

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

How to allocate your students to the correct tier

How do I know what Tier to start off with?

Sometimes it's very obvious. The student is clearly failing and not coping in class.

At other times, it's not quite that obvious.

The best strategy is to estimate the Tier you think is appropriate – refer to the notes on each Tier. Then place the learner in that Tier, but monitor their performance over 2-3 weeks.

This should be sufficient to tell you whether that learner can be moved down, or needs to be moved up.



You can use the StepsWeb Spelling Placement Test to gauge how your learners' Spelling Age (SA) compares to their Chronological Age (CA). As a general guide:

- **Tier 4** = Students who have an SA that is 2 or more years behind their CA.
- **Tier 3** = Students who have an SA that is 1 to 2 years behind their CA.
- **Tier 2** = Students who have an SA that is 6 months to 12 months behind their CA.
- **Tier 1** = Students who have an SA at or ahead of their CA, or up to 6 months behind their CA.

Maintain gains and consolidate progress

When you start to work with a struggling learner, look at all aspects of their learning and make a judgement.

Place your learner in the chosen tier and monitor progress for the first couple of weeks. If learning is being absorbed (and retained), it's likely that your learner is on the correct tier.

If you've put your learner on Tier 3 and they're not progressing, move them to Tier 4. Likewise, if you've placed them in Tier 4 and they're making very good progress, consider moving them down to Tier 3 – but only once you feel confident they can retain their progress.

Only move one tier at a time in either direction and monitor progress – ideally for several weeks before making another change.

The biggest mistake is to take a Tier 4 learner who has been making good progress and drop them back into Tier 1, which often results in losing progress as quickly as it was gained.

