

Overcoming Early Reading Difficulties in Florida: Lessons from Research

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Some Reading First Fun Facts...

1. Largest federal/state initiative ever conducted to prevent early reading difficulties
2. Established and specified in Part B of the No Child Left Behind Act, signed into law in 2002
3. Budget of approximately 6 Billion Dollars over 6 years, more than 300 million for Florida
4. To receive funds, States were required to submit applications that met specific requirements with regard to nature of instruction, assessments, professional development, leadership, etc.
5. The first awards were made in June, 2002 (Alabama, Colorado, Florida)-and continued over next two years

More Reading First Fun Facts...

6. Currently, 5,200 schools in 1550 Districts in every state have received awards—based on size of population – 590 schools in Florida
 7. A few states (including Michigan) began implementing at the school level in 02-03, but most (including Florida) began implementing in 03-04)
 8. Reading First money is spent primarily for:
 - Professional Development
 - Curriculum Materials
 - Early assessments
 - Classroom and school libraries
- 20% can be used at state level- the rest goes to schools

Why do we have Reading First?

1. Far too many children, particularly poor and minority children, are being “left behind” when it comes to growth of proficient reading skills
2. Prevention of reading problems is far more effective and humane than trying to remediate after children fail
3. New discoveries from scientific research about reading can provide the basis for improved outcomes for all children

The most important Reading First goals:

1. Increase the percentage of students reading “at grade level” each year at each grade level from kindergarten through third grade
2. Decrease the percentage of students with serious reading difficulties each year at each grade level

These goals are to be met while considering all children taking the year end test, not just those who have received the full treatment

The most important Reading First goals:

Overall student performance should increase each year due to two factors:

In each successive year, many of the students will have had the advantage of previous RF instruction

By year 3, many 3rd grade students – 3 years

By year 3, many 2nd grade students – 3 years

By year 3, many 1st grade students – 2 years

Each year, instruction at each grade level, and school-level systems as a whole, should be stronger

The broad Reading First model for preventing reading failure in grades K-3:

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom
2. Conduct timely and valid assessments of reading growth to identify struggling readers
3. Provide immediate, intensive, skillful, and properly focused interventions to prevent students from falling too far behind

The Intervention in Florida: What schools agree to do in their application to participate

1. Adopt a common, comprehensive core reading program that is to serve as a scaffold for explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies
2. Provide at least 90 minutes of protected reading time every day
3. Administer a common set of progress monitoring measures 4 times a year, and a common set of outcome measures once a year. Submit results to FCRR within a specified time schedule
4. Identify some means to provide more intensive instruction to students lagging behind in reading development

The Intervention: What schools agree to do (cont.)

5. Pay for a reading coach to serve K-3 teachers in each school
6. Support attendance of all teachers at a 4-day *Reading First Teacher's Academy* during the summer
7. Participate in the state and federal evaluations of Reading First

Funding: \$300 per K-3 student – minimum 40,000/year, maximum 175,000/year- with declining funds over six years

Ongoing support from State

The work of Regional Reading First Professional Development Coordinators is coordinated by the University of Central Florida – Currently have 26 coordinators for 590 schools, but began with only 12 for 326

Have provided summer academies for teachers (4day), summer conferences for coaches (4 days) and principals (2 days)

Provide all assessment training and support through FCRR, including the Progress Monitoring and Reporting Network for student reports

Lots of technical assistance about use of data, selection of programs, assessments, etc.

Outcomes after two years of implementation in first cohort of schools – the schools

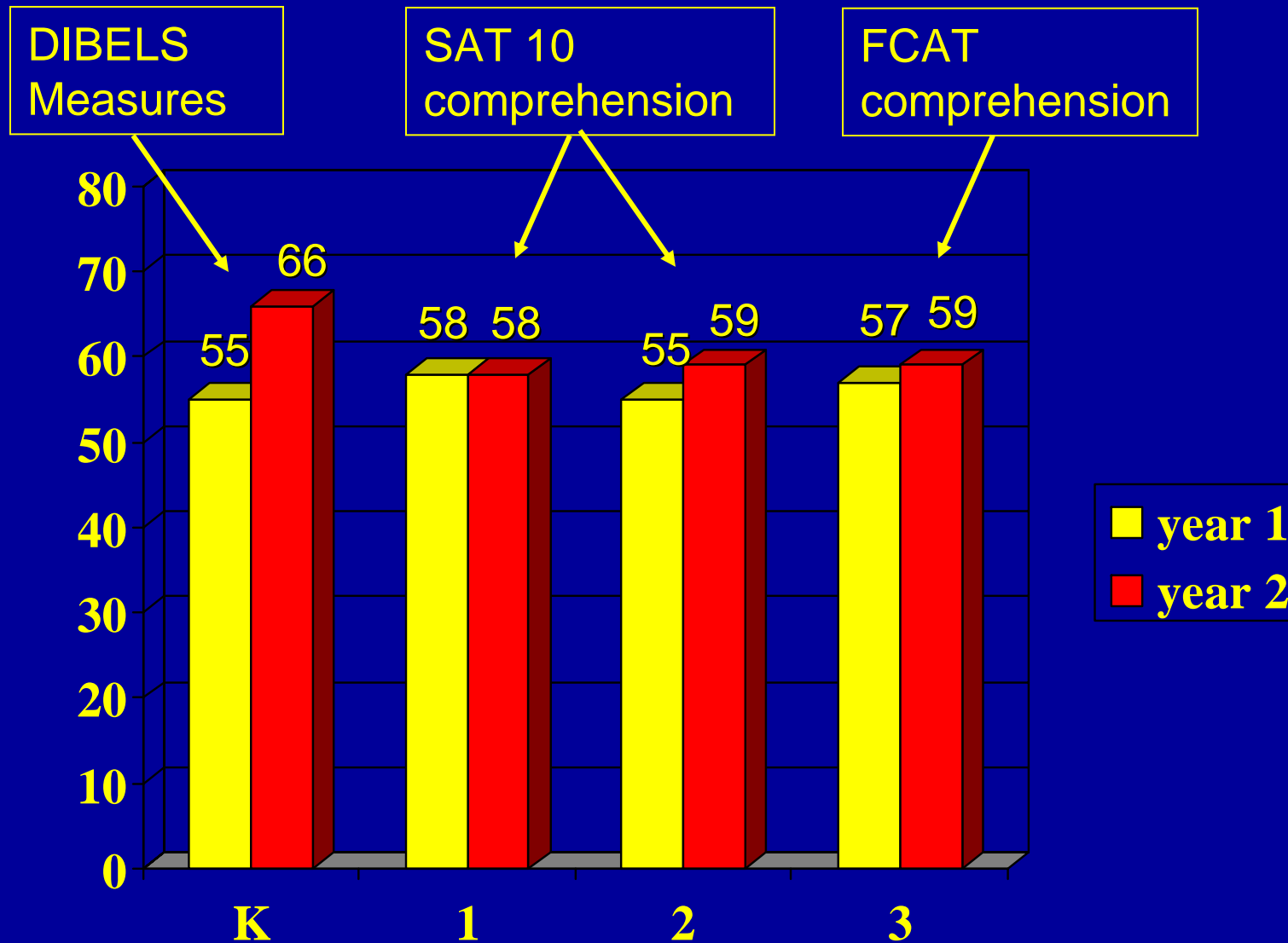
1. 326 schools began their RF implementation in 03-04
2. We have complete data for 318 schools that participated in both 03-04 and 04-05.
3. The schools were varied, both demographically and geographically – 33 school districts.

The Students and Schools:

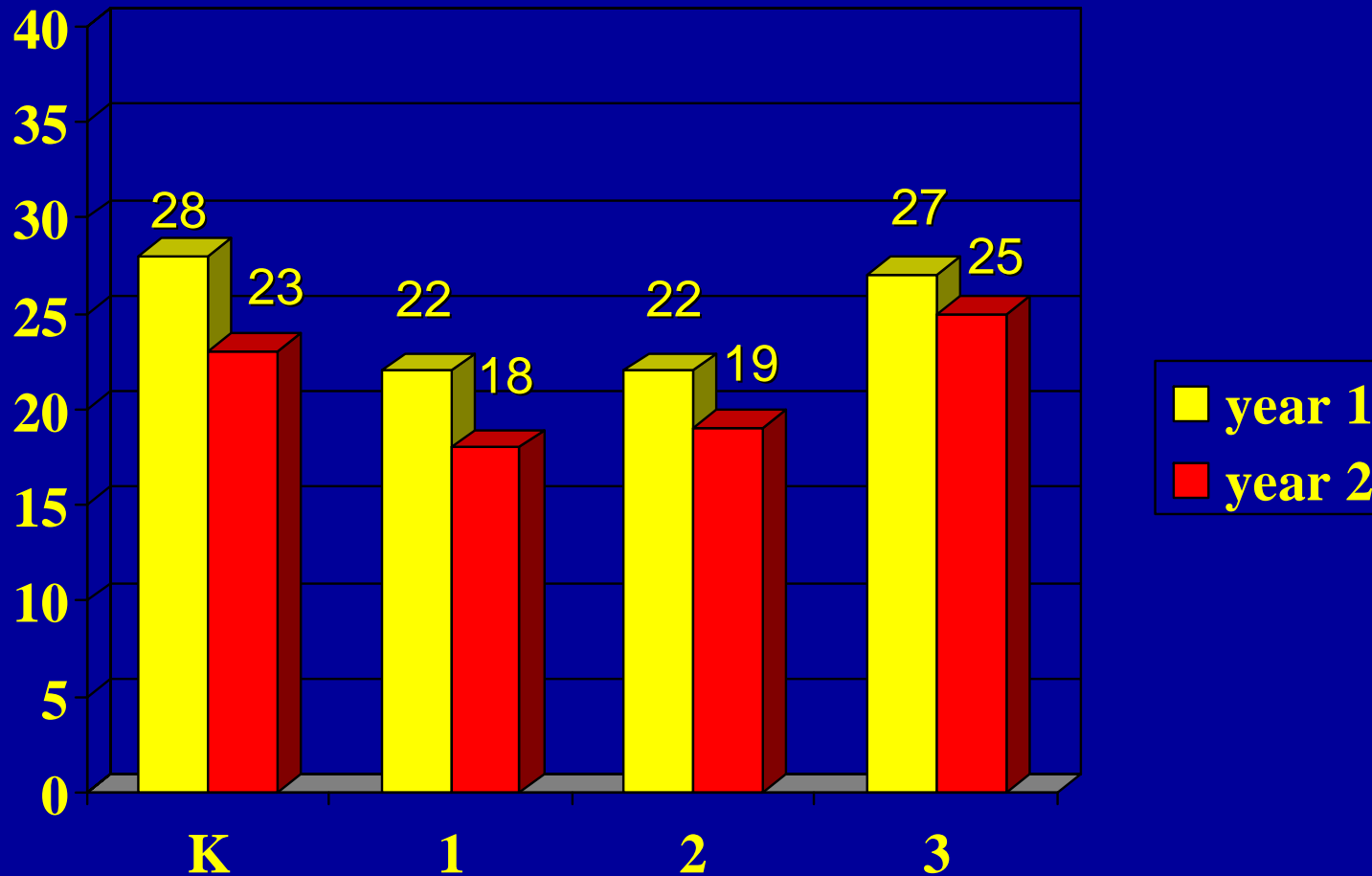
	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>
Average number of students per grade	32,300	32,000
Average number of students per school	404	404
Percent qualifying for FR lunch	70%	73%
Percent minorities	59%	61%
Percent English Language Learners	12%	12%

Mobility 70% attended RF schools both years.

Percent of students at “grade level” end of years 1 and 2 in the same schools



Percent of students with serious reading difficulties end of years 1 and 2 in the same schools



What are the areas in most need of immediate improvement?

Stronger support for the growth of text reading fluency in second grade

Progress Monitoring & Reporting Network: Reports

State Progress Report

District: RF Only

School: RF Only

Class: All

Grade: 2nd Grade

Probe: Oral Reading Fluency

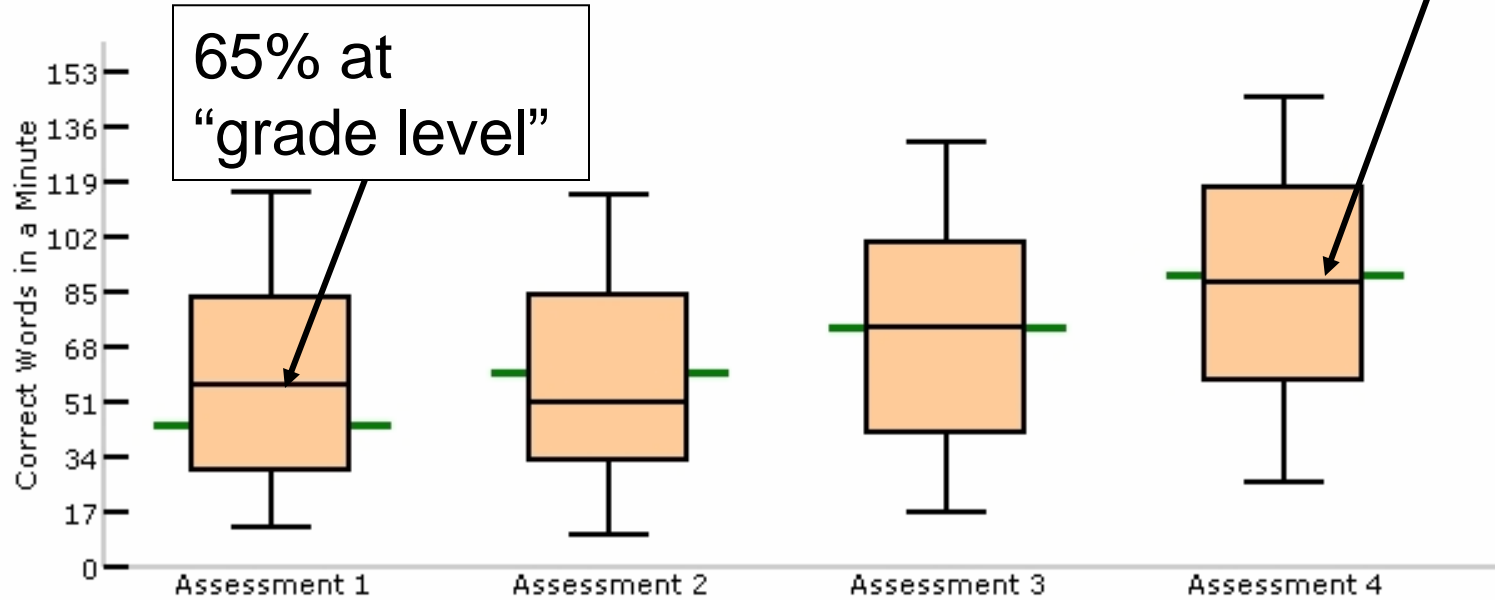
Student: All

Assessment: 4

School Year: 2004-2005

Date/Time: 6/9

48% at "grade level"



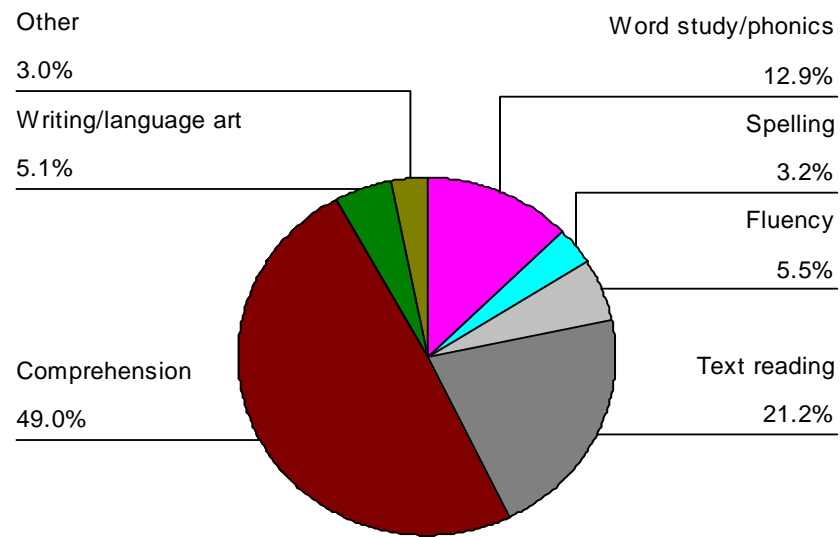
65% at "grade level"



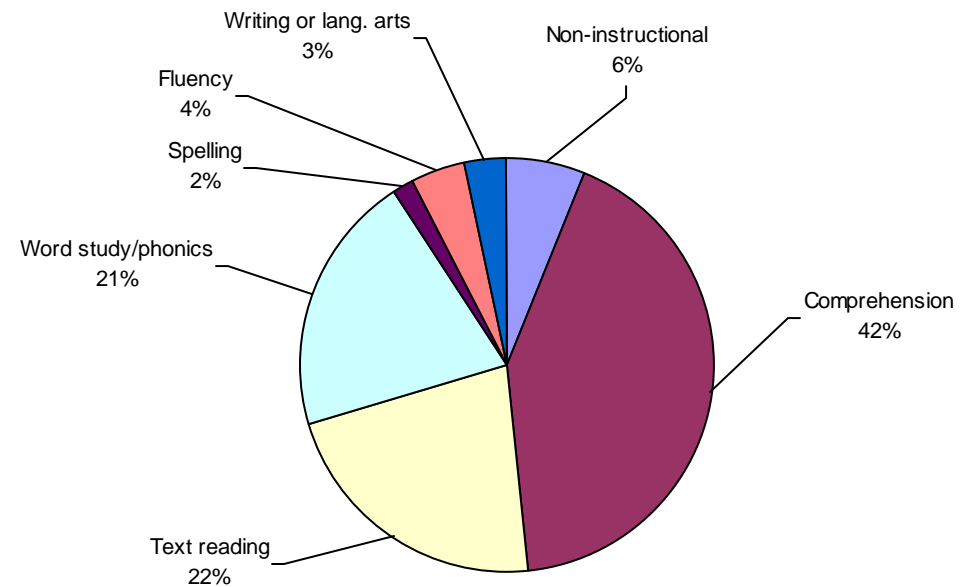
Select a District:

[Show Grade Summary Report](#)

Instructional Emphasis for Second Grade



2004



2005

Progress Monitoring & Reporting Network: Reports

State Progress Report

District: RF Only

School: RF Only

Class: All

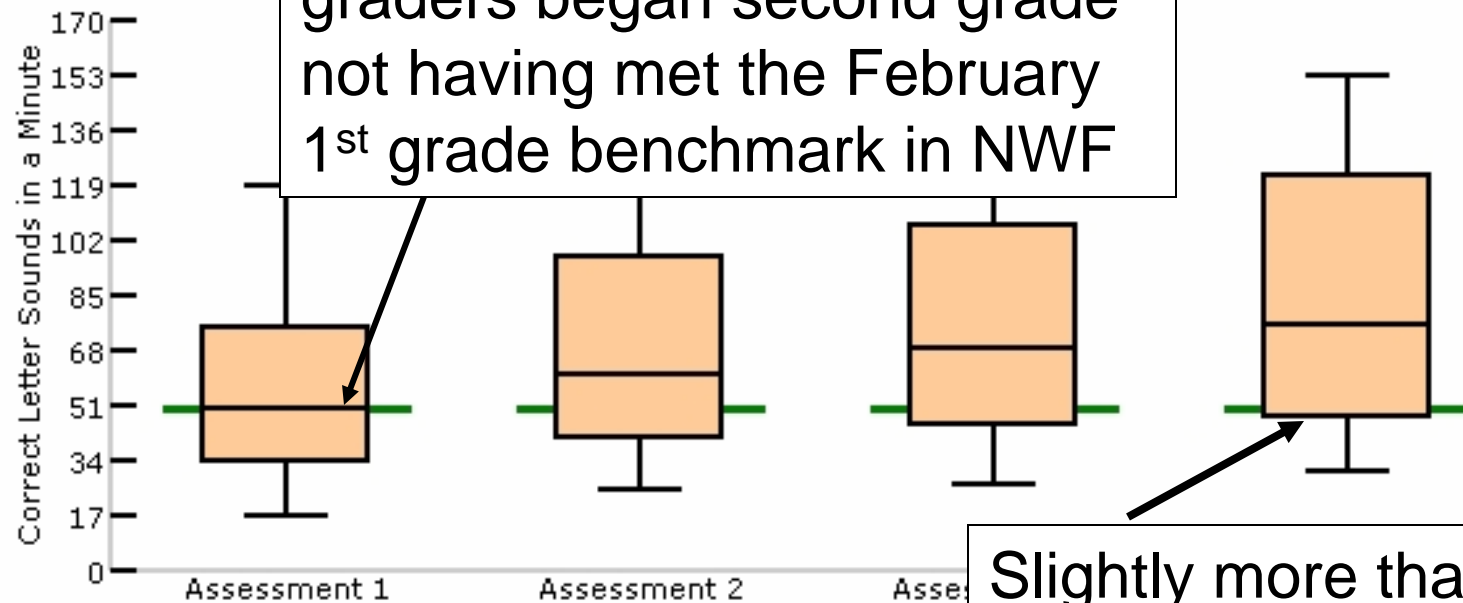
Grade: 2nd Grade

Probe: Nonsense Word Fluency

Student: All

Assessment: 4

Time: 6/10/2005 3:19 PM



About half our second graders began second grade not having met the February 1st grade benchmark in NWF

Slightly more than 20% still hadn't met the 1st grade benchmark at the end of second grade

Show Grade Summary Report

One problem that arises from so many students coming into 2nd grade still weak in effective, accurate word reading strategies

Growth in fluency requires accurate practice

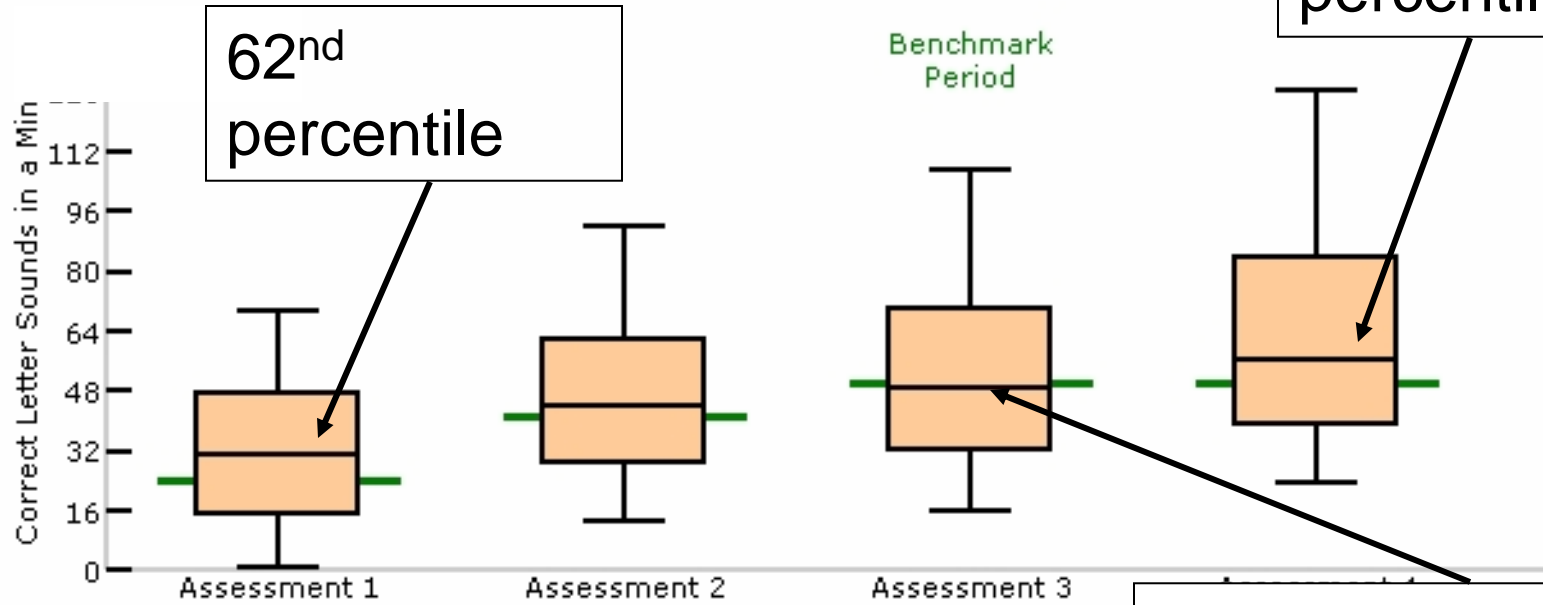
A major factor underlying growth in fluency for struggling readers is how fast the number of words they can recognize “by sight” increases

Children must read unfamiliar words with perfect accuracy on multiple occasions before they can become sight words

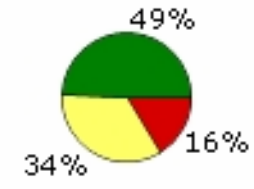
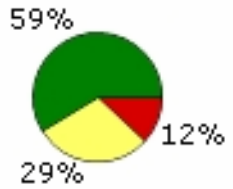
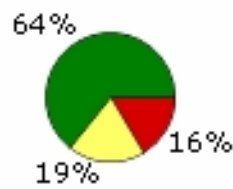
Sight vocabulary must grow very rapidly in second grade to keep pace with normative development

State Progress Report

District: RF Only **School:** RF Only **Class:** All
Grade: 1st Grade **Probe:** Nonsense Word Fluency **Student:** All
Assessment: 4 **School Year:** 2004-2005 **Date/Time:** 6



# of Students	39636	38214	39946
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Select a District:

Over 1/2 of our students did not make the benchmark on time

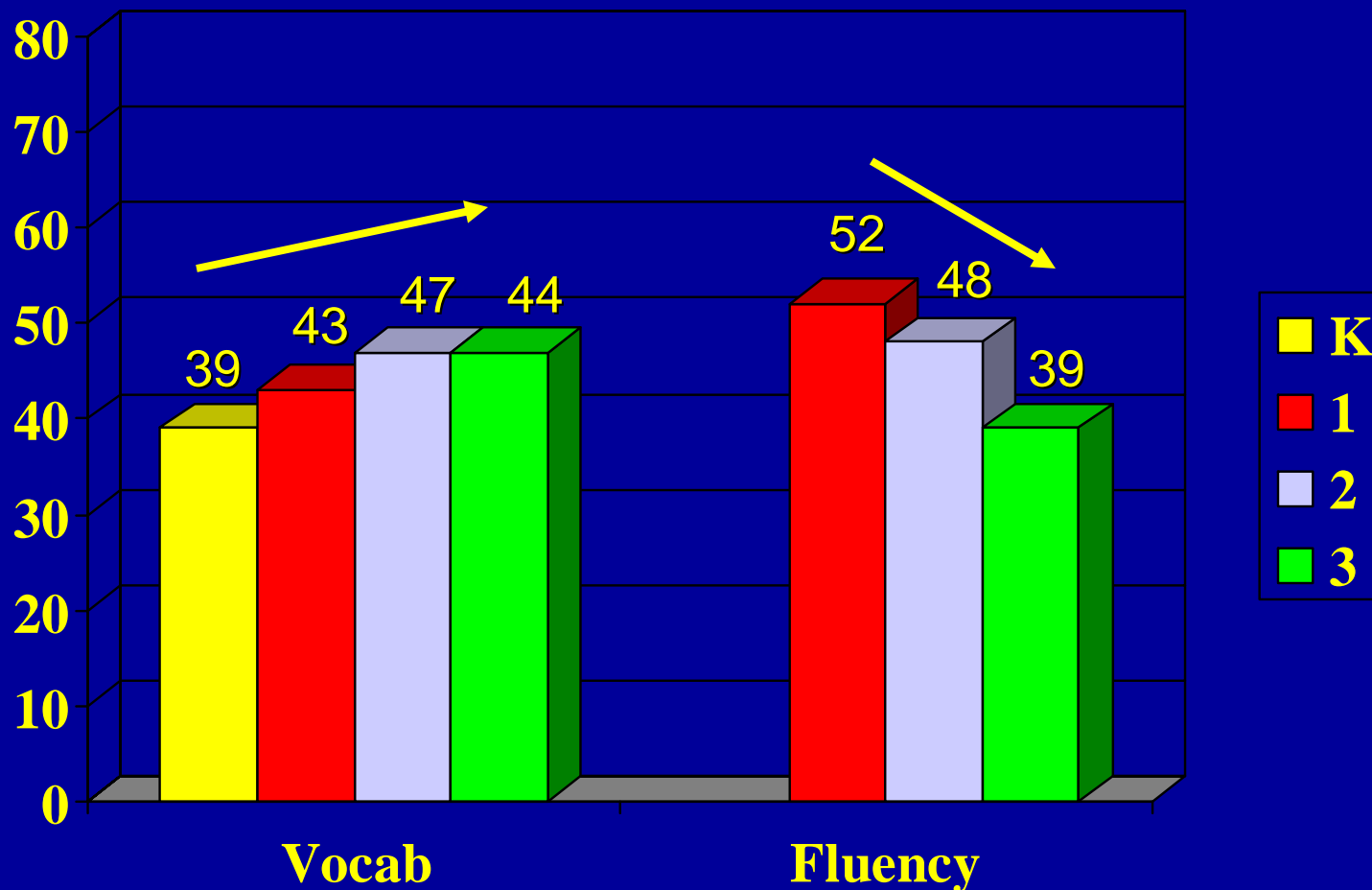
What are the areas in most need of immediate improvement?

Stronger support for the growth of text reading fluency in second grade

More powerful instruction toward mastery of the alphabetic principle early in first grade

A Curious finding at the end of Year 2

% of students “at grade level” in vocabulary and reading across grades



Meeting the grade level standard on the FCAT: two important challenges

It was specifically created to place high demands on vocabulary (word knowledge) and reasoning/inferential skills-these demands accelerate significantly after elementary school

It requires students to read relatively long passages before asking them to answer questions. This places special demands on reading fluency.

Studying the reading and language factors that make a difference on the FCAT

Gave 2 hour battery of language, reading, nonverbal reasoning, and memory tests to approximately 200 children in each grade (3rd, 7th, and 10th) at 3 locations in the state

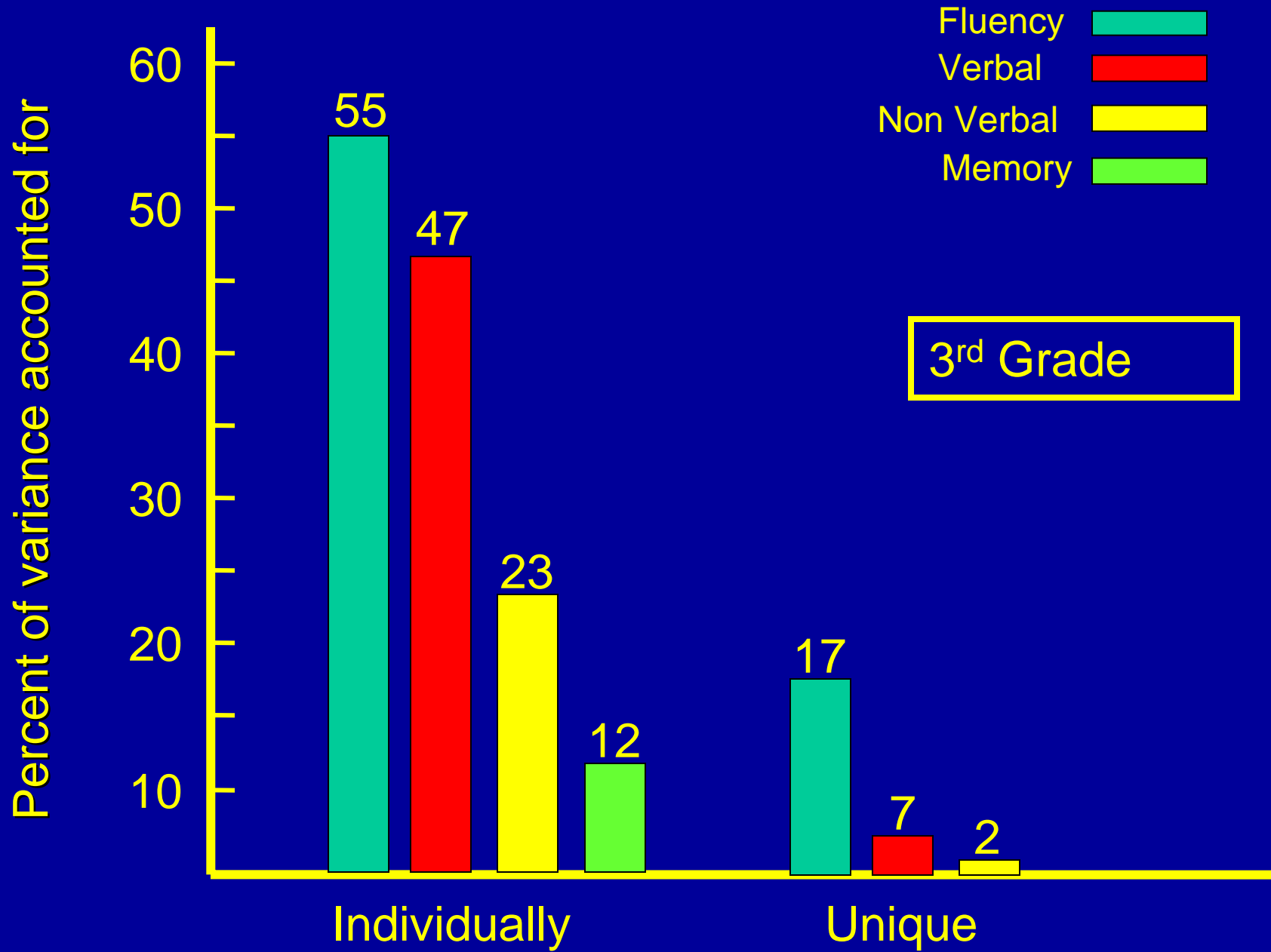
Language – Wisc Vocab and Similarities

Listening comprehension with FCAT passage

Reading– Oral reading fluency, TOWRE, Gray Oral Reading Test

NV Reasoning – Wisc Matrix Reasoning, Block Design

Working Memory– Listening span, Reading Span



Speculations about remaining instructional problems in 1st and 2nd grade

In the core programs, most instruction in phonics is whole group

Since the core programs do not provide strong outlines for specific, skills based instruction in small groups-a lot of small group work is “guided reading”

Even in the group instruction, there is not enough explicit instruction or mastery oriented review of knowledge and skill as it is taught

There is not enough well monitored, fluency oriented instruction and practice.

A broad, three pronged plan for meeting the needs of all students

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom

2. Conduct timely and valid assessments of reading growth to identify struggling readers

3. Provide more intensive interventions to “catch up” the struggling readers

The prevention of reading difficulties is a school-level challenge

1. Increase the quality, consistency, and reach of instruction in every K-3 classroom

Instruction during the Reading Instructional Period is typically divided into two sections

Whole group instruction -

Small group, differentiated instruction, time

Teacher works with small groups of homogeneously grouped students to meet specific instructional needs

When not in a teacher-led group, students work on “independent student learning activities

Improve the power of instruction provided during the “small group instruction” time within the 90 minute reading block

1. Bring additional instructional personnel into the room so that the weakest readers don't have to spend as much time working independently
2. Increase the quality of the teacher-led small group instruction
3. Increase the quality of independent student learning activities during the “small group instruction time”

Enhancing the power of instruction during the “small group time” by having some of the small group instruction provided by another teacher or paraprofessional

Classroom
teacher and
group of 7

Resource
teacher and
group of 4

Independent
Learning
Activity (5)

Independent
Learning
Activity (6)

Increasing the quality and power of teacher-led, small-group, differentiated instruction

Instruction should be differentiated to meet the needs of individual students in at least four ways

Frequency of meeting in small groups – every day, three times per week, etc.

Size of instructional group – 3 students, 6 students, 8 students, etc.

Focus of instruction – work in phonemic awareness in phonics, work in fluency and comprehension, etc.

Lesson format – guided reading vs. skills focused lessons

Teachers should provide differentiated instruction using at least two different lesson formats

Guided Reading Lesson Structure

Purpose: to allow students to integrate their new acquired skills and knowledge while reading text for meaning

“Guided Reading is a context in which a teacher supports each reader’s development of effective strategies for processing novel texts at increasingly challenging levels of difficulty” (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p. 3).

- Selecting the text
- Introducing the text
- Reading the text
- Discussing the text
- Teaching for strategic activities
- Extending meaning (optional)
- Word Work (optional)

Guided Reading Lesson Structure

The *Guided Reading* lesson structure provides teachers the opportunities to monitor how well students are applying skills to reading of text, encourage and support application of skills during text reading (e.g., word level skills and comprehension skills), engage students in thinking about the meaning of text, and build a sense of reading as a meaningful, enjoyable activity.

Guided Reading Lesson Structure

Limitations for students still acquiring initial skills

Does not support systematic instruction and practice on foundational knowledge and skills

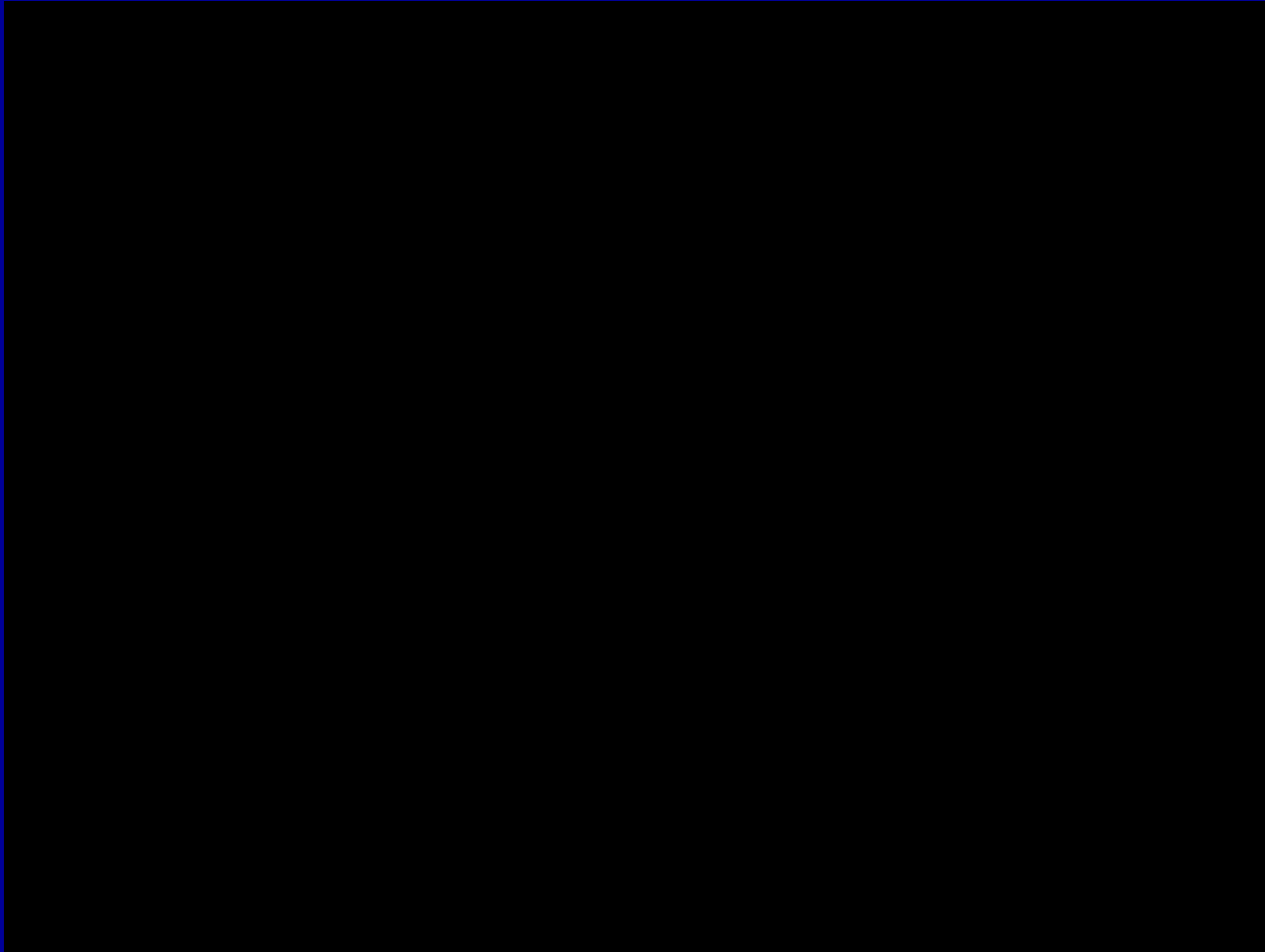
Does not provide enough opportunities for mastery oriented practice on foundational skills

Does not provide a good structure for systematic review required by struggling readers

Often, the leveled books used in guided reading lessons do not provide good practice on early phonemic decoding skills

The Skills focused lesson format

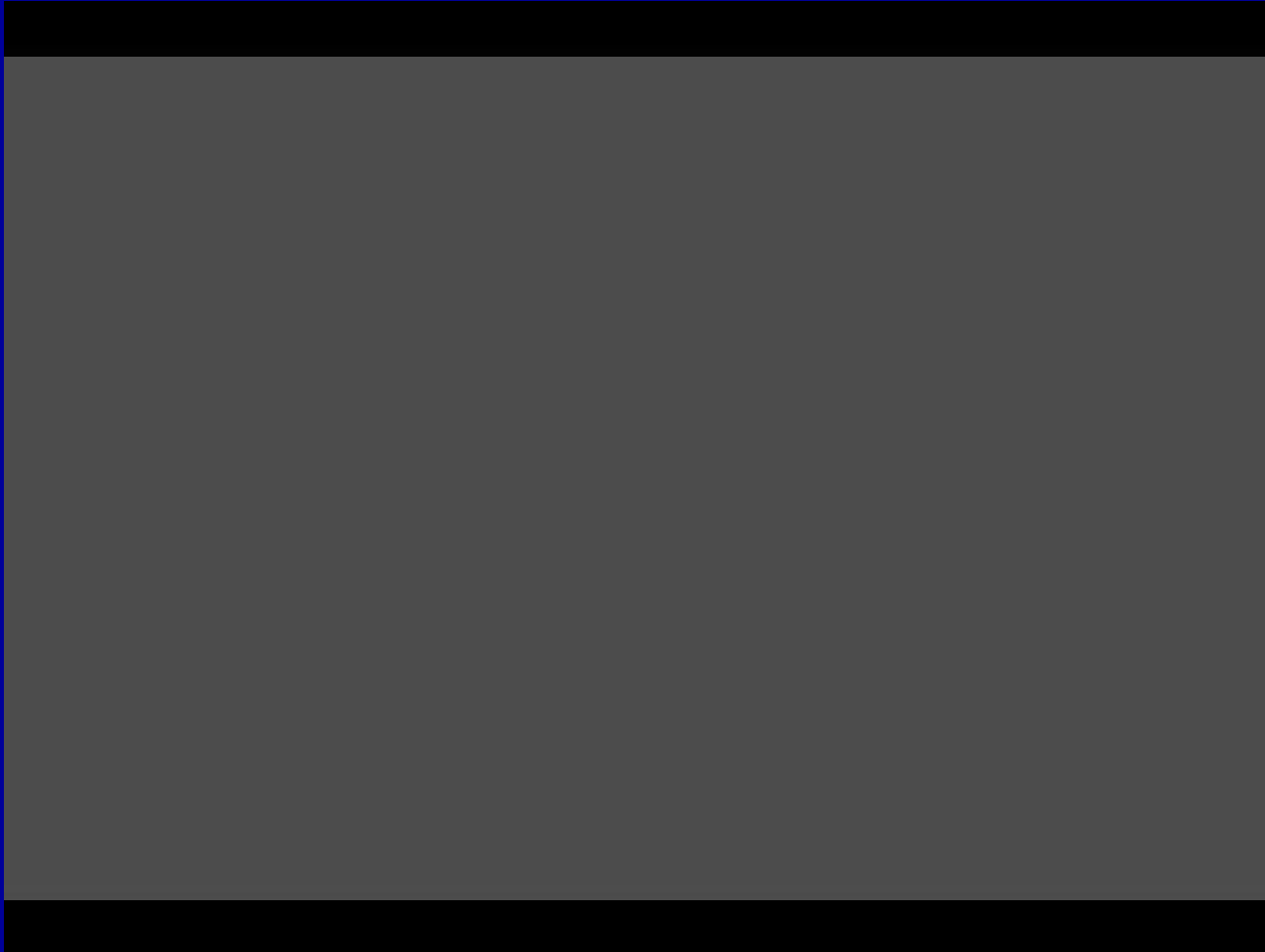
Purpose: to provide explicit and systematic instruction, as well as extended and focused practice on specific skills and knowledge for students who need this before attempting to integrate these skills in a guided reading lesson. To provide more focused instruction and practice than is possible within a guided reading format.



Differentiated instruction in small groups



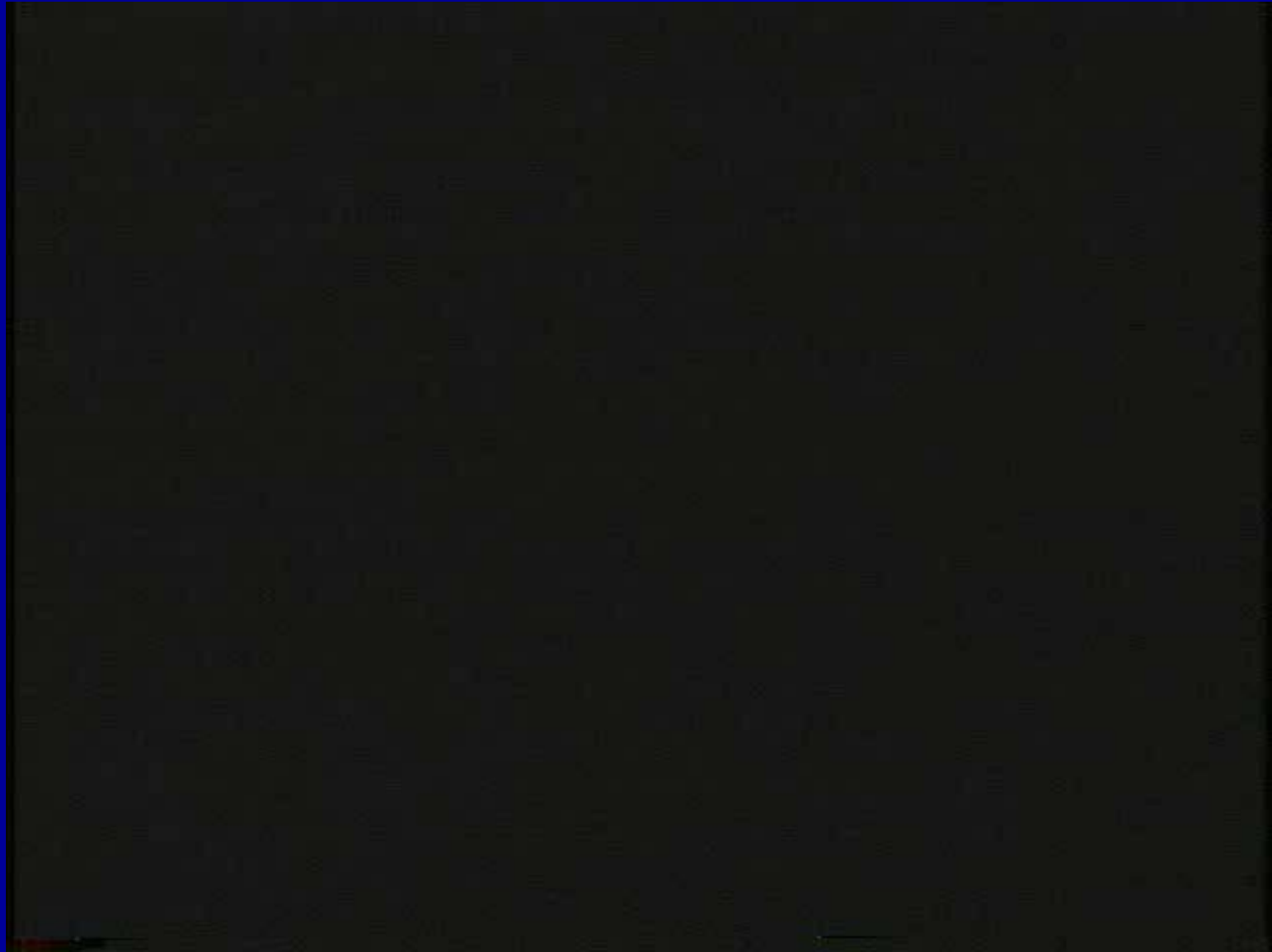
Work on phonemic awareness



Blending sounds into words



Directly building sight recognition of high utility words



Comprehension-story grammar...

The Skills focused lesson format

Many students will need explicit re-teaching of both knowledge elements and skills, as well as extended opportunities to practice the application of these skills in a variety of contexts ranging from individual words, to phrases, to sentences, to connected text. Skills-Focused Lessons will be successful to the extent that they are fast-paced, interactive, and targeted appropriately on critical skills for each reading group.

These lessons could draw upon materials from the core reading program to reinforce knowledge and skill that was only weakly learned when it was taught in the whole group format. Could also use materials from supplemental or intervention programs, or teacher designed lessons

An example of how this might work in a first grade classroom

Group 1 (very low) meets every day – 4 students

Focus – phonemic awareness, phonics, and word reading

Activities – explicit letter-sound instruction and practice for fluency, explicit phonemic awareness toward segmenting 3 phoneme words, blending practice, sight word practice for fluency, word meanings emphasized

Group 2 (“at risk” but not lowest) meets every day – 4 students

Focus – phonemic awareness, phonics, and word and sentence reading

Activities – segmenting 3 and 4 phoneme words, extended word work, work with high frequency words, supported sentence reading and discussion

An example of how this might work in a first grade classroom

Group 3 (moderate risk) meets 3 times per week – 6 students

Focus – phonics and paragraph reading

Activities – continued explicit word work to build confidence and fluency in decoding, practice reading decodable text, support for meaning, move to paragraph reading and interpretation-emphasizing word meanings

Group 4 (grade level) meets 2 times per week – 6 students

Focus – phonics, reading comprehension, and vocabulary

Activities – guided reading lesson format, with explicit word work on advanced phonemic decoding strategies

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[cart](#)

MAKING SENSE OF PHONICS

The Hows and Whys



ISABEL L. BECK

Making Sense
of Phonics

Isabel Beck

Guilford Press

19.95 at
Amazon.Com

Improve the power of instruction provided during the “small group instruction” time within the 90 minute reading block

1. Bring additional instructional personnel into the room so that the weakest readers don't have to spend as much time working independently
2. Increase the quality of the teacher-led small group instruction

3. Increase the quality of independent student learning activities during the “small group instruction time”

Providing teachers with high-quality materials and activities for independent student learning activities



Effective independent student learning activities...

Available free to all schools and teachers

Well developed and targeted materials for use in independent student learning activities

To download up to 240 independent student learning activities for K-1 classrooms, go to

<http://www.fcrr.org/activities/>

Student Center Activities

Phonological Awareness

Part One

- Rhyme
- Alliteration

Part Three

- Phonemes

Part Two

- Sentence Segmentation
- Syllables
- Onset and Rime

Phonics

Part One

- Letter Recognition

Part Three

- Onset and Rime

Part Five

- Syllable Patterns
- Morpheme Structures

Part Two

- Letter-Sound Correspondence

Part Four

- Word Study

Fluency

All Parts

- Letter Recognition
- Letter-Sound Correspondence
- High Frequency Words
- Oral Reading

Vocabulary

All Parts

- Word Identification/Words in Context
- Word Categorization/Word Knowledge
- Words That Describe/Word Meaning
- Word Structure/Word Analysis

Contents

Phonics

Letter-Sound Correspondence

- P.027 Object Letter-Sound Matching
- P.028 Alpha Eggs
- P.029 Letter-Sound Train
- P.030 Sandpaper Letters and Picture Match
- P.031 Letter Stamp Mini-Books
- P.032 Photo Chart
- P.033 Letter-Sound Place Mats
- P.034 Letter-Sound Big Book
- P.035 Words Around Us Memory Game
- P.036 Brown Bag It
- P.037 Letter Bag
- P.038 Chalktalk
- P.039 Write the Room
- P.040 Letter Boxes
- P.041 Letter-Sound Folder Sort
- P.042 Letter-Sound Mobile
- P.043 Letter-Sound Dominoes
- P.044 Letter-Sound Bingo
- P.045 Where's That Sound?
- P.046 Picture Letter-Sound Match
- P.047 Guessing Belts
- PLSC-I Initial Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards
- PLSC-M Medial Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards
- PLSC-F Final Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards



Phonics

P.027

Letter-Sound Correspondence

Object Letter-Sound Matching

Objective

The student will match initial sounds to letters.

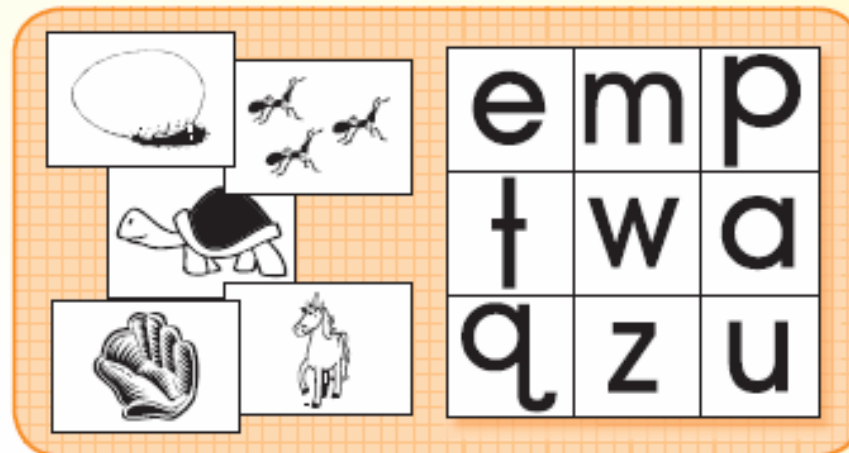
Materials

- ▶ Scrambled letter boards (Activity Master P027.AM1a - P027.AM1c)
- ▶ Magnetic letters
- ▶ Tray
- ▶ Tub of "A-Z" objects
- ▶ Dry-erase marker boards or paper
- ▶ Dry-erase markers or washable markers

Activity

Students match the initial sounds of objects to letters

1. Place the scrambled letter board, tray of magnetic letters, and tub of objects on a flat surface.
2. The student chooses an object from the tub.
3. Places the object on corresponding letter (e.g., turtle, /t/).
4. Continues until all objects are matched with a letter.
5. Practices writing the letters on the marker board.
6. Self-check



Extensions and Adaptations

- ▶ Label the object.
- ▶ Use final and medial sounds.

Phonics



Letter-Sound Correspondence

P.047

Guessing Belts

Objective

The student will match initial/final sounds to letters.

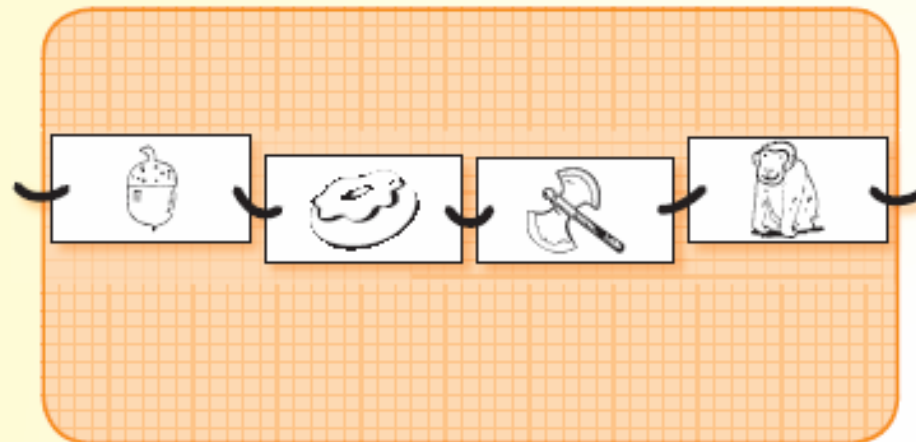
Materials

- ▶ Set of initial and final sound picture cards (Activity Master PLSC-L1 - PLSC-L22 and PLSC-F1 - PLSC-F16)
- ▶ Yarn
 - Cut into 36 inch lengths.*
- ▶ Hole punch

Activity

Students identify words on picture belts using letter and sound clues.

1. Place picture cards, yarn, and hole punch on a flat surface.
2. The students hole punch and "thread" four or more picture cards with yarn to make belts. Tie the belts around their waistlines (with the pictures on their backs facing outward).
3. Taking turns, the students provide clues until each student is able to guess the names of the pictures on his partner's belt. Clues should include the name of the beginning and ending letters. For example, "This picture begins with /d/ and ends with /t/."
4. Reverse roles and continue activity.
5. Peer evaluation



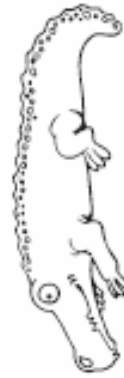
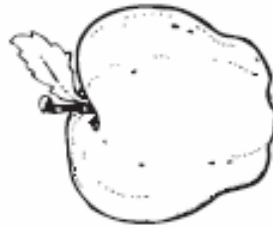
Extensions and Adaptations

- ▶ Include medial sounds in the clues. For example, "The middle sound in this word is /n/."
- ▶ Include rhymes in the clues. For example, "This word rhymes with bat."

Phonics

P.LSC-I.1

Letter-Sound Correspondence Cards – Initial



ant, apple, alligator, ax, ape, apron



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<http://www.fcrr.org/activities/>

Can also download instructions on classroom management during small group instruction and up to 70 minutes of video training

Activities for grades 2 and 3 will be available in Fall, 2006, along with video training

A concluding thought....

There is no question but that it will be very, very difficult to increase each year the percent of students who can read proficiently by third grade...

It will require finding necessary resources at the state and local level, continuing to support teachers with focused professional development, providing good instructional materials and lots of books, and keeping our eyes on the goal...

But, its not the most difficult thing we could be faced with...



Consider this task for example...

Thank
You

www.fcrr.org

Science of
Reading Section