

# Tennessee students in early elementary improve reading skills by more than 1 year in 4 months

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## Implementation Objectives

Principal Anetta Ferguson at Hardy Elementary in the Hamilton County Department of Education in Chattanooga, Tennessee, was interested in evaluating the effects of the Fast ForWord products on the academic skills of her students. She used a case study, involving the assessment of the students' reading skills before and after Fast ForWord participation. Study participants were 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders at Hardy Elementary.

## Methodology

School personnel tested the students' reading skills at the beginning and end of the study with Reading Progress Indicator (RPI). School personnel administered the assessment.

At each school, educators were trained in:

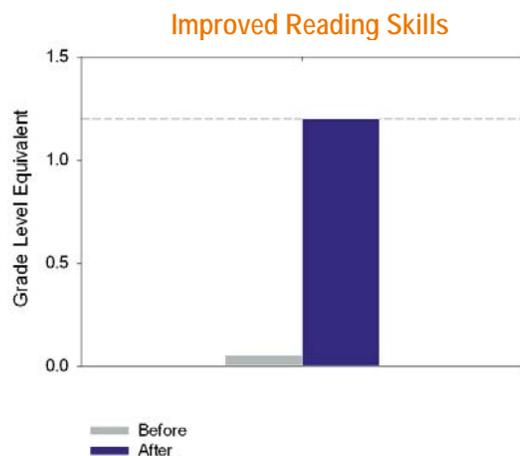
- Current findings on the neuroscience of how phonemic awareness and the acoustic properties of speech impact rapid development of language and reading skills
- Methods for assessing candidates for use of Fast ForWord
- Appropriate measures for testing and evaluation
- Effective implementation techniques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

## Schedule of Use

Most students used the 30-Minute protocols, which call for students to use the Fast ForWord products for 30 minutes a day, five days per week for twelve to sixteen weeks. Students used the products for an average of 115 days during the 2010 – 2011 school year, with average participation of 96% and attendance of 70% (with holidays, teacher work days, and parent-teacher conferences considered, perfect attendance is around 85%). Most of the students (60%) completed two or more products.

## Assessment Results

Reading Progress Indicator (RPI) is a nationally-normed, computerized assessment developed by Scientific Learning in partnership with Bookette Software Company. RPI assesses students' early reading skills including phonemic awareness, decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension.



On average, study participants made a statistically significant improvement in their reading skills scores ( $t(101)=12.1$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). At the beginning of the study, most of the students (82%) were in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade, with another 17% in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. The students' average skill level was early kindergarten – more than one year below their grade level. In the four months between their first and last assessment, the students averaged one year and one month of improvement, corresponding to an improvement from the 9<sup>th</sup> percentile to the 37<sup>th</sup> percentile. Ms. Ferguson, the Principal, enthusiastically reported, "All I know is it works, it works, it works!"

## Educational Gains

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

The students significantly improved their reading skills.

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## Program Study Statistics

### School Years:

2010 - 2011

### Number of Schools:

1

### Number of Students:

101

### Grade Level:

1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders

### Products Used:

Fast ForWord Reading Prep  
Fast ForWord Reading Level 1  
Fast ForWord Reading Level 2  
Fast ForWord Language

### Assessment Tool Used:

Reading Progress Indicator (RPI)

## School Statistics

### Ethnic Breakdown

Black: 96%

White: 3%

Other: 1%

### Classifications

Economically Disadvantaged: 99%

### Environment:

Urban

For other reports showing significant academic gains following use of Scientific Learning products go to:  
[www.scilearn.com/resultsreports](http://www.scilearn.com/resultsreports)

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