

What impact does Evidence Based Literacy Instruction have on reading achievement and spelling outcomes?

Date Submitted
May 23, 2007

Written By

Pam Brady
Russ Doane
Wendy Miller
Kathy Roper
Pam Wicks

Abstract

In an attempt to service students who were not reading at grade level and to raise students spelling scores Douglas Elementary School implemented Evidence Based Literacy Instruction in various classrooms and school settings. Evidence Based Literacy Instruction is a program that helps students to understand the logic of the English language. Evidence Based Literacy Instruction contains research based instructional strategies which have been proven to have a high rate of success with struggling readers. The following report explains the process and the results of a year long study using Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. Douglas Elementary found that Evidence Based Literacy Instruction does increase students reading achievement but more research needs to be done on the program's effectiveness with regards to a student's spelling score.

Introduction and Background

The ability to read is a critical skill for all students. When examining learner benchmarks in core areas at all grade levels, the ability to read is a basic necessity for success in all areas. Students who do not learn to “unlock the code”, or decode, early in their schooling tend to fall farther and farther behind in their studies. Historically, once a child is in third grade and not reading at grade level, the potential for success in reading is at risk.

In the past, Douglas Elementary School, an elementary school with four hundred and twenty students kindergarten through fifth grade, has provided a mentoring program (Learning Is Fun Together) for their lower-elementary students (grades one and two) whose testing indicated they were not progressing sufficiently in reading. Teachers recommended students who appeared to be behind in reading. Those students were then given a series of assessments in order to establish baseline data. If the student scored below a certain level on the variety of assessments, he/she was then placed in the Learning Is Fun Together program. The children were assessed in the following areas: phonemic awareness, sight word base, word identification, comprehension and word attack. A child needed to score 90% or higher in sound identification, rhyming, blending and segmenting. A child needed to be proficient with the preprimer, primer and first grade sight words. Finally, the child needed to have a standard score between 90-110 and be at grade level in the areas of word identification, comprehension and word attack using the Woodcock-Johnson Reading Diagnostic Battery. If a child did not pass these assessments then he or she was placed in the LIFT program

For the past ten years, approximately twenty percent of Douglas Elementary first and second graders received services in the Learning Is Fun Together program. These

students worked with a mentor thirty minutes a day, four days a week for one school year. Except for those students in Special Education, the school did not provide any extra remediation for their students in grades three, four and five.

During the past year, the school began a process of credentialing students to identify those students who were not making sufficient progress. The school uses scores taken from reading theme tests, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program and Measures of Academic Progress. This data clearly identified the students in the school who were at risk of school failure because of difficulty with reading.

A team of teachers and administrators looked at several remediation programs and chose the EBLI (Evidence Based Literacy Instruction) program. The team carefully researched the program online by examining the research and literacy components found on the EBLI website. The team then made several phone calls to districts that had used the program, such as Northview Public Schools and Hart Public Schools, and discussed the outcomes. In all cases, general education, slow learners, special education, etc., the documentation and conversations that took place showed significant gains for students. Once a consensus was reached the team decided to have the founder of the program, Nora Chabazi, actually visit the school to see the program in action. She visited the middle school and conducted whole class, small group, and individual lessons with sixth and seventh grade students. The sessions were video taped in order for the team to go back and analyze what they had seen. The team felt that this program would allow for intense reading intervention to occur with third, fourth and fifth grade students. It was the hope that the program would fill a vacancy that appeared to be found within the upper grades.

In August, 2006, an elementary team, made up of the reading specialist, two special education teachers, and three classroom teachers, met for three full days to learn how to use Evidence Based Literacy Instruction.

The Evidence Based Literacy Instruction program is very well researched. Over twenty-nine references were used when developing the program. Some of the references include the National Reading Panel Report, psychology books based off of Piaget's work, research on dyslexia and phonemic awareness components. A study was conducted in the Hart Public Schools during the 2003/2004 school year (EBLI Chahbazi & Hammel, 2000). First grade students, who were individually tutored, went up 1 grade level in word identification and 1.45 in word attack. The first grade students were below grade level at the start of the tutoring session and ended up scoring in the second grade range and higher. Third grade students, who were individually tutored, went up 1 grade level in word identification and comprehension and 2 grade levels with word attack. The third grade students were all below grade level, approximately 2.5, when the tutoring sessions began. Finally, a study was conducted in the Quincy Schools during the 2003/2004 school year (EBLI Chahbazi & Hammel, 2000). Sixth grade students, who were individually tutored, went up almost 2 grade levels in word identification, 3.5 grade levels in word attack and 4 grade levels in comprehension. The sixth grade students were below grade level in all areas prior to tutoring and were averaging 4.0 in word identification, word attack and comprehension.

The Douglas Elementary team structured their study in such a way that they could rule out many variables and check progress only on students who received Evidence Based Literacy Instruction as their main source of remediation. As with any study, many variables came into play. They are discussed elsewhere. The team is convinced, though,

that their data build on previous research because they controlled variables as much as could be expected within a normal elementary school setting.

In the same way, the team's findings contribute to knowledge about teaching students to read. The study showed that remediation is effective when it is taught early, and when the remediation is research based. The study also showed that teachers need to be given sufficient training to teach the essential elements of reading. The study showed that when teachers are given extensive training in how the English language is structured, they can better inform, teach, and coach students in understanding the English Code.

Hypotheses/Research Questions

One of the goals of Douglas Elementary was to implement a phonetic intervention for children at risk of failure in reading. Several programs that stressed decoding and comprehension were investigated. Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was chosen. Non-credentialed students were chosen first for the individual tutoring program and other students were added based on teacher recommendations and a school-wide spelling assessment. The Non-credentialed students were chosen based off of a triangulation of data. The four data sources were the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) [California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) for the second graders and Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP) for the first graders], Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores, and classroom performance. Those children, who were not credentialed, were then given the Woodcock Johnson Diagnostic Reading Battery to determine baseline scores.

The children in this study received one-on-one Evidence Based Literacy Instruction from the reading specialist, Mrs. Miller. None of these students was involved in our other interventions such as Bal-A-Vis-X or LIFT. For the general population, Mr.

Doane, Mrs. Wicks, Mrs. Roper, and Mrs. Brady replaced their phonics and spelling programs with Evidence Based Literacy Instruction strategies. These teachers also incorporated Evidence Based Literacy Instruction strategies into their instruction during reading, writing and spelling. The hypothesis was that the scores of the students in the tutoring program would substantially increase along with the scores of the students in the regular education classrooms.

Review of Literature

The North Central Accreditation goal for reading at Douglas Elementary School is “All students will demonstrate at least one year’s growth in reading each school year”. As indicated by the Measures of Academic Progress and Michigan Educational Assessment Program test results, approximately thirteen percent of the students are not reaching this goal.

Recent longitudinal studies of reading acquisition, and the position of the International Reading Association, have demonstrated that the acquisition of phonemic awareness is highly predictive of success in learning to read (Moats, 1995). Research shows that, among other things, teachers must be specifically trained to teach phonemic awareness. Teaching Reading Is Rocket Science (American Federation of Teachers, 1999) points out that many educators exhibit rudimentary or cursory familiarity with the concepts about writing systems that are insufficient for teaching children. This article goes on to say that although some children will learn to read in spite of incidental teaching, others never learn unless they are taught in an organized, systematic, efficient way by a knowledgeable teacher using a well-designed instructional approach. The author says that teachers are not given sufficient training to teach the essential elements of reading (Moats, L.CI & Lyon, G.R., 1996). The National Research Council panel on

the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children and the Learning First Alliance agree that teachers require more extensive training in how the English Language is structured in spoken and written form (Learning First Alliance (Spring/Summer) 1998). Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was used in this particular study, because it supported what the research was saying.

Evidence Based Literacy Instruction has a large research base which supports the necessity for, and the efficacy of, their program. Evidence Based Literacy Instruction utilizes a number of strategies which are adequately supported by credible scientific reading research as cited in the National Reading Panel Report, 2000, and elsewhere. “Evidence Based Literacy Strategies” and activities have strong emphasis on word level instruction, and they are designed to inform, teach, and coach students that every English word is comprised of sounds, that the forty three human sounds are represented by individual letters or letter combinations, and that the English Code is a system of logic. Also, Evidence Based Literacy Instruction makes it clear that spelling and reading are intricately related (EBLI Chahbazi & Hammell, 2000). From the phonemic awareness standpoint, Evidence Based Literacy Instruction makes use of the “say it and move it” procedure, and this activity, which involves moving a letter while concurrently saying the phoneme associated with the letter, has been shown to be highly effective (Blachman & Ball, 1991). The Evidence Based Literacy Program was used in the hopes that, the 13% of the students who fail to make sufficient progress, will be able to cross over into the 87% who are making sufficient progress.

Research Design

Design Elements

The study relied heavily on pre-tests and post-tests to determine if Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was effective in individual tutoring sessions and spelling instruction found in third and fifth grade classrooms. The study combined both qualitative and quantitative elements when examining the data.

Two different settings were used to determine whether Evidence Based Literacy Instruction increased word identification, comprehension, word attack and spelling ability. In the first setting twelve students were seen once a week, for twelve weeks, in forty-five minute time blocks. Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was used in order to determine whether an increase in students' word identification, comprehension and word attack skills occurred after the twelve tutoring sessions. The second setting comprised of one third-grade classroom and three fifth-grade classrooms. In all three rooms Evidence Based Literacy Instruction took place, focusing specifically on spelling strategies. Spelling instruction and subsequent strategies were taught at least three to four times a week throughout the course of the study.

Extraneous variables were found in the individual tutoring sessions. The twelve students who were individually tutored came from a variety of grade levels. Three third-graders, three fourth-graders and five fifth-graders participated in the study. Of these eleven students, six students were taught in regular education classrooms where Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was taking place. These students received instruction from teachers who attended a three-day training session specifically on Evidence Based Literacy Instruction during the summer. The strategies were implemented immediately when school started. Five students were taught in regular education classrooms where

one or two strategies were taught to the teachers in a thirty minute training session. The training session took place during a staff meeting two months into the school year. The amount of training teachers received, the level of comfort they felt imparting those strategies, along with the amount of time students were exposed may have affected the data.

In the classroom setting there were no extraneous variables. The teachers used the required spelling words; however, the spelling program that went with them was discarded. The teachers used the strategies, found within Evidence Based Literacy Instruction, as the basis for the spelling program. It should be noted that the participants focused in on spelling so that other extraneous variables could be ruled out.

Several steps were taken to ensure the integrity of the data. Both the pretest and posttest were given and analyzed by the teachers who had been extensively trained to use Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. The data was housed in one central location and once again only the participants used and examined the data.

Several limitations were encountered when completing the study. Data from the third and fifth-grade classrooms, with regards to comprehension and word attack, was supposed to be used in the study. The fact that the teachers would be using their current reading series along with any phonics instruction made the validity of the data on word identification, comprehension and word attack invalid; therefore, the focus was narrowed to spelling only. The special education teacher used Evidence Based Literacy Instruction with her students but, once again, data could not be used due to the other reading programs that were required. Representation was supposed to occur in a third, fourth and fifth grade classroom; however, two fifth grade teachers were trained. The twelve sessions that the students received during the individual tutoring took longer than

expected. School events combined with days off proved to be a challenge when fitting in the number of sessions that needed to occur. It took four months to complete the sessions rather than three months as anticipated. Due to the time factor, only twelve students' data will be used, but twenty students will receive individual tutoring by the close of the school year. Finally, one of the special education teachers, who were trained in the summer, left her position in October. Her participation in the grant was terminated.

Methodology-Subjects

The Saugatuck Public School District is comprised of residents from the City of Saugatuck, the City of the Village of Douglas, and portions of Saugatuck and Laketown Townships. There are approximately 5,500 people living in the district. The district consists of an elementary school (Douglas Elementary), which offers preschool through fifth grade, a middle school (Saugatuck Middle School), which offers sixth through eighth grade and a high school (Saugatuck High School), which offers ninth through twelfth grade.

Douglas Elementary School currently enrolls 420 students in grades prekindergarten through fifth grade. The student body is made up of mostly white students with a small percentage of Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander and Black students. Less than 10% of the students receive special education services. Douglas Elementary School is currently in the transitions phase of the North Central Accreditation process. The school received the Blue Ribbon award in the fall of 2006.

Three different factors were used when determining which students would participate in the individual tutoring sessions. A spelling assessment was given to all third, fourth and fifth graders. The data obtained from the spelling test indicated students who may have difficulty with reading based on their ability to write down sounds.

Students who missed six or more words on the spelling test were looked at further. Students, who were not credentialed, based on the North Central Accreditation credentialing process, were looked at more closely. The Non-credentialed students were chosen based off of a triangulation of data. The four data sources were the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) [California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) for the second graders and Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP) for the first graders], Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores, and classroom performance. Students needed to pass two out of the three areas in order to be credentialed. Finally, after combining these two data sources teachers were given a list of names and then teacher recommendation was taken into consideration. It was also very important that representation occurred in all three grade levels to determine whether Evidence Based Literacy Instruction worked with one specific age group.

Two factors were used when determining who would participate in the classroom based instruction using Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. Representation at every grade level was critical in order to determine where the strategies would fit best and then future transitions using Evidence Based Literacy Instruction would be smoother and easier as well. Finally, the availability of the teachers to attend a summer training session had an impact on the samplings. Originally, a third, fourth and fifth grade teacher were participating in the summer training. A fourth grade teacher could not attend; therefore two fifth grade teachers were trained and in September the remaining fifth grade teacher was trained. There is not a sample of a fourth grade classroom using Evidence Based Literacy Instruction, with regards to spelling.

Methodology-Instrumentation

The students who were individually tutored for twelve weeks were given the Woodcock-Johnson III Diagnostic Reading Battery for both their pretest and posttest. The test is a comprehensive measure of reading achievement. The test aligns directly with the five essential components of *Reading First*. The test examines comprehension, word identification, word attack, phonemic awareness, spelling, fluency and oral language. The Woodcock-Johnson III was used for several reasons. First, it broke down essential components of reading and those components fit directly into what was being assessed using Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. Secondly, the test was easy to administer, score and required a minimal time commitment on both the student's and administrator's parts. Finally, the test's validity and reliability scored high.

“The *WJ III*[®] sample was selected to represent, within practical limits, the U.S. population from ages 24 months to 90+ years. Normative data for the test were gathered from 8,818 subjects in over 100 geographically diverse communities in the United States. Individuals were randomly selected within the stratified sampling design that controlled for 10 specific community and individual variables and 13 socioeconomic status variables. The sample consisted of 1,143 preschool subjects; 4,784 kindergarten to twelfth-grade subjects; 1,165 college and university subjects; and 1,843 adult subjects.

The *WJ III* uses continuous-year norms to yield normative data at 10 points in each grade. It provides age-based norms by month from

ages 24 months to 19 years and by year from ages 2 to 90+ years.

And it provides grade-based norms for kindergarten through 12th grade, 2-year college, and 4-year college, including graduate school.

The *WJ III DRB* clusters show strong reliabilities, most at .90 or higher. The Woodcock-Johnson III shows strong reliability by scoring .90 or higher”

(<http://www.riverpub.com/products/wedrbdetails.html#technical>)

The students who participated in the study by focusing in on spelling strategies were given a pretest, a mid year test and a post test. The tests consisted of twenty five spelling words that were drawn from the Zaner-Bloser Publishing site and the book, A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling by Leonard Ayers.

Zaner-Bloser is a premier publisher of research based programs that date back to the 1880’s. Zaner-Bloser’s programs first focused in on handwriting but now they have expanded their research based programs to reading, writing, spelling and study skills programs. Leonard Ayers published the book, A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling in 1986. His book describes the impact that spelling can have on the way we view and measure a child’s literacy world. These two resources were combined in order to produce a spelling list that would be researched based and allow for measurement to occur. (See Appendix A)

Methodology-Procedures

A letter went home, to parents, explaining Evidence Based Literacy Instruction and indicated which students would be participating in the tutoring sessions. Parents were encouraged to contact the school and meet with the Evidence Based Literacy instructor to discuss what role the program would have in their child’s education. The

students who participated in the program were told that they would be meeting with a teacher once a week to work on comprehension, attacking words and fluency.

In the classroom setting the teachers sent home a note explaining Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. The note explained how the spelling program was now tailored to use and implement the strategies that were found within Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. Parents were encouraged to talk to their child about the strategies as well as following through with them at home.

Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was created by Nora Chabazi, the owner of Ounce of Prevention Reading Center in Flushing, MI and Celeste Hammel, a professional educator from New Jersey. Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was formed in order to expand on the extensive Phono-Graphix training that both Celeste and Nora found to be critical in a child's reading ability. Their goal was to provide educators, students, and parents strategies that would allow all learners to reach their highest potential in reading.

Evidence Based Literacy Instruction emphasizes the fact that, with evidence based strategies being taught, students will reach their highest reading potential. The strategies found within Evidence Based Literacy Instruction place strong emphasis on word level instruction. The strategies are geared towards the understanding that words are made up of sounds, that there are forty three human sounds that can be represented by individual letters or letter combinations, and that there is logic to the English language. The logic component, found within the strategies, makes a lasting impression on struggling readers because the English language appears to be lacking logic and reason. Rules that are taught can be broken several times and sounds are represented several ways. Evidence Based Literacy Instruction allows struggling readers to categorize and classify words based off of sound patterns not rules. These sound patterns become the

readers guide to decoding and attacking words. These sounds patterns allow children to find logic in a complicated language.

Finding Logic within the English Language...

<p>1, 2, 3 or 4 letters can represent one sound.</p>	<p>Words can be made up of the same sounds yet have different spellings.</p>
<p>/o/ hot /ie/ pie /igh/ sight /eigh/ eight</p>	<p>/ay/ play /ai/ rain /ey/ they /ea/ steak /a/ paper /e/ very /aigh/ straight /eigh/ eight</p>
<p>Words can have the same spellings yet they yield different sounds.</p>	
<p>/ow/ out /oo/ you /u/ tough /oe/ soul</p>	

Essentially what the “logic” does is allow the reader to manipulate, blend and segment sounds. This component of Evidence Based Literacy Instruction is better known as Phonemic Awareness. The strategies also make it very clear to struggling readers that spelling and reading are related and that one cannot be successfully achieved without the other. Finally, fluency and comprehension are stressed throughout the strategies. Fluency is recognized as being directly related to comprehension and a vital component in a student’s reading ability.

In the first setting twelve students were individually tutored using Evidence Based Literacy Instruction in its entirety. The strategies were taught through lesson plans that followed a set sequence and pattern. First, students were taught to blend, segment and manipulate sounds. Second, students were given sounds to classify and sort using a multi sensory approach. Third, fluency and comprehension exercises were completed. Finally, the student was given higher level text to read in order to practice the strategies that were taught during the lesson.

There are minimal materials required in the tutoring sessions. A lesson guide, an Evidence Based Learning manual, white board, marker, eraser, timer and text are all that is required.

Each lesson is designed to be completed in one forty-five minute tutoring session. The minimum amount of sessions that one student may have is twelve. The students were able to receive twelve or more sessions; however, the first four sessions covered approximately two lessons. Due to the instructor's and student's first exposure to the material, the lessons required more time than was indicated.

Three fifth-grade teachers and a third-grade teacher implemented the spelling strategies found within Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. The teachers used the same spelling words that were found within their spelling program; however, they did not use the lessons or the workbook pages that were used in previous years. The teachers used the sound or phonemic awareness component of Evidence Based Literacy Instruction when imparting the new way to approach the spelling words.

The first step, in the new program, was to write each sound, or phoneme, down on small laminated squares. The students used these squares throughout several manipulation strategies that are found within Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. Once

the students reached a point where they were able to do the sounds or phonemes on the squares, they started using computer generated worksheets that Nora Chahbazi and Celeste Hammell created. The worksheets were geared towards having the students understand that one, two, three or four letters could produce one sound. A dot n dash method was used to emphasize the sound or phoneme components found within the worksheets.

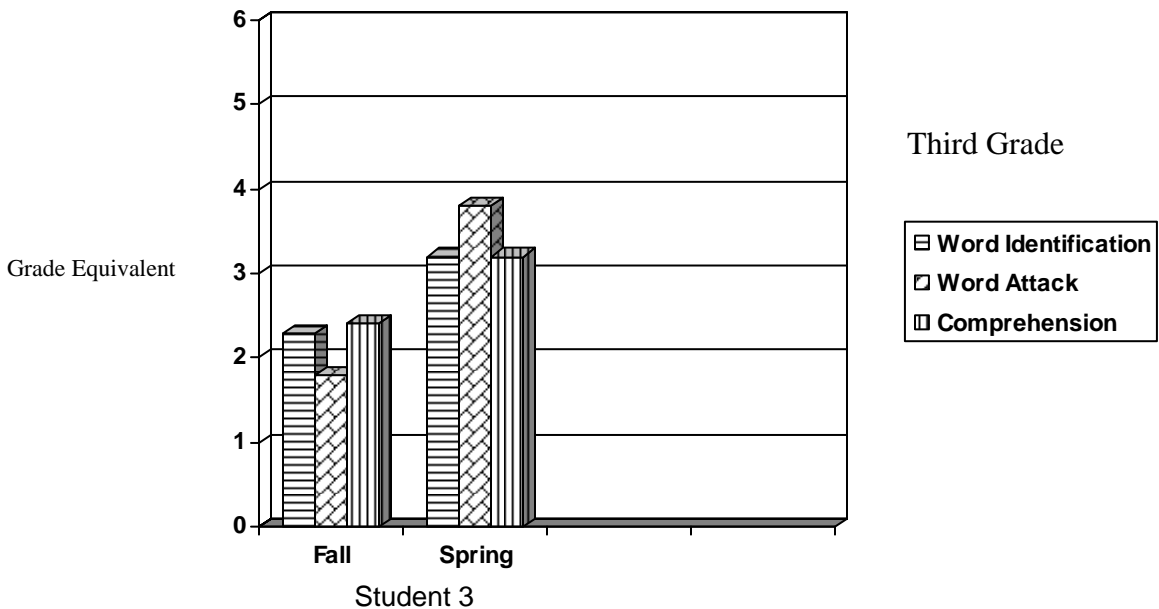
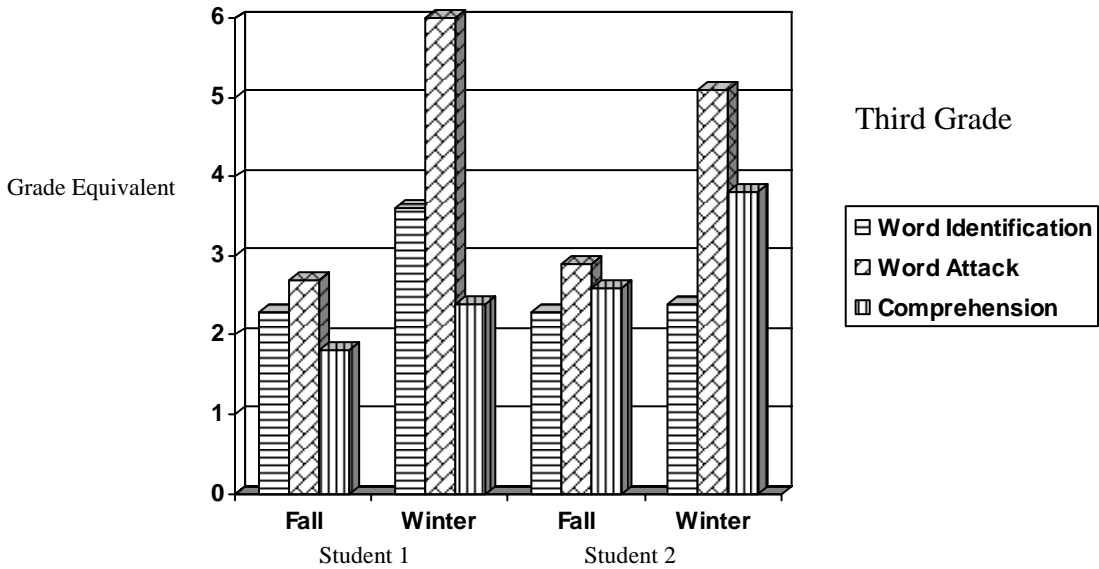
The new spelling program was taught five days a week for thirty or more minutes a day. A parent letter went home informing parents of the new program and to also illicit support for the program. It was critical that parents understood that their child would be coming home practicing their spelling words in a new format different from what they had previously seen.

Very few materials were needed in order to implement the new spelling program: laminated squares, a white board, marker, eraser and worksheets.

Methodology-Data Analysis

The Woodcock-Johnson III Diagnostic Reading Battery was given as a pretest and posttest to the twelve students who were individually tutored. The reading battery was used because it broke reading down into several components that were explicitly taught in Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. Word identification, word attack and comprehension were used to determine whether third, fourth and fifth grade students had made sufficient gains in reading. On average, the third grade students gained 1.0 grade level in word identification, 1.1 grade level in comprehension and 3.2 grade levels in word attack. In all three reading areas students made at least .1 grade level gain with almost 5.9 grade levels being the ceiling number.

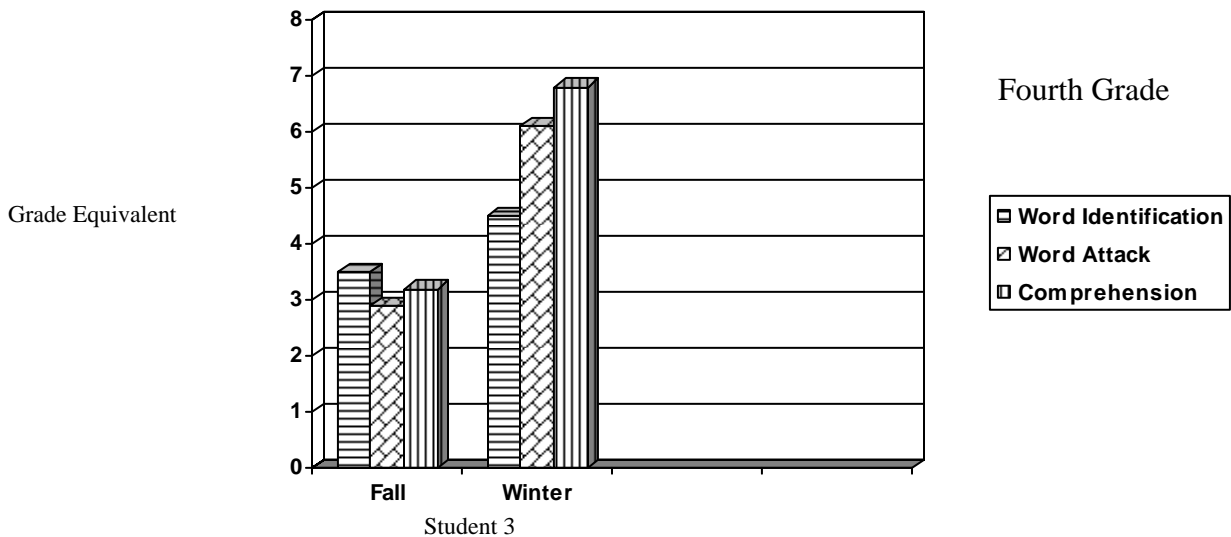
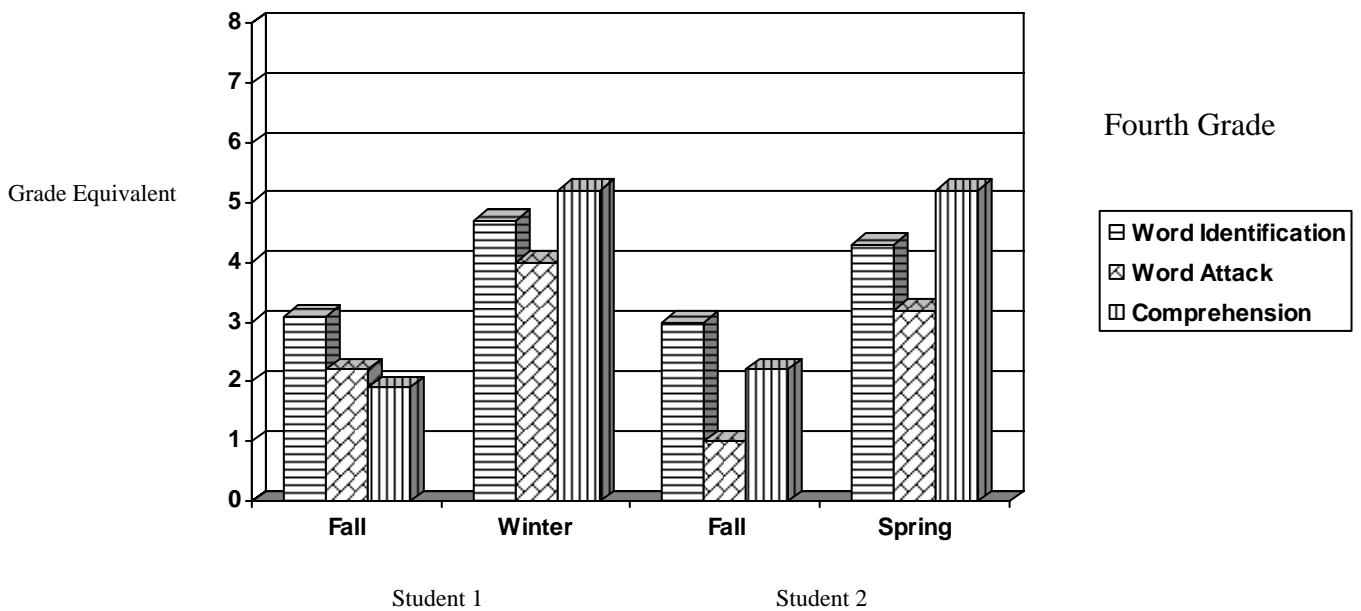
Student three was taught in a room where Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was used. The classroom instruction she received did have an effect on her comprehension when comparing it to students one and two. The classroom instruction did not seem to have an effect on word identification and word attack.



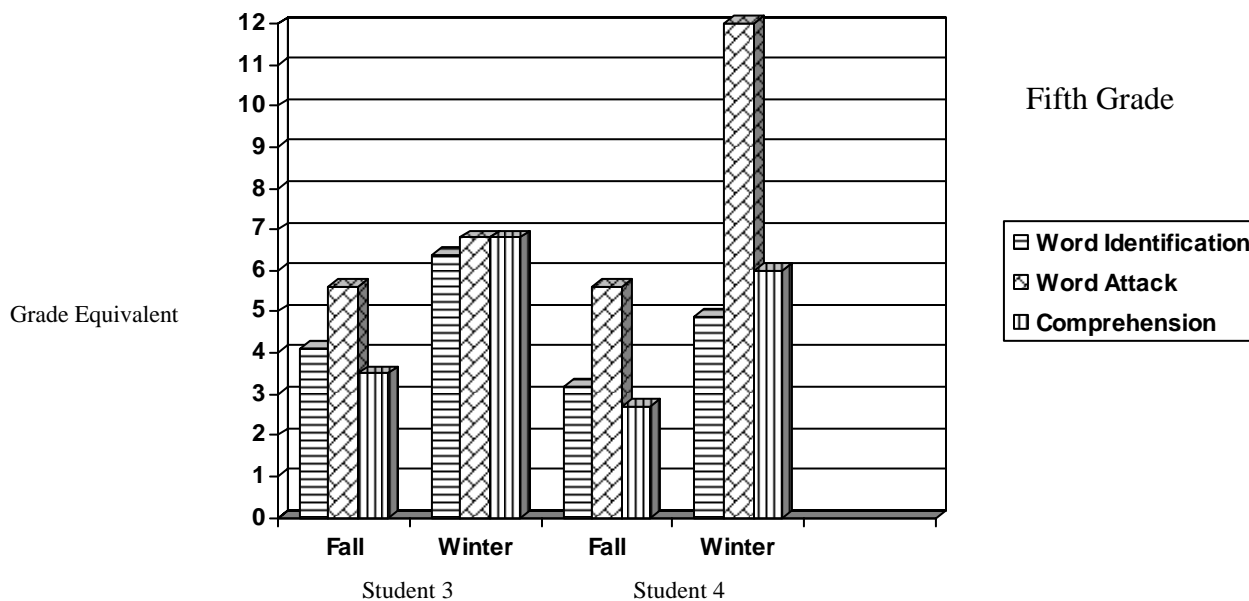
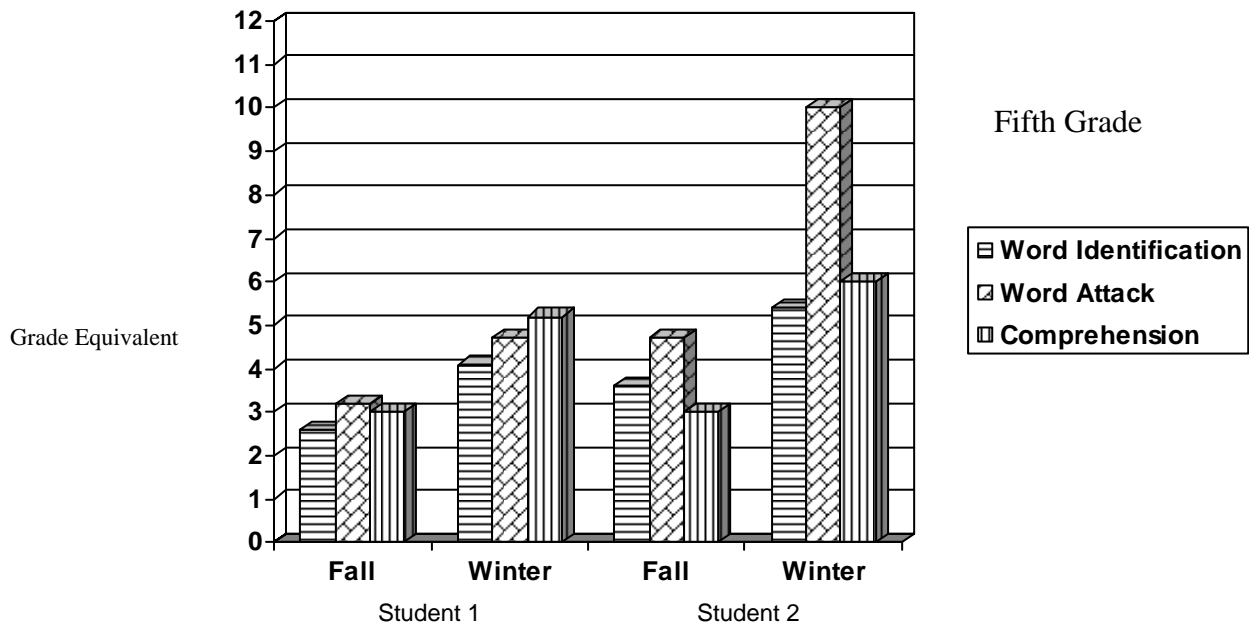
This student was in a classroom where the teacher was EBLI trained.

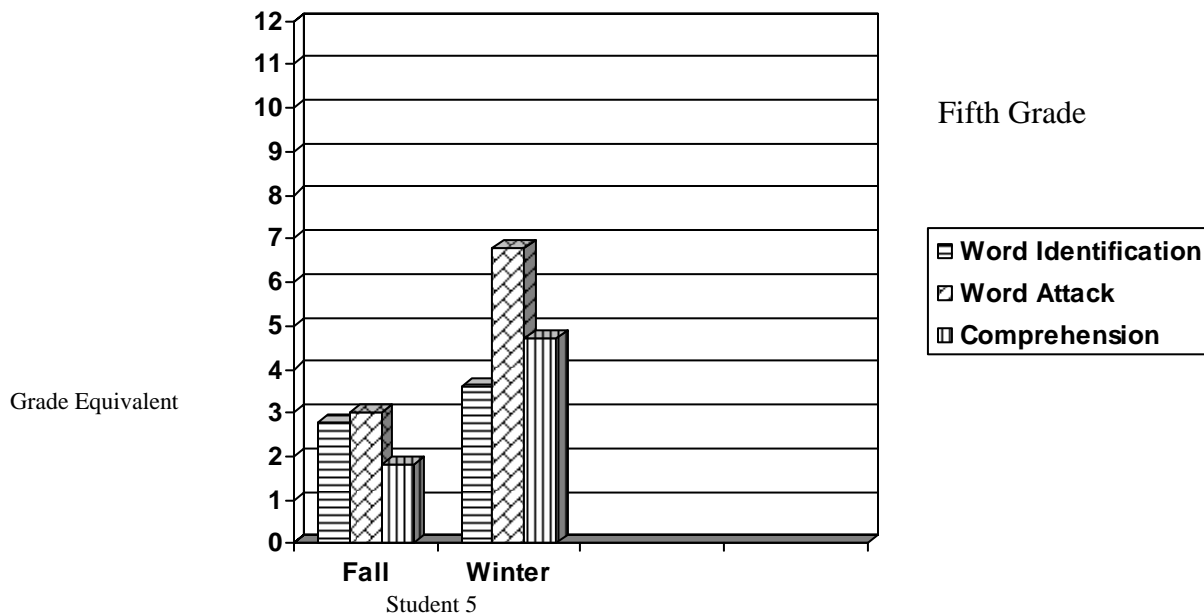
On average, the fourth grade students gained 1.3 grade level in word identification, 3.3 grade levels in comprehension and 2.8 grade levels in word attack.

The three fourth grade students were not instructed in a classroom where a teacher was trained in Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. In all three reading areas students made at least 1 grade level gain with 3.6 grade levels being the ceiling number.



On average, the fifth grade students gained 1.6 grade level in word identification, 3.1 grade levels in comprehension and 3.6 grade levels in word attack. All of the students received classroom instruction from teachers who had been trained in Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. In all three reading areas students made at least 1 grade level gain with almost 7.3 grade levels being the ceiling number.



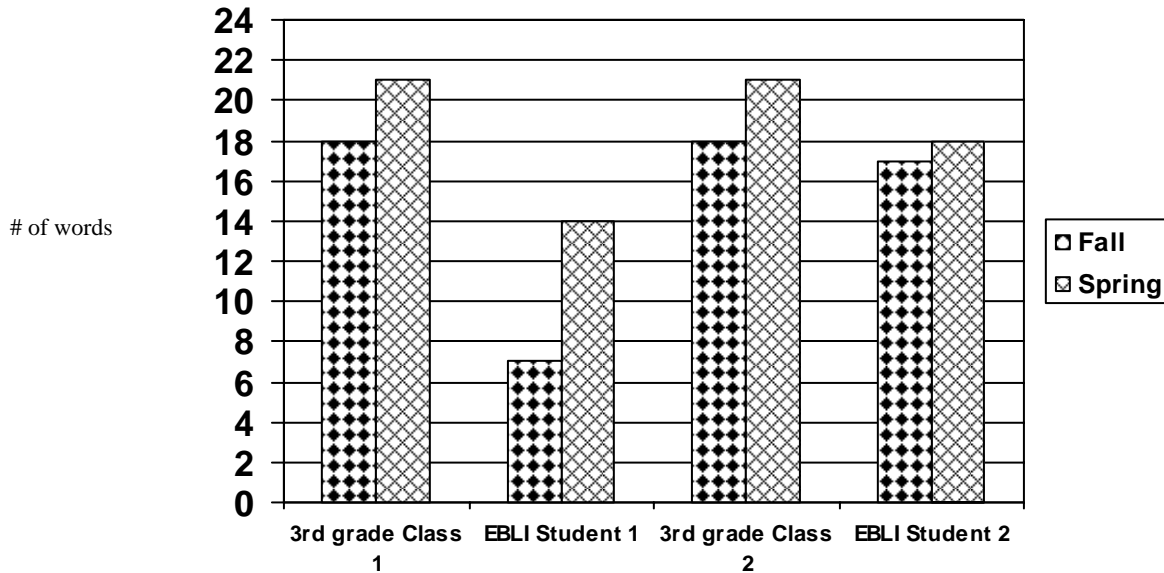


A spelling assessment was developed using words from Ayers book and the Zaner-Bloser Publishing site. The goal was that the students would master the phoneme combinations found within the list of twenty-five words. The words on the list contained many phonemes, or combination of phonemes, that were taught in the third and fifth grade classrooms. The students in third grade gained 4 spelling words from the fall to the spring. The student in the classroom where the teacher received Evidence Based Literacy training gained 7 spelling words. The student in the classroom where the teacher used the same strategies, but was not trained in Evidence Based Literacy Instruction gained 1 spelling word.

The participants were unable to use a control group for classroom spelling strategies found in third grade, for two reasons. The first being that one of three third grade teachers, who was not trained, used some Evidence Based Literacy Strategies. The teacher worked closely with the teacher who participated in the grant and was able to use

the spelling strategies in her program as well. Once again it should be noted that the teacher did not attend the summer training on Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. Second, the remaining third grade teacher misplaced the folder which contained baseline data, which was pertinent to the grant. Therefore the participants could not use the data as a control group due to the missing information.

3rd Grade Spelling Growth

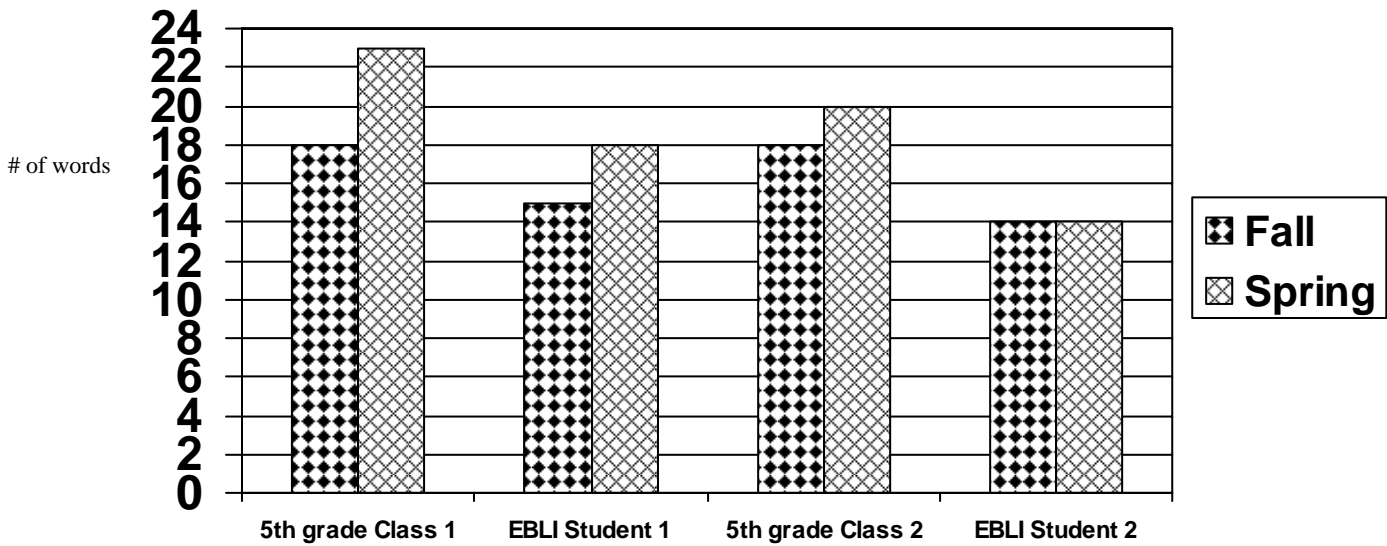


Teacher was not EBLI trained but was mentored by the third grade teacher who was trained. She used many of the teacher's EBLI materials.

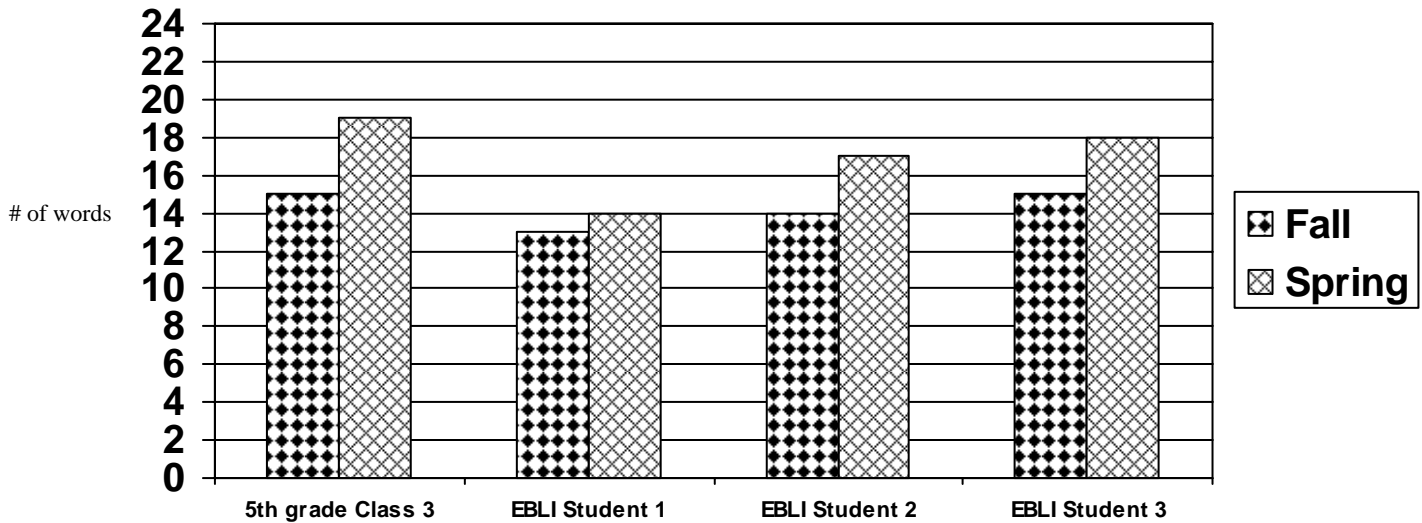
The participants in the grant were unable to find a control group for fifth grade as well, due to the teacher attending a three day training session in September on Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. The district felt that it was imperative that all fifth grade teachers use Evidence Based Literacy instruction in order to prepare the students for the transition into middle school.

The fifth grade classes averaged a 4 word gain in spelling. The students who were tutored in Evidence Based Literacy Instruction averaged a 2 word gain. Their averages were lower than the class averages.

5th Grade Spelling Growth



5th Grade Spelling Growth



Teacher was EBLI trained but did not participate in the grant

Findings and Recommendations

Several conclusions can be drawn from the data on the tutoring sessions. First, Evidence Based Literacy Instruction does have a direct impact on student's achievement in reading. It appears that the heavy emphasis Evidence Based Literacy Instruction puts on sounds, sound manipulation, categorizing and classifying the English Language, and the transferring of these skills into comprehension lessons does raise students reading achievement. The highest gains fell in the word attack area. This could be attributed to the fact that the instructor placed a heavy emphasis on word attack lessons throughout the tutoring sessions. The Evidence Based Literacy lessons are designed to allow children repeated practice with manipulating phonemes in order to be able to attack a word and identify it. Once a child is able to do this then a child's comprehension ability increases. Based off of the data Evidence Based Literacy Instruction will be used next year with the students who qualify in the area of reading.

Several suggestions are recommended when working with Evidence Based Literacy Instruction in a tutoring situation. First, the instructor found that the one on one interaction that took place during the tutoring was a vital component when imparting the lessons. This allowed the instructor to individualize the lessons and differentiate for each student. Secondly, the instructor's comfortableness with imparting the lessons had an impact on time constraints. As the instructor became more familiar with the technical aspects of the lessons the more time could be spent on the reading strategies. Third, the time spent on the comprehension portion of the lessons need to be equal to the word attack and word identification portions of the lessons. Finally, it is critical that the instructor is properly trained in Evidence Based Literacy Instruction. The program can

not be broken up and done in bits and pieces, but needs to be used with the intent that it has been created.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the data on spelling achievement and recommendations were given. First all, the teachers felt that the spelling assessment did not accurately convey the gains that they saw in their students' spelling ability. The children's spelling scores went up, on average, but the gains were not significant. The teachers felt that a better indicator of how the students' spelling was affected by Evidence Based Literacy Instruction was the carry over into the students' writing. All of the teachers saw less spelling errors during writer's workshop and various other writing situations. Unfortunately writing samples and data were not collected; therefore, this is only based off of teacher recommendation. Next year, the teachers will be taking data from their writing and comparing it to an end of the year sample. They will be specifically looking at spelling conventions within the child's writing samples. Secondly, the teachers received positive feedback from the parents. The parents were pleased with the progress their child had made in spelling; therefore, the teachers will develop a parent survey that will allow them to get feedback on how they felt the strategies worked. Finally, the teachers felt that it would be beneficial to continue developing the program. The program will be used during the 2007/2008 school year with the hope that the new data collecting procedures will yield more reliable and valid data.

In conclusion, Evidence Based Literacy Instruction will be used next year with students who need a reading intervention due to the fact that they are at risk in the area of reading. The spelling strategies will continue to be used in two third grade classrooms and three fifth grade classroom. The participants will be collecting data

again with the hopes that the program continues to improve students reading and spelling achievement.

Third and Fourth Grade Spelling List

1. bat
2. rub
3. hot
4. step
5. crib
6. plug
7. lost
8. desk
9. chop
10. wish
11. truck
12. when
13. steam
14. bride
15. scoop
16. flight
17. choice
18. crazy
19. shirt
20. paper
21. plenty
22. react
23. remember
24. elevator
25. jealous

Fifth Grade Spelling List

1. bed
2. ship
3. when
4. lump
5. float
6. train
7. place
8. drive
9. bright
10. shopping
11. spoil
12. serving
13. chewed
14. carries
15. marched
16. shower
17. cattle
18. favor
19. ripen
20. cellar
21. pleasure
22. fortunate
23. confident
24. civilize
25. opposition

Bibliography/Works Cited

Ayers, Leonard P. (1986). *A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling*, Mott Media.

Blachman, B.A., Tangel, D.M., Ball, E. W., Black, R., and McGraw, C.K. (1999). Developing phonological awareness and word recognition skills: A two year intervention with low-income, inner-city children. *Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 11, 239-273.

Chahbazi, Nora, Hammell, Celeste, *EBLI: Evidence Based Literacy Instruction* (2005). Flushing, MI: E.B.L.I, LLC.

Learning First Alliance (1998). *Every child reading: An action plan of the learning first alliance*. www.learningfirst.org.

Moats, Louisa C. (Summer, 1995). The missing foundation in teacher preparation, *American Educator* 9, (43-51). Washington, D.C.: American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

Moats, Louisa C. (1999). Teaching reading is rocket science: What expert teachers of reading should know and be able to do, (7-7), (9-12). Washington, D.C.: American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

National Reading Panel (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. Bethesda, MD: National Reading Panel.

Troia, Gary A. (1999). A Phonological awareness intervention research: A critical review of the experimental methodology. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 34(1), 28-52.

Woodcock-Johnson Diagnostic Reading Battery III (2004).
<http://www.riverpub.com/products/wdrb/details.html#technical>

Zaner-Bloser *Spelling Connections* (2007). www.zaner-bloser.com.