Questions and Answers

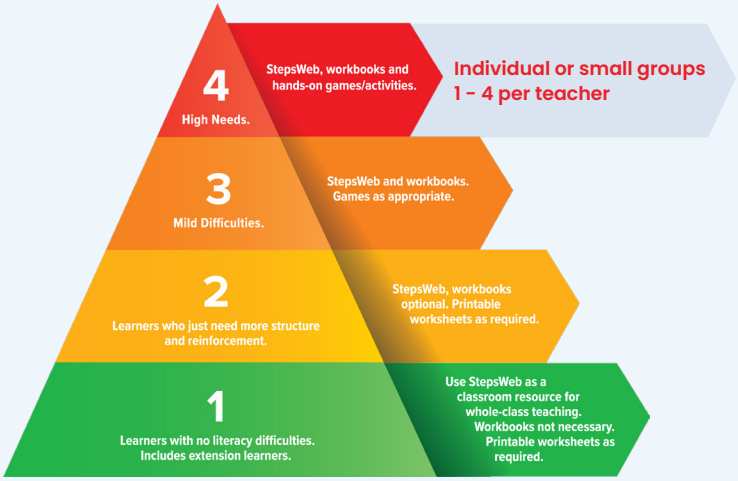
View the RTLB Cluster 6 Research Study summary

Were the gains made from the RTLB Cluster 6 research study also reflected in the books that they read?

The feedback which was reported to us was that their class and subject teachers noticed big improvements in class with students engaging more readily and being more confident in their written work. But we haven't had feedback from those schools about what specific books those students were choosing to read after they had made those gains.

How much time (days/minutes) did the students who were part of the RTLB research study spend on StepsWeb?

This depended on their level of need. As you are probably aware, we recommend a 4-tier RTI (Response to Intervention) system, rather than the normal 3-tier one. One of the first things we did was to test each year-group and, together with feedback from teachers, allocate them to a Tier. Tiers 3 and 4 were on workbooks and were required to do 22 activities per week as their Weekly Goal.



Tier 4 also had small group intervention from teachers/teacher aides. Our recommendation for rapid progress is between 4 x 40 minutes and 5 x 60 minutes per week including their time on StepsWeb and explicit teaching.

Note: The average activity on StepsWeb takes approximately 2.5 minutes.

Therefore:

- 12 activities = approximately 30 minutes actively engaging with StepsWeb.
- 22 activities = approximately 55 minutes actively engaging with StepsWeb within overall tuition time above.

When analysing the results from the RTLB 6 study, we did not analyse progress for students who averaged less than half of their weekly goals overall because of absence or other issues. Actually very few students consistently achieved their whole weekly goal over that period, but overall gains were still extremely good.

Learn more about the 4-tier model on the StepsWeb Remedial Learner webpage.

Where can I find the Scope & Sequence you use and how did you come up with the Scope & Sequence?

Here's the link to download the StepsWeb Course Scope & Sequence.

The Scope & Sequence was developed with reference to a number of sources. These included:

- International research studies into literacy stages of acquisition.
- Research into the development of phonological awareness and other perceptual/processing skills.
- Analysis of existing curriculum sources, such as the UK National Literacy Curriculum, which is extremely detailed and useful.

In our school, we are required to do a written spelling test every Friday, even though our students are working through the Course. Is this a good idea? If they're only on StepsWeb, surely they don't ever do a spelling test.

There are several points here. Firstly, one of the main points of the StepsWeb Course is that each student is working at their own Level and speed. Therefore each student may be working on a totally different wordlist at any one time. That is crucial if you are going to genuinely meet each student's needs.

The other point is that students most certainly do spelling tests when they're going through StepsWeb. The Spelling Quiz activity is not actually called a test, but it acts as a test in every way. And, in addition, they're doing activities which will give you information about all the other aspects, such as phonological awareness, reading accuracy, and comprehension.

And bear in mind that StepsWeb will continually analyse each student's errors and will regularly create individualized reinforcement for them.

In summary, if your students are going through the StepsWeb Course, this means you don't need to do spelling lists or spelling tests. In effect, it replaces your spelling programme, although it's obviously not intended to replace other aspects of the English curriculum, but to support them.

I never realised that StepsWeb is the same as Structured Literacy. I thought Structured Literacy is a new development?

No, actually the concept of structured literacy has been around for a number of years now, although it's only just gaining traction in some countries. It's just the label which is new to some people – even those who have been following structured literacy principles for decades.

The reality is that StepsWeb is – and always has been – fully in accord with Structured Literacy principles in terms of its approach and literacy progression. The only thing we do not do is teach syllable rules in the way advocated by some structured literacy practitioners. The reasons for that are given in our previous webinar, Understanding Structured Literacy, which you may find useful.

I'm very new to StepsWeb. How do I learn to use the programme?

We'd recommend that all educators who are new to StepsWeb do the online Essential Core Skills Course, which will teach you all the key functions you need to use with your students. You'll find this on the Educator Welcome Page (the one with 'Manage Students' and 'Manage Classes') and it's in modular format so you can work your way through it at your convenience.

Teachers and teacher aides are also most welcome to give us a ring if you need a hand with anything.

Can you remind me where to find that Export Tool to access the detailed reports you showed us?

No problem! Go to 'Manage Students' and click the 'Tools' button at the top of the page. Then click the 'Open' button in the Student Export section.

Have any more questions?

Contact us

info@stepsweb.com

stepsweb.com