



National Research Project Prescott High School Overview 2006 – 2007

Introduction

During the 2005-2006 school year, a national study on the effectiveness of Reading Plus® was begun by Dr. John Shelley-Tremblay, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of South Alabama. Part of this research involves a longitudinal study being conducted with nine schools which will continue until spring, 2007. At the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, Prescott High School in Prescott, Arizona began work with 95 students who will be involved in the study over the next year. The students are spread among the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades.

Purpose of Research

The research project at Prescott High School is being conducted to determine the long term effects of continued Reading Plus® instruction on students' standardized test scores using the Scholastic SRI.

Methodology

All of the students involved in the research at Prescott High School will be taking the Scholastic SRI quarterly. Students are expected to spend time engaged in Reading Plus® programs at least 2-3 times per week. They will be working in various Reading Plus® programs including PAVE™, Guided Reading™, Cloze Plus™, and Reading Around Words™. Their Reading Plus® and SRI data will be assessed on a regular basis. We will be gathering test data for these students every few months and, where possible, for the test results at the end of the quarter following their exit from the Reading Plus® program to assess retained gains. Students will also be assessed pre-training, mid-training, and post-training using the Visagraph™ III Eye-Movement Appraisal System.



Results

To date, we have early data for 58 of the Prescott High School students. These students took the SRI assessment in both August and December. The other students using Reading Plus® at Prescott did not take the December SRI assessment and, therefore, were not included in this interim analysis. The SRI reports student achievement in terms of Lexiles. These Lexile scores are based on an equal-unit scale and therefore can be used to track student progress. According to the Scholastic SRI Growth Report, students are expected to improve by approximately 75-100 Lexiles per year. This averages to 87.5; dividing by two yields an expected half yearly gain of approximately 44 Lexiles.

As a group, the 58 students included in this report far exceeded these expectations. Their average Lexile improvement was 105. This represents an increase of 239% of the expected half yearly increase.

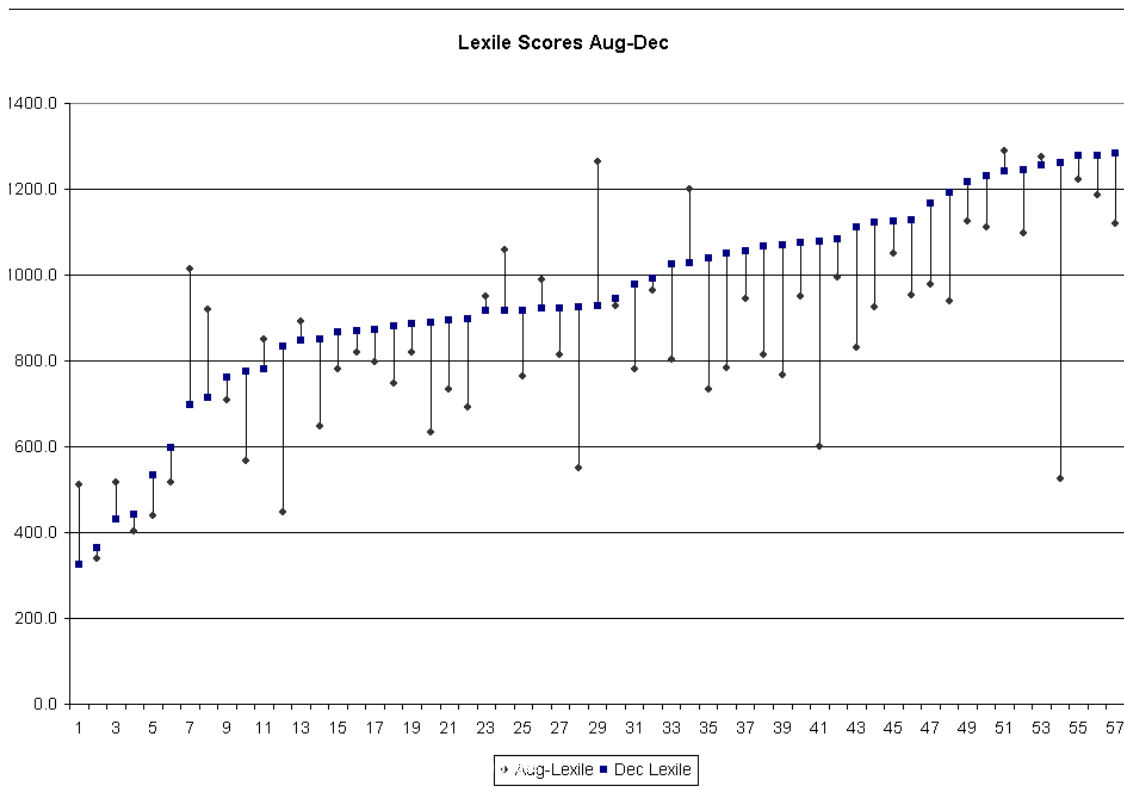
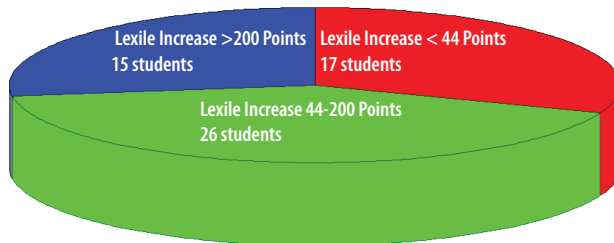


Figure 1 - August and December Lexile scores for each student



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Lexile Increase	# of Students
Less than 44 points (expected increase)	17
44 - 200 Points	26
Greater than 200 points	15

Figure 2- Lexile Point Increases for all Students

These students have averaged 27 Guided Reading™ lessons with an average comprehension score of 66%. The average Guided Reading™ Part B rate, or guided slot rate, increased by 115 words per minute, or 69%. The range of usage was 2-3 times per week over the course of three months.

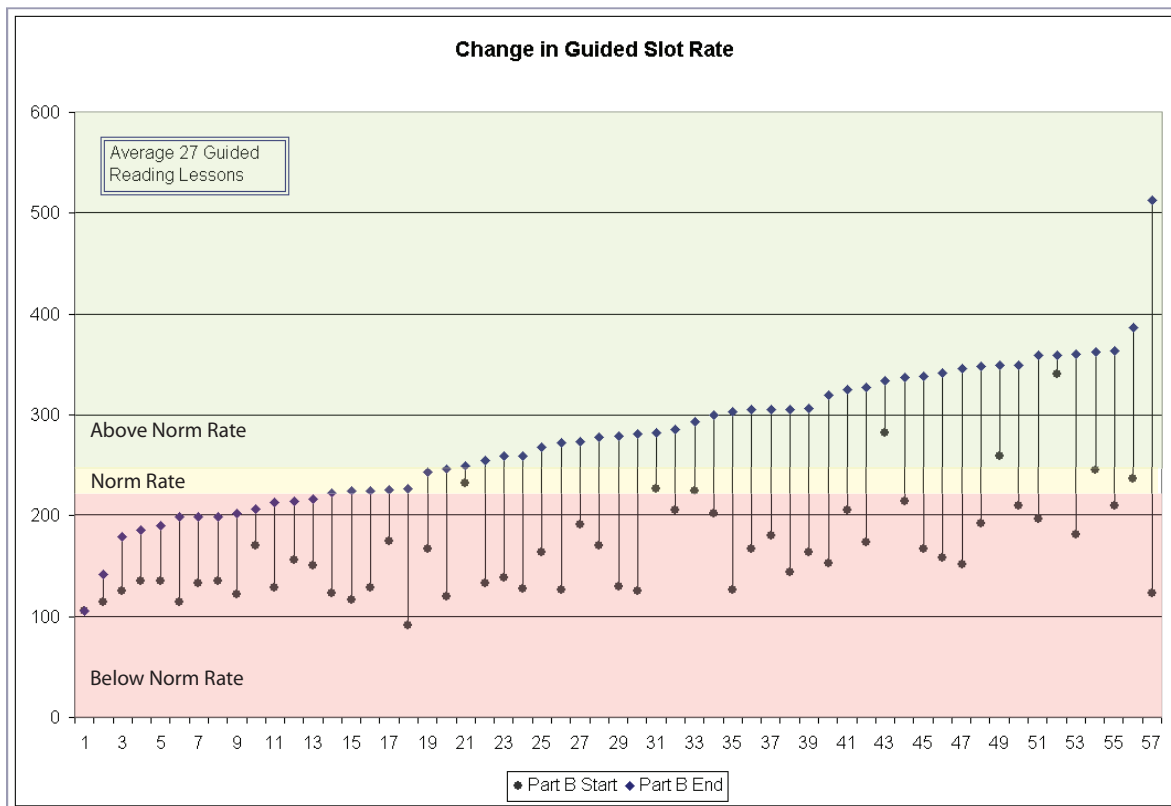


Figure 3- Reading Plus® Guided Reading™ Starting and Ending Rates for all Students

Each student's visual efficiency is expected to improve each year due to normal growth, development, and educational experiences. According to a norm study conducted by Stanford Taylor, et al with 12,000 students ranging in grade level from Kindergarten through college, students are expected to improve by one Grade Level Equivalent (GLE)



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on their Visagraph™ assessment each year. At the high school level, they are also expected to decrease their overall fixations (eye stops) by 4 per hundred words read and their regressions (reverse fixations) by 1 per hundred words read. 49 of the 58 students for whom we have mid-year data were also both pre- and mid-tested on the Visagraph™ Eye-Movement Appraisal System. After only four months of training with Reading Plus®, the average GLE increase among these 49 students was 1.3, slightly more than the expected annual increase without intervention. Their fixations and regressions decreased by at least twice the expected yearly improvement without intervention.

Conclusions

Overall, the 58 students reviewed from the mid-year data have made a marked improvement in their four months of Reading Plus® instruction over the expected annual improvement in a year of instruction without intervention. We will continue to monitor their progress in Reading Plus®, on their SRI Growth Reports, and on their Visagraph™ III appraisals for the balance of this school year. We will follow up with these students next year to see what percentage of the gains they have made they are able to retain in the year after they have completed their Reading Plus® course of study.