

IOWAREADS Reading Remediation Program Results

Introduction

IOWAREADS utilizes the Direct Instruction (DI) curriculums from the National Institute for Direct Instruction (NIFDI) to build the literacy skills of the low income, at risk students we enroll in our programs. NIFDI has 3 main curriculums in their arsenal:

- “Corrective Reading” (CR) – a remedial curriculum for grade 4-12 students who have had beginning reading instruction from other curriculums and who have struggled to become proficient with the instructional methods used by these other approaches.
- “Reading Mastery” (RM) – the primary beginning reading curriculum for grades K-3.
- “FUNNIX” – A beginning reading curriculum that has been adapted to computer presented lessons intended primarily for parents to utilize with their pre-K children.

IOWAREADS approach is to avoid competing with the public schools by NOT becoming involved in the main effort during grades K-3 to teach beginning reading skills. Our main effort is to enter the picture at the beginning of grade 3 for children who are measurably below grade level in reading ability and use the Corrective Reading (CR) curriculum to fill in the skill sets these students have failed to acquire from the curriculum chosen by the school. While the Corrective Reading curriculum is designed for grades 4-12, the grade 3 regular curriculums used by the schools are focused on building comprehension, so we are allowed (and encouraged to) begin remediating decoding shortfalls in the 3rd grade. NIFDI guidelines do not allow us to introduce CR comprehension curriculums until the student is in grade 4, so our basic approach is to make a strong effort to remediate the major portion of decoding shortfalls in grade 3 and offer comprehension instruction in grades 4 and 5.

Grade 3 Results –SRI Test

IOWAREADS/ B&G CLUB 3 Semester SRI Score Gain

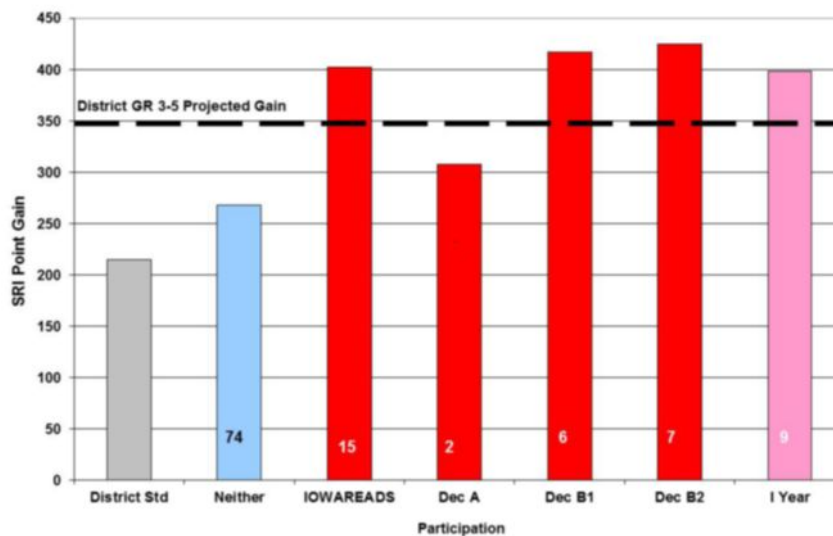


Chart I

Chart I shows the results of our grade 3 effort during the most recent school year (2014-15) program. We enrolled about 30 students who had decoding issues, all from the bottom half of the 97 students in grade 3 at our partner school. Of the 30 enrolled, 23 participated on a regular basis throughout the school year. We measure the success of our efforts by analyzing the testing conducted by the school which used the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) test to measure progress in grades 3 and above. The standard the local district is for 3rd graders to improve by 170 points from the entry test administered in August to the exit test administered in the following May. In actuality, the 74 students of the school who were not participants in our program improved by 157 points as a result of the normal district required curriculum, and presumably our students would have improved by 157 points without the after school program.

There were a total of 23 students who participated the full program, with them starting at 3 different entry points into the curriculum; Decoding A (3), Decoding B1 (12) and Decoding B2 (8). These entry points were determined by a short placement test that is part of the program administrative practices. Students in Decoding A are still learning sounds, while Decoding B1 is forming whole words and Decoding B2 is building fluency, speed and confidence.

The weakest reading students (3 enrolled) in our program started with the Decoding A curriculum and met 5 days per week immediately after school for the full year and completed both the Decoding A and Decoding B1 curriculum. These students improved an average of 323 points over the year, or more than twice the 157 points of their classmates. This impressive doubling of the improvement of their classmates still understates the level of improvement of these students, as the SRI test sets the zero point at a level of literacy skill equal to that expected of a student on grade level for grade 3 and Decoding A placements would place well below zero if the test allowed that, so they have to complete most of the Decoding A curriculum just to get their score to register above zero.

The students in Decoding B1 and Decoding B2 met 3 times per week and completed the full 65 lessons of their program. The Decoding B1 groups improved 259 points over the course of the year or 102 points more than their classmates. The Decoding B2 students improved 261 points over the course of the year or 104 points more than their classmates.

Grade 4 Results – Two Year Participants

Chart II on the next page shows the results of the program on students who participated for 2 consecutive years, with the notation being their beginning curriculum in year 1. There had originally been 28 students participating in the 2013-14 school year, with 24 of these students remaining at the same school for the 2014-15 school year. Of the 24 students still there, 15 of them participated in a second year of our reading program. The students who had been in Decoding A as 3rd graders had completed all of Decoding A and 47 lessons (of 65) of the Decoding B1 the first year and all went to Decoding B2 as 4th graders. The 6 students who had started Decoding B1 had completed that program as well as 41 of the 65 decoding B2 lessons and went into Comprehension B1 as 4th graders. Also, the 7 students who had started in Decoding B2 as 3rd graders did Comprehension B1 as 4th graders.

As with the 3rd grade comparisons in the previous section, the test utilized was the SRI test conducted by the district and the comparison would be with those students not participating in our program. As 3rd graders, these students had improved 157 points (vs. the district goal of 170 points) over the year, and as 4th graders they improved another 83 points (vs the district grade 4 goal of 85 points), for a 2 year cumulative improvement of 240 points. Our students improved by a 2 year total of

490 points, doubling the score of their non-participating classmates. In fact, with their gain of 490 points, our students 2 year growth was 44% above the district three year target for grades 3-5.

Corrective Reading Impact

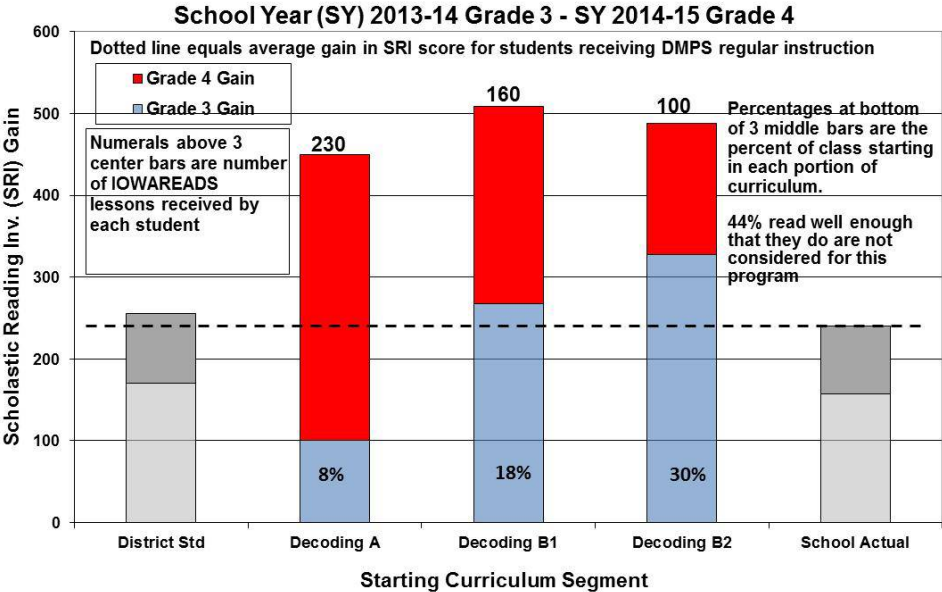


Chart II

These results are very impressive for all entry points, but there are some differences, especially with those starting at Decoding A and Decoding B1. In School year 2013-14 we used the results of school testing for the first time, and had conducted our own Woodcock Reading Mastery Testing in the fall, as we did not know at the start that we would have access to school test results. This took till until about November 1st to accomplish, so we started about 6 weeks later than is now the case and completed 107 lessons with the students who started in Decoding A and 92 with the students who started in Decoding B1. The SRI test has the ability to score below zero, and our decoding A students showed little progress until they entered the Decoding B1 curriculum, which accounts for why they only improved 443 points over the two years (only 100 points the first year and 343 the second), while the Decoding B1 students show progress on the SRI test from the time they start that curriculum. They improved 514 points despite having 15 less lessons than their Decoding A counterparts. The students who started with Decoding B2 had the 65 lessons of that curriculum followed by the Comprehension B1 program and gained about 483 points from the 2 years of our program.

The pink bar shows the progress over the 2 years of the 9 students who participated in year one of the program but not the second year. Most of these Started as Decoding A or Decoding B1 students who were not in the Boys and Girls Club but who stayed after school for our program. As they did not or could not join Club, they could not continue in the Decoding B2 or Comprehension curriculums as these are offered an hour or more after school dismisses and Club membership is required. The gains they made continued to grow in 4th grade despite not participating. They did not grow as much, but their 4th grade scores grew far beyond the 85 points of those who had experienced NO Corrective Reading.

Kindergarten – The FUNNIX Program

Four years ago we introduced a new curriculum, FUNNIX, to our efforts at the kindergarten level. This is not an effort to compete with the schools, but it is clear that some of the children enter kindergarten with absolutely no beginning knowledge of letters and sounds, while others have been taught these basic skills by their parents or grand-parents and are at a great disadvantage with their peers, and are likely to remain so throughout the grade K-3 “learn to read” period. Our intent is to use the curriculum designed for parents to use to prepare their pre-K children for entering school, except we use it during the kindergarten year to catch them up in the skills that many of their peers learned at home before entering the school system. Once these children are through kindergarten, we back away and don’t re-engage (except in rare circumstances) again until these children reach grade 3.

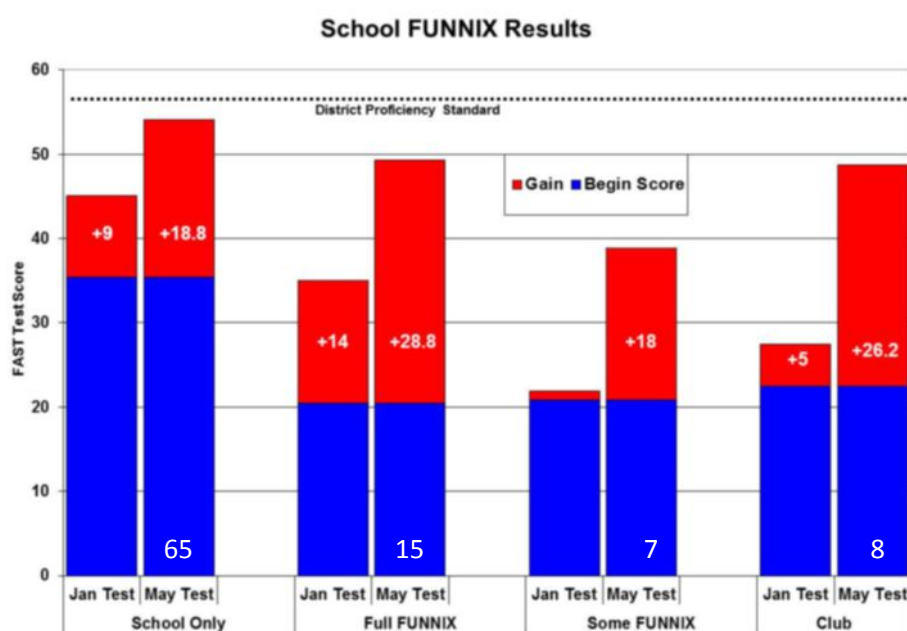


Chart III – FUNNIX School Year 2014-15

Chart III shows the results of our FUNNIX program at the school for the School Year 2014-15. We enrolled about 30 students in 3 situations of 7-15 in each. The left most pair of bars is the baseline of approximately 65 students who were not selected for the program and who entered K with an average Formative Assessment for Students and Teachers (FAST) test score of 35. These students improved by an average of 9 points by January and 18.8 points by late May. The group of 15 students labeled Full FUNNIX were students who did not belong to the Clubs and who received an average of 3.5 lessons per week of FUNNIX (Half did 4 days per week and half did 3 days per week based on our teacher availability). These students started with an average score of 20.4 and improved by a total of 28.8 points over the course of the school year, nearly closing the gap with their better prepared peers.

In selecting the students to participate, we started by selecting the 9 lowest from each of the 4 classrooms, expecting that at least 3-4 from each class would be Club members, and leaving no more than 6 that needed to participate during the school day. However, one of the classes had all 9 as non-Club members and another had 8 non-Club members, so we needed a third school hour teacher and

could not recruit one until Dec 10 and then lost that teacher in Mid-March, so these children had only about 20-25 lessons during their participation, making little progress. The 8 members of the Clubs who participated only during after school Club hours received 3 lessons per week, the maximum the Club will allow, and had lower attendance than school hour children, so they started at an average FAST score of 22 and improved 26.2 points over the period of the program. On average they received 10-12 lessons less than the school hour “Full FUNNIX” participants and improved almost as much as the “Full FUNNIX” students. They showed growth of 40% more on the FAST test score than those receiving only school program instruction.

Third Grade – The FUNNIX Program Impact

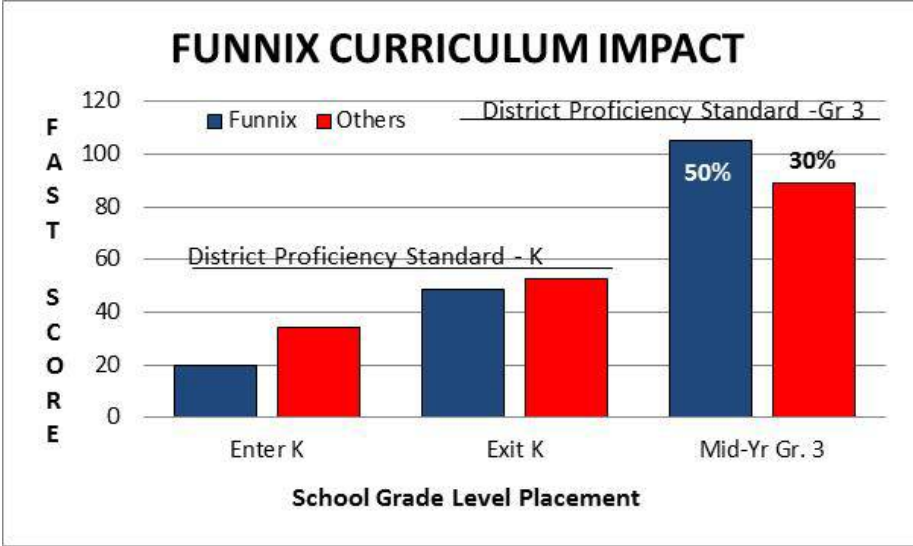


Chart IV – FUNNIX Impact on Grade 3

This is now the fourth year since we started offering FUNNIX to entering unprepared kindergarteners, and we can now measure the impact of that early grade intervention on the pool of students as we screen them for our main grade 3-5 intervention. The pairs of bars on the left and center of the chart show the results of the average of the “Full FUNNIX” and Club participants vs the non-participants in last year’s FUNNIX program (These are not the identical kids that are now 3rd graders as the schools have changed tests over that time and we have no FAST test results for the current grade 3 students)

There were 15 participants in our initial FUNNIX Program and 10 of them still attend this school. These 15 participants were chosen from the bottom third of entering students and now have progressed to the point where when tested at the mid-point of their 3rd grade year, outscore their better prepared classmates (when entering kindergarten) by 16 points on the FAST test and 50% of them meet the District proficiency goal, whereas only 30% of the students who did not receive FUNNIX as kindergarteners met the district proficiency standard.