Griffin Foundation School District

Children Reaching for the Sky Elementary

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Research Data showing the effectiveness of "Super Star Phonics Software by Help Me 2 Learn" in grades 1st through 6th

Abstract

Children Reaching for the Sky Elementary is located in Tucson, Arizona. Our enrollment is around 280-300 students. Over 87% of our students are eligible for free lunch program and come from low income homes. At least 70% of our students come from homes that only speak Spanish. These students' knowledge of English is very limited and some younger students do not speak English at all. Both of these factors are a constant challenge for our school and by using different tools such as Phonics will help us to continue to reach our academic goals.

We picked "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" due to the way the program is very interactive and uses games and songs to entertain and teach the users. This program has proven that the student; find it easy to use and makes learning enjoyable. Each student gets motivated by improving their scores with the use of the bronze, silver, and gold star scoring system. Before they can go to another program they need to accomplish all gold stars.

We divided the students from 1st through 6th grade into three groups.

- The first group did not get to use the program.

- The second group would have very little exposure to the software.

- The third group would get to use the program regularly.

The first group was students that had other assignments given to them to try to increase their reading and writing skills.

The second group was student that had limited time in the computer lab to use the "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" programs.

The third group was composed of students that were in our Special Ed program and after school tutoring programs. These students' had special needs due to being in a special education program or due to being behind in their grade-level and needed to catch up with their reading and writing skills. This allowed each of these students to have computer lab time each day to complete as many of the sessions as they could. We also installed two network computers in the Special Ed classroom allowing student to have access to "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" each time they were having Special Ed training.

The following "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" was used for this research paper.

Phonic 1a – Vowel Sounds – Beginning Reading

Phonic 1b – Consonant Sounds – Beginning Reading

Phonic 2a – Intermediate Level

Phonic 2b – Intermediate Level II

Phonic 3a – Language Arts Review – Advanced Level with Sports

Phonic 3b – Language Arts Review – Advanced Level II with Sports

Testimony from the Special Ed Teacher, Ms. Carrillo:

The "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" Phonics program is a tutorial program especially effective with Special Education students as well as any student requiring remedial reading assistance. This program works with basic reading skills such as letter-recognition, phonemic awareness, and letter-sound correspondence. The program's instructional approach is concise, simple, and encourages self-correction.

The phonics-based program progresses to decoding, recognition of sight words, and vocabulary development. Incremental in its approach, the program offers the drill and practice necessary for success, particularly the success of a child with a learning disability. Knowing the alphabet, letter sounds, decoding skills and word recognition provide the foundation for successful reading. Students with learning difficulties in reading need more drill and practice than is usually offered in the regular education classroom. If any of the foundational reading skills are lacking, the reader's success will be limited. The review and practice of the "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" Program is provided in an entertaining and user-friendly manner. Students that have known reading failures in the past are often difficult to motivate, however through the high interest games and activities of the program students become fully engaged in learning.

Purpose of this study:

The purpose of this study was to identify the software's impact on our students that had the most exposure to "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" programs.

Research results:

Since one of the groups did not use any of the "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" programs we decided to use Renaissance Star Reading as the program to measure progress.

Group 1: (Did not use "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" Program)

1st Grade - These students were able to perform the basic requirements when entering into the 1st grade they scored high on their pre-test and showed continuing growth throughout the year. They scored the highest on the post-test, but showed the least amount of growth.

2nd Grade – These students scored high enough on the pre-test to use accelerated reading from renaissance place and showed average amount of growth throughout the year around 33% increase.

3rd Grade – These students were slightly under the requirement of a 3rd grade reader on their pre-test and were able to increase their standings when they completed their post-test to be at a 3rd grade level during the 4th marking period to early 4th grade reader.

4th Grade – These students were already reading at the 4th grade level when the pre-test was preformed. Their results of the post-test also showed that they were able to advance their scores to be reading at the 5th grade level.

5th Grade – These students' results of the pre-test were at the 5th grade level and their post-test score showed that they were advancing their skills throughout the year.

6th Grade – The pre-test results showed that these students were a little behind the 6th grade reading level. This group showed the least amount of growth when they completed their post-test results.

Group 2: (Limited use of the "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn" Program)

1st Grade – These students were low on their pre-test showing that they had little to no abilities to read. Throughout the year they showed some improvements but still are below average in their post-test results.

2nd Grade – These students were reading at a mid year 1st grade reading level when they took their pre-test and showed a 50% increase when they took their post-test and now read at a 2nd grade level during their 4th marking period, and some at a 3rd grade level during the 1st marking period.

3rd Grade – These students were one grade behind when they did their pre-test. The post-test showed that the students increased their reading to the level of a 4th grader. This growth would be measured as being 100% increase.

4th Grade –This group of student's pre-test results showed that they were reading at the level of a 2nd grader mid year reading level. The post-test results showed that they increased to an early 4th grade reader.

5th Grade – These students pre-tested under the 5th grade level and the results of the post-test showed that they gained around a 15% increase giving their reading level to be a student that is in their 5th grade in the 3rd marking period.

6th Grade – These students pre-tested low, but also their post-test seemed to be below what should have been for the entire year.

Group 3: (Daily use of the "Super Star Phonics by Help Me 2 Learn"Program)

1st Grade – These student's had scored way below their levels and some were unable to read or speak English. Even though their post-test still showed that they performed below average for their grades they showed that their skills have increased by at least 50%. All students that did not speak English have the ability to speak, read and write English.

2nd Grade – These students were under the grade level of kindergarten and by the time they completed the year some were still below their grade level. The results showed growth of learning. Some were at 1st grade level during 4th marking period and others were reading at a 2nd grade during 2nd marking period.

3rd Grade – These students, when they completed their pre-test, were testing at the level of 1st grade reading and had shown a 60% increase when they completed their post-test.

4th Grade – These students were a few grades lower when they did a pre-test and after using this program it showed that they improved by 2 grade levels. Their growth was double the amount of the students that did not use the program and 20% increase over group 2 students.

5th Grade – Some of the students that were using this program, due to being extremely behind their grade level, did not show any improvements whereas others did. This will reflect the percentage of improvement overall. There was an 8% improvement with this group over the growth of the other two groups.

6th Grade – This group was very small, consisting of only 3 students that used the program. Each of these student show the same amount of growth as the second group showed. They test slightly under what they should be at the end of the year.

Conclusion:

This program has proved to us that each child that had daily exposure of this program, were the ones that increased the greatest on their post-test. Many of the children that had this kind of exposure were the students that were extremely behind in their reading skills. By having this program and having these students use it, they are reducing the gap between their skills and their peers.