



What Works Hub
for Global Education

Teaching at the right level: The core components of an effective approach

What is teaching at the right level?

Teaching at the right level is a pedagogical approach that helps children catch up on foundational literacy and numeracy skills. Children are first assessed on their mastery of foundational skills, and then they are taught in groups of peers at the same learning level using interactive instructional methods and activities that are aligned with their learning levels.

What is the evidence base for teaching at the right level?

Reviews of research on educational interventions in global south contexts have consistently found teaching at the right level to be **one of the most effective interventions** for raising children's foundational literacy and numeracy levels at scale. For example:

- In Uttar Pradesh (India), teaching at the right level 'learning camps' raised the proportion of children (grades 3–5) who could read a paragraph or story from 15% to 49%.
- In Botswana, 30 hours of teaching at the right level lessons raised the proportion of children who demonstrated mastery of all four basic maths operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) from 11% to 40%.

Crucially, teaching at the right level programmes typically achieve these outcomes **cost-effectively**. Accordingly, these programmes are recommended as one of only three 'Great Buys' in the 2023 Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel report (which refers to these programmes as 'targeted instruction').

Where has teaching at the right level been implemented?

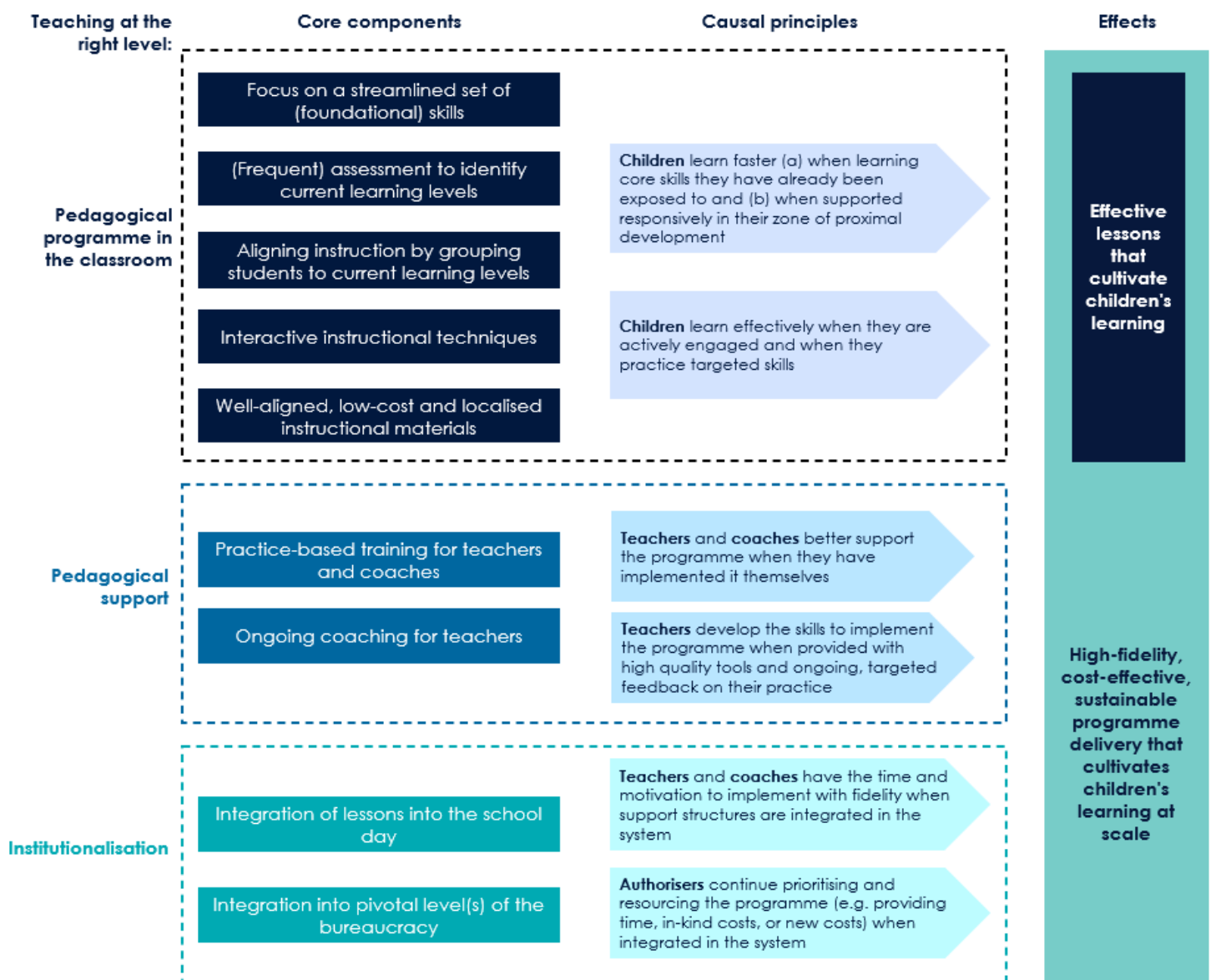
From its origins in **India**, teaching at the right level has now spread elsewhere in South Asia (**Pakistan, Nepal**) to numerous education systems in sub-Saharan Africa, including **Zambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Niger, Madagascar, Uganda, Zanzibar, Angola, Somaliland, and Namibia**.



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Core components of teaching at the right level

New research from the What Works Hub for Global Education identifies the 'core components' of teaching at the right level. Each of these core components, shown in the figure below, is essential to effectively implementing and institutionalising a teaching at the right level programme at scale through the government school system.





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Key resources

What Works Hub for Global Education. (forthcoming). Core components of teaching at the right level: Unpacking the “black box” of proven programs by systematically combining multiple sources of rigorous evidence with implementer insights. What Works Hub for Global Education working paper. *Note: If you would like to be notified when this paper is released, please email wwhge@bsg.ox.ac.uk.*

Banerjee, A., Banerji, R., Berry, J., Duflo, E., Kannan, H., Mukerji, S., Shotland, M., & Walton, M. (2017). From proof of concept to scalable policies: Challenges and solutions, with an application. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(4), 73–102.
<https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.31.4.73>

Curtiss Wyss, M., Qargha, G. O., Arenge, G., Mukoyi, T., Elliott, M., Matsheng, M., & Clune, K. (2023). *Adapting, innovating, and scaling foundational learning: Four lessons from scaling Teaching at the Right Level in Botswana*. Center for Universal Education at Brookings.
<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/adapting-innovating-and-scaling-foundational-learning/>

Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel. (2023). *2023 Cost-effective Approaches to Improve Global Learning—What does Recent Evidence Tell Us are “Smart Buys” for Improving Learning in Low- and Middle-income Countries?* FCDO, the World Bank, UNICEF, and USAID. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099420106132331608/>

See also:

- TaRL Africa website: <https://teachingattherightlevel.org/>

Webinar series on implementing teaching at the right level:

<https://www.povertyactionlab.org/page/teaching-right-level-tarl-webinar-series>



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www.wwhge.org

wwhge@bsg.ox.ac.uk



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