



Frequently Asked Questions

1. The *Story Friends* intervention focuses on improving oral language skills. What areas of oral language are addressed in the intervention?

The program contains lessons designed to strengthen children's oral skills, focusing on vocabulary, concept words, and comprehension. Find more information [here](#).

2. *Story Friends* is a Tier 2 intervention. How are tiered interventions beneficial to children at risk for reading difficulties?

Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) are shown to be more effective in reading instruction than other approaches. Children are provided high-quality instruction with a range of needs in the least restrictive environment. A Tier 1 intervention is the lowest level of instruction and represents the general education curriculum that applies to all children. Tier 2 interventions are small group instruction for children who need additional support. Tier 3 interventions represent the most intense, individualized services.

For more information on multi-tiered systems of support, click [here](#).

3. How were the words in the *Story Friends* program chosen?

The vocabulary words selected for each storybook challenge children to expand their word knowledge in ways that will be useful in a school setting and will have the most impact on their language skills and future reading comprehension. The *Story Friends* vocabulary words are words that are relevant to children's daily lives and useful across many contents areas and difficult to learn from context without explicit instruction and multiple exposures.

Each *Story Friends* book provides instruction on one or two basic concepts such as *up/down*, *many/few*, and *all*. The concept words included in *Story Friends* are selected from preschool curricula and from tests of basic concepts. The concepts are selected to be immediately relevant in the preschool curricula and in future school settings.



4. What children benefit most from *Story Friends*? Can I use *Story Friends* with all the children in my class?

The embedded lessons in the *Story Friends* storybooks are designed to promote language development among children who are at risk for reading difficulties due to underdeveloped oral language skills.

The *Story Friends* program provides a *Decision-Making Framework Teacher Questionnaire* as a screening tool to help you identify children who will most likely benefit from participating in the program. To identify children to include in your small group, you might look at the lowest-scored questionnaires to determine where to place children.

Information from additional sources, including teacher questionnaires and observations, can be used in combination with universal screening measures. Teacher questionnaires that ask about specific language and learning behaviors can be effective in identifying children who are good candidates for Tier 2 supplemental instruction. Those children who struggle to learn in small group settings might be better served by one-on-one instruction. For more information, please see page 82 of the [Teacher's Guide](#).

5. Can I use the program with English language learners?

To benefit from the *Story Friends* program, children need adequate English language skills to understand the stories and embedded lessons. English language learners who cannot label at least two pictures on the [Picture Naming IGD](#) (Individual Growth and Developmental Indicators) would not have the English language skills necessary to benefit from the *Story Friends* intervention.

6. What materials are needed to successfully implement the *Story Friends* intervention?

The *Story Friends* intervention requires headphones for the children and facilitator, an MP3 player or other device that plays audio files (e.g., laptop, tablet, smart phone), and a splitter to connect each headphone to the device.

7. What is the listening center?

The *Story Friends* intervention is delivered at the Listening Center. The [Listening Center](#) is an area in your classroom where children listen to the stories and instruction based on those stories. [Watch the implementation video on how to set up a Story Friends Listening Center.](#)



8. How does *Story Friends* hold children's attention?

Children learn best when they are engaged. Through interactive [animal-themed storybooks](#) and [lively engaging audio recordings](#), the *Story Friends* program is designed to promote active responding. Children participate by answering questions, looking at and pointing to pictures, lifting flaps, and gesturing during lesson activities.

9. How will *Story Friends* fit into my schedule?

Teachers will find it easy to work *Story Friends* into their everyday classroom routines. The instruction is all prerecorded, so it's simple to add the program to a daily center rotation or small group time.

