

# Amarillo ISD high school students exceed expectations on the TAKS

## Implementation Objectives

The Amarillo Independent School District in Amarillo, TX, was interested in evaluating the effectiveness of the Fast ForWord products for improving the reading skills of high school students. They conducted a case study, assessing students' reading skills before and after participation on the Fast ForWord products. Students in the study were ninth graders attending Palo Duro High School in the Amarillo ISD.

## Methodology

Students' reading skills were evaluated at the end of their eighth-grade and ninth-grade years, using the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). All testing was administered by school district personnel.

At each school, educators were trained in:

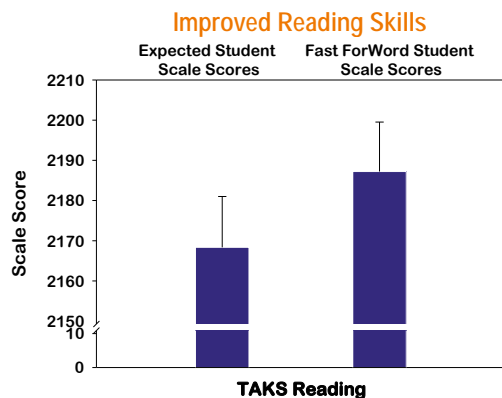
- Current findings on the neuroscience of how phonemic awareness and the acoustic properties of speech impact rapid development of language and reading skills
- Methods for assessing candidates for use of Fast ForWord
- Appropriate measures for testing and evaluation
- Effective implementation techniques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

## Schedule of Use

The school chose to use the 90-minute protocol, which calls for students to participate 90 minutes per day, 5 days per week, for 4 to 8 weeks. On average, students used the Fast ForWord Middle & High School product for 17 days over a period of 55 calendar days, and completed 73% of the product content. Some went on to use the Fast ForWord Language to Reading product for 4 days over a period of 11 calendar days, completing 31% of the product content.

## Assessment Results

The reading portion of the TAKS measures a student's ability to comprehend and critically analyze culturally diverse written texts. The TAKS is administered annually to students in grades 3-9, and is closely aligned with state curricular standards.



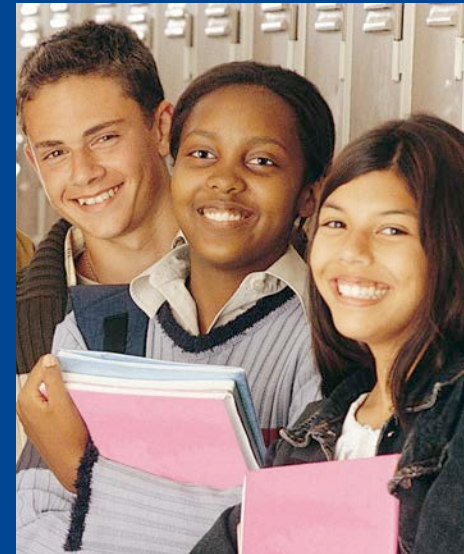
Following Fast ForWord use, ninth-grade students at Palo Duro High School significantly exceeded their expected gains on the reading portion of the TAKS, scoring an average of 19 points higher than expected. The students achieved an average Texas Growth Index (TGI) 73% higher than the 2005 school-wide average. In addition, the number of students meeting the state reading standard increased substantially, from 74% to 84%.

## Educational Gains

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

Students achieved significant gains in Reading.

**Fast ForWord**<sup>®</sup>  
by Scientific Learning



## Program Study Statistics

**School year:**  
2005 - 2006

**Number of Students:**  
101 students

**Grade Level:**  
Ninth grade

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

**Assessment tool used:**  
Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)

**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](http://www.scilearn.com/resultsreports)

**Contact us for more information:**  
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