

A Success Story Against All Odds

West Woods Charter Elementary School

El Dorado, Arkansas

Overview

This case study took place at the West Woods Charter Elementary School in El Dorado Arkansas. Even though West Woods has a remarkably dedicated staff, it is a small school that faces big challenges.

- 60 Students
- Grades 1-4
- 86% Free & Reduced Lunch
- 96% Minority
- 100% At Risk

All of the students at West Woods are at risk of failure and are classified with some learning disability, low motivation, or both. In the 2004/2005 school year, administrators were

looking for a technology-based intervention strategy to improve the essential reading skills and motivation of the students. After careful consideration and examination of the efficacy and instructional approach of Learning Today's **Smart Tutor™** program, they determined that it could be effective with their "At Risk" student population. They decided to adopt it as an intervention program to assist them in their goal of improving their students' academic performance.



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Method

At the beginning of the second half of the 2004/2005 school year, the 60 students at West Woods received **Smart Tutor's Reading Challenge**, a diagnostic/ formative assessment that determines the deficiencies and gaps in each student's essential skills.

Smart Tutor then automatically provides an individualized learning program

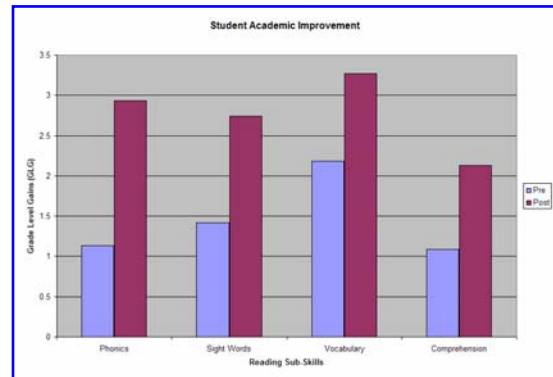
- 14 week program
- Used 2-3 times/week
- 30-40 minute sessions

for each student. The students used the **Smart Tutor** program several times a week over a period of 14 weeks. A post assessment was then administered to measure the results of the intervention.

Results

At the end of the 14 weeks, pre and post-assessment data was examined to determine if there were significant grade level gains (GLG) across four important reading sub-skills including:

- Phonics
- Sight Words
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension



The grade level gains (GLG) in reading sub-skills during the second half of the school year (in 14 weeks) were as follows:

Grade Level	Grade Level Gain (GLG) Range
2 nd	.66 – 2.33
3 rd	.83 – 1.83

The test data for 1st and 4th grades was incomplete, but indicated a similar trend of academic improvement.

Both groups started with mid year pre-assessment scores below grade level and ended with post assessment gains at or above grade level at the conclusion of the study.

Conclusion

"Our students excelled in and accelerated their learning experience, and several of them chose to work on Smart Tutor rather than have playground time! Our teachers have been amazed with the comprehensiveness of the reports and the simplicity of accessing data. Having lessons that were correlated with our State (Arkansas) frameworks also gave us confidence that we were working in compliance with standards that we would be held accountable to. In our experience there is not a learning program available that can do all that we have been able to do with Learning Today's Smart Tutor."

Allen E. Lachut, M.Ed., LPC
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