



The Literacy Leader's Top Ten

Responses to Accountability and FSA

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October 3, 2019

Why “Even” Research-Based Instruction, Interventions, and Initiatives Sometimes Fail

1. Insufficient initial professional learning opportunities
2. A Lack of
 - ongoing coaching
 - fidelity/adaptability
 - intensity
 - frequent progress monitoring
3. “Initiative fatigue”-Competing initiatives interfere with effective implementation and diffuse time, resources, and support

A close-up photograph of a person's hand touching a tablet screen. The background is a blurred library with bookshelves. The image is partially obscured by a green overlay on the right side.

The Top 10

10. Be a Literacy Leader

Effective literacy leaders...

Communicate clearly and frequently the expectations about instruction to all stakeholders.

Support people to meet expectations.

Monitor those expectations.

Determine what to do when expectations are not being met, including reallocation of resources and supports and adjusting expectations.

Reflecting on Core Instruction

- Are there agreed upon expectations for instructional practices that are present in all classrooms (e.g. read aloud every day)?
- How do you support teachers and leaders to meet those expectations?
- How do you know if teachers and leaders are meeting your expectations?
- What happens when expectations aren't being met?

Monitoring and Supporting Core Instruction and Intervention

- Professional learning walkthroughs
 - Non-evaluative; not focused on individuals
 - Agreement on common expectations/look-fors
 - May be program specific
 - Collecting calibrated, large data sets
 - Look for trends to drive professional learning supports
- Common assessments (See #9) to drive adjustments to both instruction and supports
- Participation in common planning sessions (PLC, lesson study, etc.)

District Actions That Support Effective Instruction and Intervention

- Instructional materials are in place prior to school start and teachers and leaders are trained
- Appropriate allocation of resources and supports that are differentiated based on need (equal creates inequities)
- Recruiting, retaining, and placing the right leadership and teachers

9. Love the Data, And Use the Data

- What do we give up based on our approach to the data (opportunity costs)?
- Evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and interventions (must have outcomes beyond summative assessment)
- We must dramatically increase the amount of assessment we do (focus on informal, curriculum embedded assessments)
- All data conversations must focus on student learning
- Must include data to determine what's working, for whom, under what conditions, and how well?

Principles of Assessment and Data Use

- Must lead to action
- Focus should be on supporting effective teaching and learning (instructionally useful)
- Tells us something we didn't know already (or confirms)
- Reliability and validity are critical
- Test scores are an approximation (all have limitations)-Focus on triangulation
- Outcome measures don't diagnose problems or help us manage improvement

The only thing worse than an incomplete data picture is an inaccurate one

“Merely wishing for diagnostic data won’t make such data appear if a test isn’t built with instructional diagnosis in mind” (Popham, 2009)

Key Question

- What instructional decision will teachers and leaders make on the basis of the assessment that would have been made differently had the scores turned out differently?
- If the assessments we're using don't answer this question, perhaps we are looking at the wrong assessments.

Do We Measure/Monitor/Provide Instruction?

■ Effort

■ Curiosity/inquiry

■ Resilience

■ Compassion

■ Individual determination

■ Reading volume

■ Ability to motivate others

■ Collaboration

■ Problem-solving

■ Passion

■ Innovation

■ Love of reading

8. Support Professional Learning

- Having a standards-aligned curriculum or evidenced-based interventions is not enough; teachers must be able to implement them well
- Amount of face time with students doesn't matter if teachers aren't well-trained and supported
- Create time for embedded learning during the school day
- Create case studies of effectiveness across the district

Invest in Instructional Coaches

- Create a selection and induction program
- Limit tasks that have little impact on teacher changes in practice
- Use a coach log to improve supports and impact
- Clarify the role in collaboration with principals
- Goal: 100% of the school day doing some form of professional learning

7. Make Reading, Writing, and Academic Conversations the Norm

- Every day, every classroom
- Reading to students every day
- Students asking the questions, not the teachers (inquiry-based)
- Students reading a mix of rigorous grade level texts and leveled content texts every day to practice skills and build knowledge
- Strong core instructional principles in every classroom first (across all content areas)

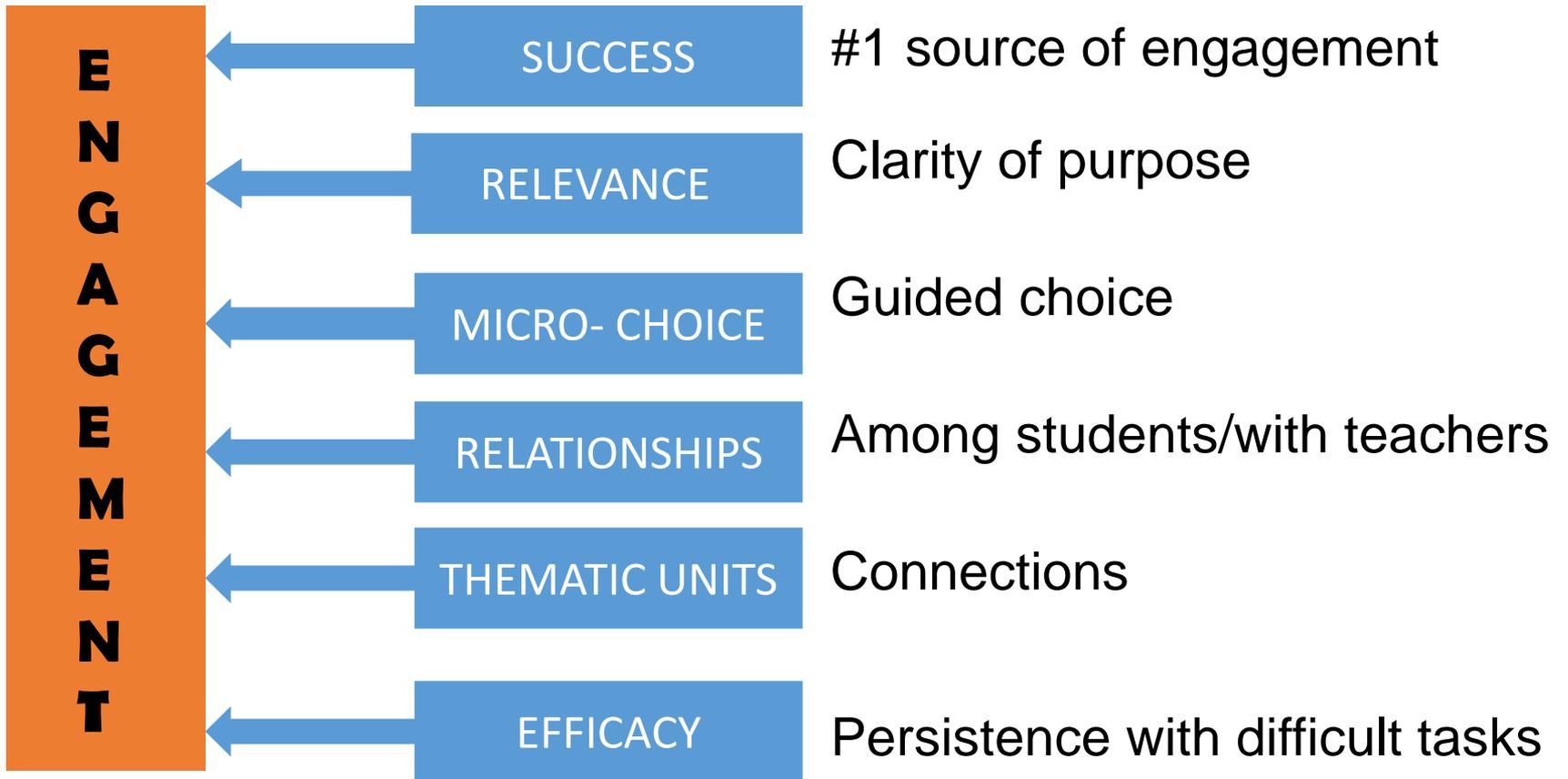
How do you know? Gathering evidence...

- Do all students have access to texts they can and want to read?
- Do students read and write about what they know and care about?
- Are students given time to explore topics and themes through reading, writing, and academic conversation?
- Do teachers model and teach students how to read, write, and discuss content?
- Are there opportunities to demonstrate and use strengths in reading, writing, and conversation, or do these activities only accentuate weaknesses?

6. Focus on Engagement and Motivation

- Many students will need:
 - A topic
 - An adult
 - A reason to keep them going
- Engaging curriculum=students keep going when text gets tough
- Amount of engaged reading correlates higher with reading achievement than gender, family income, or parental education (Guthrie)
- The motivation-achievement relationship is reciprocal and spiraling (Morgan and Fuchs)

Classroom Practices that Build Engagement

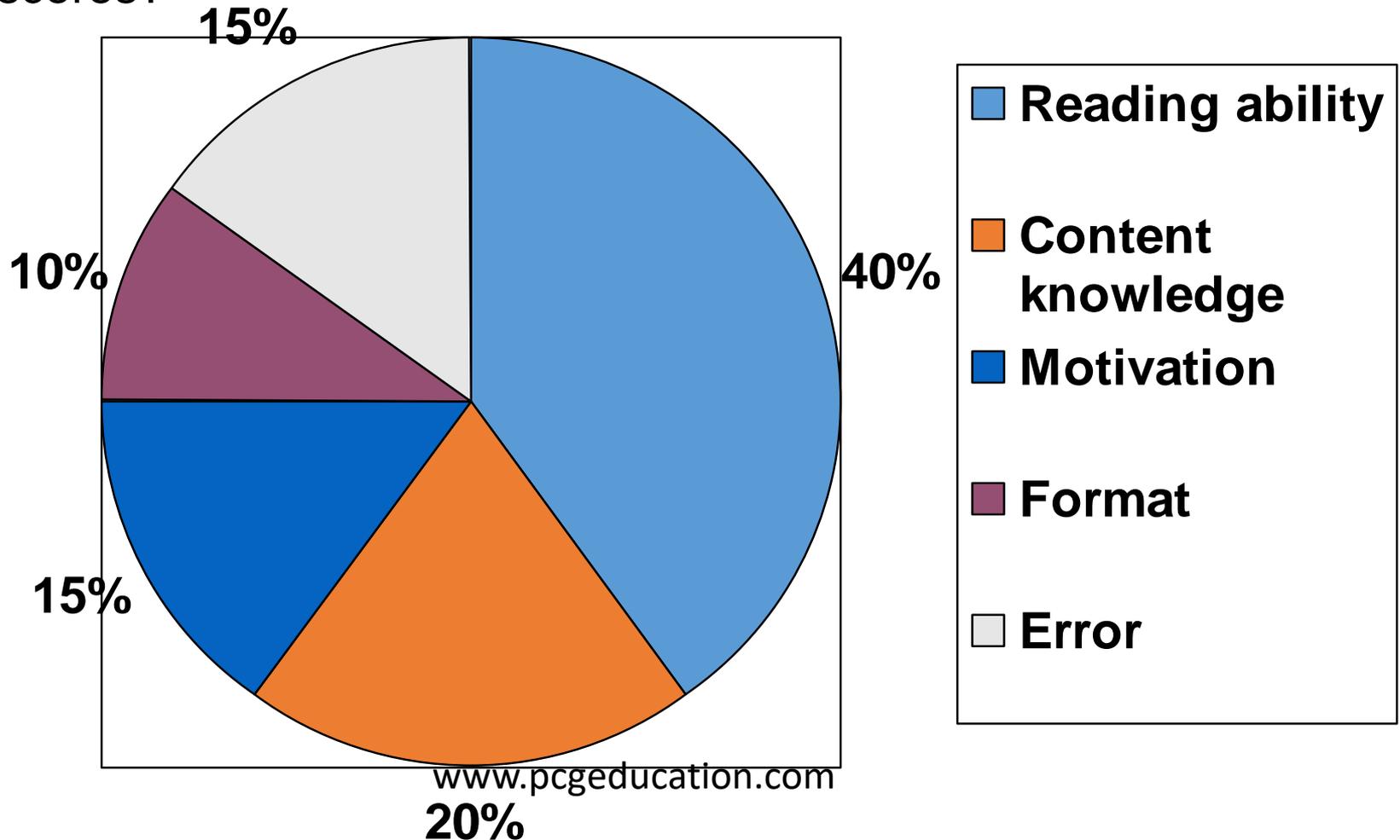


5. Understand the Role of Test Preparation vs. Test Practice

- Test preparation=Teaching deeply to the standards
- Stay away from test practice books
- Standards based reporting should always be questioned
- Help teachers believe-Good instruction doesn't mean lower scores
- Remedial, low-level materials and instruction haven't worked!

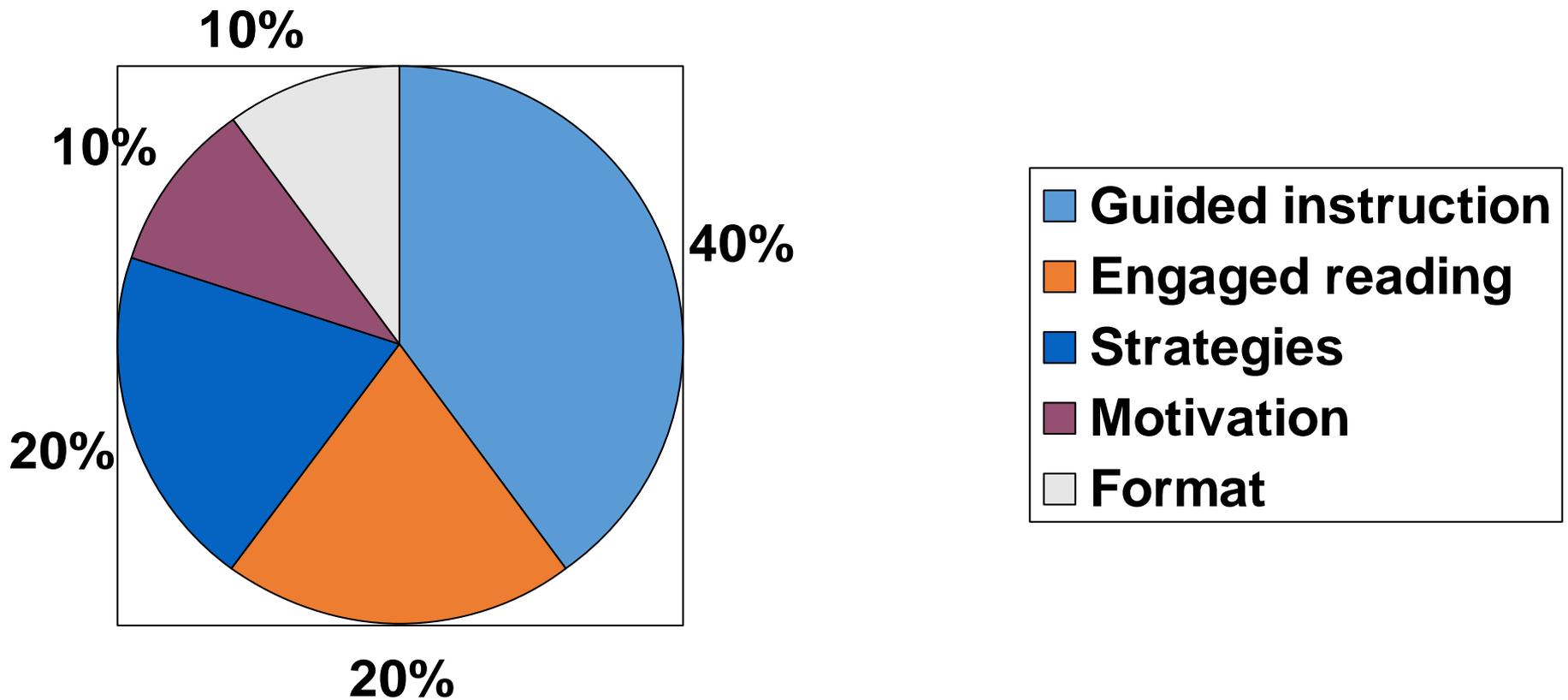
Research-Based Literacy Classroom (Guthrie)

- Which factors effect reading assessment scores?



Research-Based Literacy Classroom

- Which components should we focus on?



4. Celebrate Learning Success Not Testing

- FSA pep-rallies become learning pep-rallies
- FSA ice cream socials become learning ice cream socials
- Celebrate genuine learning and accomplishments
- Eliminate FSA from the district language
- Focus on knowledge and skill attainment
- Create culture versus competition

3. Focus Intently on Core Literacy Instruction

- Intervention will never solve for ineffective core instruction
- Ensure “good” core instruction in “every” classroom “every” day
- Measure the health of core
- Play the odds (30-60 minutes vs. 6 hours)

2. Don't Rely on Quick Fixes

- A program will not solve the problem
- Intensity and differentiation of support for students and teachers are the keys (MTSS/RtI)
- Technology should be used for engaging practice not instruction
- The greater the literacy challenge, the more time a student should have with an effective teacher
- Think fitness versus inoculation

Multi-Tiered System of Supports/Response to Instruction and Intervention – Five Systemic Actions

- 1. Identify** - Students at risk for poor learning outcomes through universal screening
- 2. Plan** – Instruction and interventions to address student learning needs; purposeful assessment and problem solving
- 3. Support** -The fidelity of instruction and intervention delivery
- 4. Monitor** - Student progress and adjust the intensity and nature of instruction and intervention if needed
- 5. Analyze** - Systemic program compliance and success

1. Prioritize Resources for PK-2

- Biggest return on investment
- We have not, despite our best efforts, consistently closed gaps after 2nd grade
- Are we putting our best resources in PK-2?
- Are we creating a space for school-based leaders to make the best decisions for children?
- This is our best chance to be successful!!!

The Daily Literacy Leader Question

- Did I put the needs of students first in every decision I made today?





Thank you!

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