

Research and Outcomes Department

Milford City School District, CT

Elementary school students in the Milford City School District in Milford, Connecticut, used the Fast ForWord products during the 2003 – 2004 school year and achieved significant improvements in their reading skills with average improvements of nine percentiles.

The Program Evaluation

Students had their reading performance evaluated with the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) before and after Fast ForWord use.

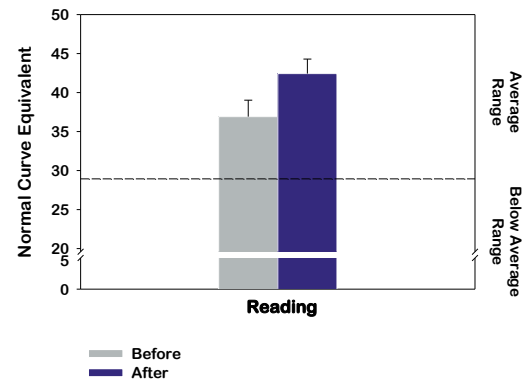
The DRP is a group-administered nationally normed assessment that measures a student's ability to read and understand material. Students are given a DRP score that indicates the level of material that a student can read at a specified level of comprehension. As part of the Connecticut Mastery Test, school personnel in Connecticut administer the DRP to evaluate the reading comprehension of their students.

The Institute for the Development of Educational Achievement, in accordance with the Reading First legislation, recognizes the DRP as an appropriate assessment for measuring improvement in the reading comprehension skills of children in early elementary school.

Approach and Methodology

Educators were trained in current and established 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 potential product participants; the selection of appropriate measures for testing and evaluation; effective implementation techniques; approaches for monitoring student performance; and techniques for measuring the gains students have achieved after they have finished using the product. This training helped ensure successful product implementation.

Improved Reading Skills



Students who used the Fast ForWord products showed significant improvements in reading ability after participation.

Students who used the Fast ForWord products accelerated their acquisition of reading skills and improved their reading achievement relative to their peers.

Participation

Forty-seven students participated in this study and had pre- and post-participation data available for analysis. All the students used the Fast ForWord Language product first. Most (41) then used the Fast ForWord to Language to Reading product. The school district chose to use the 100-minute Fast ForWord Language protocol that called for students to participate 100 minutes a day, 5 days a week for four to eight weeks. The Fast ForWord Language to Reading protocol chosen by the school called for students to use the product for 90 minutes a day, 5 days a week for four to eight weeks.

Assessment Results

Before using the Fast ForWord products, students, overall, were in the 26th percentile. On average, after participation on the Fast ForWord products, students made significant improvements in their reading ability and moved up to the 35th percentile. This improvement, relative to their peers, indicates that the students who used Fast ForWord products accelerated their acquisition of reading skills.

Discussion

Language and early reading abilities are critical for all students, impacting their ability to benefit from instruction, follow instructions, and participate in class discussions. Strong linguistic skills also provide a critical foundation for building reading and writing skills.

Scores from before and after Fast ForWord participation show that, on average, students made significant increases in their reading skills. This suggests that using the Fast ForWord products strengthened the students' foundational skills and helped them benefit more from the classroom curriculum.

To find out more about this study, and how **Fast ForWord products** can benefit students in your classroom or district, please contact us.

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