UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

Response to support -model

Anniina Kämäräinen

DECIDE RIGHT –Staff training, 23th November 2021

Content

- Assessment and evaluation in Finland
  - Assessment for learning and assessment of learning
- Response to support –model
- Assessment tools - some examples

Assessment and evaluation in Finland

Brief overview

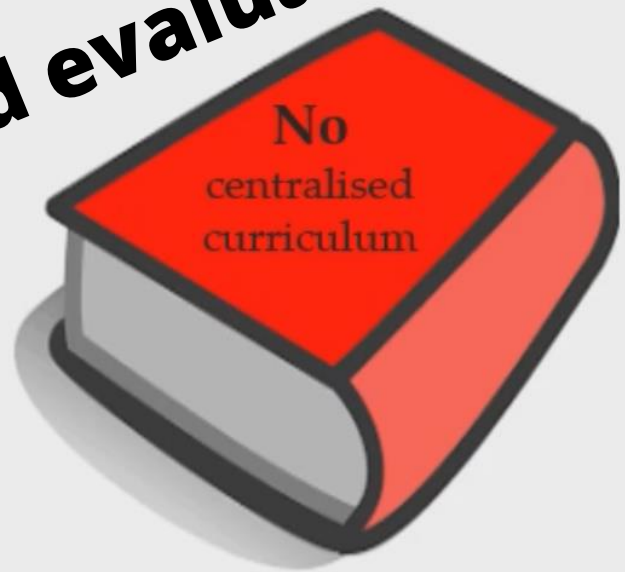
Finnish NOs in assessment and evaluation

NO to control-oriented assessment and evaluation

No school inspections

No school rankings

No national tests



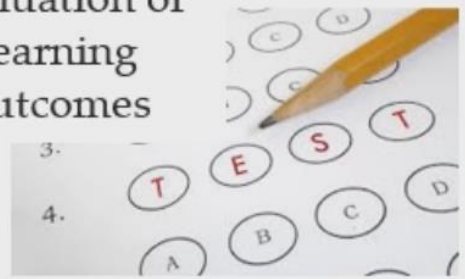
No centralised learning materials

No teacher standards and teacher evaluation

(Atjonen, 2018a)

Finnish YESs in assessment and evaluation

YES to sample-based* evaluation of learning outcomes



YES to development of assessment methods

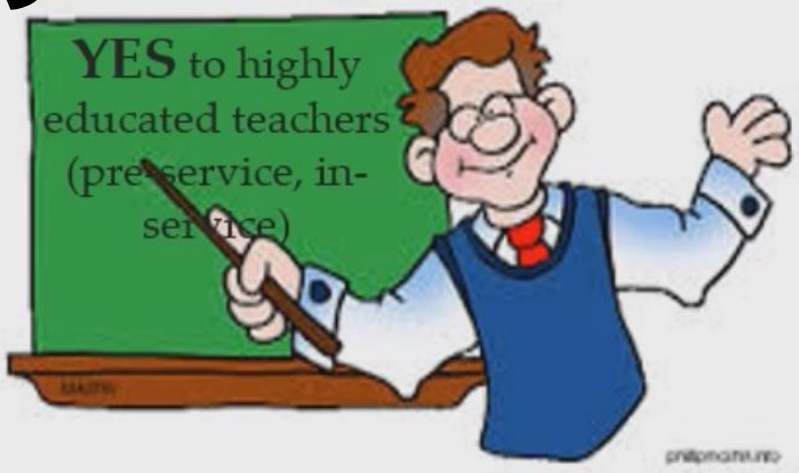
YES to local curriculas

YES to mutual trust

YES to good pedagogical materials (incl. e-...)

YES to criteria

YES to highly educated teachers (pre-service, in-service)

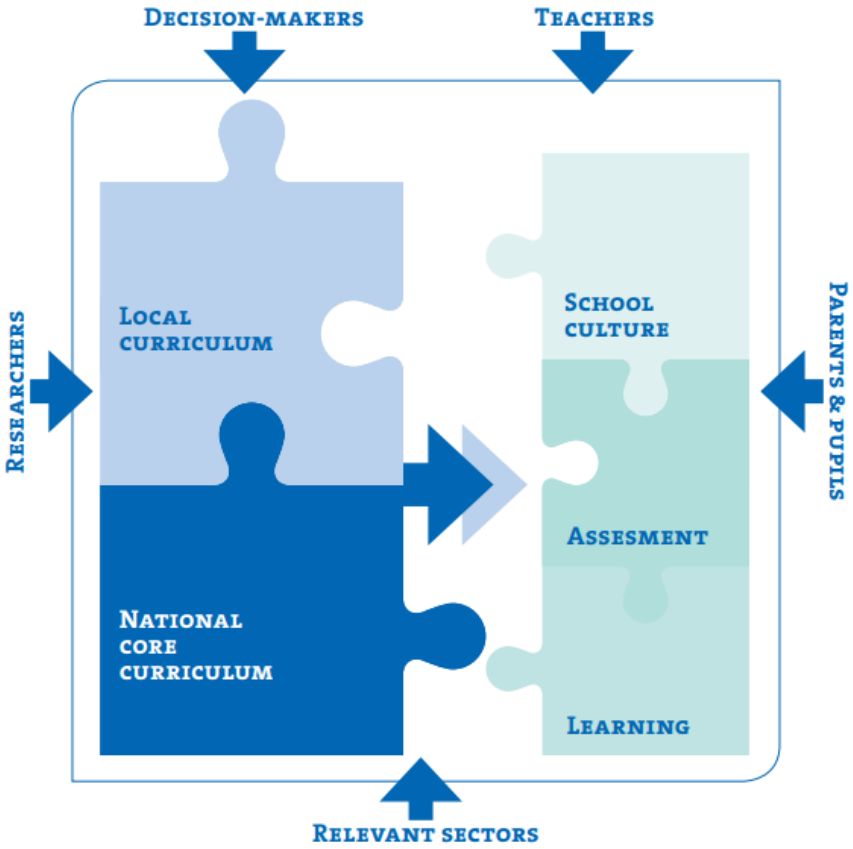


* Approximately 5–10% of the pupils in the age group participate

YES to development-oriented assessment and evaluation

(Atjonen, 2018a)

Assessment and evaluation in Finland



- **Final assessment**
  - In the end of basic education, 9th school year
  - Done by teachers
  - Criterion-based (curriculum) summative assessment, scale 4-10
  - All school subjects are evaluated
- **Assessment during the school years**
  - Formative, summative
  - Done by teachers
  - Must guide and promote learning
  - Self- and peer-assessment are encouraged

https://www.oph.fi/sites/default/files/documents/new-national-core-curriculum-for-basic-education.pdf

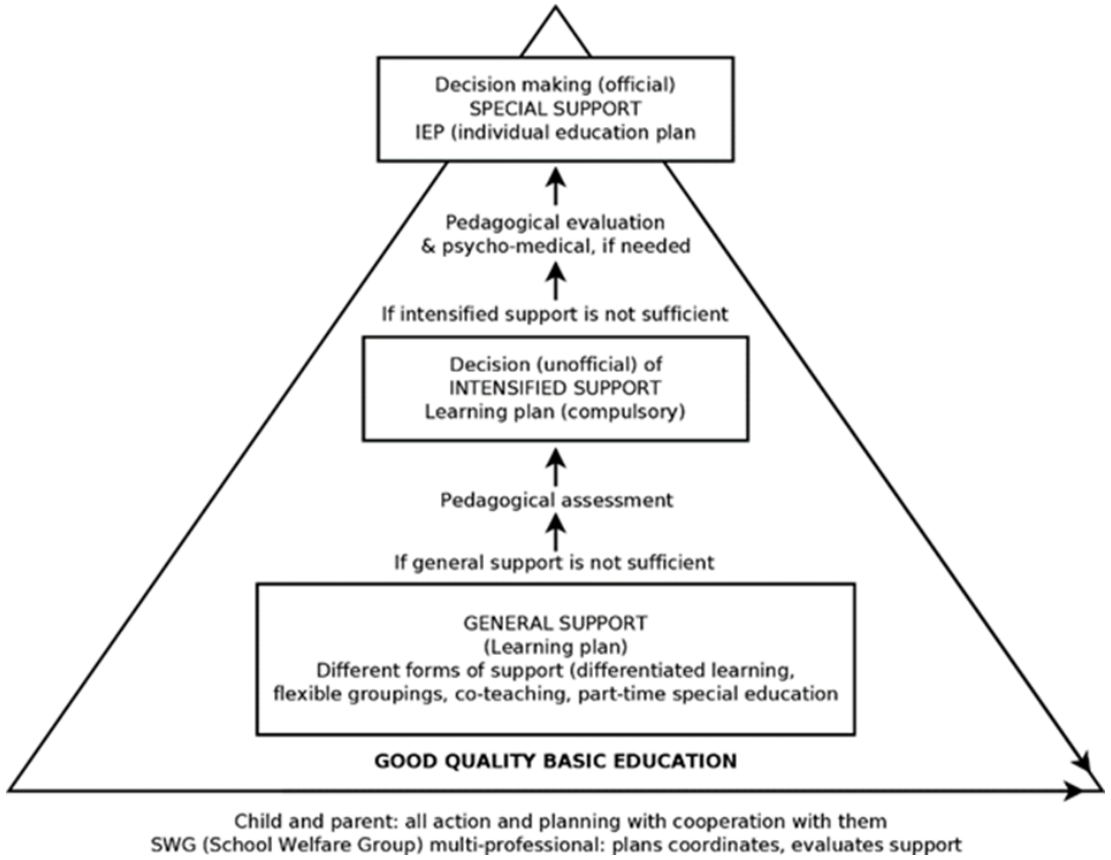
Formative and summative assessment

	Formative assessment	Summative assessment
What	- Assessment for learning	– Assessment of learning
Purpose	- Improve teaching and learning	– Measure competency
When	- On-going	– End of course
How used by students	- Learning through feedback and practice	– Grades
How used by teachers	- Diagnostic, check understanding, gap	– Grades, rankings
Stake	- LOW: Errors leads to understanding (remedial)	– HIGH: Error no longer instructs but punishes
Example	- Observation, discussion, asking questions or main points of lesson, learning from mistakes, giving specificand targeted feedback/ feedforward, self- and peer-assessment, portfolios, projects	– Final exam, mid term, paper and pen

(Atjonen, 2018b)

Response to support -model

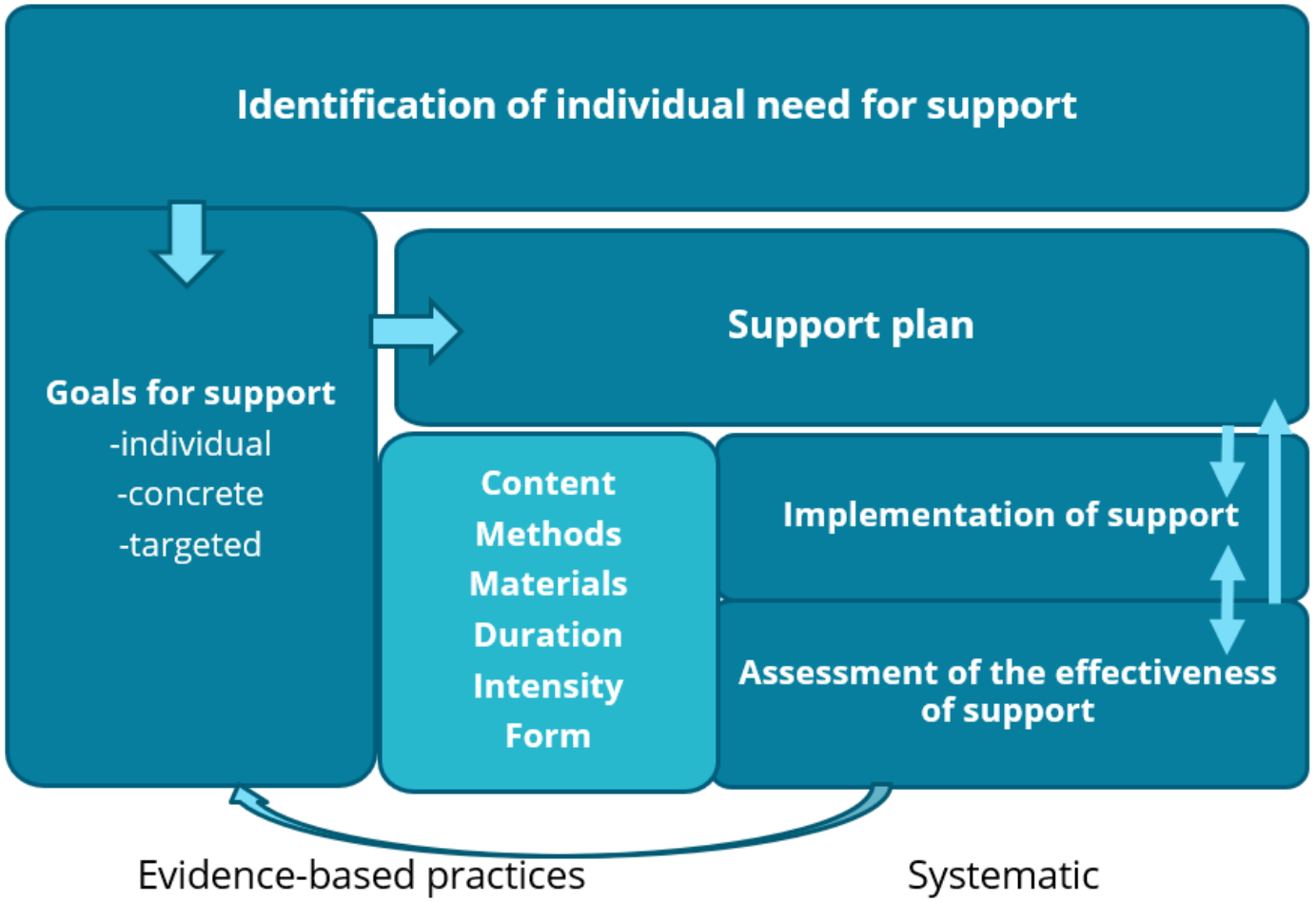
Three-tiered support system



- Support system gives a framework
  - Mainly on administrative structure for support
- No spesific instructions of the pedagogical support
  - *what, how, when, how long?*
- The pedagogical support is based on the teacher's decision
  - goals, content, methods, assessment

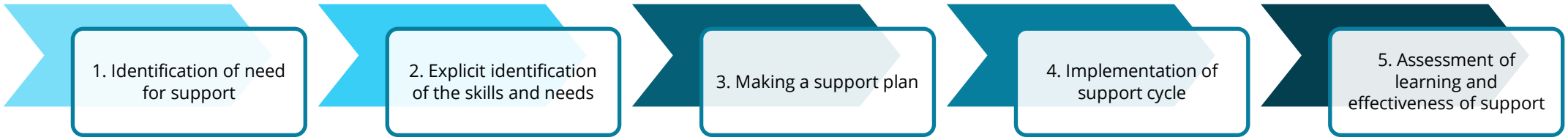
(Björn et al., 2015; 2018)

Response to support -model



(Kinnunen et al. 2021, translated by Kämäräinen)

Objectives and phases of the assessment of support – from identification to support cycle

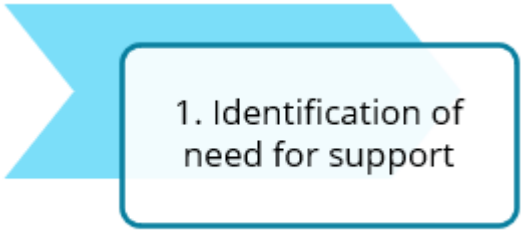


(Heikkilä et al. 2019; Kinnunen et al. 2021)

1. phase: Identification of need for support

- **Have the student's skills improved in line with their age/developmental level?**
- Universal screening
  - Various screening tests
    - e.g. Reading and spelling, Math
    - Provides brief information about all students, show which ones have low scores compared to grade-level benchmarks
- Observation
  - Teacher observation of students working, effort and behavior
  - Parents observation

Diagnostic assessment

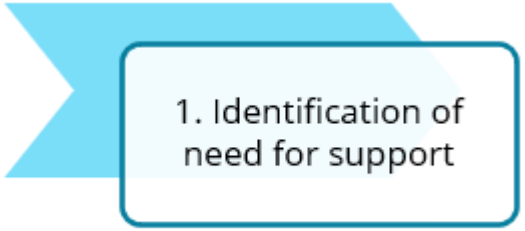


1. phase: Identification of need for support - example of RS (reading and spelling)

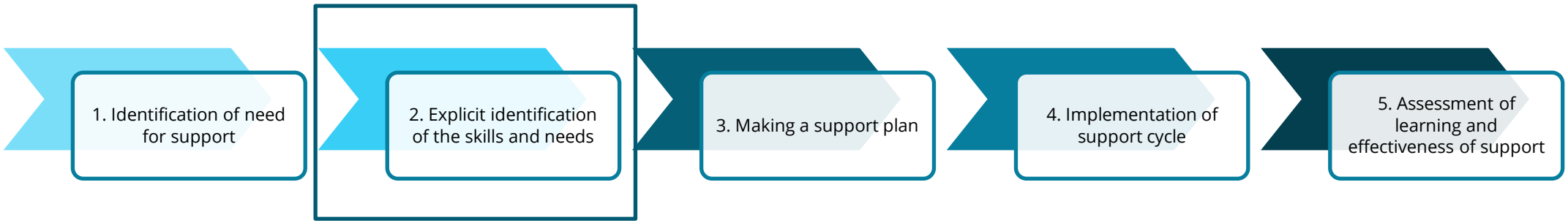
- Identifying the (1st grade) students who might be at-risk for reading and spelling difficulties

- Universal screening
  - Screening test: e.g. Lukimat-test (www.lukimat.fi) or ALLU-test (group tests)
- Observation
  - Teacher(s) and parents
- Teacher's knowledge
  - The development of reading and spelling skills and the factors that might affect the development

Diagnostic assessment



Objectives and phases of the assessment of support – from identification to support cycle

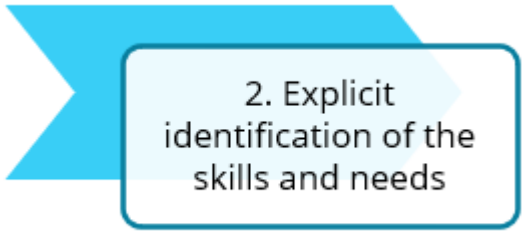


(Heikkilä et al. 2019; Kinnunen et al. 2021)

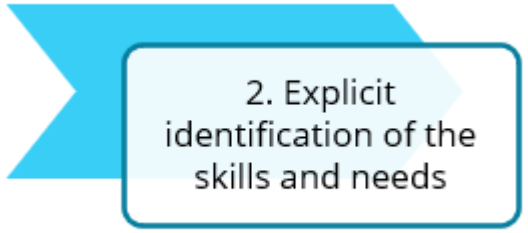
2. phase: Explicit identification of the student's skills and needs

- Objectives
  - In-depth understanding about student's skills in a specific domain
  - Detailed identification of the areas to which the support should be targeted
- Sources of information:
  - Assessment tools: norm-referenced tests
  - Student's self-assessment
  - Student's other characteristics and matters that affect learning
    - Learning capability, metacognitive skills, persistency, motivation, self-efficacy
    - Support offered at school and home
- Collaboration
  - Parents' interviews
  - Multiprofessional collaboration
- Further assessment if needed, e.g. psychological testing
- Documenting the test results, observations, interviews

Diagnostic assessment



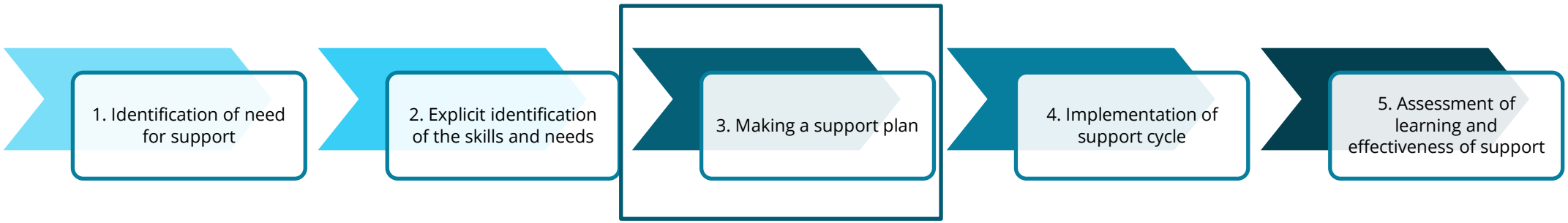
2. phase: Explicit identification of the skills and needs – example of RS (reading and spelling)



- Objectives
  - In-depth understanding about (1st grade) students' letter and sound skills, as well as letter-sound correspondence
  - Specific identification of the letters and sounds to which the support cycle should be targeted
- Sources of information:
  - Assessment tools: e.g. Lukimat-test (individual test)
  - Theoretical knowledge of the core skills and sub-skills of reading and spelling, development of the skills, key problems that may hinder the development
  - Student's self-assessment
- Student's other characteristics and matters that affects learning
  - Parents' interviews
  - Multiprofessional collaboration
- Documenting the test results, observations, interviews

Diagnostic assessment

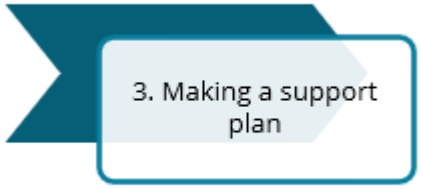
Objectives and phases of the assessment of support – from identification to support cycle



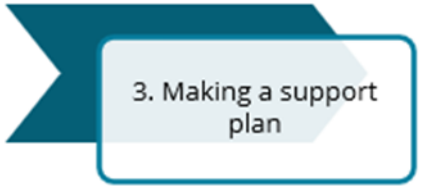
(Heikkilä et al. 2019; Kinnunen et al. 2021)

3. Phase: Making a support plan

- **How could learning be best supported by considering the student's individual characteristics and existing resources?**
- Data informed decision-making
  - The student's current level of skills
  - Skills and sub-skills that are needed to support
  - Goals for support
    - **Individual, concrete, targeted**
- Monitoring the situation
  - Previous actions
  - Resources (school and home)



3. phase: Making a support plan



Teacher utilizes

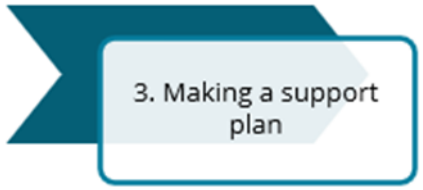
- Evidence-based practices, e.g. intervention programs or evidence-based teaching methods (Parrila et al., 2019)
- Theoretical knowledge about
  - the core skills and sub-skills of the specific domain
  - development of the skills
  - key problems that might hinder the development
- Knowledge of the effective support practices
  - Differentiated instruction, teaching methods

3. phase: Making a support plan

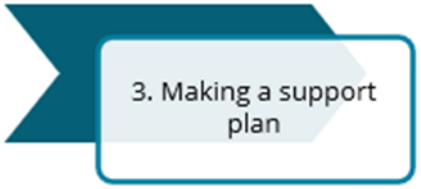
Support plan includes

- Concrete and targeted goals
- Justified means for reaching the goals:

Content
Methods
Materials
Duration
Intensity
Form



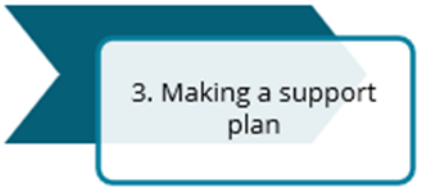
3. phase: Making a support plan



- **Content**:
  - Based on the goals
- **Methods**:
  - Intervention programs (e.g. RS, writing, Maths)
  - Teaching and learning methods:
    - Explicit instruction, systematic instruction (e.g. Archer & Hughes, 2011; Hughes et al., 2017; Spooner et al., 2012)
    - Knowledge of differentiated instruction
    - Cooperative learning, collaborative learning, peer tutoring (e.g. Gillies, 2016; Bowman-Berrott et al., 2013)
  - Learning sessions:
    - Clear instruction and structure
    - modelling and concretizing a new thing
    - Appropriate level of task difficulty
    - Plenty of chances to practice
    - Guidance during the individual work, prompts, feedback, praise
    - Self-assessment

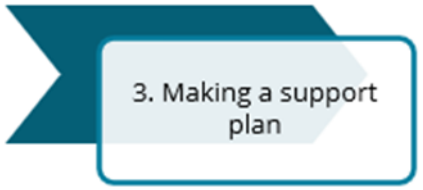
3. Making a support plan

- **Materials:**
  - Intervention programs
  - Versatile use of teaching materials and aids
  - Digital tools, programs and materials
- **Form**:
  - (individual instruction)
  - Small-group instruction (3-5 students)
  - Group instruction

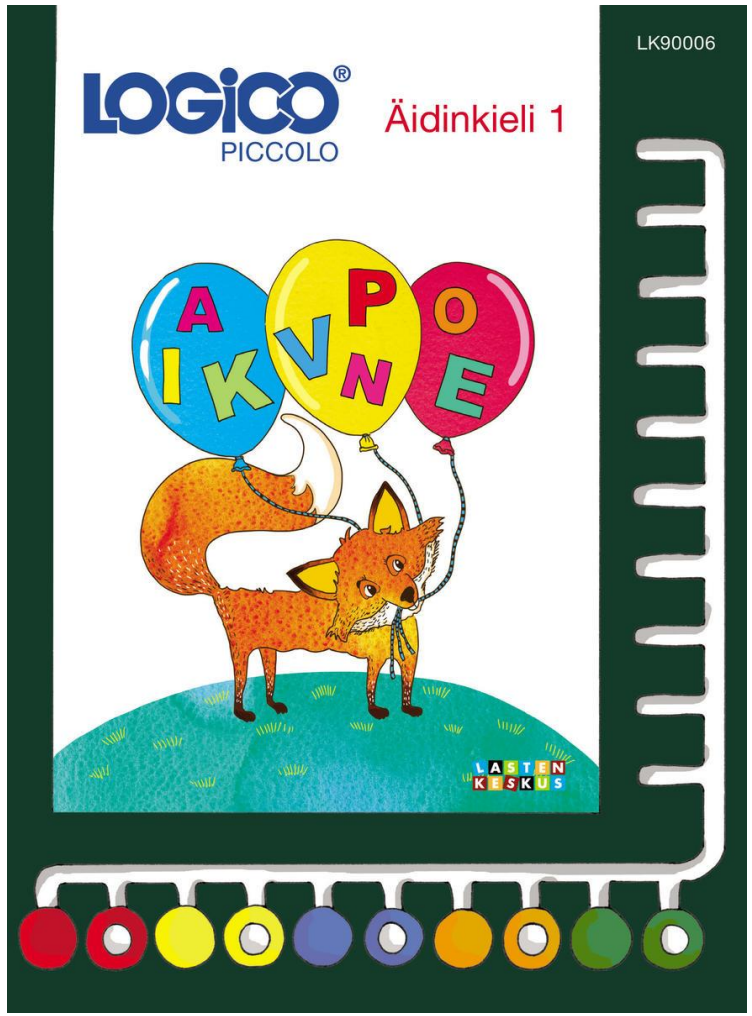


3. Making a support plan – example of RS (reading and spelling)

- Content:
  - Strengthening the foundational skills: phonemic awareness, knowledge of letters and sounds and letter-sound correspondence
- Methods:
  - Explicit and systematic instruction
  - collaborative work
- Materials:
  - *Explanation of the teaching and learning materials*
  - *Explanation of the learning aids (logico, cards with letters and pictures…)*
  - Digital tools: a learning game ”Ekapeli”
- Duration:
  - 7 weeks (certain letters and sounds in each week)
- Intensity:
  - 3 times a week (3 x 45 minutes)
- Form:
  - Small-group instruction (3-4 pupils) (Holopainen et al., 2018)



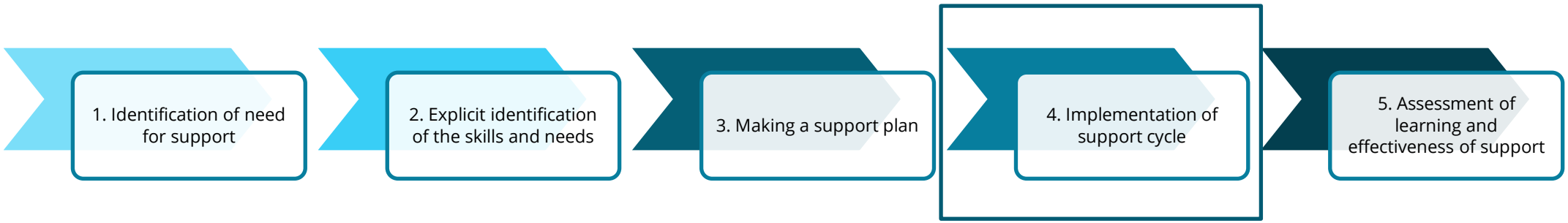
Examples of learning aids



https://lkkirjakori.kauppakv.fi/sivu/tuote/logico-piccolo-boksi-aidinkieli-1-/1640925

https://www.freeed.com/articles/4118/alkuaannebingot

Objectives and phases of the assessment of support – from identification to support cycle



(Heikkilä et al. 2019; Kinnunen et al. 2021)

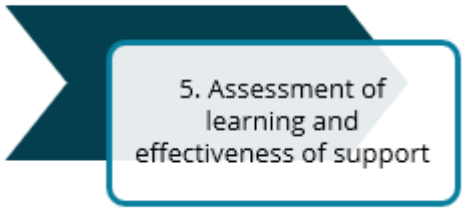
Objectives and phases of the assessment of support – from identification to support cycle

(Heikkilä et al. 2019; Kinnunen et al. 2021)

5. Assessment of learning and effectiveness of support

- **Does the provided support help students improve their skills?**
- Information collected during and after the support cycle
  - Student's responses to instruction and support
- Assessment tool
  - Progress monitoring tools designed by a teacher
  - Ready-made monitoring tools
    - e.g.intervention programs include tools for assessing the student's development
  - Teachers' and parents' observations, discussion
  - Student's self-assessment

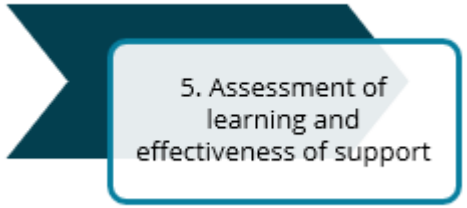
Formative assessment



5. Assessment of learning and effectiveness of support – Example of RS (Reading and Spelling)

- **Does the provided support help students improve their skills?**
- Information collected during and after the support cycle
  - Students responses to intervention/instruction and support
  - How the students phonetic awareness and knowledge of letters and sounds and letter-sound correspondence have progressed
- Progress monitoring tools
  - A tool designed by a teacher, or a ready-made tool
  - E.g. LukiMat –test (progress monitoring test)
  - Teacher's and parent's observations
  - Student's self-assessment

Formative assessment



Implementation of the response to support model – Example of special ed. teacher's annual planner

Example of intensified support	August	September	October	November	December
	Background information on the 1st graders School welfare group meetings Universal screening tests - RS - Writing - Maths	Explicit identification of the skills and needs of the students identified in the universal screening (Multiprofessional) decision of the students who will receive intensive support (support cycle) Cooperation with parents First support cycles (7 weeks) start - Several cycles for small groups (e.g. 2 groups for 1st and 2nd graders)	1st support cycles continue Progress monitoring tools, e.g. mid-tasks or tests to assess effectiveness of support Cooperation with parents	1st support cycles end The assessment of the support cycle and decision of the modification, continuation or closure of the support If the support continues, 2nd support cycles start in December	2nd support cycles start Assessment: 1. Assessment before the support cycle 2. Progress monitoring during the cycle 3. Assessment after the support cycle 4. Decision of the modification, continuation or closure of the support

Implementation of the response to support model – Example of Special ed. teacher's annual planner

January	February	March	April	May
2nd support cycles continue	2nd support cycles end	3rd support cycles start	3rd support cycles end	Meetings with the preschool professionals Collecting and preparing teaching and learning materials (Individual?) support for pupils who need extra support (before summer holiday) Data informed decision-making of the students who might need intensified or special support in the following year Summary for the parents about the progress of their child (instruction for home activities)

Assessment tools

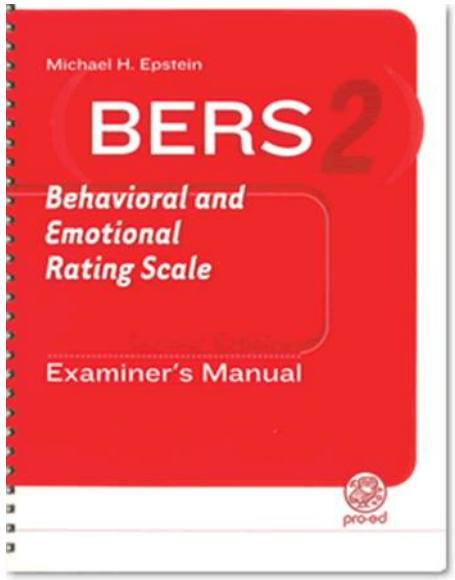
Identifying the students' need for learning or behavioral support

Assessment of behavioral and emotional strengths

- The strength-based assessment perspective or orientation
  - is a relatively new approach to assessing the behavior of children and youth.
  - is an alternative to deficit-based assessment.
  - recognizes that even the most challenged children have strengths, competencies, and resources that can be built on in developing a treatment and support approach.

The Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale - BERS 2 (Epstein)

- **Purpose:**
  - The BERS 2 is designed to assess the **behavioral and emotional strengths** of children and youth, instead of their problems and weaknesses.
  - **Subscales**: interpersonal strength, involvement with family, intrapersonal strength, school functioning, and affective strength
  - provides an overall strength score and five subtest scores
- **Content:** 52 items measuring these subscales
- **Measures** the child's behavior from three perspectives:
  - **child** (youth rating scale),
  - **parent** (parent rating scale) and
  - **teacher** or other professional (teacher rating scale)



Description of the BERS 2 – Subscales

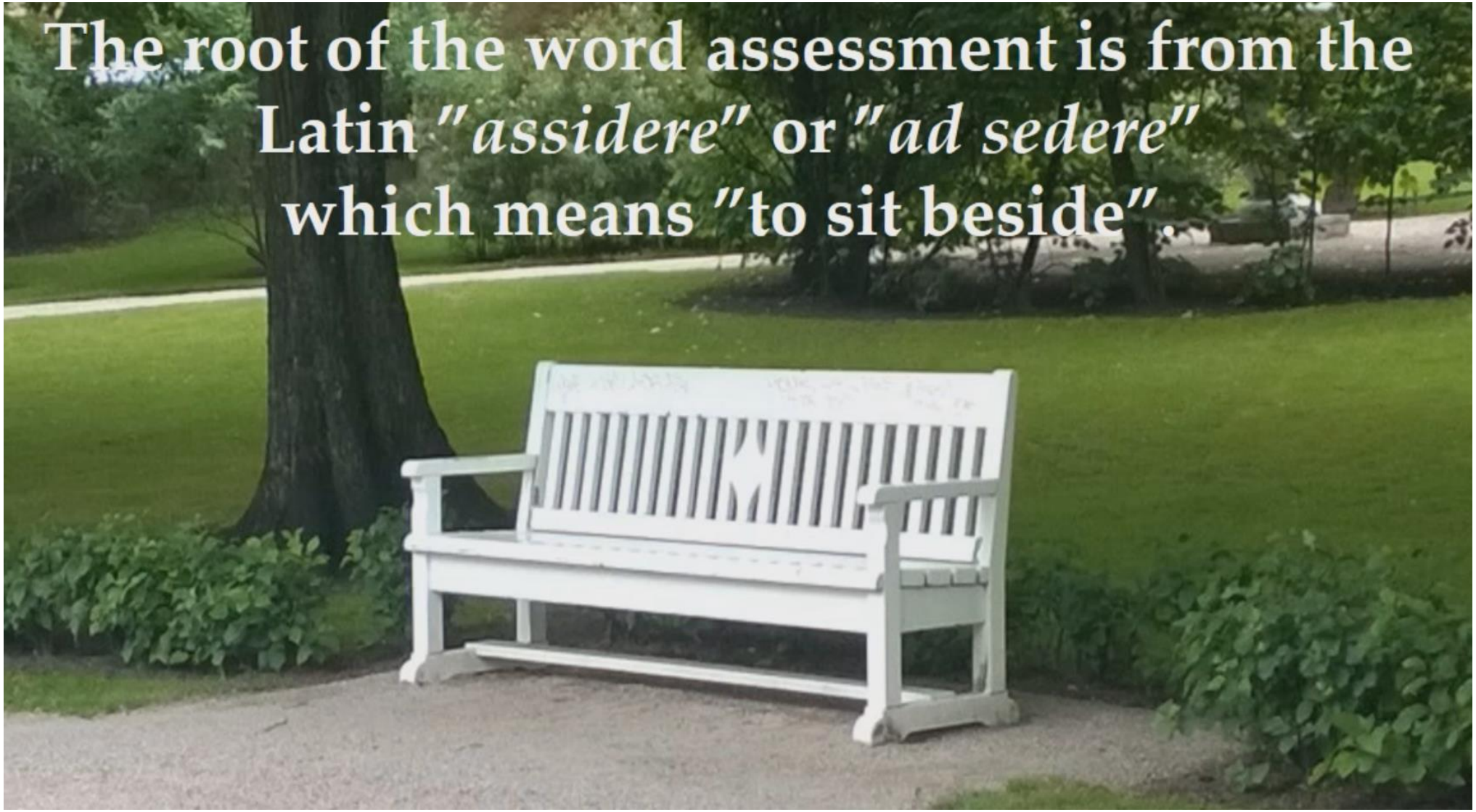
Subscale	Description of what the subscale measures	Example of item from youth scale	Number of items
Interpersonal Strength (IS)	Measures a child's ability to control his or her emotions or behaviors in social situations.	If I hurt or upset others, I tell them I am sorry.	15
Family Involvement (FI)	Measures a child's participation in and relationship with his or her family.	I get along well with my family.	10
Intrapersonal Strength (IaS)	Measures in a broad sense a child's outlook on his or her competence and accomplishments.	I know what I do well.	11
School Functioning (SF)	Focuses on the child's competence in school and classroom tasks.	I pay attention in class.	9
Affective Strength (AS)	Assesses a child's ability to accept affection from others and express feelings toward others.	I care about how others feel.	7

BERS 2

- **Ages:** 5 to 18 years
- **Time:** The scale can be completed in 10 minutes
- **Benefits:**
  - Can identify children's individual behavior and emotional strengths and the areas in which individual strengths need to be developed (limited strengths)
    - Helps to target goals for IEP (Individual education plan)
    - Useful in evaluating children for preferral services
    - Useful in placing children for specialized services and measuring the outcomes of the services

KTVA - The finnish version of the strength-based instrument, BERS 2

- Developed and investigated for few years
- Researchers working with this topic at UEF:
  - Professor Erkko Sointu
  - Senior lecturer Kristiina Lappalainen
- The examiner's manual was published in 2018



(Atjonen, 2018b)

UNIVERSITY OF
EASTERN FINLAND

Questions, comments?

Thank you!

uef.fi

References

- Archer, A. L. & Hughes, C. A. (2011). Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching. New York: Guilford Press.
- Atjonen, P. (2018a). The assessment and evaluation system of Finland. Video lecture. University of Eastern Finland.
- Atjonen, P. (2018b). Assessment and evaluation. Key concepts and philosophy. Video lecture. University of Eastern Finland.
- Björn, P. M., Aro, M., Koponen, T., Fuchs, L. S., & Fuchs, D. (2015). The Many Faces of Special Education within RTI Frameworks in the United States and Finland. Learning Disability Quarterly. 10.1177/0731948715594787.073194787
- Björn, P.M., Aro, M., Koponen, T. Fuchs, L.S., & Fuchs, D. (2018). Response-To-Intervention in Finland and the United States: Mathematics learning Support as an Example. Frontiers in Psychology. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00800
- Bowman-Perrott, L., Davis, H., Vannest, K., Williams, L., Greenwood, C. & Parker, R. (2013). Academic benefits of peer tutoring: A meta-analytic review of single-case research. School Psychology Review, 42(1), 39-55
- Gillies, R. M. (2016). Cooperative learning: Review of research and practice. Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 41(3), 1-17.
- Holopainen, L. K., Kiuru, N. H., Mäkihonko, M. K., & Lerkkanen, M.-K. (2018). The role of part-time special education supporting students with reading and spelling difficulties from grade 1 to grade 2 in Finland. European Journal of Special Needs Education, 33(3), 316–333.

References

- Hughes, C. A., Morris, J. R., Therrien, W. J. & Benson, S. K. (2017). Explicit instruction: Historical and contemporary contexts. Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 32(3), 140-148.
- Kinnunen, A-M., Aro, M., Närhi, V. & Savolainen, H. 2021. Tukivastemallilla selkeyttä ja vaikuttavuutta oppimisen ja koulunkäynnin tukeen. Oppimisen ja oppimisvaikeuksien erityislehti 31(2), 106-115.
- Sointu, E., Savolainen, H., Lappalainen, K., Kuorelahti, M., Hotulainen, R., Närhi, V., Lambert , M. C., & Epstein, M. H. (2018). Käyttäytymisen ja tunteiden vahvuuksien arviointiväline . PS-kustannus.
- Spooner, F., Knight, V. F., Browder, D. M. & Smith, B. R. (2012). Evidence-based practice for teaching academics to students with severe developmental disabilities. Remedial and Special Education, 33(6), 374-387.

Literature

- Yada, A., Björn, P. M., Savolainen, P., Kyttälä, M., Aro, M., & Savolainen, H. (2021). Pre-service teachers' self-efficacy in implementing inclusive practices and resilience in Finland. Teaching and Teacher Education, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103398.
- Kyttälä, M., Björn, P. M., Rantamäki, M., Närhi, V., & Aro, M. (2021). Assessment conception patterns of Finnish pre-service special needs teachers: the contribution of prior studies and teaching experience. European Journal of Special Needs Education, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2020.1853972