career research grant from the Society for the Study of School Psychology (with co-investigator Dr. Scott Methe) and grants to develop early literacy instructional materials for parents and teachers. John has also received grants to fund reading projects for students in low-income communities, including communities in Central America. As part of *The Guilford Press School Practitioner Series*, John is currently writing a book that is intended to help educators use academic consultation in schools.

In his graduate- and undergraduate-level teaching at NCSU, John regularly supplements traditional coursework with applied experiences in the community (e.g., schools and community-based after school programs). Students in his classes therefore obtain hands-on experiences working with children, parents, school teachers, and/or community-based educators. Overall, John's professional goal is to work with teachers and parents to help connect research and practice, and to help train university students to enter the challenging yet important field of education. John hopes that such activities ultimately make a positive influence on children's education (in the United States and internationally), particularly in the area of literacy.

Although John is passionate about his professional work and goals, his non-professional life helps to keep him balanced and happy. Outside of his professional life, John spends a great deal of time with music-related activities (e.g., learning Latin dances, learning to play musical instruments, attending live music performances). He also devotes his time to friends, family, reading, trying to learn Spanish, and learning more about the world and people through traveling.

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HELPS One-on-One Program: Implementation Protocol

Steps below that are denoted with an asterisk should be implemented in combination with the "HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions."

1. *Teacher reads introductory statements and expectations--includes Verbal Cuing procedure (15 seconds)
 - Overall: goal of program is for student to do his/her best reading. This means s/he tries to read quickly, accurately, and with good expression. Also, the student tries to remember what happens in the story and tries to remember the difficult words that s/he practices.
2. *Student Timed Reading with Passage A, as indicated on his/her Progress Tracking Form (1 to 1.5 minutes)
 - NOTE: Students who meet the WCPM criterion can be stopped at 1 minute. Students who do not meet the WCPM criterion should read 1.5 minutes to allow for some additional practice (though as indicated in the scripted directions, the student's last word read at one minute should be indicated with a bracket).*
3. *Teacher asks student to say what he/she remembers about the story (Retell Check), asking the student to recall what happened in appropriate sequential order (30 to 45 seconds)

IF STUDENT MEETS THE READING GOAL (See back page if student does not meet the Reading Goal)

The Goal is met when the student (a) meets the WCPM criterion, (b) meets the WIPM criterion, **and** (c) can adequately recall parts of the story. (See Table on back of sheet for all Goal criteria according to student grade level).

- 4a. When the student meets the Reading Goal, the teacher should: (15 seconds)
 - Provide praise for meeting the Goal and immediately graph the student's performance on Passage A.
 - Tell the student he/she will earn at least one star at the end of the session for meeting the Goal.
 - Obtain the next story in the HELPS Curriculum.
- 5a. *Student Timed Reading of next story (Passage B) in the HELPS Curriculum (1 minute)
- 6a. *Teacher implements phrase-drill error correction on all incorrectly read words (15 to 45 seconds)
- 7a. *Student Timed Reading of Passage B a second time for no more than one minute (1 minute)
- 8a. *Teacher models fluent oral reading of Passage B while student follows along (1 to 1.5 minutes)
- 9a. *Student Timed Reading of Passage B a third time for no more than one minute (1 minute)
- 10a. Teacher graphs WCPM and WIPM for the student's first and third reading of Passage B (15 seconds)
 - While doing so, teacher provides specific, ENTHUSIASTIC praise (and feedback) regarding the student's reading and praises student for reading improvements, if applicable.
- 11a. Teacher awards stars on the student's Star Chart (15 to 30 seconds)
 - Teacher gives one star because student met the Reading Goal with Passage A.
 - Teacher gives a second star if student clearly demonstrates effort when practicing Passage B and reads more WCPM during the last reading compared to the first reading of Passage B.
- 12a. Teacher records all information on the student's Progress Tracking Form and indicates which passage the student should read at the start of the next session (30 seconds)
- 13a. Teacher reviews implementation steps from flow chart and records steps missed on the student's Progress Tracking Form (15 seconds)

Estimated time of implementation if student does meet Reading Goal: 7.5 to 9 minutes

Continued from front of page...

IF STUDENT DOES NOT MEET THE READING GOAL

- 4b. *Teacher models fluent oral reading of Passage A while student follows along (1 to 1.5 minutes)
- 5b. *Student Timed Reading of Passage A a second time for no more than one minute (1 minute)
- 6b. *Teacher implements phrase-drill error correction on all incorrectly read words (15 to 45 seconds)
- 7b. *Student Timed Reading of Passage A a third time for no more than one minute (1 minute)
- 8b. *Teacher implements phrase-drill error correction on all incorrectly read words (15 to 45 seconds)
- 9b. Teacher graphs WCPM and WIPM for the student's first and third reading of Passage A (15 seconds)
 - While doing so, teacher provides specific, ENTHUSIASTIC praise (and feedback) regarding the student's reading and praises student for reading improvements, if applicable.
- 10b. Teacher awards stars on the student's Star Chart (15 to 30 seconds)
 - Teacher gives one star if student clearly demonstrates effort when practicing Passage A and reads more WCPM during the last reading compared to the first reading.
- 11b. Teacher records all information on the student's Progress Tracking Form and indicates which passage the student should read at the start of the next session (30 seconds)
- 12b. Teacher reviews implementation steps from flow chart and records steps missed on the student's Progress Tracking Form (15 seconds)

Estimated time of implementation if student does not meet Reading Goal: 7 to 9 minutes

Reading Goals According to the Student's Grade Level

	WCPM with Passage A	WIPM with Passage A	Retell Check with Passage A
First Grade	80 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Second Grade	100 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Third Grade	120 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Fourth Grade	135 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*

* For example, student retells parts of the story for at least 30 seconds or otherwise correctly states names of characters and major events in the story. Retell of the story in the correct sequential order of major events is encouraged but not required to pass the Retell Check.

HELPS One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 1

Student Name (and/or id #): _____

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	80 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	<u>Passage</u>				Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
						A	A	B	B			
						WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3			
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* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

HELP\$ One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 1

Student Name (and/or id #): _____

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	80 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	Passage				Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
						A	A	B	B			
						WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3			
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* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

HELPS One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 2

Student Name (and/or id #): _____

A A B B
Passage

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	100 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
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* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

HELP\$ One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 2

Student Name (and/or id #): _____

A **A** **B** **B**

Passage

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	100 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
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* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

HELPS One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 3

Student Name (and/or id #): _____

A A B B

Passage

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	120 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
1												
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* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

HELP\$ One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 3

Student Name (and/or id #): _____

A A B B

Passage

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	120 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
27												
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* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

HELPS One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 4

Student Name (and/or id #): _____

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	135 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	<u>Passage</u>				Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
						A	A	B	B			
						WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3			
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* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

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HELP\$ One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 4

Student Name (and/or id #): _____

A A B B

Passage

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	135 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
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* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

HELPS Program Star Chart

Student Name: _____

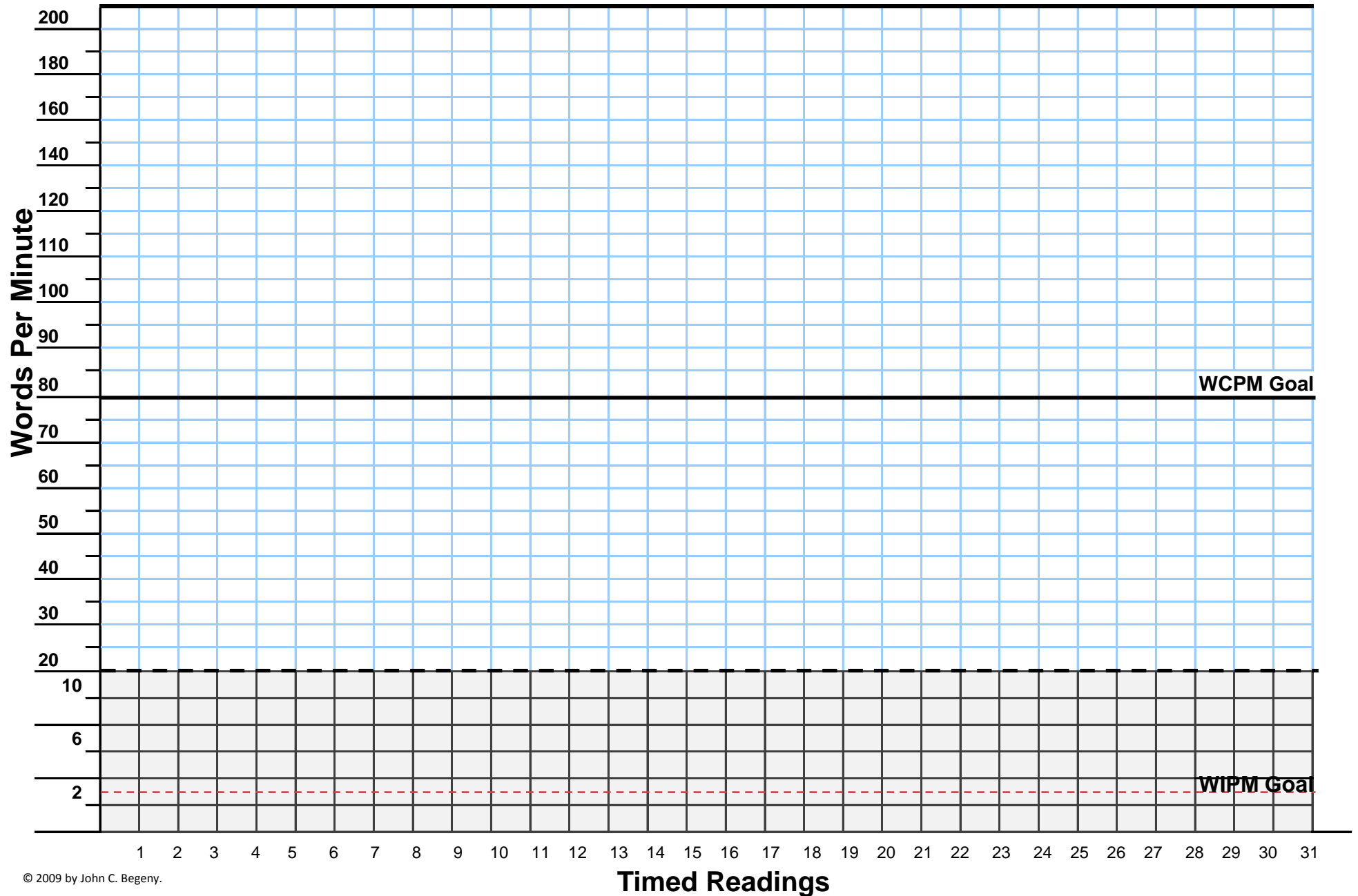
Star Chart Rules:

- **When the student earns a star in the last square of each row (a total of 15 stars), he/she earns one prize from the special prize box.**
- **When the student earns a star in a shaded square, he/she gets to select a ticket from the Bonus Bag. The number of stars written on the selected ticket should be immediately added to the Star Chart.**

NAME: _____

HELPS Program: Student Graph - Grade 1

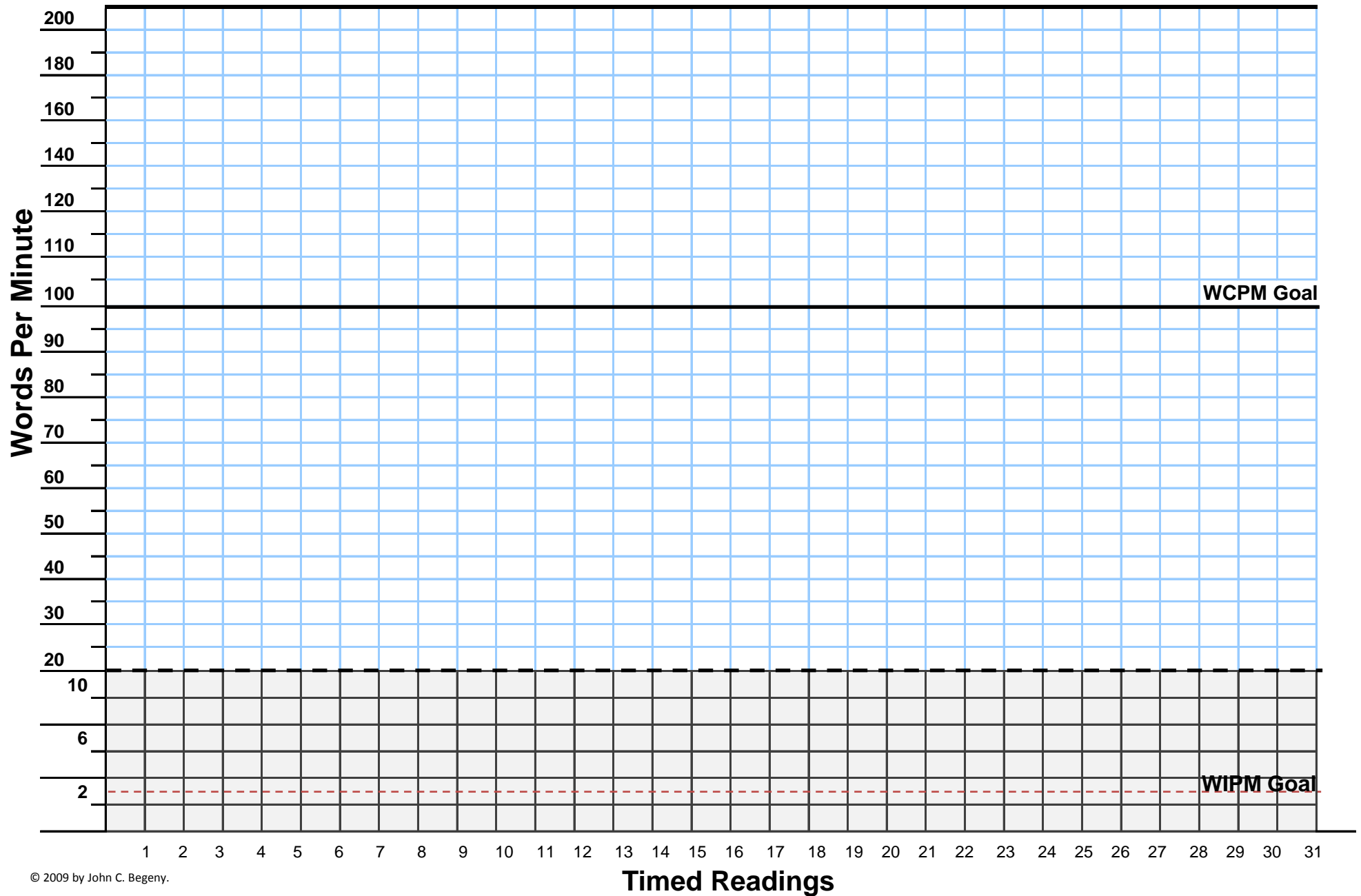
Notes: Circle Timed Reading # and first WCPM score each time student begins a new passage. Write date below first Timed Reading of the day.
(Mark WCPM with dot; Mark WIPM with X) Only connect dots and Xs for readings of the same passage.



NAME: _____

HELPS Program: Student Graph - Grade 2

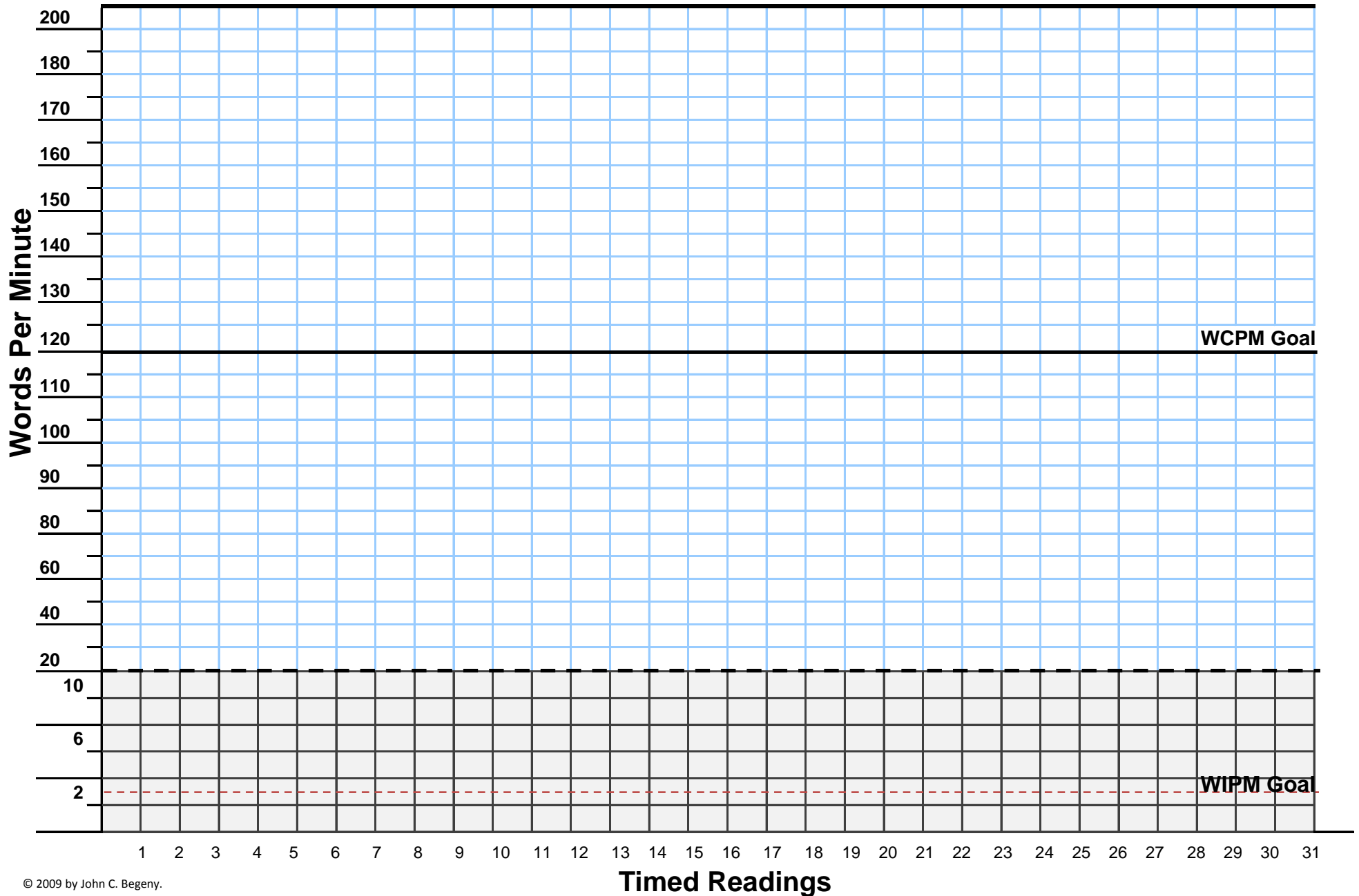
Notes: Circle Timed Reading # and first WCPM score each time student begins a new passage. Write date below first Timed Reading of the day.
(Mark WCPM with dot; Mark WIPM with X) Only connect dots and Xs for readings of the same passage.



NAME: _____

HELPS Program: Student Graph - Grade 3

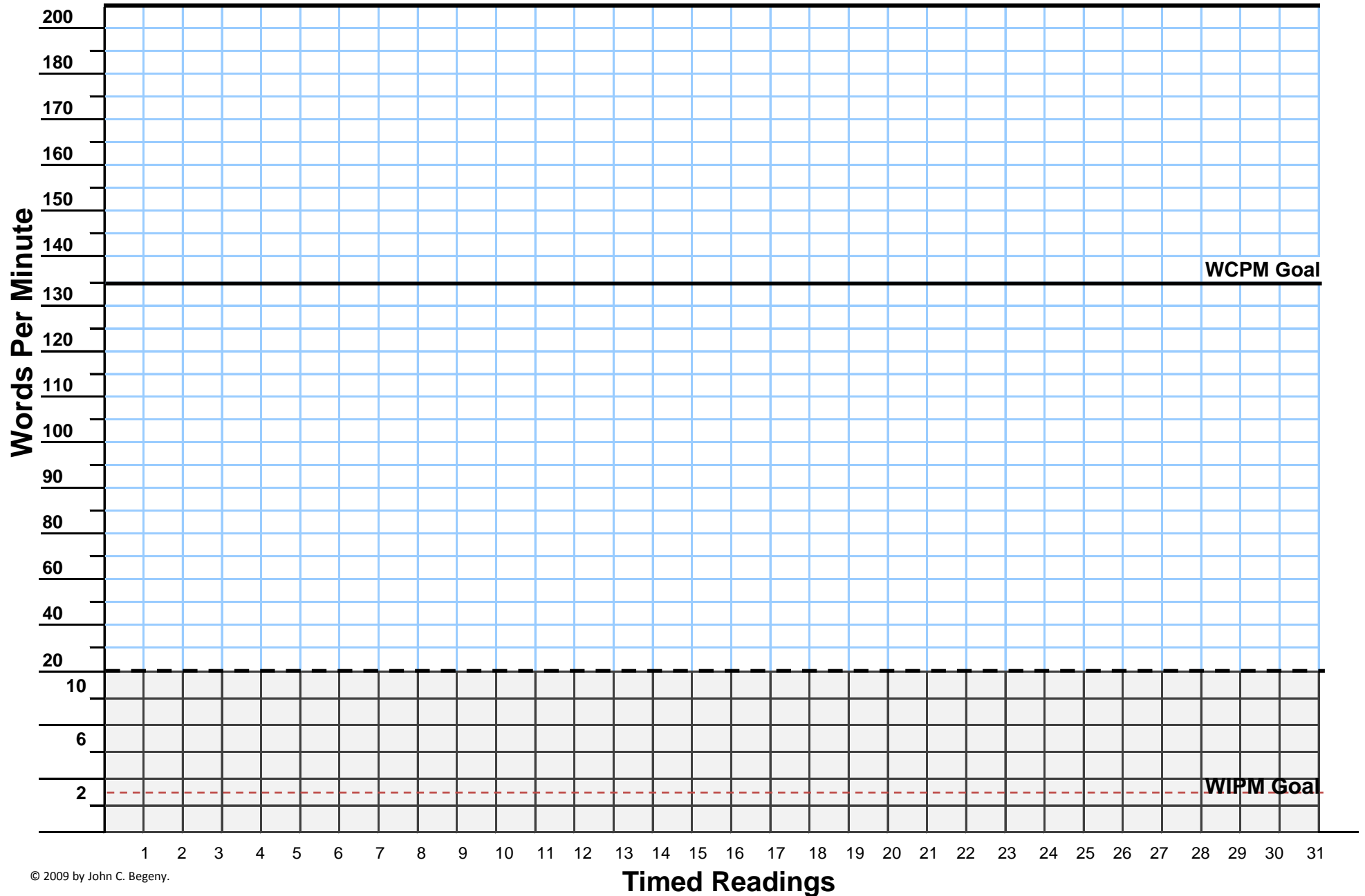
Notes: Circle Timed Reading # and first WCPM score each time student begins a new passage. Write date below first Timed Reading of the day.
(Mark WCPM with dot; Mark WIPM with X) Only connect dots and Xs for readings of the same passage.



NAME: _____

HELPS Program: Student Graph - Grade 4

Notes: Circle Timed Reading # and first WCPM score each time student begins a new passage. Write date below first Timed Reading of the day.
(Mark WCPM with dot; Mark WIPM with X) Only connect dots and Xs for readings of the same passage.



HELPS One-on-One Program Implementation Flow Chart

1. Teacher reads introductory statements and expectations



2. Student Timed Reading (TR) with Passage A



3. Retell Check



(Student meets reading goal) _____ (Student does not meet reading goal)

See table below for goals according to the student's grade level



4a. Deliver Praise & Graph Passage A



5a. Student TR—Passage B, 1st time



6a. Phrase-drill procedure



7a. Student TR—Passage B, 2nd time



8a. Modeling procedure



9a. Student TR—Passage B, 3rd time



- 10a. Graph 1st and 3rd TR of Passage B and provide praise and feedback
- 11a. Award stars on Star Chart
- 12a. Record student data on Progress Tracking Form
- 13a. Review steps and record on Progress Tracking Form



4b. Modeling procedure



5b. Student TR—Passage A, 2nd time



6b. Phrase-drill procedure



7b. Student TR—Passage A, 3rd time



8b. Phrase-drill procedure



- 9b. Graph 1st and 3rd TR of Passage A and provide praise and feedback
- 10b. Award stars on Star Chart
- 11b. Record student data on Progress Tracking Form
- 12b. Review steps and record on Progress Tracking Form

Reading Goals according to the Student's Grade Level

	WCPM with Passage A	WIPM with Passage A	Retell Check with Passage A
First Grade	80 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Second Grade	100 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Third Grade	120 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*
Fourth Grade	135 or more	3 or less	Adequately retells story*

* For example, student retells parts of the story for at least 30 seconds or otherwise correctly states names of characters and major events in the story. Retell of the story in the correct sequential order of major events is encouraged but not required to pass the Retell Check.

HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions

Introductory statements and expectations (includes Verbal Cuing Procedure):

<Student Name>, you're going to be doing some reading with me today. As you read, I want you to do your best reading. This means I want you to read as quickly as you can without making mistakes, and try to read with good expression (like I do when I read to you). I also want you to remember what happens in the story and try to remember the difficult words that we practice.

Directions to administer before a Timed Reading (as part of the Repeated Reading Procedure):

1. Place the teacher copy of the reading passage in front of you but shielded so the student cannot see what you record. The teacher copy of each passage contains word counts at the end of each line.
2. Place the student copy of the reading passage in front of the student, but cover the beginning portion of the passage until you are ready for step 4 below. (Do this so the student does not begin reading while you provide directions).
3. Say to the student, **"Here is a story that I would like you to read. When I say 'Begin', start reading aloud at the top of the page and read across the page. Try to read each word. If you come to a word you don't know, I'll tell it to you. Do you have any questions? Be sure to do your BEST reading."**
4. Say, **"Begin!"** and start the stopwatch when the student says the first word.
5. Score the student's WCPM and WIPM according to the Timed Reading Scoring Rules (see HELPS Teacher Manual).
6. At the end of one minute, place a closed bracket after the last word.
7. *If the student reads so fast that no expression is given, remind the student that when he/she reads the next story, you want him/her to read at a comfortable rate (i.e., with good expression, like when you read).*
8. Remove both copies of the reading passage.

Directions for administering Retell Check Procedure:

1. Remove the student passage in a way to ensure student cannot review the passage during the Retell Check.
2. Say to the student, **"Now I want you to tell me everything you remember about the story you just read. Try to tell me what happened in the correct order."**
3. Start your stopwatch and stop the retell activity in 30-45 seconds. Use prompts or follow-up questions as appropriate.
4. If student clearly struggles to remember parts of the story during his/her retell, note this on the student's tracking sheet and use this information when determining whether the student met his/her Reading Goal.

Directions for administering Phrase-drill Error Correction Procedure:

1. Say to the student, **"Now we are going to practice some of the words you missed."**
2. Point to the first error word, say the word, and then say, **"Read this after I do, <read the 2-8 word phrase containing the error word>. Again, Again."** In essence, allow the student to read the phrase three times. Make sure the student points to the words being read; students will sometimes just "memorize" the phrase and repeat it. (Teachers want students to read, rather than recite).
3. Repeat the above procedure for all *unique* error words in the passage (up to 5 or until time permits).
 - a. If a student makes 1 or fewer errors, practice 1-3 phrases the student read less fluently. Use the procedures above, except the student should be told **"Now we are going to practice some words you read correctly, but they are difficult and we should practice them."**
4. Praise the student for every two to three sets of phrase-drills.

Directions for teacher to read passage aloud (Modeling Procedure):

1. Say to the student, **"Now I am going to read today's story to you. Please follow along with your finger, reading the words to yourself as I read them. Sometimes I will stop reading to make sure you are following along. When I stop, you need to tell me the next word in the story. If you read the correct word, this will show me you are reading along with me and doing your best."**
2. Read the passage at a comfortable reading rate and with good expression for approximately 1.5 minutes or until you read the entire passage. Make sure the student is following along with his/her finger and prompt the student to do this, if necessary.
3. While reading the passage, stop 5-7 times in order to have the student read the word that immediately follows the word you stopped at.
4. At the end of the activity, praise the student for his/her effort (as applicable).

HELPS One-on-One Program: Tips and Reminders for Implementation

The tips and reminders listed below were developed over four years of systematically observing teachers implement the HELPS Program; they therefore represent a thorough list of rules and reminders that should assist teachers with implementing the HELPS Program effectively. The tips and reminders not only represent “best practice” for implementing the HELPS Program, but they also include important reminders about procedures teachers sometimes forget when they are first learning how to implement HELPS with their students. As a teacher is learning to accurately implement the *primary* HELPS procedures (i.e., those described in the Implementation Protocol and Scripted Directions), the tips and reminders should be regularly reviewed and implemented (as best possible) with the primary procedures. Depending on the intensity of training with the HELPS Program, a teacher may need to implement HELPS for at least 10-20 sessions before he/she can consistently implement all primary HELPS procedures *and* all the tips and reminders. However, it should be emphasized that the tips and reminders are not “optional.” **Successful use of the HELPS Program requires implementation of all primary procedures, as well as the procedures listed below.**

General Implementation Procedure

- Have the following materials available and organized before starting the session: (1) stop watch, (2) examiner passage, (3) student passage, (4) dry-erase marker, (5) pencil, (6) student’s graph, (7) student’s Progress Tracking Form, (8) student’s Star Chart, (9) Bonus Bag, (10) Implementation Flow Chart, and (11) Scripted Directions. Also, (12) the prize box should be in close proximity.
- Use the Scripted Directions or Abbreviated Directions as advised at the top of the Abbreviated Directions.

Repeated Reading Procedure

- After the student completes each oral reading, indicate on the examiner passage (with a bracket) the number of words read in one minute.
When recording all student readings with a dry-erase marker (and before transferring the scores to the Progress Tracking Form), be sure to:
- Put the appropriate number (i.e., 1, 2, or 3) next to the one-minute bracket.
- Mark student errors differently during each reading (e.g., first reading = slash, second reading = underline, third reading = circle).

Retell Check Procedure

- Throughout the Retell Check, make sure the student cannot review the passage. Thus, before prompting the student to begin the Retell Check, make sure the passage is out of sight.
- Use follow-up questions to solicit the student’s retell only if the student was unable to retell the passage for approximately 30 seconds.
- Implement the Retell Check for no more than 45 seconds unless a decision was made by the student’s primary teacher to lengthen the Retell Check.

Goal Setting Procedure

- When determining whether the student meets the Reading Goal, be sure to look at the WCPM, WIPM, and Retell Check criteria. Remember that the WCPM criterion differs depending on the student’s grade level.

Phrase-Drill Error Correction Procedure

- Ask the student to practice “logical” phrases. For instance, suppose the student incorrectly read the word “staying” in the following sentence: “Dad said we will be staying right near the dock.” A logical phrase the student could practice is, “we will be staying,” or “staying right near the dock.” A **poor example** of a phrase would be, “be staying right,” “be staying,” or “will be staying right.”
- Tell the student to “READ” the phrases; do not ask the student to “SAY” or “REPEAT” phrases.
- Point to (or have the student point) to each word practiced.
- If the student makes 1 or fewer errors, have the student practice 1-3 phrases that were read less fluently.
- If the student practiced words that were read *correctly* but less fluently (see above reminder), be sure to explain to the student that he/she read the words *correctly*, but he/she will practice them because they are difficult.

Modeling Procedure

- Read aloud at a pace just a little faster than the student's reading ability.
- Read with good expression. Remember that you are modeling the type of expression you want the student to develop when reading aloud.
- Read at a volume the student can clearly hear.
- Pause 5-7 times to have student read the next word in the passage. Not only does this procedure ensure the student is on-task and paying attention, but it also helps to ensure you are not reading aloud too quickly.

Performance Feedback (Graphing) Procedure

- While graphing, give verbal feedback and praise regarding the student's WCPM and WIPM scores.
- Graph WCPM and WIPM on 2 or 3 readings (3 if the Goal was met; 2 if the Goal was not met).
- Circle the data point and session number when the student begins a new passage.
- Connect lines between WCPM (and WIPM) scores *only* for scores of the same passage.

Motivational (Reward) Procedure

- When awarding stars on the Star Chart, remember to accurately tell the student why he/she earned each star (e.g., "you earned one star for meeting your reading goal, and when practicing the new story, you earned another star for improving the number of words you read correctly").
- With enthusiasm, praise *specific* reading behaviors (e.g., nice job reading *accurately* and with *good expression*; I like how you *corrected words you missed previously*) and praise the student for specific reading behaviors or improvements at the end of the session.
- Provide a minimum of five different praise statements regarding the student's reading behavior. A primary goal of the HELPS Program is for students to experience a lot of positive feedback about their reading.
- If the student landed on OR passed a shaded square on Star Chart, allow the student to select a ticket from the bonus bag and correctly record the bonus stars written on the ticket.
- Convey to the student that improved reading skills, rather than the opportunity to earn stars/prizes, is the primary reason that he/she should put forth effort during each HELPS session. It is okay if the student likes earning rewards as part of his/her performance with the HELPS Program, but you should always emphasize for the student the importance of learning reading skills. You should not highlight a student's success with HELPS only because he/she earns stars or prizes.

Using the Progress Tracking Form

- After finishing the session, complete the Progress Tracking Form before erasing data from the examiner passage.
- Record 2 or 3 sets of WCPM/WIPM scores on the Progress Tracking Form, as determined by whether the student met his/her Reading Goal on passage A (3 sets of scores are recorded if Goal was met; 2 sets of scores are recorded if Goal was not met).
- As needed, remember to record relevant information in the Notes column of the Progress Tracking Form (e.g., student difficulties with Retell Check, behavior problems, attention difficulties, etc.).
- Review the procedural protocol at the end of the session and correctly record the number of procedural steps implemented *incorrectly* (or forgotten completely) in the "# of Steps Forgotten" column.

HELPS One-on-One Program: Abbreviated Directions

NOTE: Only use abbreviated directions after a student has received at least 5 sessions that include the full script of directions. This should ensure the student has heard the full directions a sufficient number of times and understands each activity. If there is reason to believe the student does not understand the directions after 5 complete session, continue using the full script of directions until the abbreviated directions are appropriate.

Also, abbreviated directions should only be used after the teacher consistently implements all procedures with 100% accuracy. These abbreviated directions are only intended to abbreviate the actual verbal directions given to the student. The implementation of each activity should remain the same, as described in the other scripts and protocols.

Introductory statements and expectations (includes Verbal Cuing Procedure):

Build your typical rapport with the student and use something similar to the following script. If you do not use the exact script below, the six underlined portions of the script must be included in your description.

"<Student Name>, remember to do your best reading with me today by reading quickly, without making mistakes, and with good expression. Also remember what happens in the story and the difficult words we practice."

Directions to administer before a Timed Reading (part of the Repeated Reading Procedure):

1. Remind the student that he/she will be reading the story aloud to you again. You might also remind the student to do his/her best reading. Make sure the student does not begin until you say, **"Begin."**

Directions for administering Retell Check Procedure:

1. Use the same script as always or use very similar wording. For example, you might say: **"Now tell me everything you remember about the story you just read, and tell me what happened in the correct order."**

Directions for administering Phrase-drill Error Correction Procedure:

1. Use the same script as always or use very similar wording. For example, you might say: **"Now we will practice some of the words you missed."**
2. Point to the first error word, say the word, and then say, **"Read this after I do, <read the 2-5 word phrase containing the error word>. Again, Again."** In essence, allow the student to read the phrase three times. Make sure the student points to the words being read; students will sometimes just "memorize" the phrase and repeat it. (We want students to read rather than recite).
3. If you will practice words read correctly but less fluently, use the procedures above. However, the phrasing should be different. For example, say to the student: **"Now let's practice some of the difficult parts of the story, even though you read these words correctly."**

Directions for teacher to read passage aloud (Modeling Procedure):

1. Use the same script as always or use very similar wording. For example, you might say **"Now I am going to read the story to you. Remember to read along to yourself as I read and remember to tell me the next word in the story when I pause."**
2. Read the passage at a comfortable reading rate and with good expression.
3. Be sure to stop 5-7 times in order to have the student read the word that immediately follows the word you stopped at.

Summary of Timed Reading Scoring Rules

While a student reads a passage aloud, the teacher is expected to mark on the teacher passage all WIPM. The following indicates how teachers should mark WIPM during the three different Timed Readings: Reading 1 (mark WIPM with a diagonal slash); Reading 2 (mark WIPM with an underline); Reading 3: (mark WIPM with a circle around the word). At exactly one minute, the teacher should draw a bracket (i.e., \lceil) just after the last word read. The teacher then subtracts all WIPM from the TWR to get the WCPM score. For example, if the student scored: TWR = 88 and WIPM = 3, the student's WCPM for that reading would be 85 (i.e., $88 - 3 = 85$).

(Part A) The following should be scored as a WIPM:

1. **Mispronounced Words.**
2. **Substituted Words.**
3. **Omitted Words.**
4. **Reversals.** When a student reverses (i.e., transposes) the words in a passage, this is counted as one error as long as the transposed words were read correctly.
5. **Adding or omitting endings (e.g., -ed, -ing, -s) to words.**
6. **Hesitations.** If a student struggles on a word for more than 3 seconds (even if trying to sound out the word), the teacher should provide the word after 3 seconds and mark the word as an error.

(Part B) The following should be scored as a WCPM:

1. **Words Pronounced Correctly.**
2. **Self-Corrected Words.**
3. **Repeated Words.**
4. **Mispronounced Words because of Dialect.**
5. **Inserted Words.**

(Part C) Unique Scoring Rules:

1. **Omitted Lines or Multiple Words within a Line** are not scored as errors, but they should always be deducted from the student's number of Total Words Read (TWR) per minute.
2. **Numbers Written As Numerals.** Numbers are counted as words and must be read correctly within the context of the passage.
3. **Hyphenated Words that can stand Alone.** Each morpheme separated by a hyphen counts as an individual word if it can stand alone. For example, "Go-karts" is scored as 2 WCPM.
4. **Hyphenated Words that cannot stand Alone.** If one or more morphemes are separated by a hyphen, but the morpheme cannot stand alone as an individual word, the hyphenated word should be counted as one word. For example, "Non-productive" should be counted as 1 WCPM.
5. **Abbreviations** are counted as words, and must be read correctly within the context of the sentence.

As needed, teachers should also refer to the **Additional Tips for Implementation and Top 10 Most Common Administration Mistakes** that are listed in the HELPS Program Teacher's Manual.

HELPS Program: Examples of Praise Statements

Praise statements should be integrated throughout every HELPS session, including the time at which teachers deliver stars on the student's Star Chart. It is therefore important that teachers use specific, honest, and varied praise statements so that the praise statements continue to carry meaning for the student. Obviously there are hundreds of ways a teacher may phrase his praise statements, but on occasion some teachers get into a habit of using the same types of phrases. To assist teachers who may have difficulty varying their statements, this page lists some examples of praise statements. Note that teachers should always praise specific behaviors (see column two), but oftentimes basic praise statements precede praise of specific behaviors. As such, basic praise statements should also vary.

Basic Praise Statements

- Excellent Job!
- Great Job!
- You are a reading rock star!
- You are a marvelous reader!
- That was incredible!
- Your reading ability is impressive!
- Your reading voice is enchanting!
- I can tell you have been reading at home!
- Awesome!
- You are superb!
- Fantastically done!
- I think you read like a teacher!
- You are doing great!
- You are a star reader!
- You read like a pro!
- You read so well!
- You could be a story teller!
- Marvelous!
- Splendid!
- Incredible!
- Moving!
- Breath-taking!
- I have heard about what an impressive and amazing reader you are!
- Is it just me or has your reading really improved?!

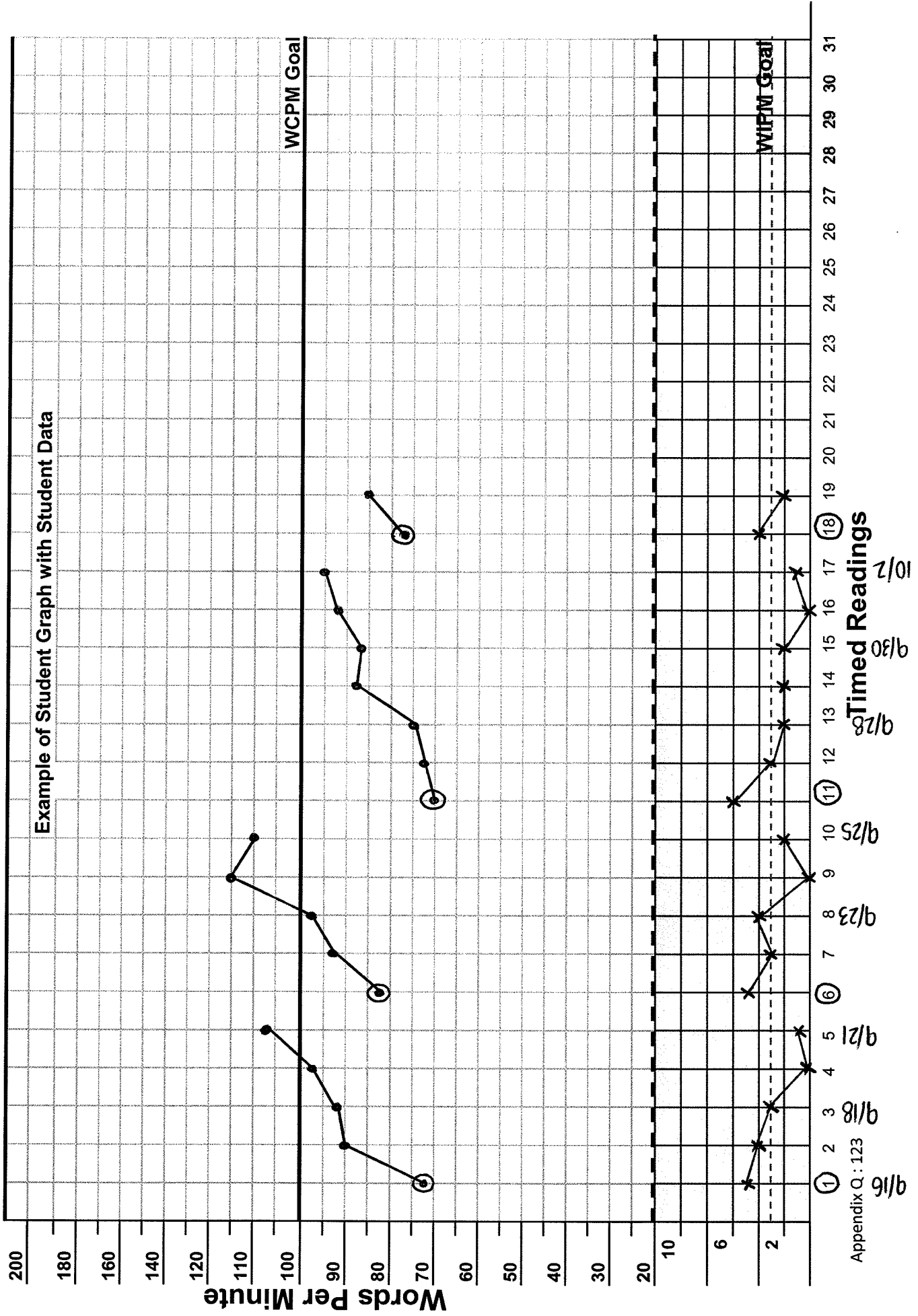
Praise for Specific Reading Behaviors

- You read with amazing expression!
- You recalled that story without a single error!
- You had no errors this time!
- You did an excellent job correcting your errors during that reading!
- You really took your time on the phase drill!
- I can tell you are really working to meet your goal!
- You did a superb job sounding out the difficult words!
- Good job correcting your mistakes!
- Excellent job taking your time during that reading!
- Your expression made me feel like you were a story teller!
- You are a speed demon with how quickly you can read!
- You read so quickly I couldn't keep up!
- You read as quickly as a middle-school student!
- You recalled everything in perfect order!
- You never leave anything out when telling me what you read!
- I love how you can read quickly and still have such amazing expression!
- I can tell you have been practicing difficult words at home!
- Your ability to catch your errors always impresses me!
- I am so happy you didn't have any errors this time!
- I am THRILLED you met your goal!

NAME: William

HELPS Program: Student Graph - Grade 2

Notes: Circle Timed Reading # and first WCPM score each time student begins a new passage. Write date below first Timed Reading of the day.
(Mark WCPM with dot; Mark WIPM with X) Only connect dots and Xs for readings of the same passage.



Example of Progress Tracking Form with Student Information

HELPS One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 2

Student Name (and/or id #): William

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	100 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	Passage				Last story read	# of Steps Forgotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
						A	A	B	B			
						WCPM/WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/WIPM Timed Reading #3			
1	Smith	W-9/16	1	N	N	71/5	90/4			1	0	
2	Smith	F-9/18	1	N	Y	91/3	98/0			1	0	
3	Jones	M-9/21	1	Y	Y	107/1		82/5	94/3	2	0	
4	Smith	W-9/23	2	N	Y	98/4	115/0			2	1	Forgot step 8B
5	Smith	F-9/25	2	Y	Y	110/2		70/6	72/3	3	0	
6	Smith	M-9/28	3	N	Y	75/2	88/2			3	0	Student seemed distracted at times
7	Jones	W-9/30	3	N	Y	86/2	91/0			3	0	
8	Jones	F-10/2	3	N	Y	95/1		76/4	85/2	4	0	Student was moved to Psg 4 b/c stayed on Psg 3 for three sessions
9			4									
10												
11												
12												
13												

* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

HELPS Program Placement Assessment Instructions (Appendix S : 125)

Note: WCPM = words read correctly per minute. WIPM = words read incorrectly per minute. When obtaining these scores as part of the placement assessment procedures, the instructor uses the CBM oral reading fluency assessment procedures described previously.

General Instructions

- Administer assessment passages (2 per level) until the appropriate starting point is determined. The starting point is determined when a student's **average** WCPM and WIPM score (obtained from the two passages administered at a given level) is within the following target scores:

Starting Point Criteria Table

Student's Grade	Target WCPM	Target WIPM
First	50-60 WCPM	5 or less
Second	70-80 WCPM	3 or less
Third	90-100 WCPM	3 or less
Fourth	105-115 WCPM	3 or less

Procedures

- Start by administering Level 1 passages (4 and 8) and determine if the student's average WCPM **and** WIPM scores are below, within, or above the target scores listed in the Criteria Table above. (Note: a student's WIPM score is considered *below* the target if the score exceeds the error limit listed).
- If the student's scores are below the criteria, start the HELPS Program with HELPS Passage 1. If the student's scores are above the criteria, administer the Level 2 passages (23 and 27) and again determine whether the student's average WCPM **and** WIPM scores are below, within, or above the target scores in the Criteria Table. Note, the term *Level* is simply used for procedural description. **Level does not reflect a student's grade or ability level.**
- Continue this process until the student's scores are within the target scores in the Criteria Table. Once the student scores within the target criteria, discontinue the placement assessment and begin at the specified starting point. Use the Table below for specific decision-making about where to start a student in the HELPS program and when to proceed with the placement assessment.

Decision Table for Placement Assessment

Passages Administered for:	Student's score is <u>below</u> target criteria	Student's score is <u>within</u> the target criteria	Student's score <u>exceeds</u> the target criteria
Level 1 (passages 4 & 8)	Start student at passage 1	Start student at passage 5	Administer Level 2 passages
Level 2 (passages 23 & 27)	Start student at passage 5	Start student at passage 25	Administer Level 3 passages
Level 3 (passages 45 & 52)	Start student at passage 25	Start student at passage 50	Administer Level 4 passages
Level 4 (passages 64 & 67)	Start student at passage 50	Start student at passage 65	Administer Level 5 passages
Level 5 (passages 79 & 80)	Start student at passage 65	Start student at passage 75	Start student at passage 75*

* If a student exceeds the target criteria with Level 5 passages, the instructor may choose to re-evaluate whether the student is likely to benefit from the HELPS Program. In some cases the student may still benefit from the program, but in other cases the student may benefit from a reading program that specifically targets a skill other than reading fluency.

Case Example Illustrating Placement Assessment Procedures

Jessica is a third grade student struggling in the area of reading fluency. That is, when reading material appropriate for her grade level, she generally decodes the words accurately, but she does so slowly and lacks good expression when reading. To assist Jessica using the HELPS program, her teacher starts the placement assessment by administering the Level 1 passages (passages 4 and 8). Jessica's scores are as follows: passage 4: WCPM = 130, WIPM = 2; passage 8: WCPM = 136, WIPM = 4. Thus, Jessica's average scores on the Level 1 passages are: WCPM = 133, WIPM = 3. Given these average scores, Jessica exceeds the grade level (Grade 3) target scores in the Criteria Table (that is, she reads *more than* 90-100 WCPM and read with 3 or fewer errors). As such, Jessica's teacher administers the Level 2 passages (passages 23 and 27) and obtains the following average scores between these two passages: WCPM = 118.5, WIPM = 2.5. Once again, Jessica's scores exceed the target scores for her grade, so her teacher administers the Level 3 assessment passages (passages 45 and 52). This time, Jessica's average scores between these two passages are as follows: WCPM = 96.5, WIPM = 3. Because Jessica's WCPM score is now *within* the target score listed in the Criteria Table, her teacher starts the HELPS program with Jessica at passage 50. If, for example, Jessica's Level 3 average WCPM score was *below* the target scores listed in the Criteria Table (e.g., WCPM = 84), Jessica's teacher would start Jessica at passage 25.

Additional Considerations for Placement Assessment

- If a student fails to meet the target criteria simply because s/he does not meet the WIPM criterion, the instructor should consider the degree to which the student fails to meet that WIPM criterion. For example, if the student exceeds the WCPM criterion by more than 10 WCPM and only misses the WIPM criterion by one or two WIPM, the instructor may choose to ignore the WIPM criterion in light of the student exceeding the WCPM criterion. Overall, the WCPM criterion provides a more accurate gauge than the WIPM criterion for determining the most appropriate starting point.
- If a student reads a placement assessment passage and the score is clearly invalid due to an unforeseen circumstance (e.g., the student is visibly distracted and stops reading during the timed assessment passage), the instructor should select an alternative passage *within 4 passages below* the invalid passage and then use that oral reading fluency score as part of the average Level score. For instance, if placement assessment passage 23 is determined invalid, the instructor should randomly choose passage 19, 20, 21, or 22 and use that passage (in conjunction with passage 27) to determine the student's average Level 2 score.

HELPS Program Placement Assessment Recording Form and Decision-Making Tables

Student's Name: _____

Student's Grade: _____

Scores from Placement Assessment

	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4		Level 5	
	WCPM	WIPM	WCPM	WIPM	WCPM	WIPM	WCPM	WIPM	WCPM	WIPM
Assessment Passage 1	4	4	23	23	45	45	64	64	79	79
Assessment Passage 2	8	8	27	27	52	52	67	67	80	80
Average Level Score										

Based upon the above scores and the tables below, this student will begin the HELPS Program at passage number: _____

Starting Point Criteria Table

Student's Grade	Target WCPM	Target WIPM
First	50-60 WCPM	5 or less
Second	70-80 WCPM	3 or less
Third	90-100 WCPM	3 or less
Fourth	105-115 WCPM	3 or less

Decision Table for Placement Assessment

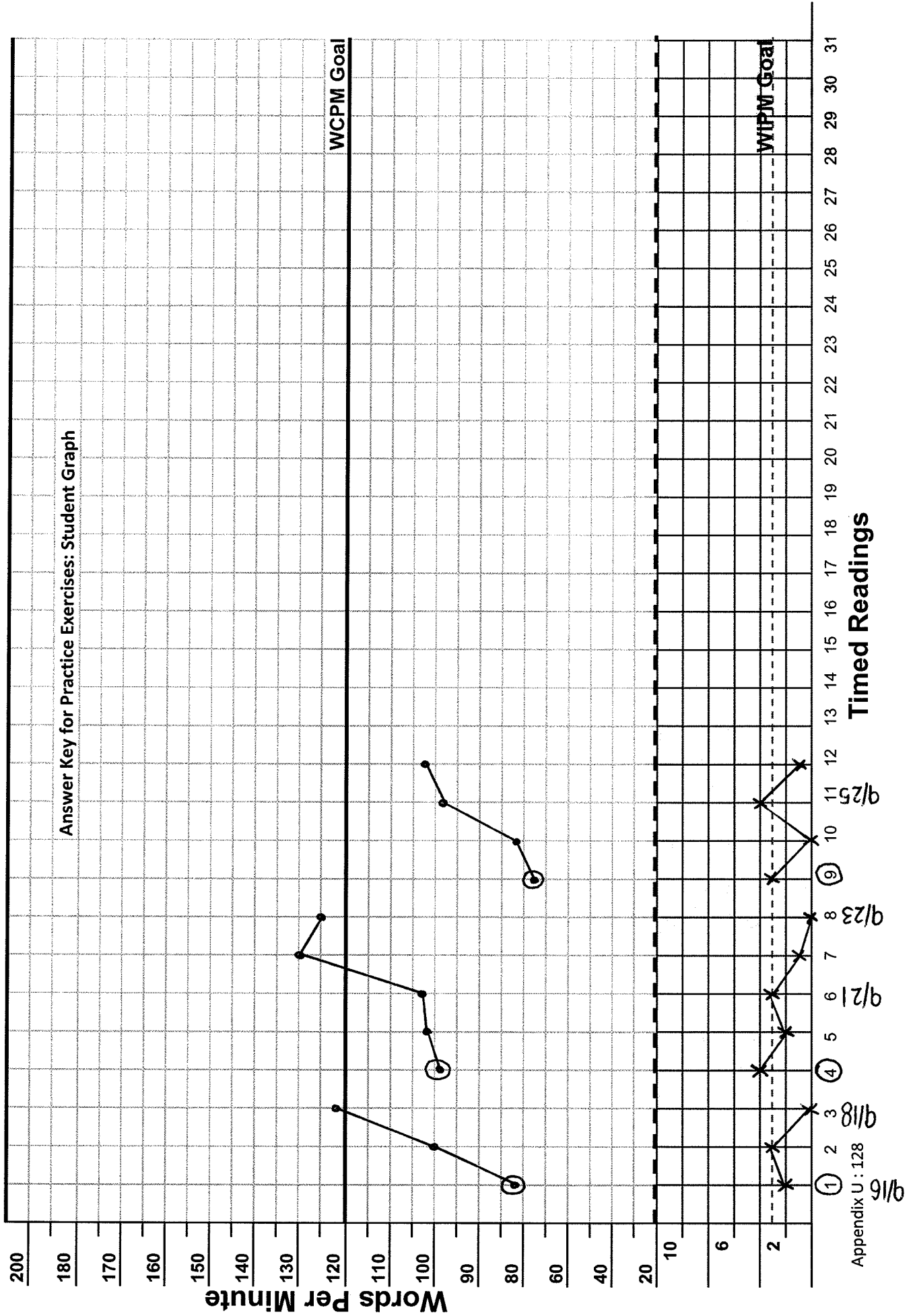
Passages Administered for:	Student's score is <u>below</u> target criteria	Student's score is <u>within the</u> target criteria	Student's score <u>exceeds the</u> target criteria
Level 1 (passages 4 & 8)	Start student at passage 1	Start student at passage 5	Administer Level 2 passages
Level 2 (passages 23 & 27)	Start student at passage 5	Start student at passage 25	Administer Level 3 passages
Level 3 (passages 45 & 52)	Start student at passage 25	Start student at passage 50	Administer Level 4 passages
Level 4 (passages 64 & 67)	Start student at passage 50	Start student at passage 65	Administer Level 5 passages
Level 5 (passages 79 & 80)	Start student at passage 65	Start student at passage 75	Start student at passage 75*

* If a student exceeds the target criteria with Level 5 passages, the instructor may choose to re-evaluate whether the student is likely to benefit from the HELPS Program. In some cases the student may still benefit from the program, but in other cases the student may benefit from a reading program that specifically targets a skill other than reading fluency.

NAME: Sam Pull

HELPS Program: Student Graph - Grade 3

Notes: Circle Timed Reading # and first WCPM score each time student begins a new passage. Write date below first Timed Reading of the day.
(Mark WCPM with dot; Mark WIPM with X) Only connect dots and Xs for readings of the same passage.



Answer Key for Practice Exercises: Progress Tracking Form

HELP\$ One-on-One Program: Progress Tracking Form

Grade 3

Student Name (and/or id #): Sam Pull

Session #	Teacher Name	Day & Date	1 st story read	120 WCPM on 1 st reading of passage A? (Y or N)*	Student passes Retell Check (Y or N)*	Passage				Last story read	# of Steps For-gotten	Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)
						A	A	B	B			
						WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #1	WCPM/ WIPM Timed Reading #3			
1	Li	W-9/16	25	N	Y	82/2	100/3			25	0	
2	Brown	F-9/18	25	Y	Y	122/0		99/4	101/2	26	1	Forgot step 6A
3	Brown	M-9/21	26	N	Y	102/3	130/1			26	0	
4	Li	W-9/23	26	Y	Y	125/0		72/3	81/0	27	0	
5	Li	F-9/25	27	N	N	99/4	102/1			27	0	Student was very upset prior to reading
6			27									
7												
8												
9												
10												

* When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.

Quiz for HELPS One-on-One Program Implementation

Information and Recommendations:

The following Quiz should be used as **one** method of evaluating whether a teacher has adequate knowledge of the HELPS Program implementation procedures. Other methods needed to evaluate a teacher's knowledge of implementation procedures include (a) having the teacher regularly review the HELPS Program Implementation Protocol (before and after having implemented HELPS) (b) having the teacher regularly review the HELPS Program Tips and Reminders for Implementation (before and after having implemented HELPS), and (c) having the teacher receive periodic feedback about his/her implementation—with feedback coming from someone who has experience implementing the HELPS Program and who has directly observed the teacher's implementation.

Using the Quiz as one method of evaluating a teacher's knowledge of the HELPS Program implementation procedures, it is recommended that teachers take the Quiz after implementing the HELPS Program for 2-3 sessions. The Quiz should always be taken independently (rather than with a group of two or more teachers) and the teacher should not refer to any of the HELPS materials while taking the Quiz. The Quiz should NOT be used as a means to confirm that a teacher does or does not know all of the implementation procedures. Rather, a teacher should take the Quiz and score it independently, using feedback from the Answer Key (see Appendix X) as a means for helping the teacher better understand what he/she does and does not know well about the HELPS implementation procedures. While taking the Quiz, the teacher should make a note next to all items he/she does know the answer with 100% certainty (i.e., "unsure items"). Then, after completing the Quiz and evaluating the Answer Key, the teacher should attend particularly closely to the correct answers for all unsure items and all items answered incorrectly. This feedback should help the teacher strengthen his/her implementation procedures. When appropriate and when possible, the teacher should also review his/her correct and incorrect answers with a person who has experience implementing the HELPS Program.

Teacher's Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Teaching position (e.g., regular ed. teacher, reading specialist, school volunteer, etc.):

True/False

Indicate whether the sentence or statement is true (T) or false (F).

- _____ 1. When providing directions to the student as part of the Phrase-drill Error Correction procedure, teachers can say, "Repeat this after I do" instead of, "Read this after I do."
- _____ 2. If a student reaches his Goal during the Goal Assessment, the teacher should immediately offer praise and graph his WCPM and WIPM performance.
- _____ 3. When graphing, teachers should circle the data point that represents the beginning of each session.
- _____ 4. When scoring a student's WCPM and WIPM, each of the following are examples of reading errors (i.e., WIPM): self-corrected words, repeated words, words pronounced differently because of dialect; inserted words (words read that do not appear in the passage).

- _____ 5. During the Retell Check, teachers should let the student continue to view the story.
- _____ 6. Teachers should be genuine when giving praise and should praise specific reading behaviors (e.g., nice job reading accurately and with good expression) rather than use broad praise statements (e.g., you did a great job working with me today).
- _____ 7. If a student does not meet his Goal, the next step in the implementation protocol requires the teacher to read the passage aloud to the student (i.e., the Modeling Procedure).
- _____ 8. You should always let the student read to the end of the story each time she reads aloud.
- _____ 9. “Tell me what happened in the story” is a sufficient example of what the teacher should say when directing the student to begin the Retell Check procedure.
- _____ 10. During the Goal Assessment, a student’s one-minute WCPM and WIPM score should be recorded. However, depending on the student’s performance, she may be allowed to read for an additional 30 seconds (for a total of 90 seconds) so that she obtains more practice reading the passage.
- _____ 11. After every student reading, the teacher must place a bracket on the examiner passage to indicate the last word read at exactly 60 seconds.
- _____ 12. When providing directions for the student to read aloud, the student should not be able to view the story until you are ready to say “Begin.”

Multiple Choice

Of the choices provided, identify the letter that best completes the statement or answers the question.

- _____ 13. If a student does not meet her Goal during the Goal Assessment, but puts forth good effort during the session and improves her WCPM score between the first and last reading of the passage, the student should earn:
- A. Two stars on her Star Chart.
 - B. One star on her Star Chart.
 - C. No stars on her Star Chart.
 - D. The option to select a ticket from the Bonus Bag.
- _____ 14. During the Goal Assessment, the WIPM criterion states that students can make no more than _____ reading errors.
- A. 1
 - B. 2
 - C. 3
 - D. 4

- _____ 15. If a student does not meet the WCPM criterion during the Goal Assessment,
- A. The teacher should begin the Retell Check.
 - B. The student immediately re-reads the passage.
 - C. The teacher begins the Phrase-drill Error Correction procedure.
 - D. The teacher may skip the Retell Check.
- _____ 16. According to the HELPS Implementation Protocol, the last procedure of each session is:
- A. The teacher records all information on the student's Progress Tracking Form.
 - B. The teacher reviews implementation steps from the Flow Chart and records steps missed.
 - C. The teacher awards stars on the student's Star Chart.
 - D. The teacher graphs student's WCPM and WIPM on the student's graph.
- _____ 17. When scoring WCPM and WIPM, which of the following are examples that should be scored as one error:
- A. An added ending (e.g., text: *the house was clean*; student read: *the house was cleaned*)
 - B. A mispronounced word (e.g., text: *the house was clean*; student read: *the house was clan*)
 - C. A substituted word (e.g., text: *the house was clean*; student read: *the mouse was clean*)
 - D. A transposed word (e.g., text: *the house was clean*; student read: *the house clean was*)
 - E. All of the above
 - F. B and C only
- _____ 18. Immediately before implementing the Phrase-drill procedure, if a student reads a passage with zero WIPM, the teacher should:
- A. Skip the Phrase-drill procedure and move on to the next procedure.
 - B. Use the time during Phrase-drill to define words the student may not know.
 - C. Use the Phrase-drill procedure to practice 1-3 phrases the student read correctly but less fluently.
 - D. Randomly select words to practice, using the Phrase-drill procedure.
- _____ 19. During the Modeling procedure, the teacher should:
- A. Read at a pace that is just a little slower than the student's reading ability.
 - B. Read the story with proper expression.
 - C. Read at a pace that is just a little faster than the student's reading ability.
 - D. Both A and C
 - E. Both B and C
- _____ 20. Which of the following statements are false about the standard WCPM Goal criterion?
- A. 1st grade students must read 80 or more WCPM.
 - B. 2nd grade students must read 100 or more WCPM.
 - C. 3rd grade students must read 120 or more WCPM.
 - D. 4th grade students must read 140 or more WCPM.

- _____ 21. If a student earns a star in a shaded square on the Star Chart, the student should:
- Pick a prize from the prize box.
 - Read Passage B an additional time.
 - Select a ticket from the Bonus Bag.
 - Move on to the next passage in the HELPS Curriculum.
- _____ 22. Each session the student will read a passage three separate times. When graphing the student's WCPM and WIPM of that passage, the teacher should graph:
- The first reading.
 - The second reading.
 - The third reading.
 - A and B
 - A and C
- _____ 23. If a student meets her Reading Goal, which of the following lists the correct sequence of procedures for having the student practice Passage B during that session?
- Reading 1; Phrase-drill; Reading 2; Retell Check; Reading 3.
 - Phrase drill; Reading 1; Model reading; Reading 2.
 - Reading 1; Phrase-drill; Reading 2; Model reading; Reading 3.
 - Reading 1; Reading 2; Phrase-drill; Model reading; Reading 3.
- _____ 24. If a student reads 78 words in one minute and make 4 mistakes, what is the correct number of WCPM and WIPM?
- WCPM=78; WIPM=74
 - WCPM=4; WIPM=74
 - WCPM=72; WIPM=4
 - WCPM=74; WIPM=4
25. Using a **photocopy** of a 2nd grade HELPS Student Graph, record the following data on the graph. Remember to graph data from all four sessions listed below.

Session 1: September 1st; Passage 5
 Reading 1: WCPM = 78, WIPM = 3
 Reading 2: WCPM = 84, WIPM = 2
 Reading 3: WCPM = 95, WIPM = 1

Session 2: September 3rd; Passage 5
 Reading 1: WCPM = 95, WIPM = 2
 Reading 2: WCPM = 100, WIPM = 4
 Reading 3: WCPM = 115, WIPM = 2

Session 3: September 5th; Passage 5
 Reading 1: WCPM = 105, WIPM = 1
 Passage 6
 Reading 1: WCPM = 87, WIPM = 4
 Reading 2: WCPM = 94, WIPM = 3
 Reading 3: WCPM = 98, WIPM = 4

Session 4: September 8th; Passage 6
 Reading 1: WCPM = 99, WIPM = 3
 Reading 2: WCPM = 108, WIPM = 2
 Reading 3: WCPM = 115, WIPM = 2

Answer Key for HELPS One-on-One Program Implementation Quiz

In addition to providing answers, the Answer Key below also contains occasional comments and/or explanations for the items in the HELPS Quiz.

True/False Items

1. False - *The emphasis here is that the student should always be directed to **read** the phrases, not simply memorize and repeat them. This is also why teachers should point to the words (or have the student point to the words) as the student reads them aloud during Phrase-drill procedures.*
2. True
3. False – *The teacher should only circle the data point representing the first reading of a new passage. Similarly, teachers should remember to connect WCPM (and WIPM) data points of the **same** passage, and not connect data points across different passages.*
4. False - *Each of the examples here are **not** scored as reading errors. Teachers should consult with the Timed Reading Scoring Rules if questions arise about scoring WCPM and WIPM.*
5. False - *Students should **not** be able to view the story during the Retell Check because the Retell Check is intended to ensure the student can retell information about the passage from memory.*
6. True - *It is important to praise specific reading behaviors so the student knows about specific areas of improvements and strengths.*
7. True
8. False - *With the occasional expectation that can occur during the Goal Assessment, students should only read the passage for one minute.*
9. False - *The correct directions are as follows (note the directions for retelling what happened in the correct order): **“Now I want you to tell me everything you remember about the story you just read. Try to tell me what happened in the correct order.”***
10. True - *Only when the student does not meet her Goal can the teacher opt to have the student read the passage for 90 seconds. Of course, the WCPM and WIPM scores at 60 seconds are always the scores graphed and used to determine if the student met her Goal.*
11. True
12. True - *If the teacher does not cover the beginning portion of the story, students will sometimes start reading the passage silently while teachers provide directions. This silent reading offers additional practice for the student, and therefore offers an inaccurate assessment of their WCPM and WIPM.*

Multiple Choice Items

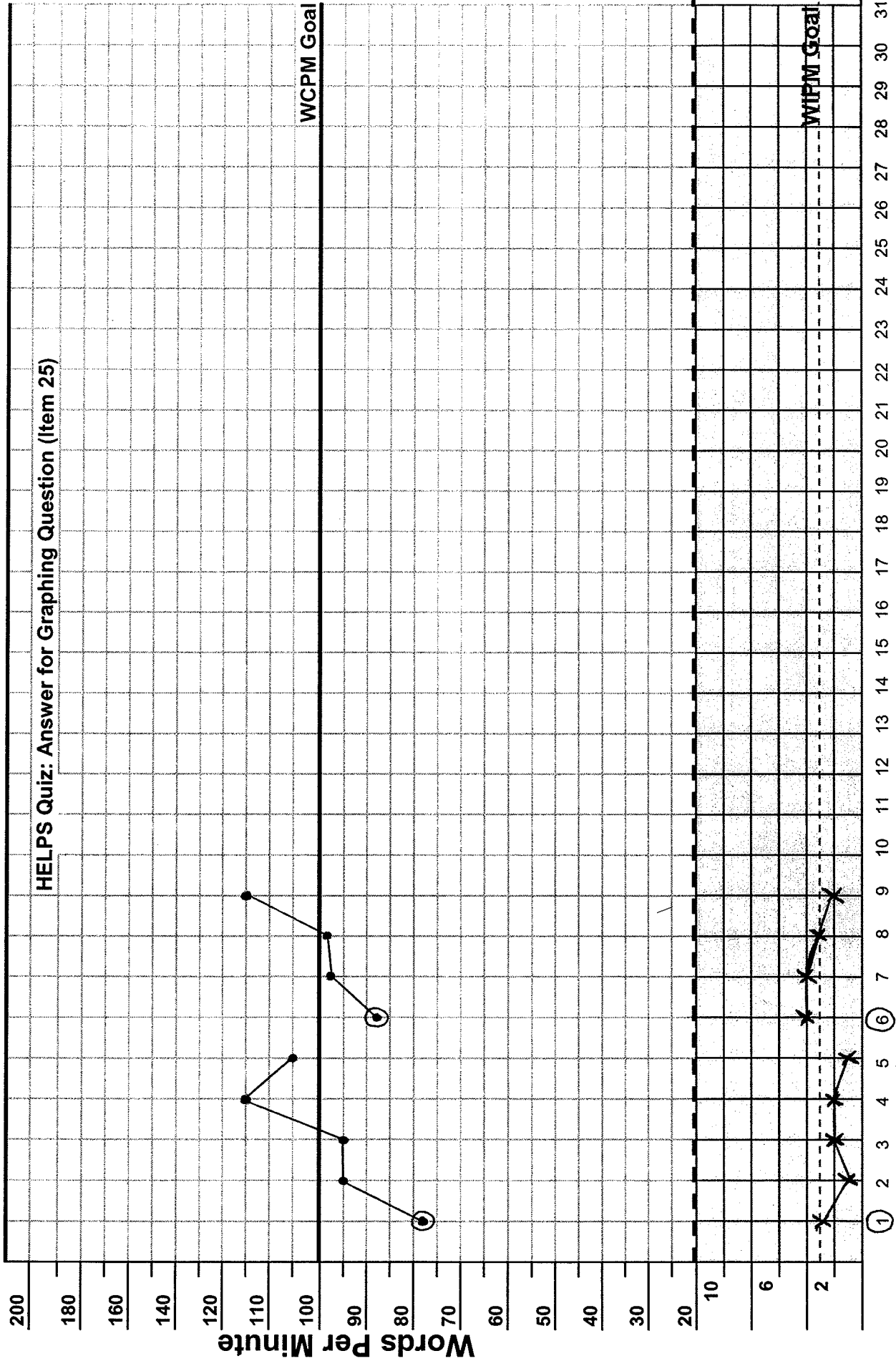
13. B
14. C
15. A - *Regardless of a student’s WCPM and WIPM performance during the Goal Assessment, the Retell Check procedure should always be implemented.*

16. B - *This is an important step because it helps keep track of implementation integrity (i.e., whether the HELPS procedures are consistently implemented accurately).*
17. E - *Each of the examples here are scored as a reading error (one WIPM). Other examples of reading errors are found in the Timed Reading Scoring Rules.*
18. C - *With this implementation rule, teachers should also remember that they need to tell the student that the words were read correctly, but she will practice them because they are difficult.*
19. E - *Teachers should always read with good expression and just a little faster than how the student would read the passage. Teachers should be careful not to read the passage too fast because the student will not be able to follow along silently.*
20. D - *The Implementation Flow Chart provides the teacher with all Goal criteria, but it is important for teachers to remember that the WCPM criterion differs according to the student's grade level. Teachers should also remember that under some circumstances, a student's WCPM Goal criterion may be modified. For detailed descriptions of when to modify a student's WCPM Goal criterion, teachers should consult the section in the manual titled, "What to Do When a Student Does Not Meet the Reading Goal."*
21. C
22. E
23. C
24. D
25. **See following page for answers to this item.**

HELPS Program: Student Graph - Grade 2

NAME: _____

Notes: Circle Timed Reading # and first WCPM score each time student begins a new passage. Write date below first Timed Reading of the day.
 (Mark WCPM with dot; Mark WIPM with X) Only connect dots and Xs for readings of the same passage.



Timed Readings

① 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 9/3 9/5 9/8

HELPS One-on-One Program: Implementation Integrity Recording Form

Observer Name: _____ School and School Year: _____

Observation Number and Date	Teacher's Name	Number of Steps Completed Accurately		Write the corresponding # (e.g., 8b) for any step not completed with 100% accuracy. Write additional notes as needed.
		If Student Met Goal Steps 1-13a	If Student Did Not Meet Goal Steps 1-12b	
1.				
2.				
3.				
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33.				
34.				

Some Benefits of the HELPS 1-on-1 Program:

- **HELPS** has been scientifically-validated to improve students' reading skills, including reading fluency and comprehension.
- **HELPS** has been successfully used and endorsed by several types of educators, such as regular education teachers, teacher assistants, school psychologists, special education teachers, reading specialists, and school volunteers.
- **HELPS** has been successfully used with elementary-aged students of all different reading levels.
- **HELPS** integrates evidence-based instructional strategies and progress monitoring assessment strategies.
- **HELPS** can be used as part of a school's Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model.

100%

100% of proceeds acquired from the HELPS Program are used to support K-12 students' academic achievement (see details inside)



Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies

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