

**AWARD READING REPORT
11-WEEK STUDY
NASSAU COUNTY
LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK**

December 11, 2009 – March 26, 2010

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Introduction

AWARD Reading is a K-3 literacy program that fully integrates technology and print to accelerate reading achievement for all students. The program consists of over 300 narrative and informational texts. The traditional print component is matched with the same texts in digital format and over 800 interactive skills activities delivered on the internet or on CD-ROM. The program also has phonics components—alphabet (K), letter combinations (Grade 1), and word families (Grade 1).

Students show a high-level of interest when technology is partnered with print. This carries over into their instructional experiences whether in small groups or as an independent literacy activity. Literacy development needs a sound framework and AWARD provides this with scaffolded skills instruction.

A recent year-long research study conducted by Dr. Cathy Collins Block and Dr. John N. Mangieri in New York City schools found that students using AWARD produced positive results whether they were ELLs or Title I students, and whether the program was used as an after-school, push-in, pull-out, or self contained model. (See the full report in the Appendix)

Proposal

Nassau County reviewed the New York City research report and sought to use AWARD as a balanced literacy package containing technology and print to look for evidence of the program's success in Long Island. However, unlike New York, the timeline was only 12 weeks.

The Principal of a school in Nassau County met with AWARD Reading representatives and agreed to a proposal to conduct a 12-week study of a daily 30–40-minute AWARD program within the literacy block, (which uses a McMillan basal).

The Principal invited teachers to participate in the study who could guarantee more than three computers per classroom for the students to work on daily on a rotation basis. She chose one class at each grade level from kindergarten through to grade three to take part in the study. This totaled four classes altogether (with 80 students).

Richard Allington believes the smaller the group, the more likely the intervention will succeed (*What Really Matters in Response to Intervention*, Allyn & Bacon, 2009).

...we find a near unanimous agreement that very small instructional groups or tutorials are needed (Allington, 2006; Denton, Vaughn, & Fletcher, 2003; Foorman & Torgeson, 2001; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2005; McEneaney, Lose, & Schwartz, 2006).

Twelve-week Pilot study

December 2009	4-7 8 14-23	Teacher training Pre-tests Study
January 2010	4-29	Study
February 2010	1-26	Post-tests
March 2010	1-24 26	Study Post-tests
April 2010	6	Report due

Procedures

Approval to conduct the research investigation was given by the Principal. Following this approval, the teachers in the study were identified and an explanation of the AWARD program was provided to the school principal, literacy facilitators, and teachers. AWARD Reading instructional materials for the 12-week study were delivered to each of the classes in the school.

AWARD Reading is a comprehensive, balanced literacy curriculum program that partners print and technology to deliver literacy outcomes to 21st-century students. Students use technology with text in the program every day. The following components are part of the daily instruction.

- Sequential learning
- Phonics instruction
- Explicit instruction
- Differentiation options
- Tools to provide feedback to parents and students
- Computer-assisted skills-based assessment
- Instruction based on research

DRA levels were provided for each class so that AWARD levels could be correlated.

Kindergarten – 10 students

Development class with struggling readers—not reached DRA level A yet (see full correlation in the appendix)

Grade 1 (Regular Class) – 20 students
(DRA levels A—34)

Grade 2 (Regular Class) – 21 students
(DRA levels 16—34)

Grade 3 (Inclusive Class) – 19 students
(DRA levels 16—38)

Pre- and Post-test Plan

Kindergarten

(Development Class with struggling learners) DRA level—not reached A yet

1. Alphabet: lower case letters (all students)
2. Upper Case letters (all students)
3. Essential words 1 (all students)
4. *At the Zoo* (DRA A) Magenta (all students)

Grade 1

(Regular Class) DRA levels A–34

1. Alphabet—letter sounds (all students)
2. Essential words 3 & 4 (all students)
3. *My Granny Rides a Bicycle* Yellow (4 students)
4. *The S Party* Blue (4 students)
5. *Where is the Cabbage?* Green (6 students)
6. *It's Time You Had a Haircut* Orange (4 students)

Grade 2

(Regular Class) DRA levels 16–34

1. *Where is the Cabbage?* Green (2 students)
2. *It's Time You Had a Haircut* Orange (4 students)
3. *Too Good to Waste* (DRA 20) Light Blue (4 students)
4. *Becky's Big Race* Purple (7 students)
5. *The Circle Shell* Gold (5 students)

Grade 3

(Inclusive Class) DRA levels 16–38

1. *Too Good to Waste* (DRA 20) Light Blue (3 students)
2. *Becky's Big Race* Purple (9 students)
3. *The Circle Shell* Gold (2 students)
4. *Kwazaa Celebrations* Silver (2 students)
5. *Step Up to the Plate* Dark Green (2 students)

**AWARD READING: What each grade will be using
to work alongside the DRA**

Grade K: Magenta (Kindergarten)

Grade 1: Red (Kindergarten)
Yellow (Grade 1)
Blue (Grade 1)
Green (Grade 1)

Grade 2: Blue (Grade 1)
Green (Grade 1)
Orange (Grade 2)
Light Blue (Grade 2)
Purple (Grade 2)

Grade 3: Orange (Grade 2)
Light Blue (Grade 2)
Purple (Grade 2)
Gold (Grade 3)
Silver (Grade 3)
Dark Green (Grade 3)

Training

The class teachers involved in the study met for professional development with the AWARD consultant. The training session was for one hour per class per grade level followed by in-class demonstrations on day 2.

Training Plan

Overview of AWARD

Participants learn how to recognize and use the components of the program, a hands-on experience

Model AWARD Reading

AWARD consultants support teachers with an understanding of the AWARD program

Implementation

Participants learn to integrate technology daily into the AWARD Balanced Literacy Reading Program and to enhance small group instruction

Management plans will be shared to support a rotation of computer access for students.

Debriefing

Participants have the opportunity to clarify and share ideas.

The CD-ROM sample and AWARD Reading Online is shared during this presentation. Teachers are asked to ensure students in the study have computer access for at least 15 minutes per day out of the 30–40 minutes allocated to AWARD.

Follow-up Visit

The AWARD consultant visited classrooms midway through the 12-week study to answer any questions. She found most teachers were committed to supporting students and they reported that students were engaged and enjoyed working on AWARD daily. Some computers were effectively running the program and most teachers had the number of computers they needed so that the students could use AWARD for at least 15 minutes each day. Most teachers had been successful at integrating technology with group reading and were focused on meeting the needs of their students. However, one class did not have computers available in the classroom, and had to use the lab daily.

A research-based intervention design

The model for the small group intervention was a daily 30-minute design, based on one in Richard Allington's *What Really Matters in Response to Intervention*.

- 20 minutes of reading appropriate new texts and rereading previously read texts
- 5 minutes of word work or phonological skills work
- 5 minutes of work on comprehension skills and strategies (p. 67)

Student Timetable

Daily model (30–40 minutes allocated)

5 minutes	Shared Reading of Genre Book
5–10 minutes	Small Group Instruction Group Reading of text and modeling activities on CD-ROM
15–20 minutes	Independent Learning Independent time on computers to practice reading and skills activities
5 minutes	Celebrate Literacy Learning

Allington states,

What will be absolutely critical is that in this redesign we must ensure that reading volume is dramatically increased if accelerated reading growth is the intended outcome. (p. 69)

In the AWARD model (see above), the small group instruction and independent learning provide a total of 20 minutes of reading appropriate new texts and rereading previously read texts in print and on the computers.

Administration of the Tests

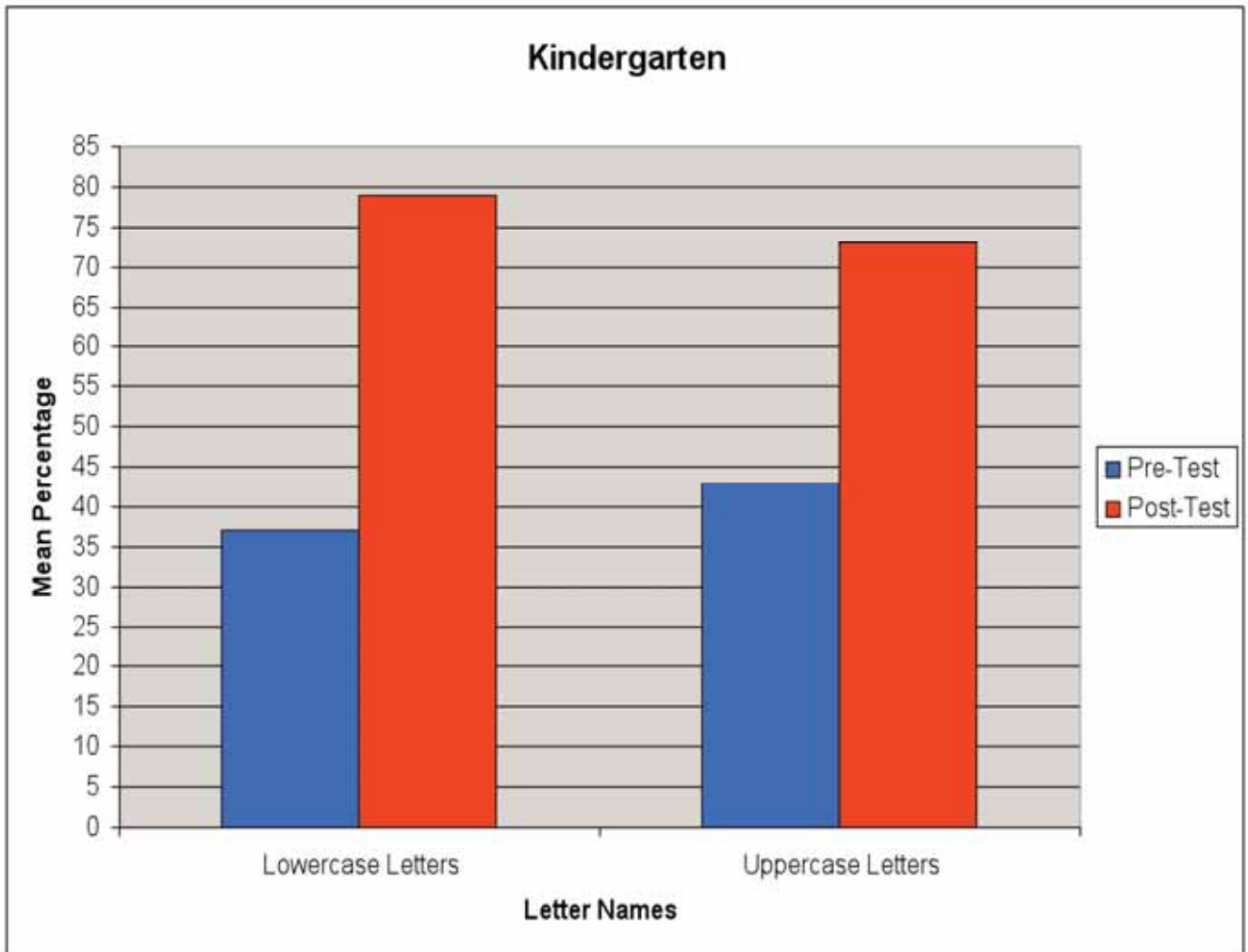
The study was for 11 weeks of instruction (taking into account that the school was closed for snow days, etc), with one day allocated for pre-testing and one day for post-testing as requested by the Principal.

Two AWARD consultants administered the pre- and post-tests. The tests were selected from the AWARD formative assessment computer program. This software was loaded onto the server for lab computers. All testing was done online or on the network on the computer and the results were saved to a database where they could be printed out as raw results or as a bar graph. (see Appendix for a sample printout)

The testing personnel followed a timetable drawn up by the Principal to ensure each student completed the tests on the computer. Each test took approximately 15 minutes.

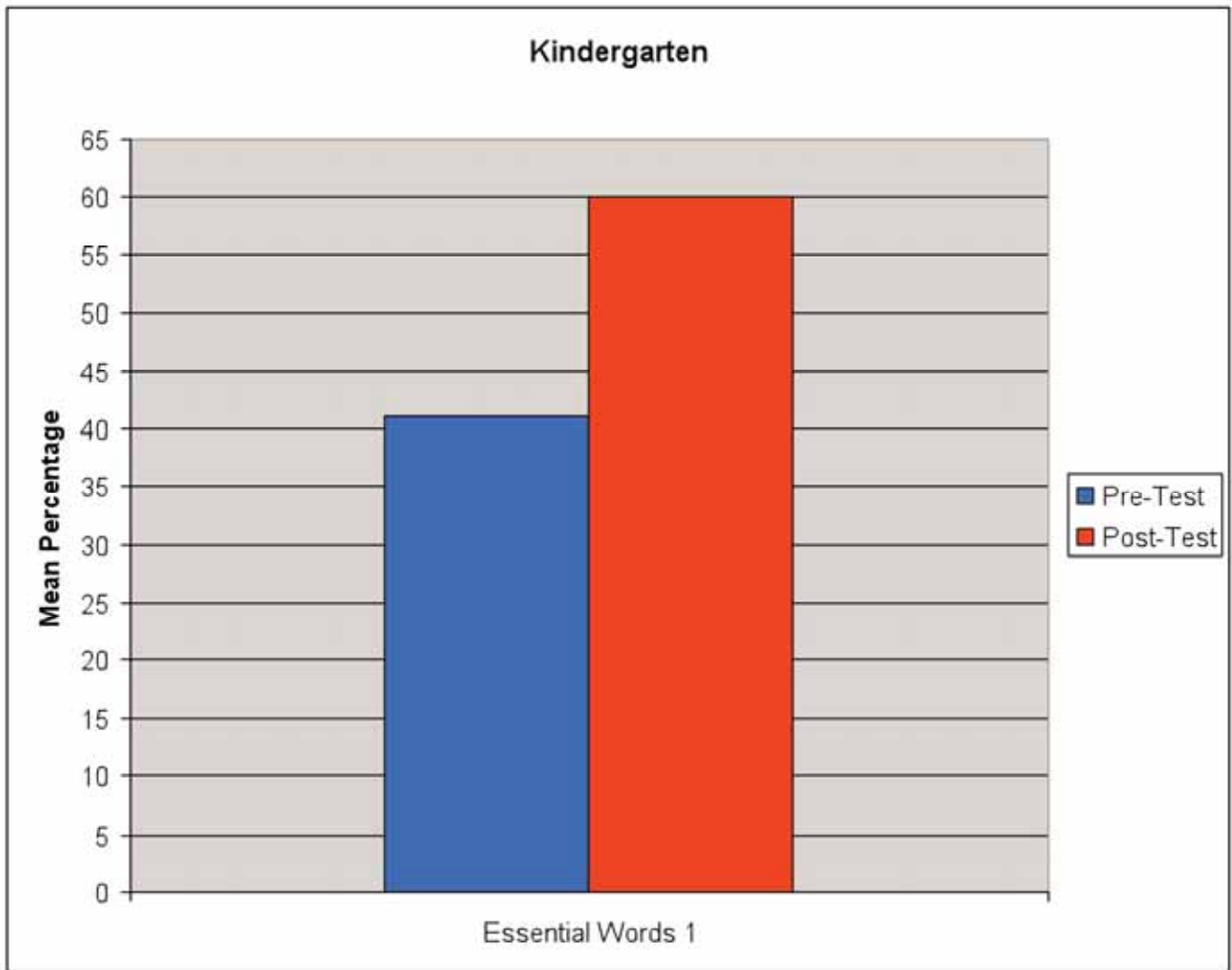
Pre-test and post-test results were printed and delivered by the testing personnel to an independent evaluator for analysis and a final report.

Results

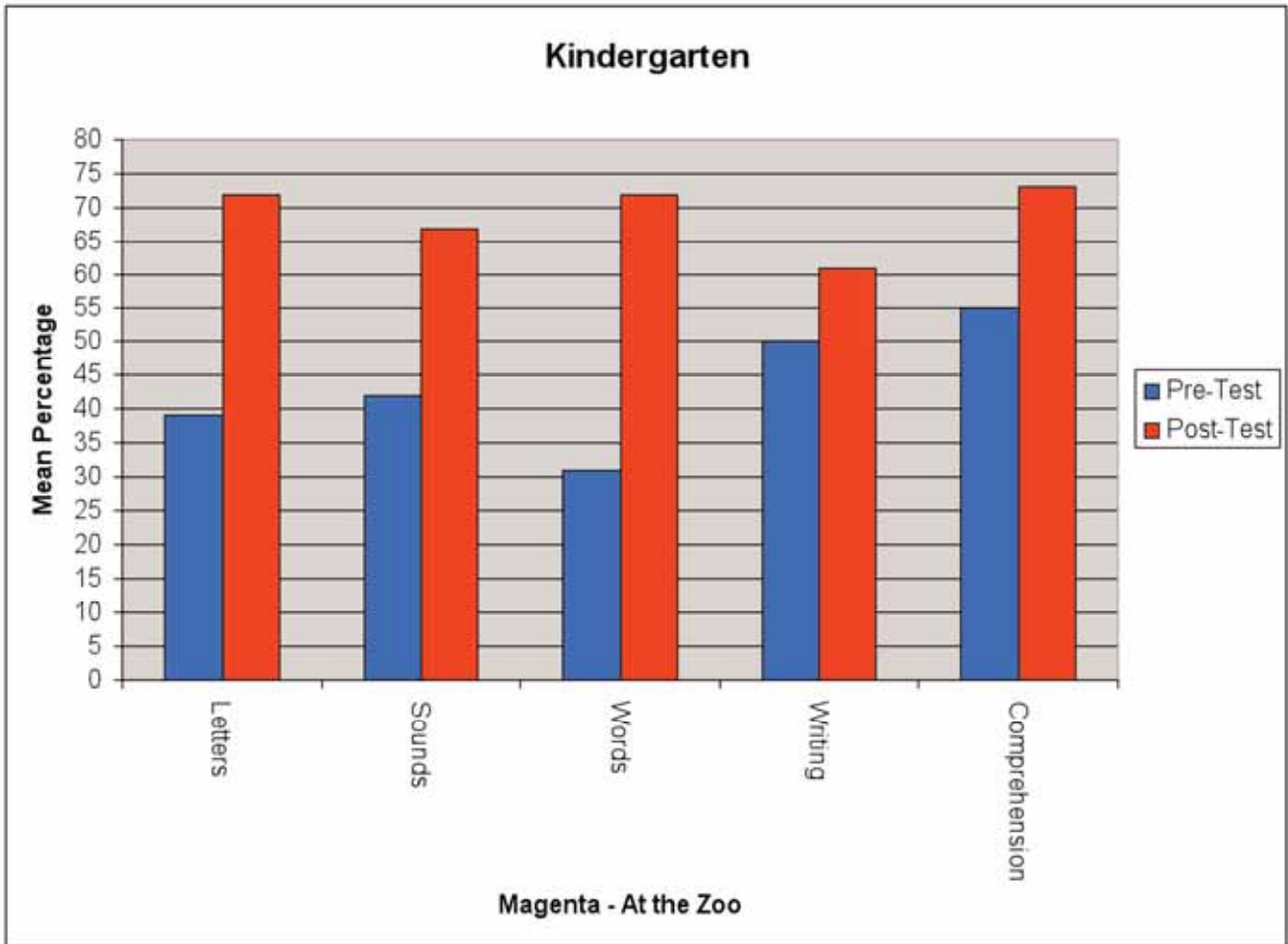


Nine students were pre- and post-tested for lowercase and uppercase letter names. All students improved their lowercase score. One student made a positive shift of 75%. Three students scored 100% in the post-test.

Eight students improved or retained their uppercase letter score by between 10% and 70%.



Nine students were pre- and post-tested for Essential Words 1. Eight of them improved their Essential Words recognition by between 8% and 70%.



These tests are from unseen texts.

The kindergarten results show an improvement in all areas assessed. Nine students were assessed on both pre- and post-tests. Eight of these students had absences of between one and seven days.

All students improved or retained their score in the letters assessment. Two students who scored 0% for letters in the pre-test scored 100% in the post-test.

Eight of the students improved their score in the sounds assessment by between 20% and 60%.

There was a significant improvement in the words score. All students improved their score by between 25% and 75%.

Two students improved their writing score and the other seven retained their score.

Six students improved their comprehension score by between 14% and 57%.



Twelve students were pre- and post-tested for letter sounds. Three students who scored 100% on their pre-test were not post-tested.

Eight students improved their scores. The greatest shift was 23%. Four students decreased their score in the post-test.

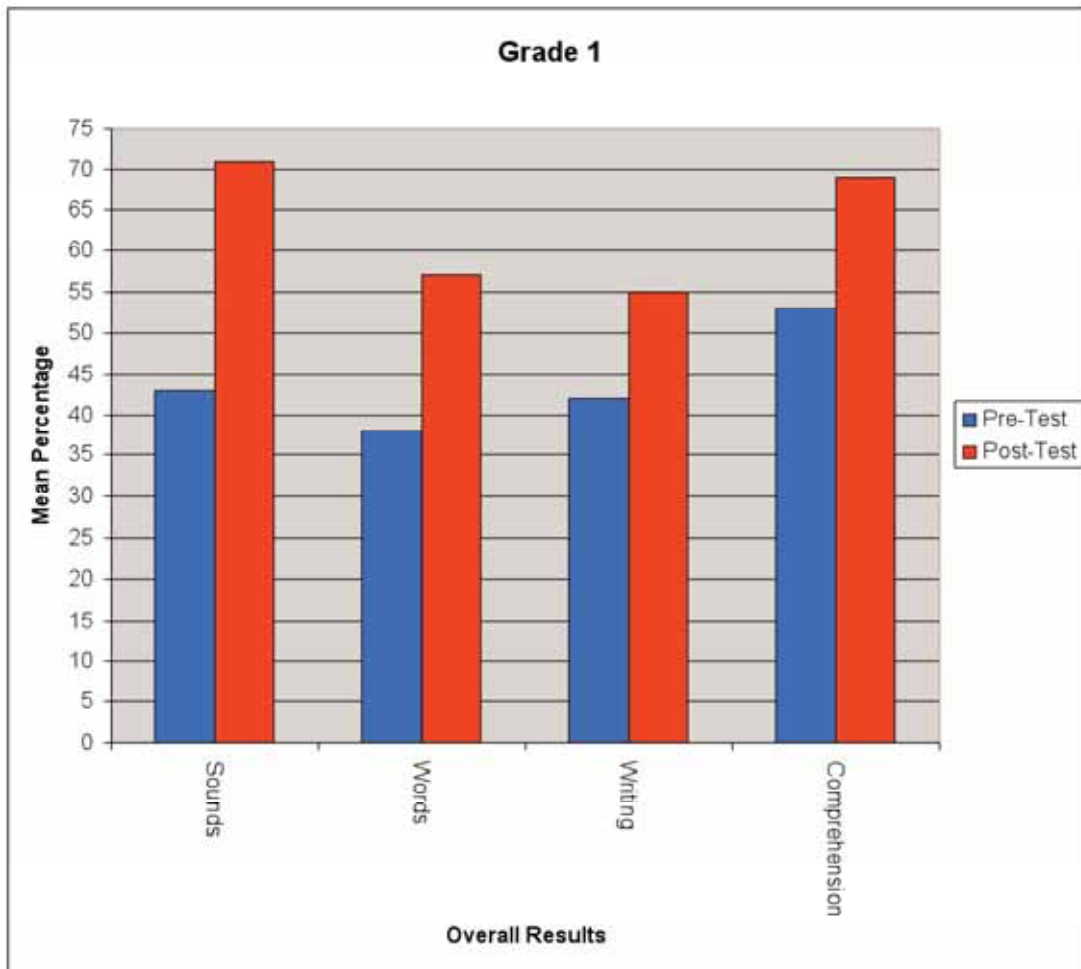


Seven students were pre- and post-tested for Essential Words 3. Eight other students were pre-tested and scored 100%. These students were not post-tested.

All students improved their score for Essential Words 3, scoring between 75% and 100% in the post-test.

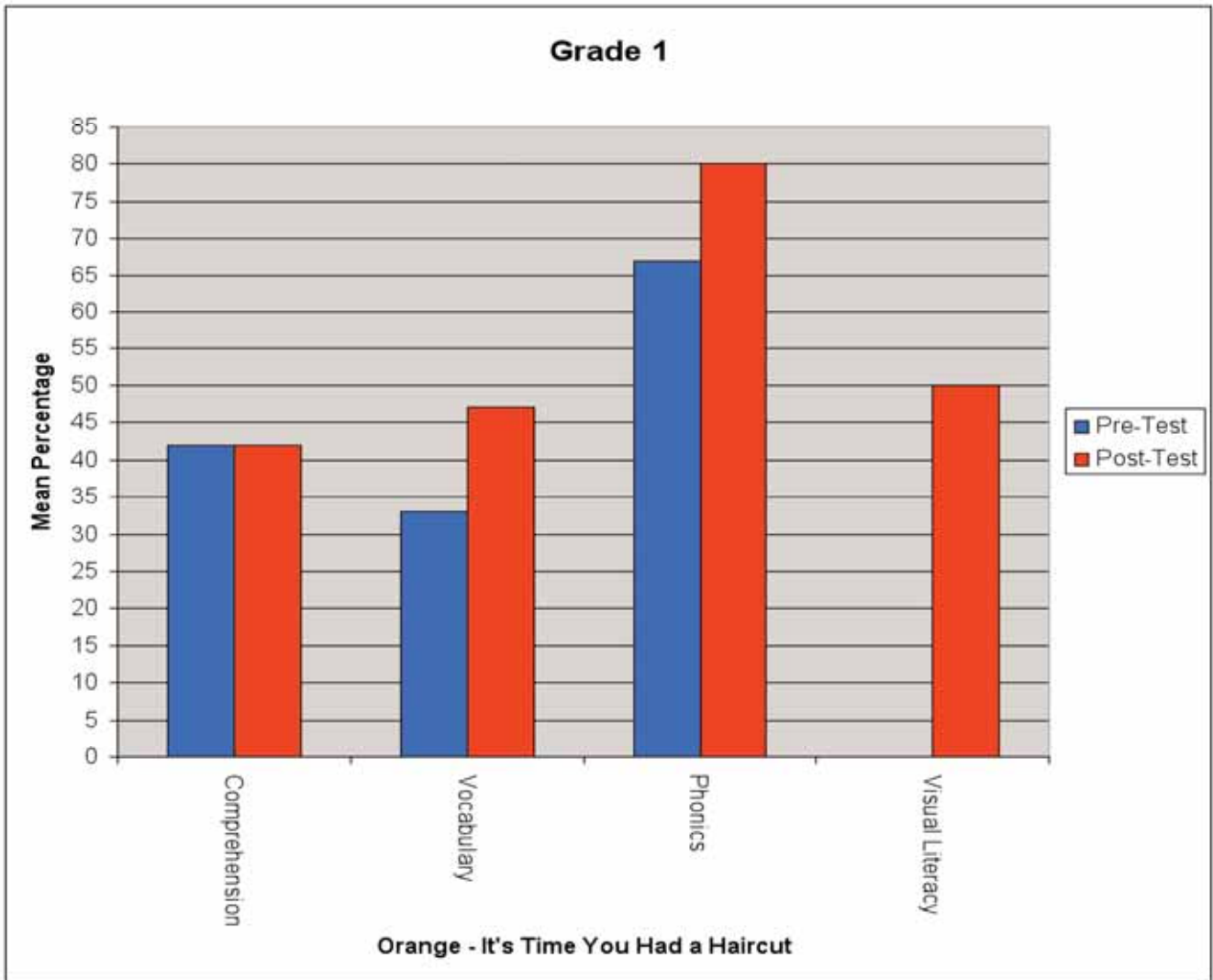
Eleven students were pre- and post-tested for Essential Words 4. Three other students scored 100% on their pre-test and were not post-tested.

Nine students improved or retained their score. Three of these students scored 100% in their post-test.



These graphs show an overall result for Grade 1 students. The students had absences of between one and seven days.

These are the results of eleven students assessed at Yellow, Blue, and Green levels. These results show outstanding improvement in all areas assessed. The most significant increase was 28% in sounds assessment.



These tests are from unseen texts.

Three students were pre- and post-tested at Orange level. There were no significant absences.

In comprehension, one student increased their score, one retained their score, and one score decreased, showing no shift.

Two students made a positive shift of 20% in their vocabulary score.

Two students retained their phonics score of 80%. The third student improved their score by 50%, also scoring 80%.

All students scored 0% in the pre-test for Visual Literacy. One student scored 50% in the post-test.

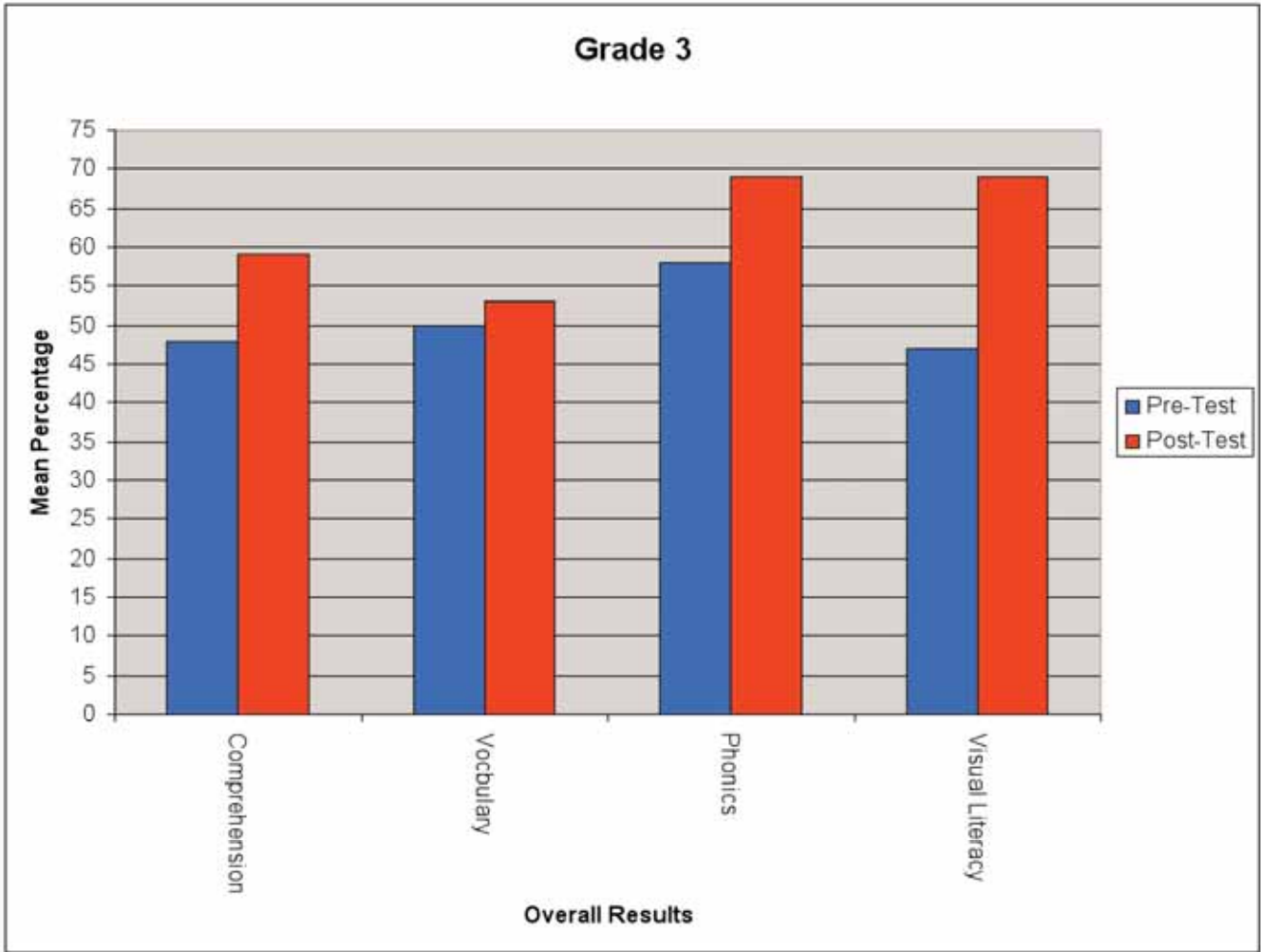
Grades 2 and 3 tests are from seen texts (available for use in the classroom lessons).



These graphs show an overall result for Grade 2 students. The students had absences of between one and five days. Their teacher was absent for 14 days of the trial and was replaced by a substitute who was not trained in AWARD Reading. The instructional model for Grade 2 was for eight weeks rather than 11.

These are the results of 14 students assessed at Light Blue, Orange, Purple, and Gold levels.

The results show an overall improvement in all areas assessed. The most significant shifts were in vocabulary and visual literacy.



These graphs give an overall result for Grade 3 students. Fifteen students were pre- and post-tested for Gold, Light Blue, Dark Green, Purple, and Silver levels. Students had absences of between one and seven days.

The results show an overall improvement in all areas assessed. The most significant shifts were in phonics and visual literacy.

Limitations

1. The study was undertaken by teachers who were new to AWARD and only had one hour per Grade level of professional development in the use of AWARD Reading.
2. The basal instruction used by the two schools had little or no technology. In contrast, teachers found themselves using technology and print daily for this AWARD pilot study, a new experience for many of them.
3. The timeline of 11 weeks for instruction was limited compared to the New York study.
4. The size of the student samples at some reading levels was 4 or less and therefore not a valid representation for a study. (Ref. Prof. W. B. Elley)

Conclusions

This evaluation has shown a positive improvement in the reading skills of students at each grade level. It produced impressive gains in the students' ability to recognize letters and sounds within text at Kindergarten level, and to read a wider variety of words at Kindergarten and Grade 1 level. Students at all grades in most assessments significantly improved in their ability to comprehend text and in visual literacy.

Careful analyses and comparisons of results from pre- to post-test clearly shows areas that students have improved or consolidated their learning and areas that need to be revisited.

This pilot study was over a 11-week period. Variables to be considered include the Grade 2 teacher's absence for 14 days, the technical problems encountered by the Grade 3 class and overall student absences. Taking these into consideration, the progress made is excellent. There is every indication that the AWARD program can be used successfully as part of a balanced literacy program or stand alone to support students' learning.

Wendy Dorset

References

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Appendix

1. AWARD Reading Level Correlation chart
2. Sample Student Progress History
3. A Research Investigation to Assess the AWARD Reading Program's Effectiveness in Developing Literacy Achievement for Kindergarten to Grade 2 Students (NYC July 2009)
4. San Diego Research—5 week study (2009)

AWARD Reading Level Correlation Chart

Literacy Stage	AWARD Levels	Reading Recovery	Fountas-Pinnell Guided Reading	DRA	Grade Level	Lexile Levels	
Emergent	Magenta	1	A	A	Kindergarten		
		2	B	1			
	Red	3	C	2			
		4		3			
		5		4			
Early	Yellow	6	D	6	Grade 1		
		7	E	8			
		8					
	Blue	9	F	10			
		10					
		11	G	12			
Early Fluency	Green	12	H	14	Grade 2		
		13					
		14	I	16			
Fluency	Orange	15	J, K	20		Grade 2	
		16					
	Light Blue	17-18		28			300-399
	Purple	19-20	L, M			400-499	
Self-Extending	Gold	20+	N	30	Grade 3		
	Silver			34			
	Dark Green		O, P	38			500-599
						600-699	

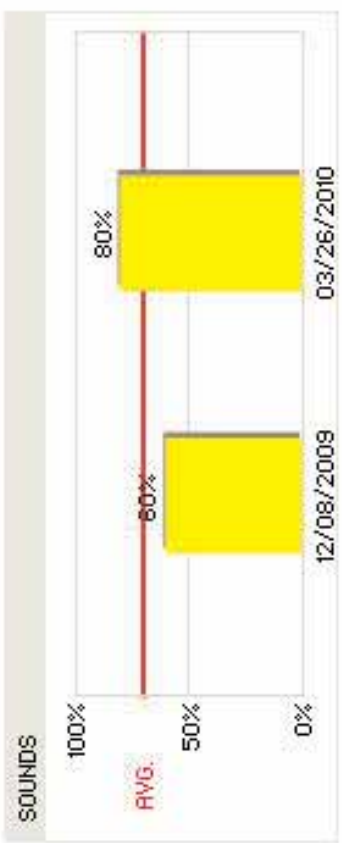
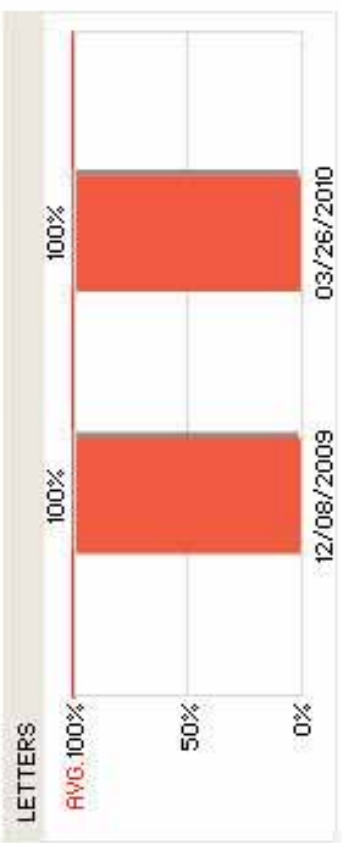
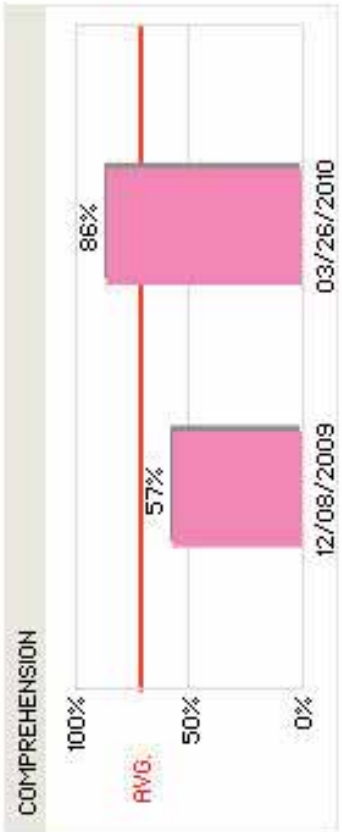
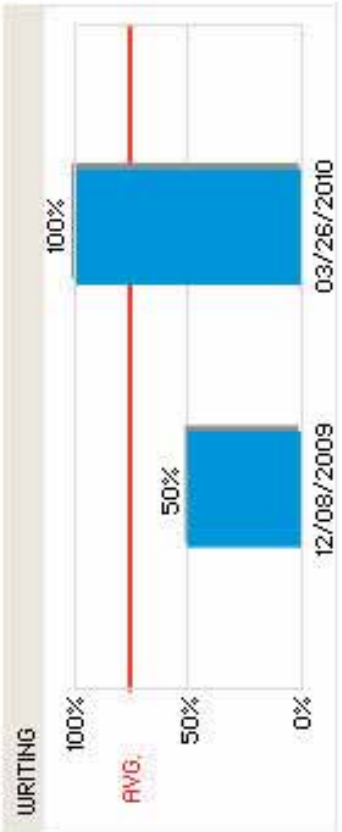
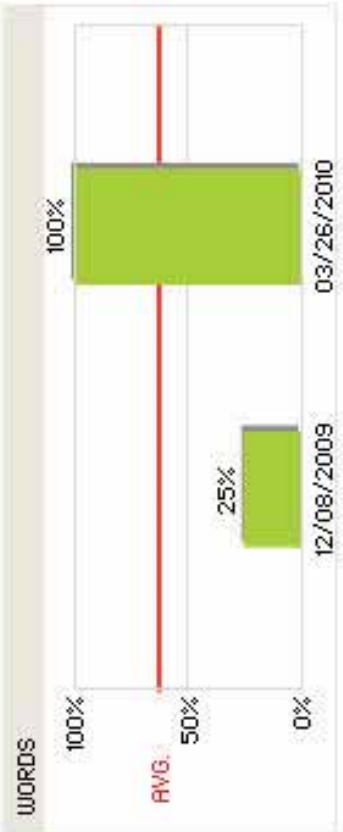


April 1, 2010

STUDENT PROGRESS - HISTORY



STUDENT
 AGE: 6
 SCHOOL:
 CLASS: Bilingual Kindergarten
 TEACHER: School Administrator
 STORY: At the Zoo
 TEST DATE: 03/26/2010



Print

View test details

View history

View bar chart

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