



# Response to Intervention

## An Alignment Guide for *Zip Zoom English*



Scholastic Inc. has prepared this Alignment Guide to assist Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and schools that are currently implementing or are considering adopting a *Response to Intervention (RTI)* model. This guide provides key background information on current educational policy related to *RTI*, and demonstrates how *Zip Zoom English* can strengthen the implementation of *RTI* and ultimately raise student achievement. This Alignment Guide provides the following key information:

- *Response to Intervention* Overview
- *Zip Zoom English* Overview
- Alignment of *Zip Zoom English* to *RTI* Core Components

*Zip Zoom English* is a research-based supplemental language and literacy program designed to support English language learners in Kindergarten through third grade in learning English and developing critical literacy skills. *Zip Zoom English*:

- Effectively supports young English language learners by delivering a systematic curriculum and an interactive software program that work together to accelerate students' oral language, vocabulary, and sight-word acquisition so participants gain improved access to the core reading program;
- Supplies a range of assessments and software-generated reports that can be used to monitor students' progress, modify instruction, and evaluate program effectiveness;
- Provides professional development that focuses on instructional strategies for English language learners and integrates them with the *Zip Zoom* teaching materials.

### Using the Alignment Guide

Beginning in January 2006, districts are permitted to use up to 15 percent of their *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* funds for interventions and measurements to be used within an *RTI* framework. This Alignment Guide addresses how the Scholastic *Zip Zoom English* program supports the implementation of *RTI*. For questions regarding *Response to Intervention* services, please consult the final *IDEA* Part B regulations governing the Assistance to States for Education of Children with Disabilities Program and the Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities Program. They can be found at <http://idea.ed.gov/explore/home>.

The Alignment Guide is informed by the *IDEA* 2004 Regulations, the National Association of State Directors of Education (NASDSE) 2005 Report, guidelines provided from the Vaughn Gross Center for Reading and Language Arts at the University of Texas at Austin, and consultation from Dr. Joe Witt's iSTEEP model on the core principles and practical implementation of *RTI* in schools.

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### About Scholastic Inc.

Scholastic is committed to providing teachers with effective materials for every stage of reading instruction to ensure that students develop the skills and strategies needed to succeed in school. Our reputation is built on an 85-year history of helping foster and support effective learning for all students. For years, we have worked with leading researchers to develop scientifically based products that produce significant results in student achievement, as well as meaningful changes in teacher effectiveness.

We look forward to partnering with you to improve reading achievement, and would like the opportunity to talk with you about how we can best support your efforts to implement *Response to Intervention*.

## Response to Intervention (RTI) Overview

### Background

The Reauthorization of the *Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004)* changed the way students are evaluated for special services by encouraging schools to identify students in need of those services and use research-based interventions to address their needs early on.

### What is RTI?

*Response to Intervention* is not a particular program, curriculum, or model. Rather, it is an approach or framework for allocating instructional services and resources in response to students' needs. *RTI* aims to prevent unnecessary assignments to special education through the provision of tiers of intervention and continuous progress monitoring.

*RTI* is the systematic practice of:

- Providing tiers of increasingly intensive, high-quality instruction, and intervention matched to students' needs;
- Measuring and continually monitoring students' progress over time;
- Using resulting data to drive educational decision-making.

### The Purpose of RTI is:

1. To focus on prevention and early identification of students in need of special services
2. To better integrate services between general and special education

*RTI* uses a multitiered model of service delivery to promote efficient response to students' needs. Each tier provides increasingly intensive support structures to ensure that students succeed.

#### Tier 1: Core Instructional Interventions

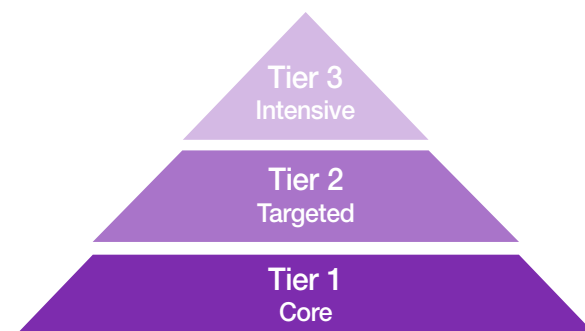
- General curricula for all students
- Proactive interventions based on instructional variables within whole-group instruction

#### Tier 2: Targeted Group Interventions

- Supplemental instruction for students who are not successful in Tier 1
- Targeted interventions oriented toward small-group instruction
- Explicit instruction, rapid response

#### Tier 3: Intensive, Individual Interventions

- Individualized instruction for students who are not successful in Tier 2
- Intensive interventions oriented toward individual students
- Diagnostic assessments to determine student need
- Higher intensity, longer duration



### Core Components of RTI

#### 1. Early Intervention

Early intervention is essential when it comes to addressing students who are at risk of not achieving reading proficiency. Students should be exposed to research-based interventions supported by continuous assessment and progress monitoring to receive the support they need as early as possible.

#### 2. A Multitiered Intervention Model

Multiple tiers of intervention allow schools to offer increasingly intensive interventions to those students who are not making adequate progress in the core curriculum (Tier 1). Interventions in Tiers 2 and 3 are intensified by increasing instructional time, decreasing group size, using materials matched to students' instructional levels, modifying modes of presentation, and providing regular corrective feedback.

#### 3. Universal Screening

All students should be screened three times a year to identify those students who are not making expected academic progress. Screening measures should be brief, reliable, valid, and appropriately identify those students who require more intense interventions.

#### 4. Scientifically Validated and Research-Based Interventions

*IDEA 2004* and *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* require the use of research-based interventions to the extent possible. Interventions should be based on research-proven practices. In addition, the intervention should be validated by scientific efficacy studies.

#### 5. Fidelity of Intervention Implementation

The fidelity of intervention implementation must be monitored to ensure that students are receiving the intervention as designed and validated by research. Interventions should include guidelines and tools regarding implementation fidelity.

#### 6. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress

The progress of students receiving interventions must be monitored frequently in order to determine whether the interventions are producing the desired academic gains. The progress monitoring measures should be brief, target specific skills, be administered easily, and accompanied by decision rules to inform instruction.

#### 7. Data-Based Decision Making

In all tiers of intervention, data from screening and progress monitoring measures should be used to make educational decisions for individual students.

#### 8. Professional Development

A high-quality professional development plan should be used to support teachers implementing *RTI*. The plan should allow for coaching, e-learning courses, and other opportunities.

#### 9. Supplemental Instructional Materials

The use of supplemental instructional materials, where appropriate, strengthens the efficacy of the comprehensive core curriculum and supports student learning in Tier 1.

#### 10. Coordinated Funding

Components of *RTI* funded by *IDEA* may be coordinated with activities funded by, and carried out under, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

## RTI and English Language Learners

The overrepresentation of English language learners in special education programs has occurred historically due to the inaccurate diagnosis of students' needs, and/or the lack of appropriate instruction and assessment. *RTI* supports English language learners by requiring the identification of those students who are struggling through the use of screenings, high-quality instruction and intervention particular to their needs, continual progress monitoring, and the use of data to keep adjusting and targeting instruction. Through the implementation of *RTI* principles and practices, English language learners have a better chance of being properly diagnosed and receiving the interventions they need to succeed.

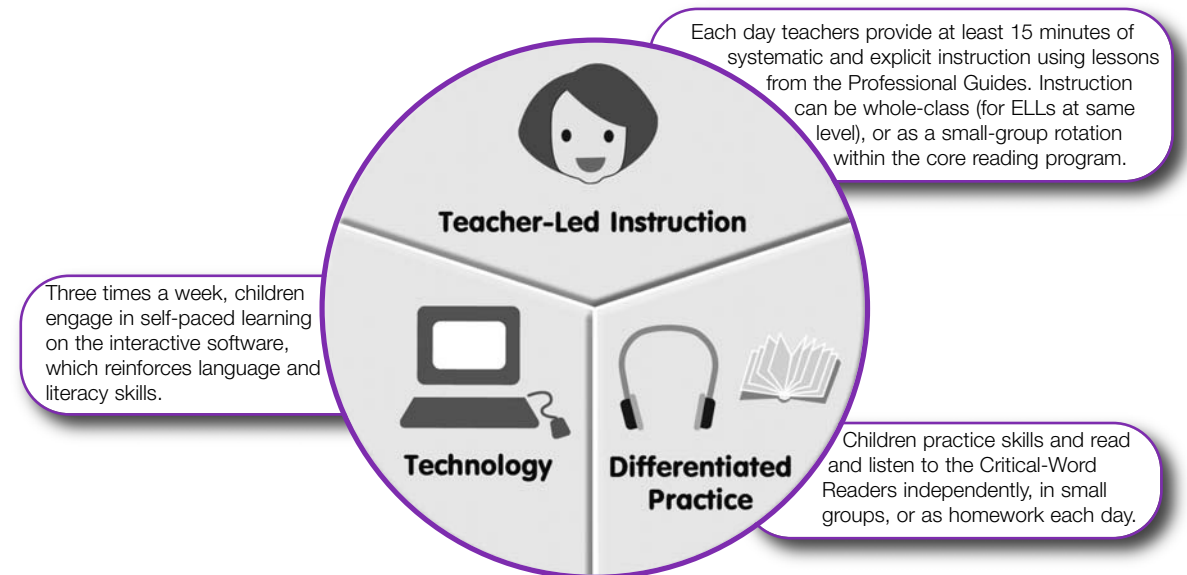
According to research, *RTI* models, in which focused reading interventions are combined with language development activities and ESL best practices, benefit young English language learners who are experiencing reading difficulties (Linan, Vaughn, et al., 2006). *Zip Zoom English* complements *RTI* models for young learners by offering a curricular solution that aligns well with *RTI*'s core principles and components. With an emphasis on instruction geared specifically toward English language learners, relevant assessments, and data-based reports, *Zip Zoom English* addresses the needs of students early on. Moreover, with the program, teachers receive professional development that focuses on modeling ESL best practices and teaching strategies to promote oral language development.

## Zip Zoom English Overview

*Zip Zoom English* is a supplemental language and literacy program designed to support English language learners in Kindergarten through third grade in learning English and developing critical literacy skills. Through Teacher-Led lessons, Differentiated Practice activities, and an interactive software program, students receive rich exposure to target vocabulary words, literacy skills, and increased opportunities for language and literacy. The three parts of the program work together to accelerate students' oral language, vocabulary, and sight-word acquisition so that participants acquire improved access to their core reading program.

Six years of research have proven *Zip Zoom English* effective at supporting young English language learners. Independent research conducted by WestEd revealed that English language learners' consistent participation in the *Zip Zoom* software improved phonemic awareness, phonics, and sight-word recognition. Recent studies on the *Zip Zoom* Critical-Word Readers conclude that after students used the books for only 12 weeks, their oral reading fluency improved by 3.4 words correct per minute for every week of instruction, exceeding the rate that researchers deem necessary to close the English language learner achievement gap. In addition, it showed benefits for both English language learners and those English-only students who enter school with limited language and literacy.

The *Zip Zoom English* implementation model combines research-based practices on the effective use of technology, reading interventions, and differentiated instruction. The three parts of the program lend to implementing small-group rotations, which provide students with the opportunity to work closely with the teacher and practice what they learned at their own pace. Through the use of continuous embedded assessment and various data-driven reports, teachers have the opportunity to address and target students' unique needs. The content and structure of the program works to meet the needs of each individual learner precisely where he or she is.



## Zip Zoom English Aligns to Response to Intervention Core Components

The following information outlines how *Zip Zoom English*, with professional development support from Scholastic RED®, addresses the Core Components of a *Response to Intervention (RTI)* Model.

### RTI 1 Early intervention so students receive the instruction they need immediately

**Zip Zoom English** is a supplemental language and literacy program aimed specifically at addressing the needs of English language learners in Kindergarten through third grade. Young English language learners face the challenge of having to learn English while simultaneously learning to read. Providing additional support and resources is crucial to ensuring every child's success. *Zip Zoom* complements comprehensive core reading programs by offering an explicit approach to developing young learners' language, literacy, academic content knowledge, and vocabulary. Through focused skill development and differentiated practice, *Zip Zoom* improves students' access to their basal/core reading program.

### RTI 2 A multitiered intervention model with intensity of services increasing as students move up the tiers

**Zip Zoom English** has the capacity to address the diverse needs of learners who require any one of the three tiers of service delivery—Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3—as outlined in the *RTI* framework. The program's flexibility allows educators to implement the curriculum and use the software within a variety of instructional models that address all three of the tiers.

In Tier 1, students are to receive core instructional interventions that are preventive and proactive. These interventions are designed to ensure that students continue to perform at or above grade level and don't fall behind. With its systematic approach to teaching students English and critical literacy skills, *Zip Zoom English* supports students' continual growth so they can advance, learning the content and mastering the standards for their grade level. The embedded assessments in the program also support continuous progress monitoring to ensure students gain the skills necessary to achieve proficiency.

Tier 2 is characterized by targeted group interventions for students who are considered to be at risk. Students in Tier 2 typically receive intervention instruction in small groups, providing them with increased opportunities for individualized attention from the teacher. The *Zip Zoom* Instructional Model supports small-group rotations structured around the three primary parts of the program—Teacher-Led Instruction, Differentiated Practice, and the Technology. In groups of five or less, students rotate through the three parts, receiving: 1) direct, but also interactive instruction from the teacher; 2) structured practice through engagement in the activities; and 3) individualized instruction and practice by using the software.

Tier 3 students are typically individual students who have not responded to the instruction provided in Tiers 1 and/or 2. They require intensive, individual interventions and ongoing monitoring of their progress. The *Zip Zoom* software allows students to go at their own pace. Students who usually struggle with independent work can interact with and advance through the structured lessons in the software.

*Zip Zoom English's* three parts support differentiated instruction and address diverse students' unique learning needs by providing the following:

- **Individualized instructional software**—The *Zip Zoom* software offers each student the opportunity to work at his or her own pace. The software provides corrective feedback that helps students move successfully through the ten lessons in each of the three levels. Students receive two chances to pass the assessments that come after every two lessons.
- **Data-driven small-group instruction**—Several classroom and student-level reports provide immediate feedback and detailed data about students' needs. Teachers can use the reports to target instruction and place students in the appropriate level or small group.
- **Direct instruction in whole or small groups**—The *Zip Zoom* Professional Guides support teachers in providing teacher-led instruction that builds students' skills systematically so that they will eventually attain English and reading proficiency.

*Zip Zoom English* also consists of three different levels—Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3. Teachers can differentiate instruction according to where students are performing in terms of their English. Each level introduces new concepts and vocabulary, which are reinforced in subsequent topics. Students may begin the program on Level 1 or Level 2, and be grouped flexibly so that if moving at a faster or slower pace, they can move to a level that is more appropriate to the level on which they are performing.

### RTI 3 Universal screening measures that are brief, reliable, valid, and appropriately identify students for Tier 2 intervention

**Zip Zoom English** presents opportunities for teachers to identify whether students are in need of intervention and continually assess where they are and how they are progressing.

The *Zip Zoom* Placement Assessment helps teachers to decide on a student's initial placement in the program. This oral production test reveals whether students should start on Level 1 or Level 2. Teachers can use the data to learn more about the student's level of oral language and vocabulary.

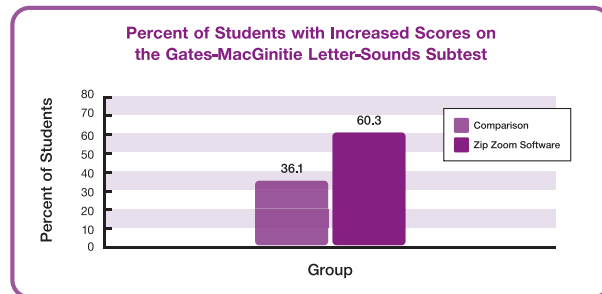
The program also provides Outcomes Assessments, which are administered at the mid-point and end of each level (approximately every ten weeks). The tests are different for each level, and measure students' oral fluency and sight-word recognition. The results indicate whether students are progressing through the program and predict how they will perform on similar assessments.

**RTI 4 Scientifically validated and research-based interventions**

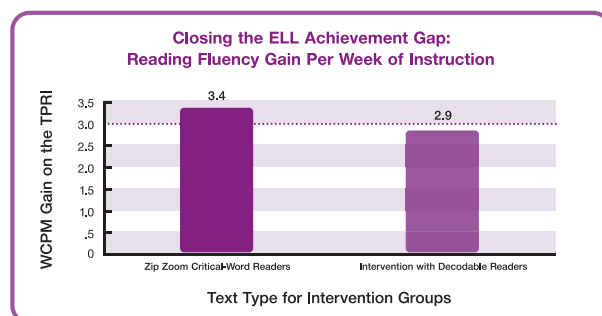
**Zip Zoom English** is based on a strong research foundation. The program is the result of six years of educational research and development.

The development of *Zip Zoom English* began when the United States Department of Education awarded Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) a five-year grant in 1999 to develop NEARStar: Network for English Acquisition and Reading Star Schools Program. The primary goal was to research and develop supplemental Web-based software that addresses the English-acquisition and literacy needs of young English language learners. The *Zip Zoom* curriculum and software are enhancements of NEARStar.

From 2002–2004, an evaluation of NEARStar was conducted by WestEd, an independent research and development organization. The findings revealed that NEARStar accelerates the language and literacy development of young English language learners. More specifically, English language learners using the program showed improvements in phonemic awareness, phonics, and sight word recognition, serving to ultimately narrow the achievement gap.



Dr. Elfrieda Hiebert, in collaboration with PREL, developed the Zip Zoom Critical-Word Readers and books found in *Zip Zoom English* according to her research findings on the text characteristics that best support the needs of young English language learners. Since then, Dr. Hiebert has conducted a series of studies on the efficacy of the readers. In 2006 (Hiebert & Fisher), a study revealed that students using the books for only 12 weeks improved their oral reading fluency by 3.4 words correct per minute for every week of instruction, exceeding the rate research deems necessary for closing the English language learner achievement gap.



Formative research was also conducted by the Education Development Center’s Center for Children and Technology (EDC/CCT) around teachers’ response to NEARStar and students’ navigation of and reaction to the software. Findings further informed product development.

Literature on the research, development, and evaluation of *Zip Zoom English* include:

- Evaluation of the NEARStar Project—First Implementation Report (2002). Los Angeles: WestEd and Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.
- Evaluation of the NEARStar Project—Second Implementation Report (2003). Los Angeles: WestEd and Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.
- Hiebert, E.H., Brown, Z.A., Taitague, C., Fisher, C.W., & Adler, M. (2004). Texts and English language learners: Scaffolding entrée to reading. In F. Boyd, C.B. Brooks, & M.Z. Rozendal (Eds.) *Multicultural and multilingual literacy and language: Contexts and practices*. New York: Guilford Press.
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- *Zip Zoom English: Successful Models of Implementation Impact Study* (2007). New York: Scholastic Inc.

**RTI 5 An intervention with fidelity of implementation guidelines that can be evaluated through reporting or observational measures**

**Zip Zoom English** offers a compilation of research tools and instruments, which can be used to determine the fidelity of program implementation. Ongoing evaluations indicate that there are strong correlations between the quality of implementation and the desired achievement outcomes. Scholastic’s Research and Validation team therefore created seven research tools, including a Zip Zoom English Implementation Level Worksheet and Classroom Observation, as well as teacher and administrator surveys and interview protocols, to support educators and educational leaders in the field to assess and monitor implementation. The Implementation Level Worksheet consists of ten indicators that define a full implementation.

**RTI 6 Use of frequent monitoring and brief progress monitoring assessments with decision rules that inform instruction**

**Zip Zoom English** includes formal and informal ways for teachers to monitor students’ progress. Continuous progress monitoring is necessary to determine whether the strategies being implemented are working, and it supports teachers in differentiating instruction.

- Formal progress monitoring occurs after each even-numbered lesson on the Zip Zoom software. The assessments provide periodic checks on phonology, oral vocabulary, and critical words. Students can only advance to the next lesson in the software if they achieve a passing score of 60 percent or higher. If they don’t pass, the teacher is alerted and students are directed to practice the skills in the lesson again before retaking the assessment.

- The opportunity for informal progress monitoring takes place through the use of lesson-level Progress Monitoring Checklists included in every lesson. Each lesson comes with a checklist based on the content and skills presented in the lesson.

Formal and informal progress monitoring allow both teachers and students to see whether students are progressing through the program, acquiring the vocabulary and literacy skills they need.

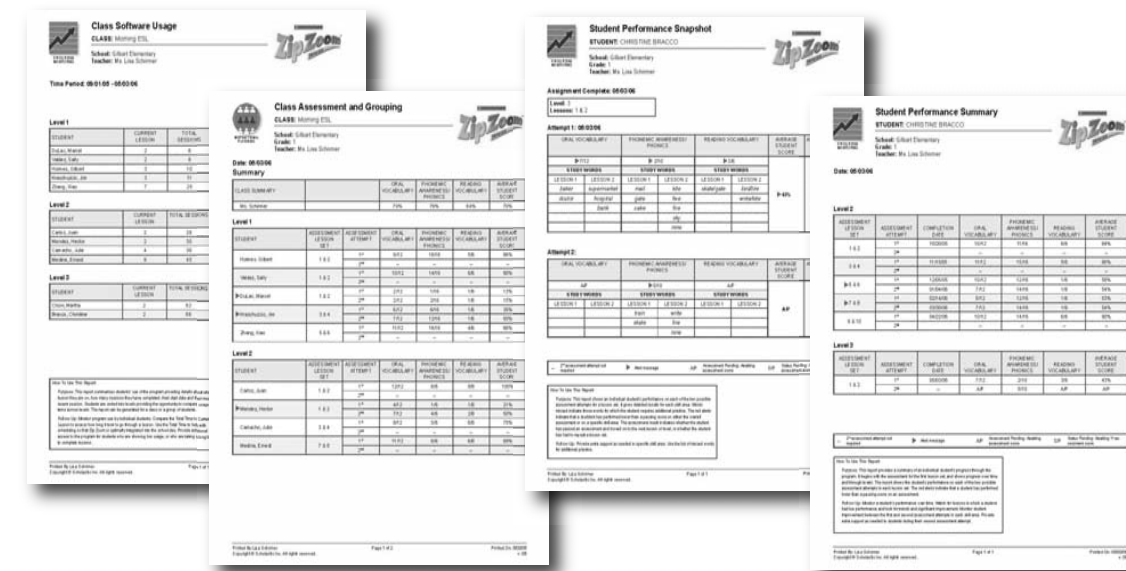
### RTI 7 Data-based decision making

**Zip Zoom English** supplies a series of reports that present regular information on student performance, class performance and grouping, and software usage. Data from the formal progress monitoring assessments housed on the software are fed into a management system. The Zip Zoom Teacher Manager continuously monitors and assesses learning gains for every student and generates detailed reports. Teachers can then use the data from the reports to inform and target their instruction in order to meet all of their students' diverse needs.

The reports include:

- Student Performance Summary provides a summary of an individual student's progression through the program over time. The report displays data on when the student completed and how well he or she performed on each software assessment. Data on how many items a student answered correctly in terms of oral vocabulary, phonemic awareness and phonics, and reading vocabulary assist teachers in determining where students need additional support.
- Student Performance Snapshot offers more detailed information for each of the two possible attempts on the software assessments. It shows the number of items correct in each skill area and also lists the Study Words students did not know. Teachers see exactly what they need to reinforce and review.
- Class Assessment and Grouping summarizes the results for the class or group. The report shows red alerts, which indicate that a student has not achieved a passing score on an assessment. This report can be used to organize small, ability-leveled groups for targeted small-group instruction or independent differentiated practice.
- Class Software Usage displays an overview of class or group software use over time. Teachers can use these data to determine at what pace students are moving through the software lessons and assessments. Some students may be taking longer to complete the lessons and, consequently, need more time and additional support.
- Outcomes Assessment summaries offer templates where teachers can graph students' results. If they graph the results on a set of the Outcomes Assessments, they can quickly determine whether the student is making adequate progress.

For reporting purposes, the Zip Zoom Teacher Manager can also generate a Master Enrollment Report, which provides a list of names, passwords, and any stored demographic information for the selected class or group.



### RTI 8 A strong professional development plan to support teachers implementing RTI

**Zip Zoom English** presents a customizable training and professional development plan to ensure the effectiveness of the program. It includes:

- In-person implementation training for Zip Zoom teachers, who in many cases include ESL Specialists and Reading Specialists;
- A facilitated, online professional development course from Scholastic RED titled *Reading Success for English Language Learners*;
- Professional Development Video Workshops of best practices included on the Teacher Resources CD.

The *Zip Zoom English* implementation training exposes Zip Zoom teachers to the program's background and research, engages them in the student experience by granting them use of the software, explores program components and supports the development of an instructional plan tailored to their school and classroom context, offers practice setting up and using the teacher management system, interprets and explains the use of the many reports available through the Teacher Manager, and informs them about other professional development opportunities with Scholastic RED and the Professional Development Video workshops.

*Zip Zoom English* includes enrollment in the Scholastic RED online course *Reading Success for English Language Learners*. The course focuses on proven, scientifically based teaching strategies and methods to help raise student reading achievement. Through 24-hour access to online resources and training, teachers can participate in interactive simulations and watch videos that show master practitioners modeling research-based practices in real classrooms. While the course covers numerous topics to help accelerate language and literacy acquisition, it integrates them within the context of the *Zip Zoom English* curriculum and materials.

The course topics include:

- Context for Teaching English Language Learners to Read
- Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, and Spelling Instruction
- Fluency Instruction and Practice
- Vocabulary as a Critical Factor in Reading Comprehension
- Teaching Students to Comprehend a Wide Variety of Texts
- Writing Instruction for English Language Learners
- Content-Area Instruction for English Language Learners

In addition, the *Zip Zoom English* Professional Guides have Professional Development Video workshops, which can be found on the Teacher Resources CD. Each workshop demonstrates best practices that teachers can use to adjust instruction to support English language learners in acquiring language and literacy, and provides real in-class looks at ESL and master teachers modeling effective instructional practices.

**RTI 9** Supplemental instructional materials, where appropriate, to strengthen the efficacy of a comprehensive core curriculum and support student learning

**Zip Zoom English** provides supplemental instructional materials, which address the following areas:

- **Phonemic Awareness**
  - The songs and chants reinforce specific sounds and key phonological and phonemic awareness tasks.
  - Children learn, repeat, and choose words targeted for initial vowel and consonant sounds covering all 26 letters of the alphabet.
- **Phonics**
  - Children develop sound and letter knowledge while building and spelling new words and using them in sentences.
  - Children progress to decoding words that include consonants, digraphs, diphthongs, blends, variant vowels, and advanced phonic elements.
- **Vocabulary**
  - Children build content knowledge and practice vocabulary through animated lessons.
  - The Read-Aloud Library and the Critical-Word Readers provide practice with vocabulary including high-frequency, high-meaning, and phonetically regular words.

- **Fluency**
  - Students listen to modeled readings from a selection of classic and non-fiction titles in a variety of topics and genres.
  - Students develop and improve fluency through echo reading, choral reading, partner reading, and repetition.
- **Comprehension**
  - Teachers preview books to draw on children’s prior knowledge, discuss context clues, and encourage children to picture and describe what they read.
  - Students develop comprehension strategies, such as making predictions, rereading, summarizing, sequence of events, and story structure.
- **Oral Language Development**
  - Teachers use the Word and Picture Books to facilitate students’ oral language development and build vocabulary.
  - Students practice listening to and learning language modeled by the teacher during the Teacher-Led activities, as well as when they use the software.

**RTI 10** IDEA RTI funding in coordination with activities funded by, and carried out under, the ESEA

**Zip Zoom English** can be integrated with funds from states, local districts, private foundations, and other sources. The federal funding programs for which it qualifies include:

- Title I, Part A—Improving Basic Programs
- Title I, Part A—Supplemental Educational Services
- Title III—English Language Acquisition
- Title V, Part A—Innovative Programs
- Reading First
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Enhancing Education Through Technology
- Microsoft Cy Pres Vouchers

## Summary

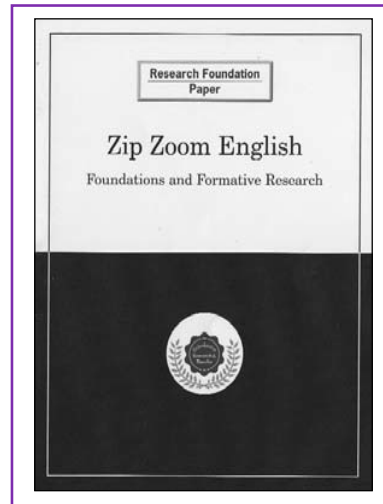
*Zip Zoom English*, along with Scholastic RED Professional Development courses, strengthens and complements the implementation of *RTI* in schools. *Zip Zoom English* provides a research-based program that proactively improves young students' access to the core curriculum by offering multiple points of entry (Tier 1), a targeted intervention oriented toward small-group instruction (Tier 2), and opportunities for individualized instruction paced according to a student's specific needs through the use of the software (Tier 3).

*Zip Zoom English* emphasizes teaching literacy skills and oral language development activities through the use of ESL best practices. In addition, the assessments and reports embedded in the program promote the practices of screening students, identifying those who are at risk, providing ongoing assessment and progress monitoring, and using data to make decisions about instruction. Finally, the inclusion of fidelity of implementation tools and various forms of professional development further assist practitioners to use the program within the context of *RTI*.

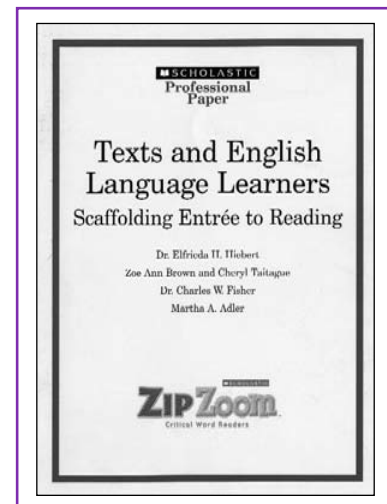
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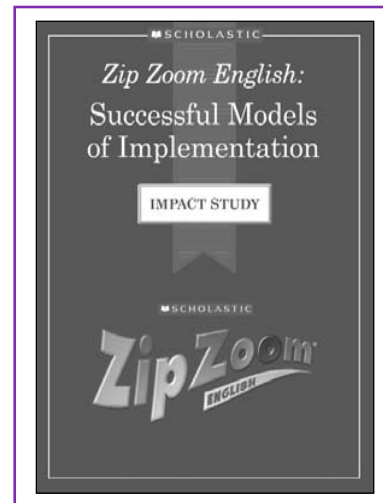
### Other Zip Zoom English Research Papers



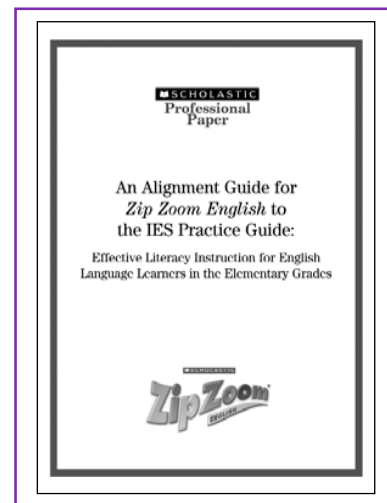
*Zip Zoom English*  
Foundations and Formative Research  
Item # 129570



Texts and English Language Learners  
Scaffolding Entrée to Reading  
Item# 897146



*Zip Zoom English:*  
Successful Models of Implementation  
Impact Study  
Item# 142809



An Alignment Guide For *Zip Zoom English* to the IES Practice Guide:  
Effective Literacy Instruction For English Language Learners in the Elementary Grades  
Item # 152822

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