

Preface

For teachers, the day rarely ends with the last school bell of the day. Lesson plans and concerns about students linger in the mind beyond the classroom. “If I could just . . . , but will it work?” “Will I lose ground in teaching the concept?” “Is it too risky?” “Will it help my students make the grade, pass the state tests, or get into college?” “Will my students resist out-of-the-box methods?”

Research-based classroom strategies are strategies for which there is “Yes, it works!” data. Even when armed with statistics that show the efficacy of best practice teaching methods, teachers still ask, “How do I do it?” As a teachers’ coach, I often hear, “It would be so good to have a strategy bank to refer to when I need ideas and techniques for the classroom.” This book, *RTI Strategies for Secondary Teachers*, fills that request.

The research presented in this text is the most up-to-date educational research available. Unfortunately, it seems that once it has been shown that a given method meets the criteria for the title of “best practice,” continuing research on that teaching method comes to a halt. Although the research on those methods may be older, they are still effective strategies. As a response to this phenomenon, this text presents an explanation of single-subject experimental design.

This book is written for teachers. As it stands, some readers might find that the research included in each lesson plan distracts from the goal of the book. Research is critical to Response to Intervention (RTI) and must be included. However, my approach to research is just as practical and realistic as my approach to teaching. I did not get hung up on overtheorizing and overresearching. Teachers want solutions, not theory.

Chapter 1 pertains to RTI overall, its efficacy, and the evidence supporting its use in secondary education. It includes examples of how some schools and teachers have mitigated the budgeting, staffing, performance, and student culture constraints faced at the secondary level.

Each subsequent chapter provides at least two strategies, presented in sample lesson plans, related to its title. Each chapter begins with a short explanation of why these particular strategies were selected for this book, the research that demonstrates their effectiveness, and detailed instructions on how to implement the lessons and extension activities. All three tiers are addressed in each lesson plan, so that the reader has a model of what RTI looks like in the classroom.

The final chapter explains acceleration centers, a process that incorporates many of the strategies presented in the previous chapters. Teachers who develop these low-maintenance acceleration centers will always have a set of meaningful learning activities readily available and will know that they meet both the interests and needs of their students.

While the main contribution this book makes to the teaching professional is a bank of research-proven RTI strategies that will improve state test score results and student achievement, there are several other benefits. Implementing RTI strategies supports *all* of our students, not just our struggling learners.

The grouping strategies inherent in each lesson plan improve the social skills of our student populations and may, depending on other circumstances, reduce the need for special education outside the main classroom. Essentially, my hope is that this book raises teaching up a level in every classroom and reduces stress for teachers and students in the process.