The Mechanical Skills of Reading
Fluency, Phonics, and Phonemic Awareness

A flowchart for knowing how to use assessments for grouping and where to begin intervention for this skill-set.

**Universal Screener for Fluency and Decoding Skills**
(e.g. the IRI, or a similar screener)

- If...Passing all subtests on the Screener, THEN...group using **Grade Level Curriculum Measures** (e.g. unit tests), and provide intervention at or above grade level.
- If...NOT passing all subtests on the Screener, THEN...further assess with **Diagnostic Measures** for phonics / decoding (e.g. CORE Phonics Survey, TPRI, etc.).

**Plus** reading in connected text at each of these levels (i.e. fluency practice that matches the instruction being provided).

**If**...Passing all diagnostic subtests, THEN...provide intervention for **oral reading fluency** in accuracy, rate, and prosody.

**If**...Passing complex phonics elements, provide intervention in **multisyllabic words**.

**If**...Passing basic phonics elements, THEN provide intervention in **complex phonics elements** (e.g. digraphs, blends, variant vowels, etc.).

**If**...Passing phonemic awareness, THEN provide intervention in **basic phonics elements** (e.g. single letter-sound correspondence, etc.).

**If**...NOT passing basic phonics elements, THEN assess for phonemic awareness.

**If**...NOT passing phonemic awareness, THEN provide intervention beginning with **phonemic awareness**.

Trace mechanical skills backwards until the student’s level of mastery is determined. After mastery is attained at one level, provide instruction for intervention at the next level.

By nature, these are skills that require instruction to mastery. Thus, the provided instruction needs to be **highly explicit and systematic**.

*“Explicit instruction presents new skills directly and clearly. Systematic instruction has a specific logical sequence in which skills are introduced...practice and review are planned to enable students to develop accuracy and fluency (with the skill) and to foster retention.”* (Draft of the NCRFTA Practices Handbook, p.14)