

Low-performing students in Oakland USD improve 15 months in reading grade level

Implementation Objectives

The Oakland Unified School District in Oakland, CA, was interested in evaluating the Fast ForWord products through use of a case study involving the assessment of reading skills before and after Fast ForWord participation. Students in the study were low-performing inner city students in eighth through tenth grades.

Methodology

School personnel tested the students' reading skills at the beginning and end of the study. Student performance was evaluated using the STAR Reading assessment. School personnel administered the assessment.

Educators were trained in:

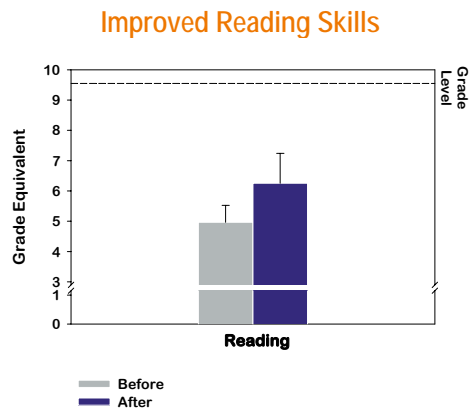
- Current findings on the neuroscience of how phonemic awareness and the acoustic properties of speech impact rapid development of language and reading skills
- Methods for assessing candidates for use of Fast ForWord
- Appropriate measures for testing and evaluation
- Effective implementation techniques
- Use of Progress Tracker reports to monitor student performance
- Techniques for measuring gains students achieve after they have finished using the product

Schedule of Use

Students participated 48 or 50 minutes per day, five days per week, for eight to twelve weeks. On average, students used the Fast ForWord Middle & High School product for 29 days over a period of 89 calendar days, and completed 63% of the product content. About half of the students then went on to use the Fast ForWord Language to Reading product.

Assessment Results

The STAR Reading assessment is a criterion- and norm-referenced test of reading ability. It consists of computer adaptive multiple choice questions and is appropriate for grades 1 through 12.



School personnel were specifically interested in students who appeared to have worked vigorously on the Fast ForWord products. On average, before Fast ForWord participation, these students were performing in the below average range of reading ability. After Fast ForWord use, students overall made significant gains in reading skills, improving one-third of a standard deviation—a gain corresponding to 15 months improvement in reading grade level.

Educational Gains

The results found in this study support other studies demonstrating that using the Fast ForWord products also results in the strengthening of foundational reading skills, better positioning students to partake in the classroom curriculum.

Students achieved significant gains in reading.



Program Study Statistics

School year:
2004 – 2005

Number of Students:
20 students

Grade Level:
Eighth through tenth grades

Products Used:
Fast ForWord Middle & High School
Fast ForWord Language to Reading

Assessment tool used:
STAR Reading

School Structure:
Urban

For detailed analysis of this data or to request other reports showing significant academic gains following use of the Fast ForWord family of products go to: www.scilearn.com/resultsreports

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