A Study to Determine if *Read Well®* is Effective with Students Identified with Behavior Challenges

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of teaching *Read Well*® on student growth in reading among Kindergarten and first-grade students qualifying for this Early Primary program mild behavior and learning disabilities that impact their ability to persist in their own learning. There were 7 participants, broken into 2 groups based on their placement test. Each student stayed within their groups the whole time (meaning no students fall behind) and each student increased in their reading levels after taking an end of the assessment. Baseline data, weekly assessments, observational data and teacher input tracked the growth of students while using *Read Well*®. The results indicate that all students demonstrated reading growth and an increase in engagement and willingness to want to read. All students made gains each week and there were no differences in gains between Kindergarten and first graders, however it was inconclusive whether the growth was a direct result of using the *Read Well*®.

Introduction

There are many programs, interventions and curricula available for teachers. But is this the right one for Early Primary? In an Early Primary classroom, students are in a self-contained environment due to their various challenges that would impede their learning in a general education classroom. They are supported with Individual Education Plans which are developed by a team of educators and parents to aid in their student's development. Such goals include but are not limited to social and emotional skills or self-regulation such as keeping hands to self and academic goals such as: letter identification or sounds.

Since students in this program can have access to a general education setting, the principal wanted to ensure that whatever was used during this reading intervention time aligned with what other teachers in our building were going to be using during the reading intervention. It was important to her that alignment was present so that when these students integrated into the general education classroom, they would be familiar with the content. After collaboration with other Kindergarten and first grade teachers, it was determined that *Read Well*® would be the program that is used.

Problem Statement

Reading, while an essential skill in early development is also a very demanding skill. When students are lacking social and emotional learning or self-regulation skills or already experiencing challenges in their learning this can be daunting. In those cases, the task of reading is not whether or not one can "code or decode" but more like "why is it important to me" and "why should I even try?" The difficulty is often trying to find the "right" intervention that will maintain interest of the students so that they can overcome such challenges, but what is the "right intervention"? Will *Read Well*® be the intervention that best supports students with behavior

challenges in the area of reading? Will this intervention help students stay engaged at the same time as breaking down the skills so that students that are faced with so many other challenges do not become more overwhelmed?

Rationale

Determining whether or not *Read Well*® will support students in a special education classroom in the area of reading will provide educators with support to use this reading intervention in other "like" classrooms. If *Read Well*® shows that it can be an effective resource, then it will help teachers to quickly provide an effective intervention, thus closing the gap in further skills.

According to OSPI, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language arts for Kindergarten are the following:

- (ELA) CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.2.B: Count, pronounce, blend, and segment syllables in spoken words;
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.2.C: Blend and segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.K.2.D: Isolate and pronounce the initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in three-phoneme (consonant-vowel-consonant, or CVC) words. This does not include CVCs ending with /l/, /r/, or /x/.

In contrast, first graders need to be able to:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.1.2.B Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds (phonemes), including consonant blends;

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.1.2.C Isolate and pronounce initial, medial vowel, and final sounds (phonemes) in spoken single-syllable words;
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RF.1.2.D Segment spoken single-syllable words into their complete sequence of individual sounds (phonemes).

Read Well® is a reading curriculum to increase the literacy abilities of students in Kindergarten and grade 1. The program provides instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency.

If *Read Well*® is effective in supporting students in the area of reading, then having this curriculum at the fingertips of educators can increase the success of students being able to reach

Literature Review

There are many things to consider when determining the most effective curriculum to support students in reading. Some topics of suggestion are: What is the benefit heterogeneous vs homogeneous groups? What is the most important skill to start with phonics or phonemic awareness? How does the design for *Read Well*® support students with special needs?

Heterogeneous vs Homogeneous

According to Davies (2019), "Heterogeneous grouping is when a diverse group of students is put in the same cooperative learning group" (para. 9). This is a group that consists of students who represent a variety of different levels. "Homogeneous grouping is the distribution of students, who function at similar academic, social, and emotional levels, being placed in the same cooperative learning group together" (Davies, 2019, para. 10). Students are able to learn from each other's differences.

Investigating the use of heterogenous vs homogenous grouping, Vaites (2019) states that "There's nothing about a kid's reading level alone that shows what skills he or she is missing…

i.e., what he or she needs to grow as a reader. Does a student need support with decoding or fluency? A reading level doesn't tell you" (para. 6). Therefore, having students grouped solely by a placement test will not support the needs of the individual student. Sparks (2019) agrees with Vaites, stating "….evidence suggests that the practice may be less beneficial than teachers think: It can exacerbate achievement gaps and even slow reading growth for some children unless the groups are fluid and focused on skills rather than overall achievement" (para. 2).

This evidence is based on theoretical research conducted by Marshall Jean. This study consisted of Kindergarten Cohort of 1998 and 2010. The purpose of the research was to determine "how much mobility between group levels exists as students change and how have these opportunities changed over time, are descriptive" (Marshall, 2020, para. 3). This research stated "the finding that assignment to a low-ranking group discourages students from learning supports reforms to this practice – particularly, reforms that ensure that students assigned to low-ranking groups receive instruction that is appropriately challenging and engaging" (Marshall, 2020, para 6.).

However, this blog, *Grouping Students Who Struggle with Reading* discusses the effectiveness of using small groups with students with disabilities. A meta-analysis cited by Elbaum, et al (2000) showed that there was a higher effect size associated with students in small groups. Therefore, using small groups for reading is suggested to be more effective for students with varied ability.

Strategies

What should be the first focus for teaching students to read? There are many components that support the development of reading. Determining which component to focus on first can be challenging.

According to Reading Resources (2019) “Phonics is the method of teaching beginning readers to connect the sounds of spoken language with letters or a group of letters and yes, part of phonics instruction involves the teaching of children to blend the sounds of letters together to form words (technically referred to as decoding skills)” (para. 1) While, “Phonological Awareness is the awareness of sounds only. It is void of print. No letters are introduced, no sound to symbol correspondence is taught” (para. 2).

One research study conducted in 2017 suggest that phonics-based teaching is a strong indicator for one’s ability to read. The study consisted of 24 English-speaking adults they were given 2 sets of 24 novel words (e.g., /buv/, /sig/), to read and they were written in 2 different unfamiliar orthographies. Participants had 8 days to learn to read the novel words. Taylor, et al discusses the results stating:

> results showed striking benefits of print-sound training on reading aloud, generalization, and comprehension of single words. Univariate analyses of fMRI data collected at the end of training showed that print-meaning relative to print-sound relative training increased neural effort in dorsal pathway regions involved in reading aloud. Our results suggest that early literacy education should focus on the systematicities present in print-to-sound relationships in alphabetic languages, rather than teaching meaning-based strategies” (2017, para. 1).

Another study resulted in phonological awareness showing strong predictors in reading. According to this journal, The Relationship Between Phonological Awareness and Reading and Spelling Achievement Eleven Years Later, there was a phonological analysis study that consisted of 11 boys and 13 girls. This study consisted of measuring these students’ ability to read in kindergarten and then 11 years later doing a follow-report to determine whether or not there was

any significant correlation. “The results indicated that phonological awareness ability assessed during kindergarten (via the Auditory Analysis Test) was a significant predictor of word identification and spelling skills 11 years (MacDonald & Cornwall, 1995 para. 1)”.

However, there could be another option as well. Further research also suggests that “many people with Learning Disabilities (LD) have great difficulty in being able to use a phonics approach either because they cannot hear the different sounds (phonological awareness) or they may have difficulty in blending sounds together” (Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, 2018, para. 23). Therefore, teaching phonics or phonological awareness may not adequately support the student since their challenges differ in their ability to hear and blend sounds. According to Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (2018):

> Current research suggests a morphological approach helps a reader determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word by enabling the reader to segment, or break down, a word into its root word and its affixes” may support students with disabilities. This study consisted of participants from preschool to the eighth grade (para. 20).

The authors, Bowers, et al. (2010) researched the effects of morphological instruction. The areas that were focused on were “(a) on reading, spelling, vocabulary, and morphological skills, (b) for less able readers versus undifferentiated samples, (c) for younger versus older students and (d) in combination with instruction of other literacy skills or in isolation” (para. 1).

The research indicated that this approach benefits learners, brings benefit to “less able reader. However, the results showed that this approach “ is more effective when combined with other aspects of literacy instruction” (Bowers, et al. 2010, para. 3).

Since students with learning disabilities may find it challenging to hear or identify sounds, the morphological approach is shown to provide students an opportunity to be able to

read. Using this approach could allow students to learn the patterns of how words are spelled and learn the meaning of such words as they are written. Yet, there are authors that disagree on prioritizing a strategy whether it be teaching phonics, phonemic awareness or even having a morphological approach, is not necessary.

According to the article: The Best Practices of Comprehension and Instruction it is important to not just focus on a particular strategy, but figuring out what it will take for a student to be able to read. While comprehension and fluency are important, one is not more important than the other only focusing on one component could set students up for failure. Understanding the deficit and "by cultivating an environment that value the learner as inextricably linked to their own learning process, their agency will improve and positively affect their ability to transform into lifelong learners who are strategic and reflective" (Almasi, & Hart, 2011, p. 21 para. 2).

Margaritondo (2015) would agree as she states: "Phonics and Phonemic Awareness are similar; however, they serve two distinctive purposes. Proficient use of both skills is the first step in the journey of becoming literate" (para. 5). Both authors agree that both strategies are important to helping students learn to read but neither strategy should be more emphasized over the other.

***Read Well*® Design**

What is Read Well's design? How is it used? What is the purpose? Is it effective? These are a few questions that come to mind when determining if ***Read Well***® is beneficial for students with behaviors affecting learning. According to ***Read Well***® Research Foundation (2020),

> To be successful and compete in a global economy in the 21st century, students must be not only literate, but also capable of analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing, and drawing

> cogent conclusions about written material independently, which will lead them to become productive problem solver (para. 1).

One study (Frasco, 2008) that was conducted included 34 English Language Learners in the 1st grade to determine the effectiveness of Read Well. In this study, there were 34 participants in total. They divided the group in half. Seventeen of the students used *Read Well* ® as their core reading program while the other 17 students used a different program called McMillan/McGraw-Hill 2003 as their main program. What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) considers the extent of evidence for *Read Well* ® to be small for both reading achievement and English language development for English language learners" (2019, p. 3 para. 4). According to the WWC (2019), in the area of reading achievement, the results indicated that:

> There was not statistically significant difference in reading gains, as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Nonsense Word Fluency subtest, and a not statistically significant difference in fluency and comprehension gains, as measured by the Gray's Oral Reading Test–Fourth Edition (GORT-4) (p. 3 para. 5).

However, in the area of English language development the results indicated "a positive and statistically significant difference in vocabulary gains as measured by the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test–Third Edition (PPVT-III)" (What Works Clearinghouse, 2010, p.4 para. 2).

Read Well (2020) describes alignment with "The Orton-Gillingham approach" which is a reading instruction that was developed in the 1930s to address individuals with language disabilities, particularly dyslexia. The Gillingham Manual expounded the virtues of specific techniques that were thought to be effective for students with specific learning disabilities. This Stating "***Read Well***® is not only designed to ensure that students with language disabilities can read words, but also to ensure that all students can read with understanding—including those

with processing disabilities, low IQs, or other factors that place them at-risk" (Read Well, 2020, para. 1).

In the experimental study called "Evaluating the Effectiveness of ***Read Well***® Kindergarten," " Kindergarten teachers in 24 elementary schools in New Mexico and Oregon were randomly assigned, by school, to teach RWK or their own program (Gunn, Smolkowski, & Vadasy, 2011, para. 1). This study was implemented to see if ***Read Well***® was effective in teaching students to read independently. "The findings suggest the potential efficacy of RWK in conjunction with frequent opportunities for independent practice for developing beginning reading skills" Gunn, et al,, 2011, para.1).

A comparison analysis was conducted to determine the effectiveness of Read Well versus Read First, in a rural general education classroom setting. This study included 195 kindergarten students, 213 first-grade students, and 191 second-grade students (Anglin, 2017, p. 13, para.1). The research took place to evaluate results of the curricula in three areas:

1. Are there significant differences in 2014-2015 SAT10 scores between male and female kindergarten students who received Read Well instruction and kindergarten grade male and female students who did not receive Read Well instruction?
2. Are there significant differences in 2014-2015 SAT10 scores between male and female first-grade students who received Read Well instruction and first grade male and female students who did not receive Read Well instruction?
3. Are there significant differences in 2014-2015 SAT10 scores between male and female second-grade students who received Read Well instruction and second-grade male and female students who did not receive Read Well instruction? (Anglin, 2017, p. 14 para. 3)

Results reported that while females scored higher than males, there were no significant

differences in the 2014-2015 spring SAT10 total reading scale sores found between males and females at any of the grade levels tested. Results showed that kindergarten and first-grade Read Well students scored higher than kindergarten and first-grade Reading Street students. The results showed that second grade Reading Street students scored higher than the second-grade Read Well students. The only significant difference between the two curriculum groups was found at the first-grade level, p = .000, with Read Well students scoring higher (Anglin, 2017, p.78 para. 3)

Question

1. 1s *Read Well*® an effective intervention to help Kindergarten and first grade students in a self-contained, behavior intervention special education classroom learn to read?
2. Were there differences in gains made between Kindergarteners and first graders?
3. Did engagement in reading change?

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of teaching *Read Well*® on student growth in reading among Kindergarten and first-grade students in a self-contained, behavior intervention, special education classroom.

Methodology

This action research study using mix modes for data analysis to determine the impact of teaching *Read Well*® on student learning. To begin all students were given a baseline assessment to determine how the students would be grouped. Once the placement test was given students were placed in two groups; Kindergarten and first grade; the lead teacher taught the Kindergarten group, while another educator led the 1st grade group. The data that was collected during these six weeks included both qualitative and quantitative data.

Qualitative Data

Every day an engagement observational journal was kept, answering three questions for each student. The questions were: Are they engaged? Why/Why not? How long did they stay engaged and I also had a place to add any additional comments such as: Students did not eat breakfast, parents reported students had lack of sleep. Notes were made about anything that could have contributed to the 'lack of engagement'. The data concluded that, whole class engagement went up. As the weeks progressed, engagement for students increased across the board.

For the first week, engagement for the whole class was average of 29% meaning that on average 29% of the time all students were during the whole 20 minutes. The second week engagement was at 28% and it went up to 34% of the time by week 3. We then decided to transition to a 4-day week study because we wanted to see if by doing 4 days and then having a celebration on the 5th day would show more engagement. We transitioned to a 4-day plan and engagement continue to increase: Week 4 engagement increased to 58%. Week 5 increasing to 73% and by week 6 the average engagement was 78%.

We also met weekly as a team to analyze the engagement data and to strategize tools that would increase engagement such as pacing, time of day, providing brain breaks before and afternoon reading group, break the reading into smaller parts. All of these strategies were discussed. As a team we agreed upon changing the weekly plan from a 5-day plan to a 4-day plan to give students a "reward" day at the end of the week. We also implemented brain breaks before and after reading group so that students would have some opportunity for movement before the intervention time but also have something to look forward to afterwards. This proved to support increased engagement.

Quantitative data/ Data Gathering Instruments/Assessments

There were three assessments used to collect data for analysis.

Assessment #1 : *Read Well*® Placement test. The same assessment was used for baseline. They measured student proficiency before and after the intervention. This test was done 1:1 Students pointed to the letters and identified what they know. This assessment assisted in identifying what group a student would benefit from best.

Assessment #2: STAR Early Literacy. This assessment measured student growth while using the *Read Well*® curriculum. It was conducted individually on the student's iPad. The test is electronic and students were able to hear the question but had to be able to read the answer in order to make the correct choice.

Assessment #3: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) This assessment is taken in the fall, winter, and spring. It measures proficiency in foundational skills. This assessment will provide long-term data regarding the efficiency of *Read Well*® and a clear assessment for student reading abilities as the intervention progresses

Intervention

The intervention was conducted over approximately 6 weeks. We used the protocol provided by *Read Well*® and implemented it with fidelity. Prior to beginning *Read Well*®, I assessed each student by giving them a placement assessment that is part of the *Read Well*® program. After discussing the results of the placement assessment with my team, it was determined that due to students being unfamiliar with the curriculum it would be best to start them in Preludes A-C. These units are designed to help students understand the routine of the curriculum. The placement assessment showed students needed to all start with Prelude A-C. I

taught prelude A-C as a whole group so that students could get in the routine of expectations. Preludes were given based on a 3-day plan:

Prelude A	Cover Decoding Practice 1 Story 1 Decoding Practice 2 Story 2 **Notes:**	Cover Decoding Practice 3 Story 3 Decoding Practice 4 Story 4 **Notes:**	Cover Decoding Practice 5 Story 5 Assess/Activity **Notes:**	_____ P NP _____ P NP _____ P NP _____ P NP P=Pass NP=No Pass

Day 1-3 Each lesson began with students writing their name on the first page of the magazine (cover). Then we went around the table and students introduced themselves by saying "I'm ____" and pointing with their tracking finger under each word. We then did the first page of the magazine, which was a maze of letters. We practiced the strategy "I do, we do you do". The first time I used my tracking finger and said the sounds of all the letters as I moved my finger through the maze, modeling the expectation. Then we did the same thing as a class and lastly I asked each individual to do the maze on their own. While they were working on their own, I assessed their ability to identify sounds by listening to the sounds and providing immediate feedback. We then did a decoding practice 1 exercise where students were asked to point and identify pictures words: Scissors, crayons. We then did the story 1: Students were asked to listen to me read and answer comprehension questions about what was read, we then did decode practice 2: Students are instructed to stretch and shrink words, and I introduced new sounds through smooth and bumpy blending with blend cards that are provided. Lastly, students did Story 2: Students are instructed to read only the big words and answer comprehension questions. This is followed with fidelity to the protocol provided by Read Well.

Day 3: begins the same way but ends with an assessment to determine if students can move beyond the current prelude.

Prelude B-C follows the same routine.

After the first 3 lessons, I retested students to determine where they would initially place. The findings revealed that all the Kindergartners were on the same reading level and the first graders were on the same reading level. Thus, two separate groups would be appropriate moving forward. Both groups started with a five-day plan that looked like this:

Kindergarten

Day1: cover: Decoding practice 1 and story 1

Day 2 Cover Decoding practice 2 and story 2

Day 3: Cover, Decoding practice 3 and story 3

Day 4: Cover, Decoding Practice 4 and story 4

Day-5 Assessment

Each activity included the same instruments as the preludes**.**

1st Grade

Day 1:

Decoding Practice-includes a new sound introduction where students echo the sounds and read the words.

New sound practice -where students write the featured new sound they are asked to read the poem and trace the "featured" letter of that unit.

Stretch and Shrink-Student take the word and stretch it out so that they can identify all the sounds.

Tracking words: students use their index finger and say the picture words as they point.

Introduce a new word: Students are asked to trace the spelling of the new word then use words in a sentence.

Story 1: Students read a story that features the new words and sounds page-by page chorally, then independently.

Skill work 1: Students are asked to trace the featured letter and write it independently.

Day 2:

Decoding Practice (following the same format as 1)

Story 2

Skill-work 2

Day 3 Decoding Practice 3/Story 3/Skill-work 3

Day 4: Decoding Practice 4/ Story 4/ Skill-work 4

Day 5 Review and assess

However, after noticing engagement decreasing, the team decided to implement the 4-day plan, it looks like this:

Kindergarten

Day 1: Cover, decoding practice 1, story 1-Decode practice 2/story 2

Day 2: Cover: Decoding practice 3, story 3

Day 3 Cover: Decoding Practice 4, story 4

Day 4: Review/ Assess

Day 5-Fun activity to celebrate success

1st grade:

Day 1-Decoding Practice/Story 1/Skill work 1/Decoding Practice 2/Story 2 /Skill-work 2

Day 2: Decoding practice 3/story 3/Skill-work 3/Decoding practice 3/story 4/; Skill-work 4

Day 3: Decoding practice review: Students reviewed all new sounds and new words/

Story Review: Students answered comprehension questions of the whole story

Day 4: Assessment

Day 5 Fun activity of celebration.

Results

Findings:

Chart 1: Kindergarten DIBELS COMPOSITE SCORES:

The areas that were measured are: First sound fluency (FSF), Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF), Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) and Letter Name Fluency (LNF).

The Kindergarten DIBELS scores reflect a growth from the Fall scores to the Winters Scores. However, these results include measurements that were not assessed in the fall. Therefore, this does not give a clear picture of reflection from what the students knew in the Fall and what they know now in the Winter. The only areas that are measured in both Fall and Winter are First Sound Fluency and Letter Naming Fluency.

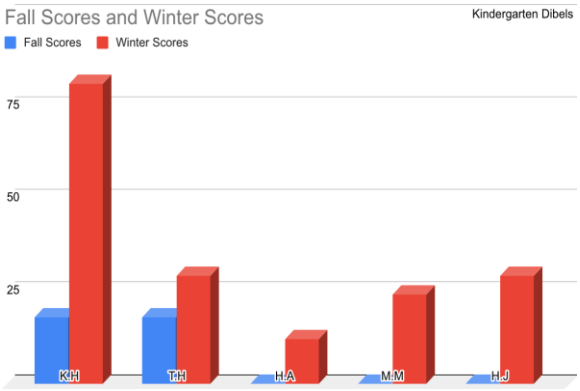


Chart 2: Kindergarten DIBELS scores for First Sound Fluency

Measures the students' ability to hear the first sounds of a word. A word is read, and students are asked to say the first sound.

This measurement demonstrates the gains made per student from Fall and Winter in the ability to identify first sounds. Most students demonstrated gains in this area but the gains were minimal.

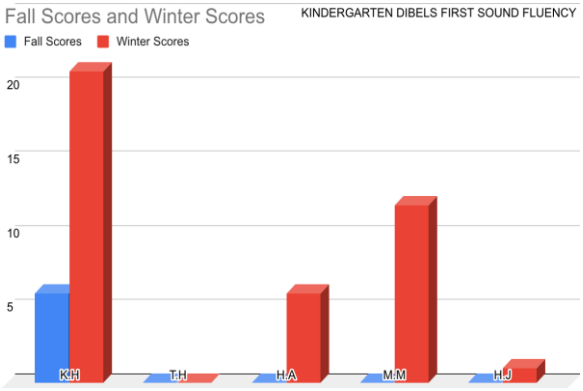


Chart 3: Kindergarten DIBELS: Letter Name Fluency (LNF).

This chart displays the results for students in the area of Letter Name Fluency: The assessor points to the letter and asks the students to say the name.

The analysis of this chart displays that most students made significant growth with naming letters. However, that is not necessarily a correlation to this intervention alone. In the classroom there are multiple opportunities to work building the skill to name letters

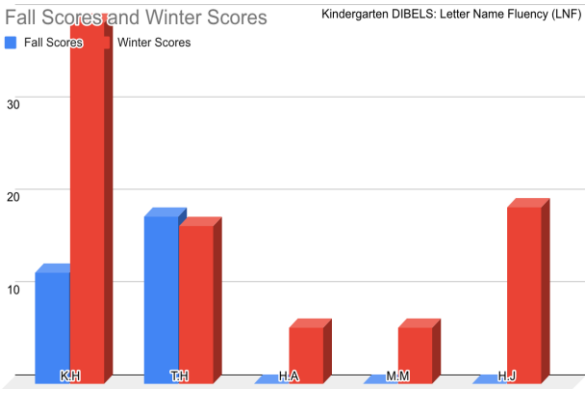


Chart 4: 1st Grade STAR EARLY READING SCORES:

Students are read a question electronically and asked to answer the question: question such: Identify letter that is different than the others, what is the middle sound you hear in the

word “bat”, or looking at this graph who has more___. Their ability to read is not really measured since the audible functions read to them.

The results indicate the both students made gains over the course of the three months. What I also noticed is big inflation in scores in November. During this time, we had different substitutes and that could be an indicator of the inflation. However, just looking at September and December scores show gains between the two.

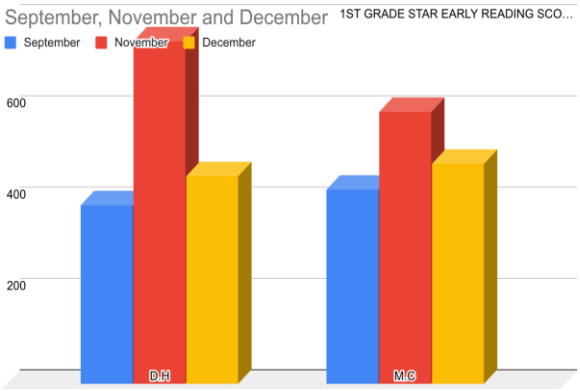


Chart 5-Composite DIBELS Scores for first grade all areas including: in the Fall the following areas were measured: Line Naming Fluency (LNF), Nonsense Word Fluency-Correct Letter Sounds (CLS), NWF-WWR (whole word reading), Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF). In the Winter the following was measured: NWF-CLS,NWF,-WWR, ORAL READING FLUENCY (ORF)- ACCURACY, ORF Errors and Words Correct.

Looking at the results of this chart and taking into consideration that different components are assessed in in the Fall than in the Winter, the results are inconclusive as to whether *Read Well*® was solely responsible for student growth.

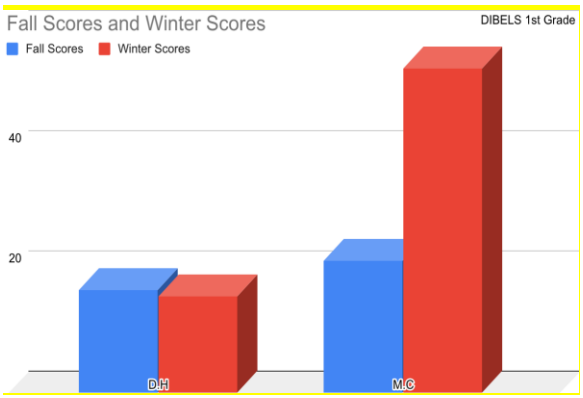


Chart 6: Nonsense Word Fluency: Correct Letters Sounds (CLS);

This chart shows student growth in the area of being able to identify the correct letter sounds in nonsense words.

The results indicate that there has been some growth in the areas of producing the correct sounds for letters put together. This indicates that first grade students are becoming more fluent in producing the sounds for letters.

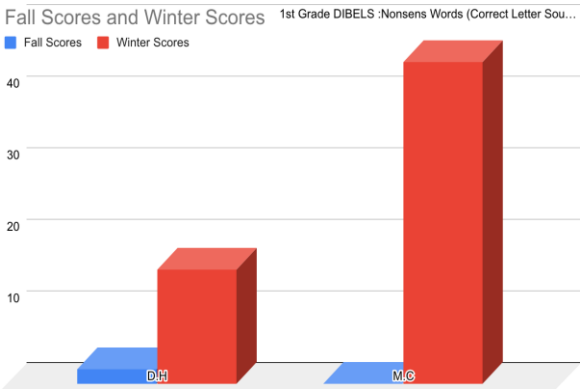


Chart 7: Nonsense Word Fluency (Whole Word Read) This chart shows student lack of growth in the area of being able to say a whole nonsense word.

The results indicate that there has been no growth in the area of reading whole word "nonsense words". *Read Well*® does not use nonsense words in the intervention, so while the

results indicate that there has been no growth in this area, are inconclusive in regards to *Read Well's* effectiveness.

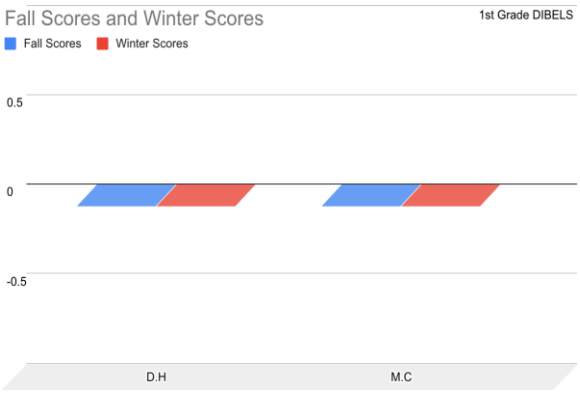


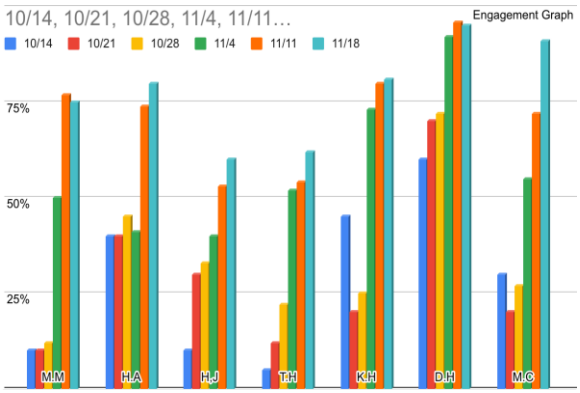
Chart 8-Engagement Data:

This chart reflects the data collected over the course of 6 weeks displaying student engagement. The first three weeks represent the engagement level when the 5-day plan was implemented. The last three weeks represent the engagement level when it was decided to use the 4-day plan.

When looking at the data of engagement it is clear that implementing the 4-day plan increased engagement for students. The team decided to make this change because after collecting engagement data in the first three weeks it was noticed that students were not wanting to move into their groups. Students made comments that "this is boring" "why do we have to learn to read" "I do not want to read ". These comments challenged our team to make a change because the students were losing their drive.

When the plan was changed to the 4-day plan, the team met and decided that it could be trial for the first 2 weeks and if we needed to make additional changes we would do that. It was also decided that students need an additional incentive to stay engaged so the team decided that if students maintained an engagement of 50% or more, there would be a celebration on Friday.

The results showed that students really responded to this and that the 4-day plan kept students focused and engaged.



Discussion

Conclusions

The team was unable to determine conclusively whether *Read Well*® is the appropriate program for students that are in a self-contained classroom. The assessments that were used to track data for students during this intervention did not adequately indicate that this intervention is what resulted in gains for students.

The DIBELS testing changed from how it was used last year resulting in my not being aware of the testing changes that would be happening from fall to winter, in regards to what areas would be continually assessed. For example, they would not be re-testing in all the corresponding areas in the Winter that they had tested in the Fall. This left my results inconclusive in multiple areas because the composite scores did not share the same measurements. The STAR assessment only provided data for 1st graders. Kindergarten was not assessed using STAR, therefore that assessment was not administered to everyone participating in the study and could not be used to determine the degree to which *Read Well*® influenced the results.

Implications

The research and findings determine that the students need additional support to make gains in their reading. One program may or may not be enough in order for students to grow. This further indicates that students need intervention but it is undetermined whether or not *Read Well*® is the right one. While students may be passing their unit assessments weekly, the knowledge is not transferring across other settings and therefore the information is not being retained long enough for students to progress in other academic settings. This was discovered while assessing students with the sound fluency and letter recognition in the general education setting. A couple of students that were pulled to assess, while they passed their *Read Well*® unit assessment could not identify the same letter in another setting, that they had been working on all week.

Limitations

Read Well® is a grant-funded program that has to be implemented to fidelity following a strict schedule and routine. Not all students were able to have intervention time every day due to services received outside of my classroom such as speech, occupational therapy or physical therapy. Attendance was also a factor in implementation and individualized support. Both of these factors impacted the study; if the student is not at school they are not receiving the intervention at the time and in the same environment of the other students. When the paraeducator is not present we often did not have a substitute and this impacted our ability to appropriately split into our reading level groups.

Recommendations

I would recommend further studying with possible side-by-side comparative intervention. For example, having one group use one curriculum and another use a *Read Well*®, to determine which would best support the students in the classroom. Having a side-by-side study may allow for the educators to determine which intervention would best meet the needs of the students in the classroom.

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