

High school students in Kentucky improve ACT Reading scores after Reading Assistant use

Scientific Learning Research Briefings: 17(7)

Study Objectives

Educators at Conner High School, in the Boone County School District, wished to evaluate the effectiveness of providing guided oral reading practice with an individualized, computer-based tutor for improving the reading achievement of struggling high school students.

Methodology

Educators were trained in:

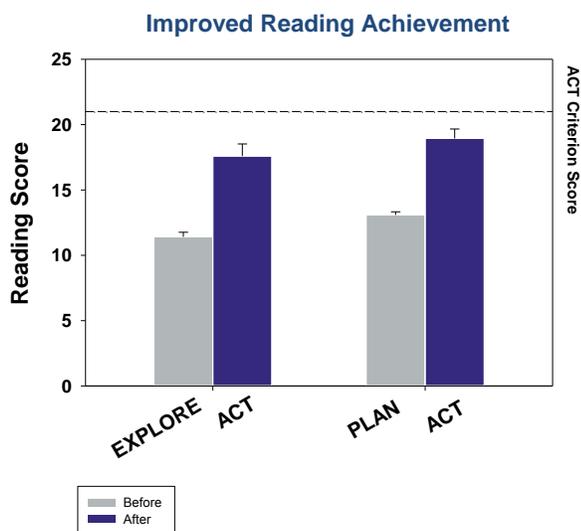
- Current research on the relationship between fluency and comprehension, and how guided oral reading practice can impact reading improvement;
- Effective implementation techniques;
- Use of Progress Tracker or MySciLEARN reports to monitor student performance;
- Appropriate measures for testing and evaluation.

District schools use the ACT Educational Planning and Assessment System tests: EXPLORE (8th grade), PLAN (10th grade), and ACT (11th grade). Conner High students who fell below criterion on the reading portion of the EXPLORE or the PLAN were placed on Reading Assistant, and periodically re-tested with practice versions of the ACT.

On average, the study participants used the Reading Assistant software for 37 days over a period of 4 months. For 2 to 3 days per week, the students used either the 30-minute protocol in a pull-out format, or the 40-minute protocol as part of a reading class.

Assessment Results

The 27 ninth graders in this study took the EXPLORE in the spring prior to the study year; the 33 tenth graders and 1 twelfth grader in this study took the PLAN in the fall of the study year. All participants took practice versions of the ACT in the winter or spring of the study year. While these tests have different benchmark criteria, they are all scored on the same scale, allowing direct comparisons.



At the beginning of this study, the students' average reading score was 12.3. After Reading Assistant use, the group average increased to 18.3, for their best-effort tests. This increase is statistically significant ($t(60) = 11.8$; $p < 0.001$). Of the 61 students, 54 (89%) improved their score, and 20 (33%) met or exceeded the ACT benchmark score of 21 points.

Educational Gains

After using Reading Assistant software for guided oral reading practice, the students in this study gained an average of 6 points on the ACT, with 89% of the students showing gains, and 33% "testing out" of the intervention by reaching the ACT benchmark score.



Study Overview

School Years:

2011-2012, 2012-2013

Number of Students:

61 students

Number of Schools:

1 school

Grade Levels:

9th, 10th, & 12th grades

Products Used:

Reading Assistant

Assessment Tools Used:

ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System:
EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT

Contact Us to Learn More:
Phone: 1-888-282-7401 (US & Canada)
Email: info@scilearn.com
www.scientificlearning.com

Scientific
Learning®