

## Research and Outcomes Department

### Washington Local School District, OH

Located in Toledo, Ohio, the Washington Local School District is a Kindergarten through twelfth grade district with 12 schools and nearly 7,000 students. Nine elementary schools in the district chose to use the Fast ForWord products during the 2003 – 2004 school year.

Students in the study were in the third and fourth grades and at-risk for academic failure. On average, students made significant improvements in reading achievement, with the majority of students increasing at least one performance level and 47% of students meeting or exceeding Ohio testing standards after Fast ForWord use.

#### The Program Evaluation

In October of 2003, before Fast ForWord use, and in March of 2004 after Fast ForWord participation, third grade students were assessed with the Ohio Achievement Test (OAT) and fourth grade students were assessed with the Ohio Proficiency Test (OPT).

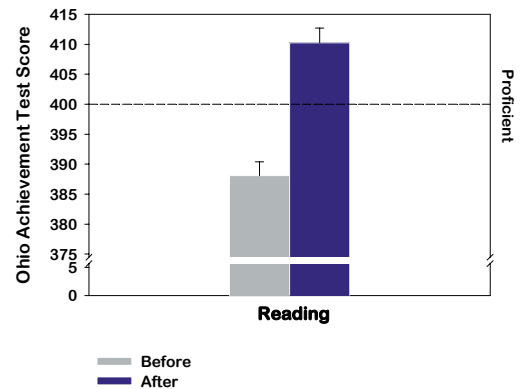
The tests are criterion-referenced, and compare student performance to Ohio's selected curriculum. The Ohio Achievement Test for third grade students is designed to measure four of the five standards in Ohio's Grade 3 Academic Content Standards for Reading: Acquisition of Vocabulary, Reading Process, Reading Applications: Informational Text and Reading Application: Literary Text. The Ohio Proficiency Test for fourth graders compares student performance to the selected curriculum in five areas: reading, math, citizenship, science, and writing. Test items include multiple choice, short answer, and extended response style questions.

Scores on the OAT and OPT are reported in terms of scale scores. The Ohio State Board of Education has established performance standards (cut scores) based on these scores. These standards divide test scores into performance levels ranging from Limited/Below Basic to Advanced.

#### Approach and Methodology

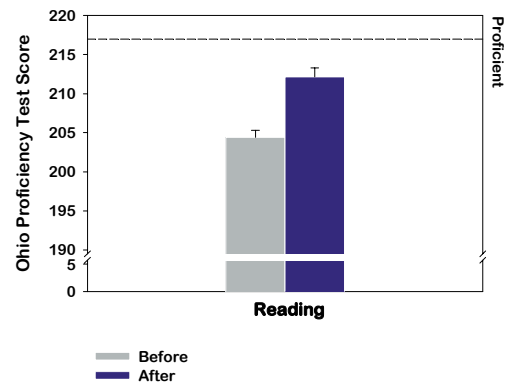
Educators were trained in current and established findings on the neuroscience of how phonemic awareness and the acoustic properties of speech

#### Improved Reading Achievement Third Grade Students



*Third graders, on average, made significant improvements in reading achievement after Fast ForWord use and moved into the proficient range of reading as measured by the Ohio Achievement Test.*

#### Improved Reading Achievement Fourth Grade Students



*On average, fourth grade students who used the Fast ForWord products made significant gains in reading achievement as measured by the Ohio Proficiency Test.*

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.

## Participation

One hundred and eighty-five students participated in this study. The Washington Local School District chose to use a combination of the 100-Minute Fast ForWord Language Protocol, the 50- and 90-Minute Fast ForWord Language to Reading Protocols, and the 48- and 90-Minute Fast ForWord to Reading 3 Protocols. These protocols call for students to use the products for 48, 50, 90 or 100 minutes a day, five days per week for four to twelve weeks.

## Assessment Results

Before participating on the Fast ForWord products, the group of third graders had an average OAT score of 388 which was below the proficiency standard for the Reading Achievement Test, and 83% were at a performance level of Basic or below. Overall, after Fast ForWord use, students made significant gains and moved well into the Proficient range on reading achievement to a score of 410. In terms of performance level, 78% of third graders met or exceeded proficiency after using the Fast ForWord products.

Fourth grade students overall were performing in the Basic range of reading achievement before Fast ForWord use. After Fast ForWord participation, students made significant improvements, increasing the average OPT score from 204 to 212 points, and moving closer to the Proficient range. Looking at individual performance levels, 43% of fourth graders who were at Basic improved to Proficient.

## Discussion

During the 2003 – 2004 school year, third and fourth grade students used the Fast ForWord products. On average, third grade students made significant improvements on the Ohio Achievement Test, improving their average score by 22 points. The group of fourth graders also made significant improvements with scores improving by 8 points and 43% who were Basic meeting proficiency after participation on the Fast ForWord products.

Overall, 47% of students met or exceeded Ohio proficiency standards after Fast ForWord use and 57% improved one or more levels. These findings demonstrate that, within the Washington Local School District, an optimal learning environment coupled with a focus on cognitive and early reading skills can help students attain a higher level of reading achievement.

To find out more about this study, and how **Fast ForWord products** can benefit students in your classroom or district, please visit [www.scilearn.com/resultsreports](http://www.scilearn.com/resultsreports).

