

Fast ForWord participants make greater gains than comparison group

Scientific Learning Research Briefings: 15(11)

Implementation Objectives

The Grand Forks Public Schools in Grand Forks, North Dakota, were interested in evaluating the effects of the Fast ForWord products on the academic achievement of students. A quasi-experimental study was used, with one elementary school using the Fast ForWord products, and the other serving as the comparison group. Both elementary schools fed into the same middle school. Study participants were in the 5th grade at the time of the Fast ForWord use.

Methodology

School personnel tested the students' reading achievement at the beginning and end of the study with the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA). School personnel administered the assessments.

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 Fast ForWord products

Schedule of Use

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 12 to 16 weeks. Students used the products for an average of 132 days across 11 months.

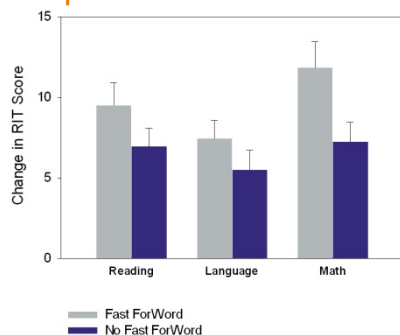
Assessment Results

The MAP are state-aligned computerized adaptive tests, administered by the district each Spring. They accurately reflect the instructional level of each student and measure growth over time. The NDSA are North Dakota's high stakes test, designed to measure knowledge in various subject areas. They are administered each Fall.

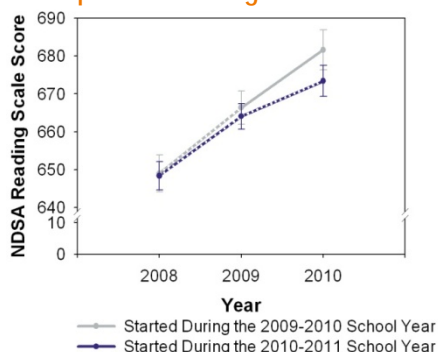
A comparison of the 5th graders in two elementary schools showed that students at the school using Fast ForWord products made significantly greater improvements in all areas tested compared to the students at the school that did not use the products ($F(1,75) = 6.0$; $p < 0.05$) (left figure).

The experimental group started using the Fast ForWord products in late September, six to eight weeks prior to the Fall administration of the 2009 NDSA. A comparison of the 2008 scores (prior to the use of any Fast ForWord products) to the 2010 scores (after use) showed that there was a trend towards significance with the Fast ForWord participants improving more ($F(1, 70) = 2.85$; $p < 0.10$) (right figure).

Improved Academic Achievement



Improved Reading Achievement



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 academic achievement.



Program Study Statistics

School Years:

2009-2010

Number of Schools:

2

Number of Students:

76

Grade Level:

5th

Products Used:

Fast ForWord Language Series
Fast ForWord Reading Readiness
Fast ForWord Reading Levels 1 - 4

Assessment Tool Used:

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)
North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA)

District Statistics

Ethnic Breakdown

White: 84%
Native American: 7%
Black: 4%

Classifications

Economically Disadvantaged: 35%
Special Education: 15%
English Language Learners: 4%

School Environment:

Urban

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

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