Zip Zoom English:
Successful Models of Implementation

IMPACT STUDY

ZipZoom ENGLISH

Foreword

This study was conducted by Scholastic's Research and Validation Department to better understand the implementation and impact of Scholastic **Zip Zoom English**. **Zip Zoom English** is a supplemental language and literacy program designed to support English language learners. With an innovative curriculum and interactive software, the program helps students to acquire English while simultaneously developing critical literacy skills. While six years of research already demonstrate that certain critical program components—the Zip Zoom software *(WestEd and PREL, 2002, 2003)* and the Critical-Word Readers *(Hiebert, Brown, et al., 2004; Hiebert & Fisher, 2006)*—are effective, this study was designed to gain a better understanding of the implementation, use, and impact of the program as a whole.

Researchers closely examined the use of **Zip Zoom English** at six distinct school sites located across the country. In regard to implementation, researchers found that the program has the flexibility to be implemented successfully within various instructional models, including ESL after school, ESL pull-out, and ESL push-in programs. Researchers also found that teachers differentially enhance aspects of the program, such as oral language development versus phonemic awareness, dependent upon their instructional background and the needs of individual students. In regard to impact, researchers discovered that students who participate in the program gain confidence, speak more English, and achieve better results on standardized assessments that measure certain literacy skills and English language acquisition. Descriptive case studies of the six sites provide detailed information about each school's context, reason for choosing the program, instructional model, actual implementation and use, and evidence of impact.

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School	Location	After School	Pull-Out	Push-In	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th–6th
Benjamin Franklin Elementary School	Anaheim, CA	●			●	●	●	●	
Berclair Elementary School	Memphis, TN	●			●	●	●	●	●
Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary School	Clark County, NV		●				●	●	●
Jefferson Elementary School	Lennox, CA		●					●	
North Star Elementary School	Denver, CO			●		●			
Walter Douglas Elementary School	Tucson, AZ		●		●				

Introduction

The English language learner population is the fastest growing K–12 population in the United States. By 2010, over 30 percent of all school-age children will come from homes where the primary language spoken is not English. As of 2005, the English language learner population was already at approximately 5.5 million, having grown eight times faster than the general student population (95 percent growth versus 13 percent growth) in just one decade *(NCES, 2002)*. According to data collected from the annual Survey of State Education Agencies, 44 percent of the total English language learners enrolled in United States schools are in preK through third-grade classrooms *(Kindler, 2002)*. English language learners represent more than 460 different languages, but roughly 79 percent identify Spanish as their first language.

The *No Child Left Behind* act requires that schools report reading scores for English language learners in addition to showing evidence that all students make progress towards reading proficiency *(NCLB, 2001)*. Moreover, NCLB mandates that English language learners receive instruction to master English in order to meet the same academic standards that the English-only student population is expected to meet. However, only 30 percent of teachers who instruct English language learners have received specialized training, and less than three percent have degrees specializing in English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual education *(NCES, 2002)*.

In addition, questions about how to best instruct English language learners persist. In 1999, the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth was formed to examine and report on the research literature on the literacy development of language-minority students. The research found that instruction which sufficiently covers the key components of literacy as identified by the National Reading Panel (2000)—phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension—has a positive effect. It also suggested that programs which attempt to teach these key components while simultaneously supporting students in learning English have a better chance of succeeding *(August & Shanahan, 2006)*.

"It is not enough to teach reading skills alone, but instruction must teach these component skills while fostering extensive oral English language development."

—*National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*

Zip Zoom English

Zip Zoom English is a supplemental language and literacy program designed to support English language learners in learning English and developing critical literacy skills. Through Teacher-Led lessons, Differentiated Practice activities, and an innovative software program, students receive rich exposure which targets vocabulary words and literacy skills. The three parts of the program work together to accelerate students' English oral language, vocabulary, and sight word acquisition so that participating students eventually attain access to their core reading program. While six years of research already demonstrate that certain critical program components—the Zip Zoom software *(WestEd and PREL, 2002, 2003)* and the Critical-Word Readers *(Hiebert, Brown, et al., 2004; Hiebert & Fisher, 2006)*—are effective, this study was designed to gain a better understanding of the implementation, use, and impact of the program as a whole.

The Study

Over the course of the spring term of 2007 (from January 15th–June 15th), researchers conducted case studies on the implementation and impact of **Zip Zoom English** in six school sites. The purpose of the research was two-fold: 1) to share six unique stories that highlight different ways by which the program can be implemented within various instructional models, and 2) to communicate overarching themes and findings that emerged across the six sites. The research sought to address the following two questions:

1) How are educators in the field using and implementing **Zip Zoom English** within different settings (i.e., ESL pull-out, ESL push-in, and ESL after school)?

2) Does consistent use of **Zip Zoom English** result in an impact on student learning, as seen in the acquisition of English language and literacy skills?

Researchers designed and customized research instruments to learn as much as possible about each of the six sites. They collected data from external assessments, classroom observations, and interviews with the multiple stakeholders involved, and then analyzed the data to determine findings about the implementation and impact of the program.

School Sites

Criteria for selecting the six case study sites were: 1) the level of program implementation, 2) geographic distribution, and 3) the instructional model within which the program is being implemented. Researchers first looked for sites where educators were implementing the three main parts of the program—the Teacher-Led, the Differentiated Practice, and the Technology. Secondly, researchers sought to select sites that would represent a geographic distribution; however, when site selection occurred in January 2007, the majority of the sites were located in the West. Lastly, researchers wanted the sites to represent various instructional models within which educators were using the program, such as ESL pull-out, ESL push-in, and ESL after school (see Figure 1).

Many schools across the country provide interventions for English language learners in need of additional support through the use of various instructional models. Three such models are represented within the six schools participating in the case study research. They are: 1) *After school*, which is usually conducted for a set amount of time after the school day ends; 2) *Pull-out*, which occurs at designated times during the school day; and, 3) *Push-in*, which happens in the student's regular classroom. Typically, with after-school ESL programs, classroom teachers receive stipends, or teachers are hired especially to provide selected students with additional support after school. An ESL pull-out program means that students are pulled out of their regular classrooms on certain days at specified times during the week. They generally work with an ESL Specialist or teacher on English oral language development in a space or classroom outside of their mainstream classroom. In some models, the specialist or teacher works with larger groups of more than ten; in others, with a small group of about five or less students; and, sometimes with a student one-on-one. In a push-in model, the ESL Specialist or teacher "pushes" into the regular classroom to either team-teach, work with a small group of students, or in some cases, individual students. While these three instructional models were represented across the six sites, each school's implementation of the program varied (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Case Study Schools

School	Location	Instructional Model	Teacher	Grade Level(s)	Number of Students
Benjamin Franklin Elementary School	Anaheim, CA	After school: 60-minute session, 4 days a week	Classroom teachers	K–3rd grades	115 students
Berclair Elementary School	Memphis, TN	After-school tutoring: 90-minute session, 2 days a week	ESL teachers	K–6th grades	22 students
Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary School	Clark County, NV	Pull-out: 50-minute session, 3 days a week	ESL Specialist	2nd–4th grades	15 students
Jefferson Elementary School	Lennox, CA	Pull-out: 30-minute session, 4 days a week	ESL Specialist	2nd grade	18 students
North Star Elementary School	Denver, CO	Push-in: 30-minute session, 4 days a week	Classroom teacher and ESL Specialist	1st grade	5 students
Walter Douglas Elementary School	Tucson, AZ	Pull-out (Reading Lab): 30-minute session, 5 days a week	Reading Specialist	Kindergarten	10 students

Site Visits

During the months of February, March, and April 2007, researchers conducted a site visit to each one of the six schools. During visits, researchers conducted observations of teachers and students participating in **Zip Zoom English**. Observations took place whenever teachers at each site normally teach the program, be it during or after school. After the observation, researchers conducted formal interviews with whoever taught the program, which in some cases was a classroom teacher and in others, an ESL or Reading Specialist. Interviews were also conducted with administrators, who worked at the school and/or district level, and were closest to the program's implementation. When possible, researchers also talked informally with students about their experiences.

Student Achievement Data

Collaboration with those at each site allowed for researchers to gather student achievement data from relevant external assessments that were already being administered. Researchers worked with teachers and administrators at each site to choose the measure most conducive to determining if students were indeed making gains in learning English and/or acquiring the necessary early literacy skills to achieve reading proficiency. An array of assessments were selected (see Figure 2). They include:

Houghton Mifflin (HM) Assessments—a literacy assessment that tests specific literacy skills, such as letter recognition, high frequency words, phonics, and phonemic awareness

TCAP (Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Plan)—Tennessee's timed, multiple choice assessment for students in third through eighth grades

LAS Links (Language Assessment System)—a benchmarked language assessment that measures English language learners' development of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and comprehension skills

DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment)—a literacy assessment that identifies the student's independent rather than instructional reading level

PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening)—a leveled instrument used to identify students in need of additional early literacy instruction and diagnoses specific skill deficits in struggling students

DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills)—a literacy screening that measures early literacy skills predictive of whether students will achieve reading proficiency by the third grade

Figure 2: External Assessments

School	Location	Grade Level(s)	Assessment	Measures	Administered During Year
Benjamin Franklin Elementary School	Anaheim, CA	Kindergarten	HM Assessments	Literacy skills	Twice (fall and at the end of year)
Berclair Elementary School	Memphis, TN	K–6th grades	TCAP	Reading / Language Arts	Annually
Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary School	Clark County, NV	K–6th grades	LAS Links	Language classification	Twice (start and end of year)
Jefferson Elementary School	Lennox, CA	2nd grade	DRA	Literacy levels	As often as needed
North Star Elementary School	Denver, CO	1st grade	PALS	Literacy skills	Three times (fall, winter, and spring)
Walter Douglas Elementary School	Tucson, AZ	Kindergarten	DIBELS	Literacy skills	Three times (fall, winter, and spring)

In addition, researchers gathered data collected by and stored on the Zip Zoom Teacher Manager. The Teacher Manager houses student and class-level data from the Zip Zoom software assessments, given after every two lessons, as well as software usage and demographic data. While on the site visit, researchers asked teachers and/or administrators to print out the Student Performance Summary reports for all participating students, and the Classroom Assessment Report for each participating class or group. Researchers also asked those at each site to administer the Zip Zoom Outcomes Assessments, which consist of leveled word lists and reading passages aligned to what is taught in the program, and administered at the mid- and end-point of each level.

The Participants

In all six cases, the students selected to participate in **Zip Zoom English** were those who struggled academically. They were either: 1) newcomers, which means they were brand new to the school and the language, and thus in need of acquiring English; or, 2) classified English language learners who had been in the system for some time but were still challenged in terms of mastering English and/or the literacy skills necessary to become proficient readers. In most cases, administrators and teachers collaborated to select students. They looked at all available data, which often included those yielded from the mandated English language proficiency test, and results from several relevant standardized literacy assessments. In most cases, they also considered teacher judgment.

Start dates varied (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Start Dates

School and Location	Start Date
Benjamin Franklin Elementary; Anaheim, CA	January 15, 2007
Berclair Elementary; Memphis, TN	February 1, 2007
Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary; Clark County, NV	January 3, 2007
Jefferson Elementary; Lennox, CA	January 24, 2007
North Star Elementary; Denver, CO	February 13, 2007
Walter Douglas Elementary; Tucson, AZ	January 22, 2007

Implementation and Use

Researchers identified three findings associated with the implementation and use of **Zip Zoom English**. They are:

1) The program can be implemented within various instructional models, including ESL pull-out, ESL push-in, and ESL after school.

2) The program provides a structure that teachers can follow, and lessons and activities they can modify.

3) Different parts of the program can be emphasized according to the needs of the teachers and their students.

1) The program can be implemented within various instructional models.

Even though in each of the six cases, the type of instructional model, the amount of time allotted, and how the time was structured varied, in all cases those teaching **Zip Zoom English** were able to implement the program as a whole. Teachers of the program employed the three parts—the Teacher-Led, the Differentiated Practice, and the Technology—regularly and on a weekly basis, albeit in varying ways. To do so, district- or school-level administrators worked with Zip Zoom teachers to determine how to best organize and structure the instruction and time. In all six cases, teachers used small group rotations to address the different parts of the program.

At Benjamin Franklin Elementary School in Anaheim, California, for example, after-school teachers divided the classes of approximately 15 students into three smaller groups consisting of five students each. Each small group then moved through three, 15-minute rotations. At one station, students worked with the teacher on one of the Teacher-Led lessons; at another, they worked independently on one of the Differentiated Practice activities; and at the other, they used the Zip Zoom software. Teachers spent the first 15 minutes of the hour, before they began the rotations, teaching the whole group. During this time, teachers outlined what students were expected to do, reviewed the previous day's lesson, and sometimes read one of the Read Aloud books or conducted a mini-lesson. At all six sites, teachers appreciated the program's rotational structure, finding that it was not only easy to implement, but that it also offered opportunities for students to engage in the content in different ways that held their interest.

2) The program provides a structure that teachers can follow, and lessons and activities they can modify.

In the case of all six schools, those teaching **Zip Zoom English** followed the scope and sequence as prescribed by the curriculum. At some schools, different groups of students worked on different levels of the program. Nonetheless, teachers followed the curriculum provided for whichever level they were teaching. They taught the lessons in order, but removed, added, or modified various activities within each lesson to meet their students' needs. In three of the cases, the teachers had over 20 years of experience working as educators. Those teachers felt strongly about incorporating strategies and activities that had proven effective for them over the years. For example, at North Star Elementary School in Denver, Colorado, the ESL Specialist used the images in the Zip Zoom word and picture book as conversation starters and as a way to further students' oral language development. All of the teachers voiced appreciation about having a solid structure and rich materials that they considered appropriate to students' academic levels, as well as relevant to students' interests. At the same time, many expressed enthusiasm about being able to take those same lessons and materials, and to make modifications if necessary to address students' diverse needs.

"There was nothing like this 20 years ago. I was making this stuff up as I went. Zip Zoom provides a nice format to follow as well as a nice structure to deviate from to meet individual student needs."

— Vicki Belford
ESL Specialist
Clark County, Nevada

3) Different parts of the program can be emphasized according to the needs of the teachers and their students.

Across the six cases, educators with different titles, positions, and roles (i.e., ESL Specialists, Reading Specialists, classroom teachers) taught **Zip Zoom English**. Along with those various positions came different kinds of knowledge and expertise, and hence, varying emphases on different parts of the program. For example, the ESL Specialist at Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary School in Clark County, Nevada, and the Reading Specialist at Walter Douglas Elementary School in Tucson, Arizona, both of whom have almost 30 years of experience in education, prioritized different parts of the program. For example, the ESL Specialist focused on students' oral language development, while the Reading Specialist honed in on literacy skills, such as phonics and phonemic awareness. Even though they both addressed English language acquisition and literacy, each concentrated on one aspect over the other. The Reading Specialist in Tucson explained that she emphasized the components and materials that best aligned with the skills tested on the DIBELS because, for her school, receiving Reading First funds is based on students' DIBELS scores. Those who taught the program found they could use the strength of both aspects of the program—the teaching of oral English and of literacy skills—to address their students' needs.

"It is great—a language acquisition program that teaches reading."

— Barbara Vinyard
Reading Specialist
Tucson, Arizona

Impact

Researchers identified three findings associated with the impact of **Zip Zoom English**. Analyses of the data collected reveal that students who participated in the program are more likely to experience the following effects:

1) Students gain confidence because they feel successful.

2) Students speak more English.

3) Students improve literacy skills.

1) Students gain confidence because they feel successful.

In all six cases, educators close to **Zip Zoom English** observed a rise in students' confidence due to the success students experience in the program. Many told stories about individual students, who did not have the skills to work independently or did not speak any English, until they began participating in the program. Several also commented on the fact that whether a newcomer or struggling reader, the majority of participants recognized that they were experiencing success with the program. According to the ESL Specialist at Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary School in Clark County, Nevada, the fourth-grade newcomers who participated in her Zip Zoom ESL pull-out program, were so excited about being able to read the Zip Zoom Critical-Word Readers that they carried the books back to their regular classrooms and shared them with their peers, most of whom read at a higher level. Those teaching the program attributed students' feeling of success to the level of appropriateness of the content and materials to where students were in their development. They also felt that the program was structured in a way that made it easy for students to understand and follow, and that the themes addressed students' interests. In all six cases, participating students, even though representing a wide range of ability levels, were able to move through the software assessments and display adequate progress on the Zip Zoom Outcomes Assessments.

"From my perspective, I love it. It meets this group of students precisely where they are. It addresses exactly what they need right now. Vocabulary is what they need before they read."

— Nativity Miller
ESL Specialist
Denver, Colorado

2) Students speak more English.

At the various school sites, those teaching **Zip Zoom English** shared that students were speaking more English, and used longer phrases and complete sentences when they did. Students participating in all six of the programs represented a wide range of English language proficiency levels; nonetheless, all gained valuable English vocabulary. Additionally, some who rarely spoke English began to speak. Researchers observed numerous students reading and singing along with the Zip Zoom software. An after school teacher at Benjamin Franklin Elementary School in Anaheim, California, shared an example of a student who was new to the country and had yet to speak English in the regular classroom. The first time the teacher ever heard her speak English was during Zip Zoom time after school. Several teachers also noted that the Teacher-Led portion of the program grants opportunities for students to speak, for teachers to model correct English, and for teachers to hear students and assess their language acquisition. "It has allowed me to listen more closely to their responses and clue into syntactical errors," said another ESL after-school teacher in Anaheim.

"We're having discussions we've never been able to have before."

— Jamie Newman
First-Grade Teacher
Denver, Colorado

3) Students improve literacy skills.

At all of the sites, administrators and teachers reported that students who participated in **Zip Zoom English** experienced gains on literacy assessments such as the PALS, DIBELS, DRA, and various other tests. While it is possible that these gains were caused by a number of factors, stakeholders believe that students' participation in **Zip Zoom English** is one of them. A principal attributed the school's overall rise in student achievement, as seen in state test scores, with students' participation in the **Zip Zoom English** after-school program. Several teachers reported having observed a rise in students' English vocabulary and a consequent increase in oral reading fluency. Students' improved performance on literacy assessments and English language proficiency tests also suggests improved access to their core language arts programs.

"We finally have Zip Zoom up and running. The initial reaction by our four-member ESL team is excitement. These reactions are partially based on a sudden 'upswing' in immediate English vocabulary acquisition."

— Sam Shaw, Principal
Memphis, Tennessee

Challenges

As with so many schools across the nation when it comes to implementing a supplemental program with a technology component, challenges revolved around issues that have to do with time, technology, and management. Researchers noted the following three challenges around the implementation and use of **Zip Zoom English**.

Insufficient Time to Implement the Program

While all of those who taught **Zip Zoom English** were able to implement the three main parts of the program, some struggled to find the time necessary to implement each part for the time suggested. For example, at Jefferson in Lennox, California, the ESL pull-out program ran for 30 minutes, four days a week. Principal Jason Holmes had wanted to implement the ESL pull-out program for 45 minutes a day, but classroom teachers expressed concern about students missing crucial class time. This challenge is typical when it comes to pull-out programs; teachers worry that those students who are pulled out to receive additional services will miss valuable content and feel differently from their peers. These concerns are usually exacerbated by the fact that the students who are pulled out are often those who struggle academically. At Jefferson Elementary School, however, students who were pulled out to participate in Zip Zoom experienced notable success, and consequently, next year the pull-out program will last for 45 minutes instead of 30 minutes.

Lack of Hardware and/or Personnel to Monitor Technology Use

In most cases, students who participated in **Zip Zoom English** had access to an adequate number of computers (four to eight). At North Star Elementary School in Denver, Colorado, however, students only had access to one desktop computer uploaded with the software. Students therefore had to take turns using the computer during the Differentiated Practice rotation. In addition, some teachers voiced a desire for someone to monitor students' use of the software. They suggested that whomever monitors software use also assist students when they experience technical difficulties and/or when they struggle with an assessment.

Different Rates of Progression

Teachers at most of the sites noted that several of the students in their groups progressed though the software at a pace that varied from the rate by which the teacher moved through the Teacher-Led lessons and Differentiated Practice activities. Unless someone monitored the students' progression, telling them when to stop and when to start again, some students advanced through the software lessons and assessments much more rapidly than the teacher moved through the curriculum. Although not as common, some students fell behind on the software. About half of the teachers encouraged students to go at their own pace, but some teachers wanted more control over the software.

Case Studies

The following case studies provide descriptive portraits of the implementation of **Zip Zoom English**, and the program's impact in six school sites across the country. They are:

1. **Benjamin Franklin Elementary School; Anaheim, CA**

2. **Berclair Elementary School; Memphis, TN**

3. **Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary School; Clark County, NV**

4. **Jefferson Elementary School; Lennox, CA**

5. **North Star Elementary School; Denver, CO**

6. **Walter Douglas Elementary School; Tucson, AZ**

Each case study includes the following information:

- contextual information about the district and school, which focuses on why the school chose to adopt **Zip Zoom English**;

- a description of the instructional model, in which they implemented **Zip Zoom English** (i.e., ESL after school, ESL after-school tutoring, ESL pull-out, ESL-push-in, or Reading Lab);

- a detailed depiction of the implementation and use of **Zip Zoom English**;

- evidence of **Zip Zoom English's** impact, which includes standardized assessment results as well as stakeholders' reactions.

At all six of these school sites, administrators and teachers intended to better serve and support the English language learners at their school. While program implementations varied due to contextual differences, in all six cases administrators and teachers sought to utilize the program to further develop students' oral language in English and literacy skills.

Student Ethnicity
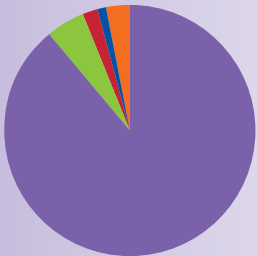
- Hispanic or Latino (89%)
- White (5%)
- African American (2%)
- Asian (1%)
- Other (3%)

Total number of students
enrolled 905

English language
learners 62%

Students eligible for free
and reduced lunch . . . 86%

Benjamin Franklin Elementary School; Anaheim, CA

Located just a few miles from the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim, California, Benjamin Franklin Elementary School presents one of those rare urban minority school success stories. Interestingly, as the number of English language learners enrolled at the school has increased by almost 25 percent over the past seven years (from 66 percent in 2000 to 89 percent in 2007), so have students' standardized test scores and the school's overall status. Benjamin Franklin's Principal, Janet Grant, attributes this success to her belief in providing teachers with the additional tools and resources they need to help students master the California state standards.

With 342,000 residents, Anaheim is the tenth most populous city in California, and the 56th most populous in the United States. Almost half of the residents are Hispanic or Latino. Known for its theme parks, sports teams, and convention center, Anaheim remains one of the safest cities of its size in the nation.

While Benjamin Franklin Elementary prides itself on promoting best practices, such as differentiated instruction, standards-based instruction, research-driven practices, and collaboration, it also offers numerous programs, interventions, and supplements. One such program, which began in September 2006 and was held after school, was created to meet the needs of English language learners. While Principal Grant appreciated the program, she thought it needed structure. "We knew we needed to teach academic vocabulary. We were looking for something to supplement, and we found the program engaging," she said about her choice to adopt **Zip Zoom English**.

ESL After-School Program

In December 2006, Principal Grant asked then second-grade teacher, Yadira Moreno, to coordinate the program. She became a Teacher on Special Assignment with an English Language Development focus, in charge of both managing the program and teaching one of the classes. She recruited four other classroom teachers to teach the after-school classes to groups of second and third graders, most of whom came from the teachers' own classrooms. Another teacher was hired specifically to teach a group of kindergartners.

Classes consisted of 13 to 15 students who were either students who struggled with speaking, listening, and reading in English, or newcomers who had only just arrived from Mexico and Central America and spoke little or no English. This year alone, Franklin enrolled 40 newcomers. Students eligible for after-school were identified based on their CELDT (California English Language Development Test) levels and teacher judgment. "For most kids, we use it as a language program rather than a reading intervention," explains Principal Grant.

Program Implementation and Use

The after-school program ran for 60-minute sessions, four days a week. Each of the teachers' classes was structured in the same way. The class was divided into three smaller groups which completed three 15-minute rotations during the hour. During the first quarter of the hour, the teacher greeted the students, reviewed the previous day's lesson, and previewed what would be covered that day. She made sure that the group was on the same page, even if students were performing on different levels and progressing at different rates. On some days she utilized that time to read one of the Zip Zoom Read-Aloud books and asked comprehension questions or did a mini-lesson on a specific skill.

Students then began the three rotations, each one of which lasted 15 minutes. One group worked with the teacher on one of the Teacher-Led lessons; another group completed one of the Independent Practice worksheets; and, the other went to the classroom's computer station where four or five computers were loaded with the Zip Zoom software. All of the teachers followed the scope and sequence of the curriculum. Most, however, made modifications to the lessons and activities. For example, several extended the practice activities by adding a writing component. They asked students to write descriptions of what they were seeing, and some integrated journal writing.

Program Impact

Principal Grant is certain the program is having an impact: "Our kids can't wait to go to after-school, and I do think that is because of Zip Zoom. I have seen the excitement in their eyes." Ms. Moreno believes that students' enthusiasm is due to the success they experience: "They felt like they could manage it. They understood the routines and the lessons. They felt comfortable. They feel successful using the program."

In addition to the students' excitement, teachers appreciated the opportunities the program provided for students to speak English. With no more than five students in each small group, every student received several opportunities to respond during the Teacher-Led rotation. According to teacher Sharon Tanner who taught one of the second-grade groups, "Some of my kids are much more vocal in Zip Zoom. The higher-level kids aren't there, so there are a lot more opportunities for speaking." In fact, the first time she ever heard one of her students speak in English occurred during Zip Zoom time. The Teacher-Led rotation also granted opportunities for the teacher to listen to and assess students' oral language development in a more concentrated way than was possible during the normal school day. "Zip Zoom is one of the only times I can sit with a student one-on-one. It has allowed me to listen to them, to their responses," remarks Guadalupe Vasquez who teaches a third-grade group.

Data from the kindergarten group reveal that the majority of the students who participated in **Zip Zoom English** are making gains on several of the subtests included in the Houghton Mifflin Assessments. The group of 21 students first took the literacy assessment in the fall of 2006, and then again in the spring of 2007. They took a series of subtests, which included letter and sound recognition, high-frequency and rhyming words, oral blending and segmentation, and phonemes. The chart below compares students' results on the high-frequency word subtest from the fall and spring administrations, respectively. Out of the 21 students, 17 read more high-frequency words at the end of the year than at the beginning of the year.

HM Assessment: High-Frequency Words Subtest

Percentage of words read correctly

Kindergarten Students
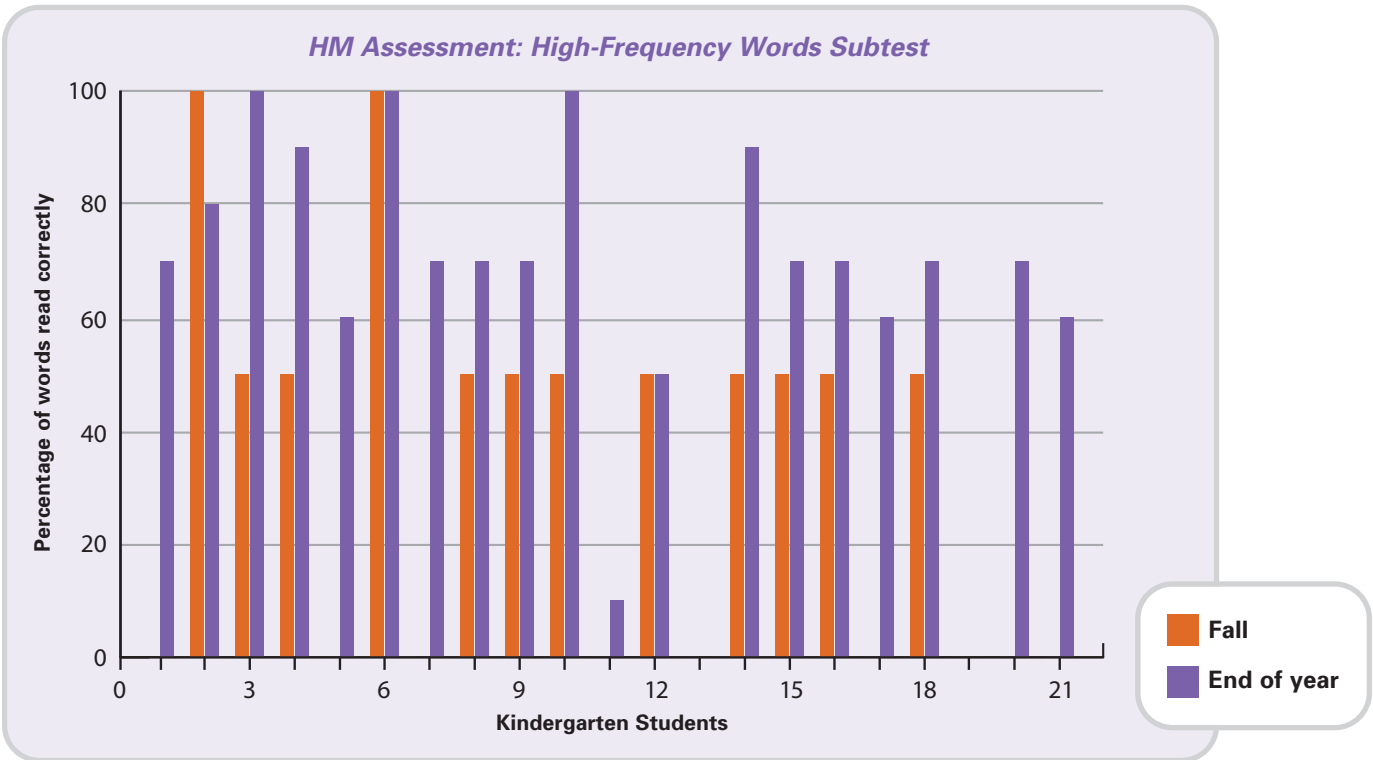
Fall
End of year

*Students with no orange bar scored less than 1% correct on the fall test.

Berclair Elementary School; Memphis, TN

Student Ethnicity
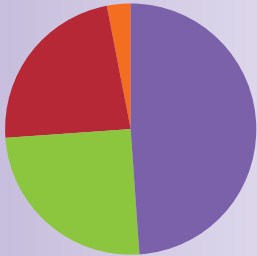
■ Hispanic or Latino (49%)
■ White (25%)
■ African American (23%)
■ Other (3%)

Total number of students enrolled 394

English language learners 39%

Students eligible for free and reduced lunch . . . 90%

At Berclair Elementary School in Memphis, Tennessee, Principal Sam Shaw has made supporting the school's fast-growing population of English language learners a priority. Everything hanging in the hallways, from labels to mission statements, is in both English and Spanish. Unlike the majority of Memphis City Schools, where the student population is predominantly English speaking, Spanish is the first language for almost 50 percent of Berclair's student population. For the 2006–2007 school year, Principal Shaw hired three full-time ESL teachers and provided each with their own classroom.

Famous for its barbeque and music legends, Memphis sits alongside the Mississippi River in southwestern Tennessee. With a population of 681,000, it is the largest city in the state and the 17th largest city in the United States. According to the 2000 census, 20 percent of the population remains below the poverty line.

The Memphis City Schools district is the largest school system in the state of Tennessee and the 21st largest in the nation. It serves more than 119,000 students in a total of 191 schools in Grades K–12. In 2003–2004, the graduation rate district-wide was 61 percent.

Students at Berclair Elementary School do relatively well in comparison to students at the majority of the district's other elementary schools. In 2006, 75 percent of the school's third graders scored Proficient or Advanced in Reading and English Language Arts on Tennessee's state standards-based test known as the TCAP. Still Principal Shaw worried about how to best serve the school's growing population of English language learners. After he consulted with the ESL teachers, he decided to purchase **Zip Zoom English** to be used in an after-school ESL tutoring program.

ESL After-School Tutoring

The ESL teachers decided to teach **Zip Zoom English** two days a week, on Mondays and Thursdays, for 90-minute sessions. Together, the ESL teachers selected 31 students in kindergarten through sixth grade, based on their scores on the annually administered, CELA (Comprehensive English Language Assessment). The ESL teachers factored in students' results on various literacy assessments, such as the DIBELS and the STAR Reading test, as well as teacher recommendations.

Program Implementation and Use

The ESL teachers organized the 31 participating students into two groups composed of roughly 15 students each. They divided the students according to grade and language proficiency level. One group was comprised of mostly younger students, of kindergarten through second graders, and the other of second through sixth graders. The three ESL teachers, along with the help of the school's bilingual mentor, co-taught each group. The younger group started on Level 1 and the older group on Level 2.

Teachers divided both groups even further by randomly assigning students to three smaller groups of about five students each. With both the Level 1 and the Level 2 groups, teachers typically started the 90-minute session by reading part or all of one of the Read-Aloud books and asking students to define vocabulary words, answer comprehension questions, and act out parts of the story. After the read aloud, students completed three 20-minute rotations. One group worked with one of the teachers on a Teacher-Led lesson; another worked with the other teacher on the corresponding Differentiated Practice activity; and, the third headed to a computer station where they proceeded through the software program.

Teachers used all of the Zip Zoom materials, modifying lessons and activities according to students' needs. They primarily used the Zip Zoom Word and Picture book and word cards to teach vocabulary and support English oral language development. They used the Critical-Word Readers to focus on fluency, intonation, and reading with expression.

Program Impact

All four of the teachers concluded that **Zip Zoom English** had an impact on students' motivation and confidence due to the success students experienced. ESL teacher Hannah Horch observed that students actually wanted to stay after school: "They want to go to tutoring. That's their favorite thing, the computer." Teachers also comment on how the program is making a real difference for certain students. About one student who is now speaking English with confidence, ESL teacher Dawn Smith explains, "He's been really hesitant to speak English in the past. He could read and write but he wasn't speaking." About another student, Ms. Horch observes, "He couldn't do anything independently [before he started using Zip Zoom]. He can't really read but with the program, he can do work all by himself."

Principal Shaw is pleased by what he's seen thus far. Preliminary results on the Reading and Language Arts section of the TCAP reveal that out of the group of 18 third, fourth, and fifth graders who participated in the Zip Zoom after-school tutoring, 14 tested equivalent to Proficient or Advanced, and only four tested Below Proficient. He remarks, "I was surprised when I saw the scores. This is our group that is struggling the most academically. I am amazed by their results. Zip Zoom is the only program that's changed from last year to this year."

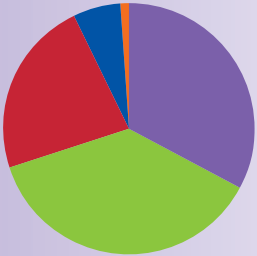*"They want to go to tutoring. That's their favorite thing, the computer."*

—Hannah Horch
ESL Teacher
Memphis, Tennessee

"He couldn't do anything independently [before he started using Zip Zoom]. He can't really read but with the program, he can do work all by himself."

—Hannah Horch

Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary School; Clark County, NV

Student Ethnicity

■ **Hispanic or Latino (33%)**
■ **White (37%)**
■ **African American (23%)**
■ **Asian (6%)**
■ **Other (1%)**

**Total number of students
    enrolled 627**

**English language
    learners 28%**

**Students eligible for free
    and reduced lunch . . . 52%**

At Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary School in Clark County, Nevada, the student population is constantly shifting; for the 2004–2005 school year, the mobility rate was 36 percent. Along with continual movement, the school has also experienced a rise in the number of students who recently arrived in the United States and don't speak English.

Occupying an area larger than New Jersey, Clark County is the most populous county in Nevada with 1.9 million people and still growing. In fact, it is the fastest-growing area in the country with roughly 5,000 people moving there each month. A low tax-rate, a thriving business climate, and great weather draw families from all over the country and the world. Plus, every year 38 million tourists visit the city of Las Vegas, which is at the heart of Clark County. With over 150,000 hotels and casinos, the city offers ample jobs in the service industry.

The Clark County School District serves 303,421 students, preK through twelfth grades, in 323 schools. The district is divided into six regions. Just over 20 percent of the district's students are Hispanic or Latino of any race, and 44 percent are eligible for free and reduced lunch. At Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary, close to 30 percent of the student population is comprised of English language learners.

ESL Pull-Out Program

Vicki Belford has 26 years of experience as an educator. This was her first year working at Berkeley L. Bunker Elementary. In her position as ESL Specialist, she was responsible for administering all required assessments, providing staff development and ongoing support, and offering additional instruction and resources to struggling students and/or newcomers. To do so, she typically pulled students out of their regular classroom for 50-minute sessions, three days a week. She worked with small groups of students, who were performing at similar language proficiency levels, in her classroom where everything, including electrical outlets, is labeled in English. She also regularly pushes into mainstream teachers' classrooms. For example, she just recently pushed into a classroom to assist a student with an in-class assignment which was to write her own book.

Ms. Belford worked with first- through fifth-grade students. Most were newcomers who had just arrived in the United States and spoke little or no English. The majority of these students came from Central and South America, and a few students came from Asia. Other students who were learning English were born in the United States, but struggled with English oral language and literacy skills. Ms. Belford's groups were flexible in that, if a student made significant progress, she replaced him or her with another student who was in greater need of support outside of the classroom.

"Students feel successful in the program since they can grasp the concepts and do the activities."

—Vicki Belford
ESL Specialist
Clark County, Nevada

Program Implementation and Use

Ms. Belford used **Zip Zoom English** as an intervention program with all of the small groups she saw. "There is so much they need. Zip Zoom is a base that I can build from," she commented. Different groups worked on different levels, but all of the groups followed the level's scope and sequence. She began the 50-minute session with the Teacher-Led component. She first reviewed the target concept words covered during the group's previous session, and when appropriate, introduced new words. She then used the words as focal points from which to expand students' oral language development. She asked students to answer questions in complete sentences, which required that they know the meaning of the words. She frequently used the Zip Zoom Word and Picture book to facilitate more discussion. Later, she shifted gears to concentrate on teaching literacy skills, such as phonics and phonemic awareness. She used the Zip Zoom Song and Chant book to teach students specific sounds. According to her, students loved the chants.
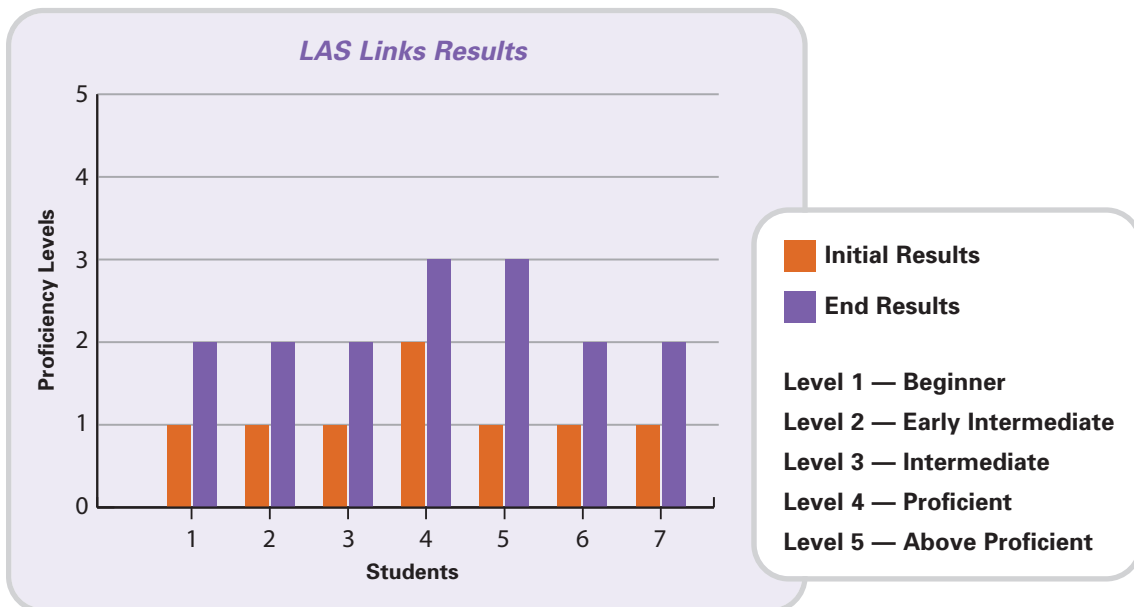
Her students were also enthusiastic about the program's Technology component. After 20 minutes of Teacher-Led instruction, she split the small group in half so that half of the students could use the Zip Zoom software, while the other half worked on the lesson's corresponding Differentiated Practice activity. After 15 minutes passed, the students switched: those who were on the computers did the activity, and those who were doing the activity moved over to the computers. Near the end of the session, students often printed out the computer versions of the Critical-Word Readers to take and read at home. Ms. Belford expressed sincere appreciation about having the Zip Zoom materials.

Program Impact

Ms. Belford was also enthusiastic about the progress she saw students making. While she realized that the growth was the result of many factors that occurred both inside and outside of the classroom, she asserts, "Zip Zoom has accelerated their growth." Their success, according to her, was in large part because, "Students feel successful in the program since they can grasp the concepts and do the activities." Even students who had struggled to work independently can do so when using the software. Moreover, the students were engaged by the program. Ms. Belford explains, "I'm amazed that the children haven't tired of it. They have a real goal to finish the books. They want to go on to the next level."

Ms. Belford's observations were confirmed when she viewed students' movement on the LAS Links. Out of the seven students who took the test, six moved up a level and one moved up two levels. She also observed newcomers making significant gains on the DRA and SRI (Scholastic Reading Inventory). One fourth-grade student, who came from Mexico at the beginning of the school year and had extremely limited English, moved from the preprimer level to a fifth-grade independent reading level and a sixth-grade instructional level on the Flynt-Cooter Reading Inventory, over the course of the school year.
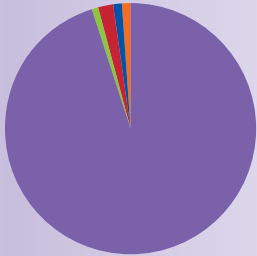
One fourth-grade student, who came from Mexico at the beginning of the school year and had extremely limited English, moved from the Pre-Primer level to a fifth-grade independent reading level and a sixth-grade instructional level on the Flynt-Cooter Reading Inventory, over the course of the school year.

LAS Links Results

Legend:
- Initial Results
- End Results

Level 1 — Beginner
Level 2 — Early Intermediate
Level 3 — Intermediate
Level 4 — Proficient
Level 5 — Above Proficient

Y-axis: Proficiency Levels
X-axis: Students

Jefferson Elementary School; Lennox, CA

Student Ethnicity

■ **Hispanic or Latino (97%)**
■ **White (<1%)**
■ **African American (2%)**
■ **Asian (<1%)**
■ **Other (<1%)**

Total number of students enrolled 917

English language learners 71%

Students eligible for free and reduced lunch . . . 91%

A network of bungalows located directly below where planes descend to land at the Los Angeles International Airport, Jefferson Elementary School is one of five elementary schools in the Lennox Elementary School District. Less than two square miles in size, the district includes the unincorporated community of Lennox, and parts of the cities of Inglewood, Hawthorne, and Los Angeles.

Lennox is considered a port of entry into the United States for families coming from Mexico. At the time of the 2000 census, the population was 22,950, and in the 2005, the estimated median household income was $32,300. Many residents work in the construction or service industries. The community suffers from overcrowding.

Like so many high-poverty, urban minority schools across the nation, Jefferson strives to adequately support its student population. "The biggest challenge with a high population of at-risk and second language learners is that the majority of our students enter kindergarten with half the amount of vocabulary words as a suburban kid," explains Principal Jason Holmes. "We have to build their knowledge and it takes time. We're always playing catch up. We have so much to make up for before they even sit down on their square on the rug in kindergarten."

To do so, students must have access to resources, supplements, and interventions in addition to the mainstream curriculum. The school has bilingual and Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) programs, which grant English language learners targeted support. Even so, Principal Holmes discovered that a group of second-grade students were not showing progress on the CELDT (California English Language Development Test), California's annually administered English proficiency test. All remained on the Beginner or Early Intermediate levels—the same place as when they started kindergarten.

Principal Holmes decided something extra was needed to support this group of students. He chose **Zip Zoom English**, after having piloted the software himself in the spring of 2005 with a small group of kindergarten students. "Our kids aren't exposed to computers at home so they jump on the chance to use them in school. [With the Zip Zoom software] it is almost like they are doing cooperative learning with the computer. It's not drill and kill like with some of the other computer software programs. The kids actually have to think and make choices."

ESL Pull-Out

In October 2006, Principal Holmes placed 18 struggling second graders in an ESL pull-out program, slated to run for 30 minutes a day, four days a week. He tapped Jefferson's very experienced Staff Development Specialist (SDS), Christina Medina, whose main responsibility was to support English Language Development and Language Arts at the school site, to teach the program. With 20 years of experience working with English language learners specifically, and 27 years overall teaching at Jefferson, she was the perfect candidate. Nonetheless, teachers were hesitant about having students pulled out of their classrooms. Some felt the students would miss valuable class time, while others worried that some students might feel badly or different. Ms. Medina and Mr. Holmes scheduled the program at the very end of the school day.

"It is almost like they are doing cooperative learning with the computer. It's not drill and kill like with some of the other computer software programs. The kids actually have to think and make choices."

*—Jason Holmes
Principal
Lennox, California*

Program Implementation and Use

Students came to Ms. Medina's class from four different second-grade classrooms every Monday through Thursday. Eight of the participating students came from classrooms with bilingual programs, and ten from ones with SEI programs. "The students have some communication skills but most struggle with grammatical structures," explained Ms. Medina. Once students arrived, they sat on the rug as Ms. Medina quickly outlined what they would be doing during that session. Most days were the same and consisted of three, 15-minute small-group rotations. One group worked with her at a table in the back of the room on one of the Teacher-Led activities; another group sat at a different table where they either pair-read a couple of the selected Critical-Word Readers or their word cards; and, the third group participated in the **Zip Zoom English** software on one of the eight computers set up in Ms. Medina's classroom.

Ms. Medina organized the small groups based on several factors: students' results on the Zip Zoom Placement Assessment, their CELDT levels, and the information from their ELD profiles, which teachers use to determine English proficiency levels. While she decided to start all 18 students on Level 1, she also divided the students into three leveled groups—low, middle, and high according to their English proficiency and reading level. She modified the Teacher-Led and Differentiated Practice portions of the program slightly by either simplifying or extending the lessons and activities to address each one of the group's distinct ability levels.

Program Impact

Ms. Medina regularly checked the Software Usage reports to determine the pace at which students were progressing through the software assessments. She also assessed students orally when they sat down with her during the Teacher-Led portion of the program. During that time, she required students to speak in full sentences so she could assess any errors they made and targeted her instruction accordingly.

At Jefferson, second-grade teachers administer the DRA frequently to assess students' independent reading level. Of the 12 students who remained in the Zip Zoom Pull-out program throughout the spring, all moved from a lower to a higher reading level as measured by the DRA. In fact, on average, students moved 9.5 levels, and 75 percent of students moved 10 levels or more. DRA levels 16 to 20 indicate that second graders were reading on grade level.
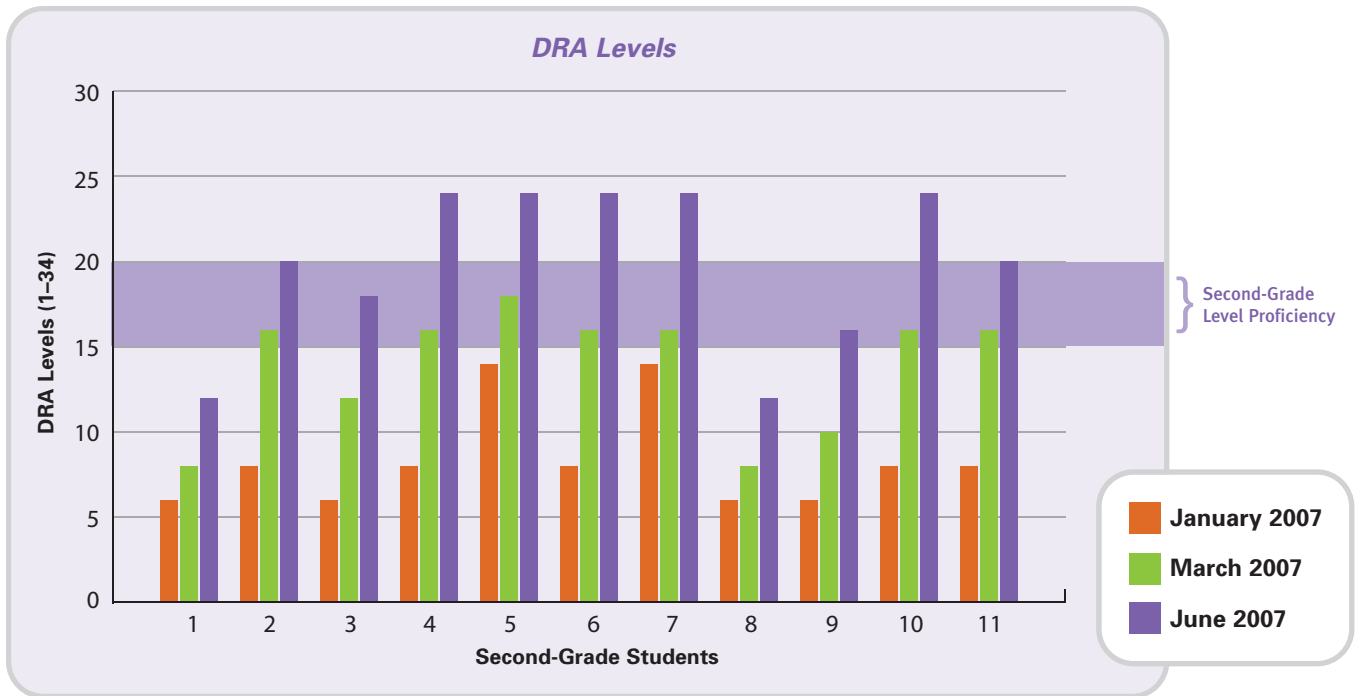
North Star Elementary School; Denver, CO

Student Ethnicity
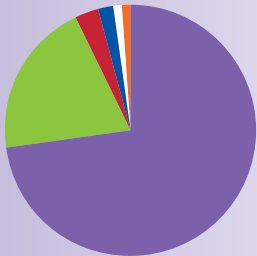
- ■ Hispanic or Latino (73%)
- ■ White (20%)
- ■ African American (3%)
- ■ Asian (2%)
- □ Native American (1%)
- ■ Other (1%)

Total number of students enrolled 468

English language learners 61%

Students eligible for free and reduced lunch . . . 88%

Over the past decade the demographics at North Star Elementary School have completely flip-flopped. Ten years ago about a quarter of the student population was Hispanic and three-quarters were white, and now, one quarter of the student population is white and almost three-quarters are Hispanic. Out of the 468 total students currently enrolled at North Star, 300 are classified as English language learners.

North Star Elementary is located in Thornton, Colorado, a suburb ten miles north of downtown Denver. With an emphasis on business, outdoor recreation, and the environment, Thornton's population has increased by 27 percent over the past five years from approximately 80,000 to 100,000 residents and, with each passing year, becomes increasingly more diverse.

North Star Elementary embraces its growing population and rising diversity by making literacy a priority for all students. To do so, school leaders provide double literacy blocks for at-risk kids, and offer second language acquisition programs and a summer school that focuses on literacy. Nonetheless, six months into the 2006–2007 school year, first-grade teacher Ms. Jamie Newman found herself struggling to teach five of the students in her classroom to read. It seemed no matter what she tried, the students did not progress.

In need of help, Ms. Newman approached District Literacy Coordinator Jan Killick, who had just heard about **Zip Zoom English**. She felt its promise to teach both English and early literacy through the use of a curriculum and interactive technology could offer a solution: "We saw that the kids were not getting enough reading strategies. We knew they needed some small-group instruction. We knew we needed to do some front-loading before they were able to get into the curriculum." Plus, she noticed that those students who were being pulled out were spending a lot of time commuting to and from the ESL Specialist's classroom. **Zip Zoom English** proposed a way to not only provide students with a foundation, but also to resolve these issues.

ESL Push-In

Soon thereafter, North Star's on-site ESL Specialist Nativity Miller began pushing into Ms. Newman's classroom everyday to teach **Zip Zoom English** to the five struggling students. Ms. Miller is responsible for supporting the academic achievement of English language learners in every grade level, kindergarten through fifth grade, at North Star.

Typically, she worked alone pulling students, who were either identified by their test scores or/and their teacher, out of the classroom to provide additional support and intervention. Upon receiving **Zip Zoom English**, she, in conjunction with Ms. Newman, decided to teach the program together.

The program's two distinct curricular components—the Teacher-Led and the Differentiated Practice—made it easy for Ms. Newman and Ms. Miller to plan and work with one another. Ms. Newman taught the Teacher-Led portion of the lesson and focused on developing students' literacy skills, while Ms. Miller taught the corresponding Differentiated Practice activity and focused on their English oral language development. "The greatest gift is that we are able to work together and be on the same page. We're more focused together," explains Ms. Miller. Before they had **Zip Zoom English**, each was teaching something different. "Now what we are teaching is connected, not fragmented," adds Ms. Miller. Moreover, the push-in model maximized students' instructional time and minimized time spent moving between classrooms.

"We saw that the kids were not getting enough reading strategies. We knew they needed some small-group instruction. We knew we needed to do some front-loading before they were able to get into the curriculum."

—Jan Killick
District Literacy Coordinator
Denver, Colorado

"The greatest gift is that we are able to work together and be on the same page. We're more focused together."

—Nativity Miller
ESL Specialist
Denver, Colorado

Program Implementation and Use

During the daily 90-minute Language Arts block, students rotated through literacy centers and a 15-minute small group guided reading session led by Ms. Newman. The five students who struggled most met with Ms. Newman everyday from 10 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. at a round table in front of the classroom. During that time, she used the Zip Zoom word cards and Critical-Word Readers to teach letter recognition, phonics, phonemic awareness, and decoding. She also worked with the students to build their vocabulary and comprehension skills, but focused on teaching critical literacy skills. At 10:15 a.m., the students placed their Zip Zoom word cards, and one or two Critical-Word Readers into Ziploc® bags marked with their names. The group then rotated to another round table located in the back of the classroom where Ms. Miller waited for them. For an additional 15 minutes, Ms. Miller guided students through the Differentiated Practice activities for the same lesson. While with Ms. Miller, students concentrated on speaking English. She asked students to describe things, answer questions, and speak in complete sentences.

Through this daily routine, these five students received a daily dose of both Zip Zoom Teacher-Led instruction and Differentiated Practice. As smoothly as the implementation of these two components had gone, the technology remained a challenge. Ms. Newman had only two computers in her classroom, and one had to remain in a literacy center that was accessible to all students. Only one computer was available to the Zip Zoom group. Even so, the students managed to progress through the software lessons and assessments.
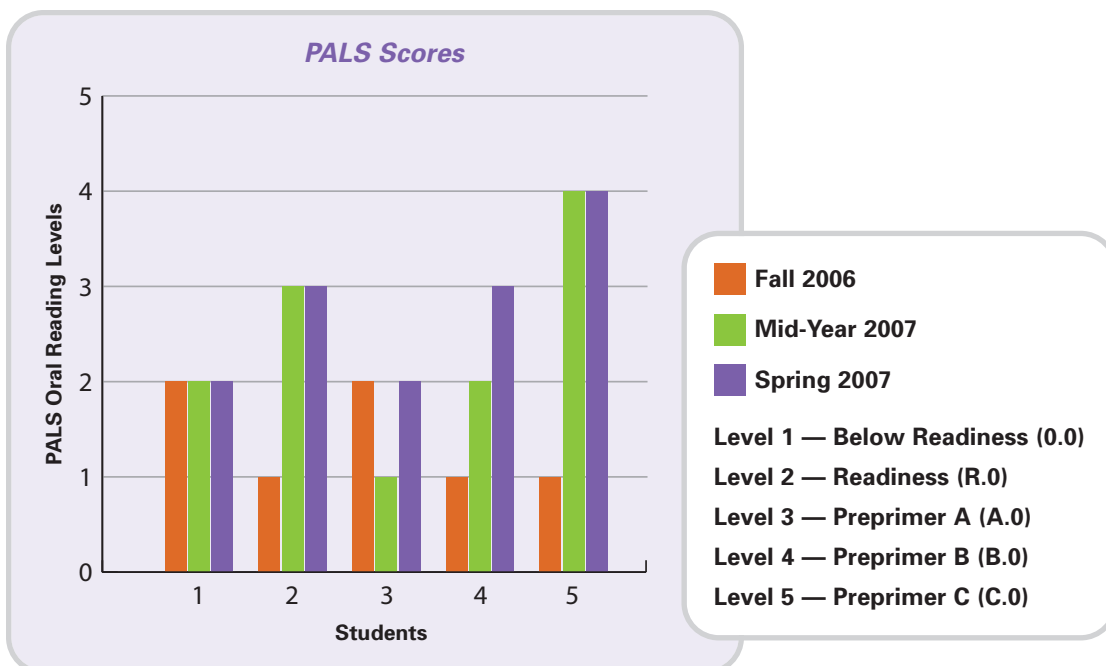
Program Impact

While Ms. Newman and Ms. Miller greatly appreciated having a program that allowed them to work together in such a seamless fashion, they noted several other benefits. Ms. Miller felt that the program met students' academic levels and needs, as well as presented topics and themes that were aligned to the Language Arts curriculum and were relevant to students' interests: "There are a lot of programs out there. Some other programs are so removed. The themes and topics [in Zip Zoom English] seem to fit really well. They are close to students' interests. It is meeting these students precisely where they are. They still need a lot of front-loading. Vocabulary is what they need before they learn to read."

Ms. Miller claimed that she had observed gains in things that couldn't be measured by tests, such as students' participation, eagerness, confidence, and focus. She identified one student in particular who was not comfortable speaking and reading in English until he started participating in **Zip Zoom English**. "We've seen such changes. He's excited about reading. He used to be all over the place. Now he's a lot more focused since he started Zip Zoom." Ms. Newman added, "I think it's because he feels successful. The lights are going on."

Ms. Newman used the PALS Assessment to identify students at risk of reading difficulties and to measure students' knowledge of important literacy fundamentals, such as phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, letter sounds, spelling, word recognition, and oral passage reading. Out of the five students who participated in the Zip Zoom push-in intervention, three made gains and two stayed at the same level according to their results on the PALS.

"There are a lot of programs out there. Some other programs are so removed. The themes and topics [in Zip Zoom English] seem to fit really well. They are close to students' interests. It is meeting these students precisely where they are."
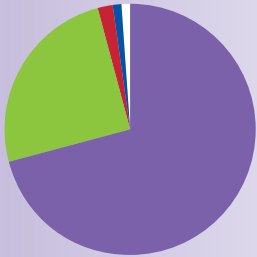
—Nativity Miller

PALS Scores

Fall 2006
Mid-Year 2007
Spring 2007

Level 1 — Below Readiness (0.0)
Level 2 — Readiness (R.0)
Level 3 — Preprimer A (A.0)
Level 4 — Preprimer B (B.0)
Level 5 — Preprimer C (C.0)

Walter Douglas Elementary School; Tucson, AZ

Student Ethnicity

- Hispanic or Latino (71%)
- White (25%)
- African American (2%)
- Asian (1%)
- Native American (1%)

**Total number of students
enrolled 640**

**English language
learners 32%**

**Students eligible for free
and reduced lunch . . . 89%**

Near the foot of the craggy mountains and amidst the cacti forests of Tucson, Arizona, Walter Douglas Elementary School serves a growing number of English language learners. Ranked an Arizona A+ school, Walter Douglas makes every effort to provide all students with an academic environment and the supports they need to achieve.

With a population nearing 500,000 in the 2000 census, Tucson is the thirty-second largest city and fifty-second largest metropolitan area in the United States. It is situated just 60 miles north of the Mexican border, crossed everyday by families who come to live and work in the United States. The region has a long history of successfully blending the cultures of the U.S. and Mexico.

Walter Douglas is one of six elementary schools in the Flowing Wells School District, located on the north side of the city where some of Tucson's primary commercial zones are found. Eighty-nine percent of the student population is eligible for free and reduced lunch, and 32 percent are classified as English language learners, which is twice the state average. And yet, 86 percent of all third graders at the school are meeting or exceeding the Arizona state standards, which is nearly on par with the state's average of 89 percent.

One of the ways by which Walter Douglas helps its students to succeed academically is by providing a Reading Lab run by Reading Specialist Barb Vinyard and attended by three ESL paraprofessionals. Highly experienced, Ms. Vinyard began her career as an educator 27 years ago, and has been the Reading Specialist at Walter Douglas for the past ten. She therefore possesses a strong knowledge of the foundations of reading along with a firm understanding of language acquisition and vocabulary development. Students who come to the Reading Lab are identified based on their scores from the DIBELS and Reading Readiness test, a district-mandated assessment that measures students' early literacy skills. They come to the lab at staggered times during the school day to receive help with the skills they need to become proficient readers.

ESL Pull-out Reading Lab

Ninety-five percent of the students who come to the Reading Lab are English language learners in urgent need of acquiring English vocabulary. The ESL paraprofessionals use the Essential Skills program to support students' English language development, but as the Reading Specialist, Ms. Vinyard wanted a program that taught both English vocabulary and the critical early reading skills. It was important to her that the program address the skills tested on the DIBELS and the RSS Readiness test, such as letter naming, phonics, phonemic segmentation, and oral reading fluency. She recognized the need for students to start and build a foundation in literacy while simultaneously learning English.

Program Implementation and Use

Ms. Vinyard decided to first try **Zip Zoom English** with small groups from two different kindergarten classrooms. Each group consisted of five or six students, and rotated into the Reading Lab at a specific time during their 90-minute Language Arts block. There, she worked with each group for 20 minutes before students moved to the computers where they used the Zip Zoom software for the next 10 minutes. Ms. Vinyard combined materials from both the Teacher-Led and the Differentiated Practice parts of the program with the lessons and activities she had used for years to teach reading. She used the Zip Zoom word cards to teach the meaning of the words, letter recognition, phonics, and phonemic awareness. She also used the Critical-Word Readers to teach oral reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary, and the Word and Picture book as a way to reinforce the meaning of the vocabulary words. Still, her focus remained on teaching early literacy skills.

Program Impact

As the Reading Specialist, Ms. Vinyard was skeptical about whether **Zip Zoom English** could meet her and her students' needs in terms of reading instruction. She thought that the double focus on both language and literacy would dilute the strength of the literacy teaching aspect. However, after having used the program with the two kindergarten groups for six months, she plans to extend its use to the first-, second-, and third-grade groups she sees. She is even recommending use of the program for a class made up exclusively of third-grade English language learners.

As the Reading Specialist, Ms. Vinyard assists the classroom teachers to assess students' progress. She helps to administer the Reading Readiness Test, a district-made test, which assesses the basic skills required for a child to achieve proficiency in reading. The following chart displays the raw scores (157 items) for the 12 kindergartners she assessed, all of whom made significant gains.

Reading Readiness Test Results
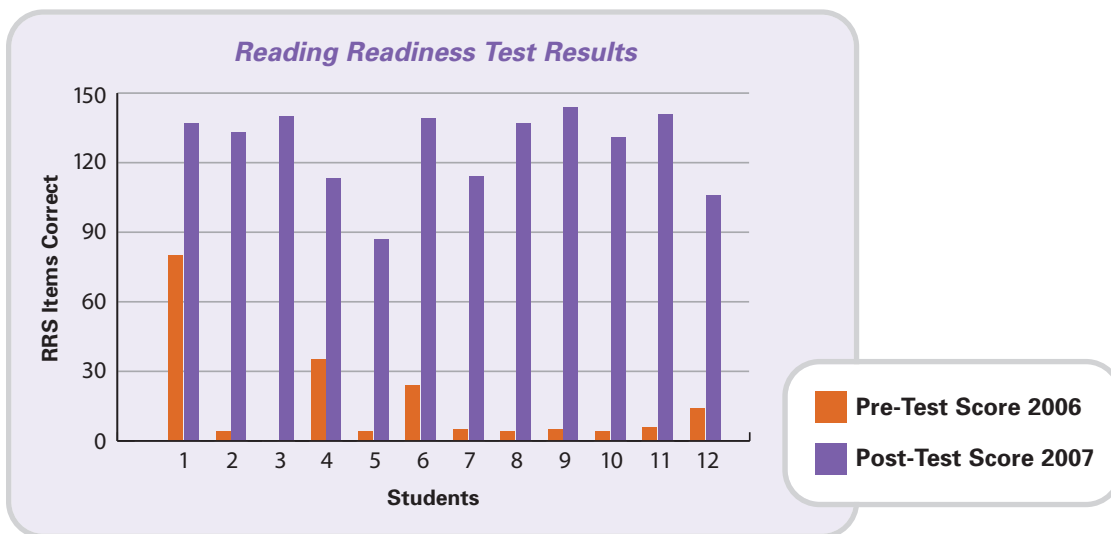
*Students with no orange bar did not answer any of the RRS-items correctly.

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(800) 342-5331	(800) 225-4625	(800) 221-5312	(800) 878-8398	(800) 348-3750
(818) 610-7272	(630) 323-3700	(214) 414-3040		(214) 414-3040

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