A specific type of intervention teacher is the reading specialist. They frequently work with younger elementary students to identify and correct reading difficulties.

Older students may also receive the services of a reading specialist to help them catch up to grade level reading.

A reading specialist has an advanced degree or certification in reading in addition to a [bachelor's degree in education](http://www.jobmonkey.com/schoolteaching/bachelors-education.html). A master's degree or reading endorsement is typically required by a school district for employment as a reading specialist.

Reading specialists are often employed through Title One programs, which are the largest federally funded education programs in the United States. Schools that qualify for Title One, based upon student poverty statistics, are given funds to meet educational goals for the school. Frequently, the money is used to hire highly qualified teachers to provide assistance to struggling students in the fields of math or reading.

The average salary of a reading specialist is US$52,000 according to PayScale.com. This is above than the average teacher's salary because of the higher level of education required.

A reading specialist is expected to assess students' reading ability and diagnose difficulties. In response, she will provide individualized instruction to increase a student's reading ability. Reading specialists often work with students individually or in small group settings. Inclusion instruction is also commonly provided. Certain IEP's may be under a reading specialist's directions.

The instruction a reading specialist provides is multi-faceted. Phonics is a cornerstone of early reading instruction, and intervention strategies may be needed for older struggling readers. Sight words are also taught by reading specialists. Reading must occur in a variety of manners: independent, guided, small group, and teacher read-alouds are common. Fluency and comprehension are both important to a reading specialist. Writing also needs to occur in correlation with reading strategies.

Beyond daily instruction, assessment procedures are an important duty. Daily formative assessments, formal and informal, are needed. Usually, a formal type of summative assessment will be given at the end of each quarter. Results will be shared with teachers and parents.

If needed, new goals and strategies will be determined.

Collaboration is a foundation of a reading specialist's job. They must frequently work in conjunction with other [special education teachers](http://www.jobmonkey.com/schoolteaching/special-ed-jobs.html). Furthermore, reading specialists are expected to work with regular classroom teachers to assist the reading development of all students. Strong parent communication practices are also essential.

Some reading specialists are responsible for assisting in the creation of a reading curriculum program to be implemented in the school or district. Often, reading specialists help plan professional development activities for teachers. The task of choosing and ordering textbooks for the language arts curriculum is another common duty.

Some reading specialists do not work directly with students. Rather, they are purely a resource for other teachers. Key responsibilities may be creating curriculum, locating resources, and being available for consult.

The heavy workload of planning individualized instruction for students can be a negative of the position. Also, in tough economic times, reading specialists, if not employed to fulfill special education laws, may face job cuts.

Overall, the value of providing struggling readers with success is priceless. The reading specialist gives students tools for life-long learning. Also, professional relationships that affect the reading quality of the entire school are formed. For a person who loves reading, students, and individual instruction the job is perfect.

For more information use the following resources.

**International Reading Association  
Website:** [www.reading.org/](http://www.reading.org/)

**Reading Online  
Website:** [www.readingonline.org/](http://www.readingonline.org/) Job description: **jobmonkey.com**