

**Frequently Asked Questions - Direct Instruction Programs**  
**The Questions Asked and Answered by our Best DI Sales Reps**



they have 9 students instead of 8 in a group for why the lessons aren't working out.

Generally, the recommended ceilings on group sizes are:

Reading Mastery K, 1 or Classic I/II

6 students for your most at-risk group, if possible; 10-12 otherwise

Reading Mastery Signature 2-5; Plus 3-6

Both may be done whole class, but when working with Tier 2 or 3 students, keep the group sizes smaller (10 or less, if possible).

**How long are the lessons, i.e., how much time to teach?**

Most DI program lesson times are 45 minutes, with the exception being Reading Mastery Signature 2-5 or Reading Mastery Plus, 2-6, where the reading lessons take 90 minutes (less time for smaller groups, 1 ¼ hours). The language strand lessons for Reading Mastery require an additional 45 minutes.

**How much training time do we need for teachers to get up and running?**

Minimally:

One day for Corrective Decoding

One day for Corrective Comprehension

Schools using new programs and are already using Direct Instruction can get by with less training, but their new teachers would still need the amount of training recommended above.

*Always recommend follow up in the form of model lessons and on-side coaching.*

**How flexible can the teachers be in teaching the program?**

The script should be followed, but the program can be added to with motivational language. Every time a student answers a question, teachers must make decisions about what to do next: praise a correct answer, correct a possible error, reconfirm the answer if the group seemed a little less than confident, etc. These decisions are not scripted.

**This looks boring to teach. What about my creativity?**

It's not if you put your creative self into "acting out" the lessons and you get a

### **Which programs can be used as a replacement core?**

Reading Mastery Signature and Reading Mastery Plus can be and are used as replacement core and core programs in many parts of the country. Corrective Reading, when both strands are used, could also be considered a replacement core.

### **Do we need to use the placement test, or can we use DIBELS scores?**

Always use the placement test. The DIBELS scores can tell you which students would benefit from an intensive intervention and also which level of the program to begin the testing, but they should not be used for placement.

### **Is there a correlation between DIBELS and placement in Reading Mastery or Corrective Reading?**

One DI implementation group, Educational Resources, Inc., has collected data on hundreds of students in Reading Mastery and this data shows that students working on grade level and at mastery in Reading Mastery Signature have 90% pass rates on the DIBELS subtests.

### **How effective is DI with ELL students?**

Intuitively, it seems that the consistent language of instruction, careful teaching scaffolding and lesson routines of DI programs would facilitate the learning of a non-English speaking student.

There is a growing body of research, dating back to the 80's, that points to DI as an effective method for teaching ELL students. A recent study was reported in the Learning Disability Quarterly, *Use of Evidence-Based, Small-Group Reading Instruction for English Language Learners in Elementary Grades: Secondary-*

**No, while the program goal is mastery for every student, a student who clearly needs more repetition and practice than others in the group needs to be helped at another time in the day by having lessons pre-taught and reviewing lesson parts in which s/he was struggling. If possible, look for alternative placements in a more appropriate group.**

**What do I do at the end of the year as far as placement for the following year?**

**Note the last mastery test or fluency check out given at which each group was scoring at or above 80% or passing. Back up ten lessons from that point when school begins and come forward.**