

**How to
Convince Your Principal
to start a
Pilot Program
at your Public or Private School

using the
Barton Reading & Spelling System**

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Your Goal

Are you a teacher or parent who has experienced success using the Barton Reading & Spelling System with students?

Would you like to introduce the system to your school?

This document contains a step-by-step approach that many people have used to bring the Barton Reading & Spelling System into their schools.

The Problem

Many students are at-risk for reading failure in our school systems. We can find these students early with screening tools such as AIMSweb, DIBELS, CTOPP, and classroom teacher assessments.

At-risk students display many common characteristics, such as difficulty with rhyming, trouble spelling, difficulty memorizing sight words for reading and spelling, mixing up the sounds in syllables and words, sound and letter confusion, and not meeting reading fluency benchmarks.

Reading research has shown that certain instructional methods work well for this group of students. Using these methods, we can prevent further reading failure in our schools.

Acting now can prevent these students from suffering lifelong difficulties with reading, writing, and spelling. **There is no time to waste!**

Call to Action

Read through **ALL** the following steps, and make sure you are prepared **BEFORE** you meet with your school principal.

1. **Ahead of time, develop a good relationship with the school principal.**

If the principal knows you are an active and supportive parent or teacher, you have a **much better chance** of success.

2. **Set up a meeting with the principal.**

Introduce the Barton Reading & Spelling System as an effective reading and spelling intervention program that **you have used and found to be successful** with students who had difficulty learning to read with the standard curriculum and instruction methods used at your school.

3. **At your meeting with the principal, you could state:**

- Many students are at-risk for reading failure in our school. We can identify these students using screening tools including AIMSweb, DIBELS, and/or classroom teacher assessments.
- These students display common characteristics. Reading research has shown that certain types of reading instruction methods work well for these students. (see separate page of Common Characteristics)
- To prevent further reading failure in our school, we must act now and implement a program that uses proven methods.
- I have found and used a proven system that has helped students in our school (or community) become successful.

4. Share your experience using the Barton System.

Share the struggles your student(s) had prior to Barton, such as:

- Early difficulty learning the alphabet or the sounds that letters or letter combinations make
- Trouble learning common sight words, even after repeated drills with flash cards
- Difficulty learning to spell words because they couldn't hear the sounds of the letters
- Does not read fluently or accurately
- Some students - a need for speech services
- Other programs were tried for your students that did not have much of an impact, such as Reading Recovery, Hooked on Phonics, Sylvan tutoring, Read Naturally, and Read Well.

5. Introduce the Barton System as the one that finally worked.

Share how you discovered the Barton System, why you decided to use it, how long you have been using it, and how well it works.

6. Share a couple of your students' success stories.

- Discuss the amount of progress that has occurred since your Barton tutoring began.
- Share the impact this had on their report card grades, scores on DIBELS or AIMSweb, and/or scores on the state standards test.
- Discuss the students' increased self-esteem, improved attitude toward school, and/or plans for college.
- If applicable, share stories of local schools that also use the Barton System successfully.

Contact Susan Barton ahead of time to identify local schools that already use the Barton System. Contact those schools to gather success stories. Ask if they would allow an on-site visit.

Or share this student's success story – a 2-minute YouTube video:
www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=VfF-CxX9fdA

7. Share the reading research.

Explain that reading research has found that multisensory, explicit, direct, and systematic reading programs work for students with these characteristics.

- Share research results that identify the instructional methods that work for this population. (See Research Pages at the end of this packet.)

8. Explain the Barton System is based on those research findings.

The Barton Reading & Spelling System incorporates the findings of that research.

- The Barton System addresses the areas of difficulty for reading acquisition beginning with the smallest units of spoken sound. It then builds on that foundation to attach those sounds to words (phonics), in a **truly multisensory** method.
- So not only does the Barton System use the visual modality, but also the motor and auditory processes. It engages these modalities simultaneously, multiple times, throughout every lesson. This locks the targeted instruction into memory.
- The Barton System also delivers **explicit** instruction so students understand the core of the English language – why it works the way it does, why sounds make the sounds they do, and why we spell those sounds as we do using logical spelling rules. This system eliminates confusion about our written language.
- The Barton System delivers **systematic** instruction. It provides the foundational knowledge for spoken sounds, then layers the letter knowledge in, then knowledge of how letters combine to form units of sound for reading and spelling. Students learn how to read and spell any word, whether they have seen it before or not.

- The Barton System also improves **reading fluency** and **vocabulary**.

When the Barton System teaches longer words, students learn the meaningful parts within those words. Students then separate and recombine those parts to improve their vocabulary (morphology).

- The Barton System greatly improves reading **comprehension**.

Improving reading accuracy, speed, and vocabulary leads to greatly improved reading comprehension.

- If your principal asks if there is any research that proves the effectiveness of the Barton Reading & Spelling System, the answer is yes.

You can find that research at:

www.bartonreading.com/research2.html#barton

9. The Barton System can prevent students from needing Special Ed.

- Your goal is to provide one-on-one Barton tutoring early enough to prevent at-risk students from needing special education services. (Or your goal might be to improve the skills of older students who do not qualify for Special Ed services, yet have low scores on the state standards test.)
- It's an affordable solution because it does **not** require certified teachers. Parent or community volunteers, classroom aides, and even reading or learning specialists can use the Barton Reading & Spelling System effectively.
- It's also affordable because tutor training DVDs are included with each level. So tutors can begin using the Barton System right away.
- Barton is a scripted system, so even first-time tutors can use it correctly and with fidelity.
- The developer offers free, unlimited support to every user of the Barton System.

10. Share the steps to create an effective Early Intervention Program.

Be prepared to discuss the 10 steps most schools use to set up the Barton Reading & Spelling System as an early intervention program with volunteer tutors.

Those ten steps are in this article: [Learn How Innovative Schools Prevent Reading Failure by Creating an Early Intervention Program for High Risk Children Using Volunteer Tutors and the Barton Reading & Spelling System.](#)

To download that article, go to:

www.BartonReading.com/pdf/Early%20Intervention%20Steps.pdf

Bring extra copies to your meeting with the principal.

Since you already have experience using the Barton System, volunteer to be the Barton Coordinator at your school.

11. Offer to do a pilot program at the school.

Starting an early intervention program using volunteer tutors may be too big a step. If so, offer to start a pilot program, working with just 2-3 students who struggle with reading – despite getting whatever intervention the school currently offers.

- Ask for six months of one-on-one tutoring, 2 times per week, for 60 minutes per session. Pick a starting date, and a date 6 months in the future when you will share results with the principal and/or appropriate staff.
- Share that once you have proven success with those students, you can implement an expanded Barton program at the school.

12. Discuss Funding.

Decide **ahead of time** which of these funding options you want to propose:

- Start with a single tutor version if you have only one or two tutors for the pilot program. Or start with a site license if you have 3 or more tutors.
- Accept a donation of levels or cash from a private donor. (Some parents have donated their own Barton levels to their child's school.)
- Fund with Title 1 resources.
- Fund with grant money. Search for local grants from the United Way, the Rotary Club, Walmart or Target Community Involvement grants, etc.
- PTA funding or fundraising. Set up a designated PTA fund into which parents and others can donate to get Barton materials for the school.

Common Characteristics of At-Risk Students

- Mixing up the sounds and syllables when saying long words
(aminal, bisghetti, hekilopter, hangaberg)
- Trouble memorizing their own address, phone number, or the alphabet
- Articulation difficulties with R's and L's
(and sometimes S-SH-CH, leading to a slight lisp)
- Mixing up letters when writing such as b-d-p-q, or m-w, or n-u
- Mixing up numbers when writing such as 6-9, 3-E
- Can't create words that rhyme
- Slow, choppy, inaccurate reading
 - o Guessing based on shape, context clues, or pictures
 - o Skipping or misreading prepositions (at, to, of)
 - o Ignoring suffixes (jog for jogged, sing for singing)
 - o Can't sound out unknown words – despite being taught phonics
Can make the sound of each letter, but cannot easily blend those sounds into a word
- Terrible spelling
 - o Cannot retain spelling words from one week to the next
 - o Extremely poor spelling when writing sentences or stories
- Not remembering sight words (they, were, does)
or homonyms (their, they're, and there)
- Not using capitals and punctuation when writing sentences or stories

Scientific Reading Research

A combination of the following scientific reading research determined the most effective instructional methods for struggling readers.

The National Reading Panel

The National Reading Panel (NRP) was a United States government body. Formed in 1997 at the request of Congress, it was a national panel with the stated aim of assessing the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read.

The panel was created by the Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) at the National Institutes of Health, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, and included prominent experts in the fields of reading education, psychology, and higher education.

In April 2000, the panel issued its report, "Teaching Children to Read," and completed its work. The report summarized research in eight areas relating to literacy instruction: phonemic awareness instruction, phonics instruction, fluency instruction, vocabulary instruction, text comprehension instruction, independent reading, computer assisted instruction, and teacher professional development.

These research findings are still used today as a strong basis for reading research and development of reading instructional and intervention programs.

The National Reading Panel found that certain instructional methods are better than others. To become good readers, children must develop:

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics skills
- The ability to read words in text in an accurate and fluent manner
- The ability to apply comprehension strategies consciously and deliberately as they read
- Vocabulary

The Panel found that many difficulties learning to read were caused by inadequate phonemic awareness. And systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness directly caused improvements in children's reading and spelling skills.

The evidence for these causal claims is so clear cut that the Panel concluded that systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness should be an important part of classroom reading instruction for children in preschool and beyond who have not been taught phoneme concepts or who have difficulties understanding that the words in oral language are composed of smaller speech sounds – sounds that will be linked to the letters of the alphabet.

Importantly, the Panel found that even preschool children responded well to instruction in phonemic awareness when the instruction was presented in an age-appropriate and entertaining manner.

The Panel also concluded that the research literature provides solid evidence that phonics instruction produces significant benefits for children from kindergarten through 6th grade and for children having difficulty learning to read.

The greatest improvements were seen from systematic phonics instruction. This type of phonics instruction consists of teaching a planned sequence of phonics elements, rather than highlighting elements as they happen to appear in a text.

Excerpted from: Langenburg, D. (April 13, 2000). Testimony before the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, and Education. National Reading Panel, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

National Institutes of Health Results on Reading Research

These research results have been independently replicated and are now considered to be irrefutable. Some of the research findings were:

- Reading failure is the most commonly shared characteristic of juvenile justice offenders.
- Reading failure is highly preventable through direct, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness.
- Children do not outgrow reading failure.
- Of children who display reading problems in the first grade, 74% will be poor readers in the ninth grade and into adulthood unless they receive informed and explicit instruction on phonemic awareness.

Additional Research

Many children with robust oral language experience, average to above average intelligence, and frequent early interactions with literacy activities also have difficulties learning to read.

Longitudinal research, including research supported by NICHD, clearly indicates that deficits in the development of phonemic awareness skills not only predict difficulties learning to read and reading acquisition, it will eventually have a negative impact on reading comprehension.

Whereas phonemic awareness is necessary for adequate reading development, it is not sufficient.

Children must also develop phonics concepts and apply these skills fluently in text.

Excerpted from: Lyon, G. R. (January/February 2000). Why reading is not a natural process. LDA Newsbriefs. Learning Disabilities Association of America.

Other reading facts

- Of the students with specific learning disabilities receiving special education services, 70 - 80% have deficits in reading. (IDA Website FAQ)
- More than 88% of children who have difficulty reading at the end of first grade display similar difficulties at the end of fourth grade (Juel, 1988).
- 75% of students who are poor readers in third grade will remain poor readers in high school (Shaywitz et al., 1997). These facts highlight the importance of providing a strong foundation for reading from birth through age five.
- For 85 - 90% of poor readers, prevention and early intervention programs can increase reading skills to average reading levels. These programs, however, need to combine instruction in phoneme awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies, and must be provided by well-trained teachers (Lyon, 1997).
- As many as two-thirds of reading disabled children can become average or above-average readers if they are identified early and taught appropriately (Vellutino et al., 1996; Fletcher & Lyon, 1998).
- Difficulties in decoding and word recognition are at the core of most reading difficulties. Poor readers have difficulty understanding that sounds in words are linked to certain letters and letter patterns. This is called the "alphabetic principle."

- The reason many poor readers don't attain the alphabetic principle is because they haven't developed phonemic awareness — being aware that words are made up of speech sounds, or phonemes (Lyon, 1997). When word recognition isn't automatic, reading isn't fluent, and comprehension suffers.

From www.ldonline.org/article/42934