

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 53 (OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN)

2008 – 2009 LITERACY INNOVATIONS GRANT SUMMARY REPORT

READ AND REC' 2009 RHYME AND REC' 2009

Context

Summer Read and Rec' is a program offered in July and August at all elementary schools enrolling primary grades. The summer of 2009 was our fifth year of running the program. We also offered a Rhyme and Rec' program for Kindergarten students at two schools: Cawston Primary and Oliver Elementary. This report summarizes the results and makes recommendations for the 2010 programs.

Read and Rec'

Read and Rec' was developed for children who need extra reinforcement in the skills and strategies necessary to become independent readers. Attendees participate in a variety of literacy activities including shared reading, guided reading, reading aloud, literacy centres, interactive writing and a daily component which includes reading their guided reading story to the teacher.

The program is an early intervention strategy and is of greatest benefit to students in grades one to three. The intent of the program is to support struggling readers or those who had just begun to consolidate their reading skills and strategies. The teaching was aimed at those who have had some instruction in reading, rather than starting from the very beginning. Sessions were open to students on a priority basis, with low achieving students being the top priority.

Eighty-three students participated in the programs offered. Each program was different in one or more ways, as we tried to match the program to the uniqueness of each community.

The program:

- was offered 16 days over 4 consecutive weeks or 15 days over 3 consecutive weeks in the months of July and August
- focused on students who had completed grades 1, 2 or 3.
- In four schools, crafts and recreation were integrated with the reading during the morning. In the fifth school, there was an afternoon recreation component.
- All schools had one lead teacher and a support teacher.

Assessment

Students were assessed using the PM Benchmark reading standards, which has 30 levels. Levels 14 – 18 are considered to be the expected reading band for students leaving grade one, levels 21 – 22 for grade two, and levels 25 to 27 for grade three. It is important to note however, that the PM Benchmark assessment is not an equal interval scale, i.e. there are not the same numbers of reading levels for each grade. Also the upper level reading tasks are more complex. Consequently, it is more difficult for a student to make a five-point gain from level 20 to 25, than to make a five-point gain from level 10 to 15.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Education.

In addition I wish to acknowledge and thank the following groups of people:

- The principals for organizing and monitoring the programs:
 - Cawston Primary – Ms Linda Thiel
 - Okanagan Falls Elementary – Mr. Garry Sutherland
 - Oliver Elementary – Mr. David Fairbrother
 - Osoyoos Elementary – Mr. Bo MacFarlane
 - Tuc-el-Nuit Elementary – Mrs. Jan Kennedy
- The teaching staff at each school for promoting the program and providing the necessary information on each child and the materials used in the program;
- The South Okanagan Similkameen Teachers Association for their cooperation and support of this program;
- District Staff, particularly those in Human Resources for making everything come together;
- The teachers that ran the program at each site. They truly gave their all to make each program effective and fun for all the students
 - Cawston Primary – Mr. Michael Lucich
 - Okanagan Falls Elementary – Ms. Lisa McCall
 - Oliver Elementary – Ms. Amanda Palmer
 - Osoyoos Elementary – Ms. Cortney Johnston
 - Tuc-el-Nuit Elementary – Ms. Julie-Anna Martin
- The custodians and maintenance staff for their patience while the programs ran during their prime summer cleaning period;
- The parents for regularly getting their children to the program; and
- The children, who behaved wonderfully and made the best of this learning opportunity.

**READ AND REC' 2009
SUMMARY REPORT**

Results

Note: Grade 4 results are not evaluated because of low participation numbers (2).

Participants in 2009

Grade (June 2009)	Female	Male	Total
1	14	21	34
2	14	19	33
3	9	7	16
Total	37	47	83

Gains in Reading Scores (averaged)

Grade (June 2009)	Number	Entry	Exit	Gain
1	34	9.79	12.21	2.41
2	35	18.39	20.39	2.00
3	20	22.75	25.56	2.81

Analysis by Gender

Grade	Gender	# Students	Avg. Entry	Avg. Exit	Avg. Gain
1	F	14	11.29	13.14	1.85
1	M	21	8.33	11.00	2.67
2	F	14	19.71	22.00	2.29
2	M	19	17.42	19.21	1.79
3	F	9	24.22	27.22	3.00
3	M	7	16.57	18.86	2.29

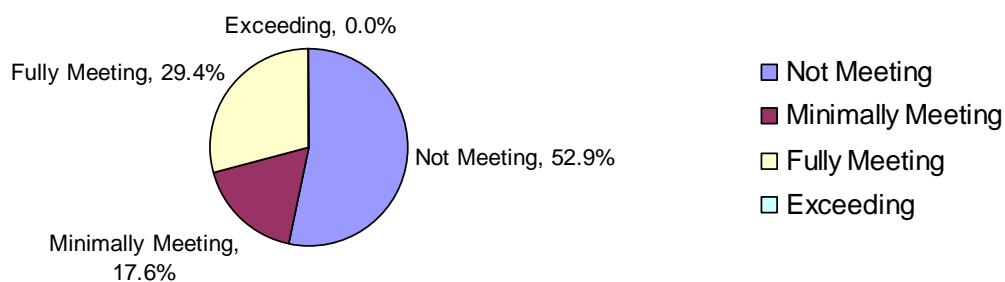
Analysis of the Results by Grade

GRADE 1:

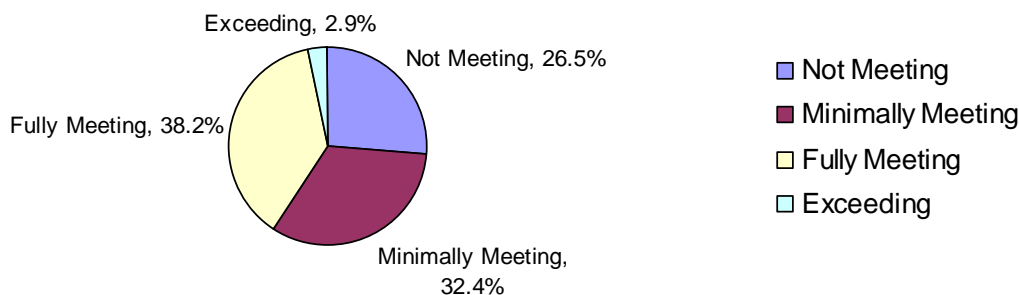
Band (level)	No. Students In Band At Entry	Entry Range	Exit Range	No. Students in Band At Exit	Average Gain
Not Meeting (1– 9)	18	2 – 9	3 – 15	9	2.33
Minimally Meeting (10 – 13)	6	10 – 12	11 – 16	11	2.83
Fully Meeting (14 – 18)	10	13 – 16	16 – 19	13	2.30
Exceeding (19 +)	-	-	19	1	-
Average gain for all grade 1					2.41

Note: 1. Exit Range is the range of the same cohort shown in the Band at Entry
 2. Graphs may not add to 100% due to rounding error

2009 Read and Rec' - Grade 1 Entry Bands



2009 Read and Rec' - Grade 1 Exit Bands



Comments For Grade 1:

At the beginning of the program, there were a total of 18 students in the Not Meeting Expectations (NME) band. All but 6 of these students made gains of 1 or more levels, with 8 moving into the Minimally Meeting Expectations (MME) band and 1 moving up to the Fully Meeting Expectations (FME) Band. The average gain for students entering the program in the NME band was 2.33 PM Benchmark (PMB) levels

On entry, there were 6 students in the MME band. All these students made gains, with an average gain of 2.83 PMB levels. Of those students, 3 moved into the Fully Meeting Expectations (FME) band.

Ten students entered in the FME band and all made gains, with an average gain of 2.30 PMB levels. Of these students, 1 exited in the Exceeding Expectations (EE) band.

The overall average gain for all Grade 1 students was 2.41 PMB levels.

There were 3 Grade 1 Aboriginal Ancestry students in the program. All made gains with an average gain of 1.33 PMB levels.

There were 9 Grade 1 English as a Second Language students. All but one made gains with an average gain of 3.67 PMB levels.

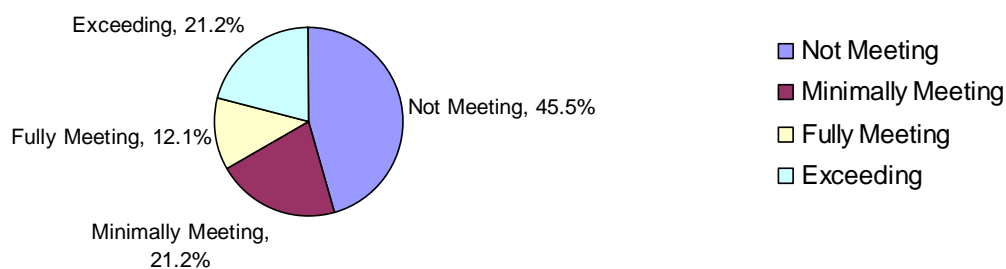
In the grade one program, there were 21 male students and 14 female students. There were proportionately more males than females at the lower levels. The male students' average entry level was lower than that of the females, however the boys made slightly higher gains on average, 2.67 PMB levels, than the females, 1.86 PMB levels. Please remember that the lower PMB levels have smaller increments than the higher ones.

GRADE 2:

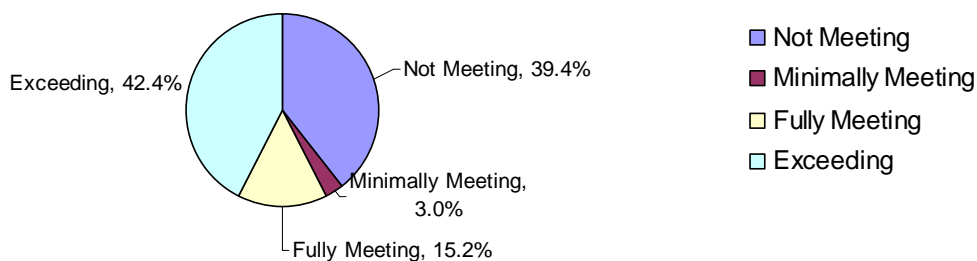
Band (level)	No. Students In Band At Entry	Entry Range	Exit Range	No. Students in Band At Exit	Average Gain
Not Meeting (1 – 18)	15	7 – 18	18 – 21	13	1.60
Minimally Meeting (19 – 20)	7	19 – 20	21 – 28	1	3.57
Fully Meeting (21 – 22)	4	21	22 – 23	5	1.75
Exceeding (23 +)	7	23 – 27	23 – 30	14	1.43
Average gain for all grade 2					2.0

Note: 1. Exit Range is the range of the same cohort shown in the Band at Entry
2. Graphs may not add to 100% due to rounding error

2009 Read and Rec' - Grade 2 Entry Bands



2009 Read and Rec' - Grade 2 Exit Bands



Comments For Grade 2:

At the beginning of the program, there were a total of 15 students in the Not Meeting Expectations (NME) band. All but 3 of these students gained 1 or more levels, with 2 moving into the Minimally Meeting Expectations (MME) band. The average entry level for this cohort of grade 2s entering the program in the NME band was lower than normal, as was the average gain which was 1.60 PMB levels

On entry, there were 7 students in the MME band. All of these students made gains of at least 1 PMB level, with an average gain of 3.57 PMB levels. Four students moved into the Fully Meeting Expectations (FME) band and 3 moved into the Exceeding Expectations (EE) band.

Four students entered in the FME band and all made gains, with an average gain of 1.75 PMB levels. All of these students exited in the EE band.

Seven students entered the program in the EE band with gains averaging 1.43 PMB levels. It is important to note that when space is available, schools may have students participate in order to consolidate reading skills, build social ties, or to act a good role models.

The overall average gain for all Grade 2 students was 2.00 PMB levels.

There were 6 Grade 2 Aboriginal Ancestry students in the program. All, but 2, made gains with an average gain of 1.33 PMB levels.

There were 10 ESL students in the Grade 2 cohort. The average gain for the group was 1.80 PMB levels.

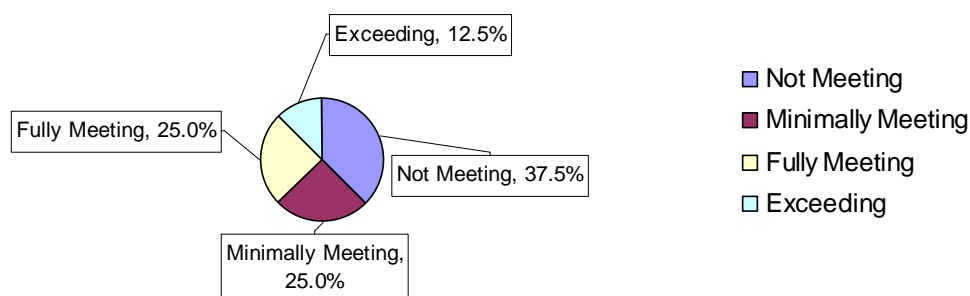
There were 19 male students and 14 female students in the Grade 2 program. Proportionately, there were more male students at NME level than females, and more females at the FME and EE levels. The female students averaged a gain of 2.29 PMB levels and males averaged a gain of 1.79 PMB levels.

GRADE 3:

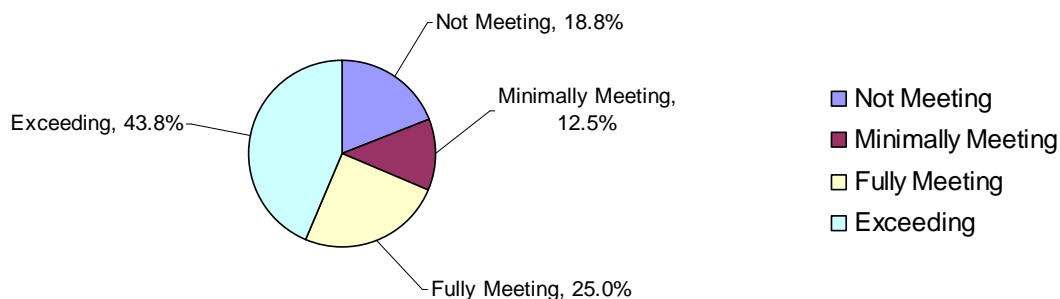
Band (level)	No. Students In Band At Entry	Entry Range	Exit Range	No. Students in Band At Exit	Average Gain
Not Meeting (1 – 22)	6	14 – 20	17 – 28	3	3.83
Minimally Meeting (23 – 24)	4	23 – 24	25 – 29	2	2.75
Fully Meeting (25 – 27)	4	26 – 27	26 – 30	4	2.0
Exceeding (28 +)	2	28 – 29	30	7	1.5
Average gain for all grade 3					2.81

Note: 1. Exit Range is the range of the same cohort shown in the Band at Entry
2. Graphs may not add to 100% due to rounding error

2009 Read and Rec' - Grade 3 Entry Bands



2009 Read and Rec' - Grade 3 Exit Bands



Comments For Grade 3:

The Grade 3 program was up 9 students from the 2008 program. At entry, there were 6 students in the Not Meeting Expectations (NME) band. All, but 2 students, made gains of 2 PMB levels or more. Two ESL students at this band made incredible gains, 7 PMB levels for one and 8 for another. These students were obviously ready to take off and this program provided the venue for it. One student actually moved right into the Exceeding Expectations (EE) band. The average gain for Grade 3 students entering the program in the NME band was 3.83 PMB levels.

On entry, there were 4 students in the Minimally Meeting Expectations (MME) band. All students made gains with one student gaining 6 PMB levels. At the end of the program 3 students were reading in the FME band and 1 in the EE band.

The overall average gain for all Grade 3 students was 2.33 PMB levels.

There were 2 Aboriginal Ancestry students in the Grade 3 cohort. Both read at the EE level at entry and were participating in order to consolidate skills. Both made gains.

There were 7 ESL students. All made gains with 3 students gaining between 6 and 8 levels. Again this program provided the motivation for these students to “take off” in their reading. The average gain for the ESL cohort was 4.14 PMB levels.

In the Grade 3 program, there were 7 male students and 9 female students. The female students average entry level was higher than that of the males'. In addition, females made greater gains on average at 3.00 PMB levels as compared to the males at 2.29 PMB levels.

Rhyme and Rec'

In the summer of 2008, Rhyme and Rec' was held at Cawston Primary School and Oliver Elementary. This program is intended for kindergarten students who have been identified as being at risk on the literacy portion of the District Kindergarten June Assessment. In conjunction with the Read and Rec' program, Rhyme and Rec' ran for two weeks (4 days per week) in July for 3.5 hours daily.

Activities:

The goals of the program are:

- development of receptive and expressive language skills
- development of phonemic awareness skills (appropriate for end of Kindergarten)
- development of listening comprehension skills
- appreciation of/and opportunity to interact with books and stories.

Students listen to stories, “memorize” text through repeated readings, interact with stories through movement, puppets, art, etc. and “play” with the language heard in stories (change words, create own versions, etc.). Poetry and songs will also be used to develop language skills.

The phonemic awareness portion of the program focuses on rhyming and the oral blending and segmenting of sounds. Brain Gym activities such as learning to cross the midline are included in the program. Instruction in alphabet recognition and letter sounds is not a focus of this program.

Identification:

A Planning Group selects students finishing Kindergarten who:

- are identified as having low language skills
- have weak phonemic awareness skills (rhyming, oral blending, and segmenting sounds)
- are still learning to listen to and respond to stories
- are ESL students
- were at-risk in the literacy portion of the June Kindergarten assessment

Assessment:

The children are pre and post assessed using an assessment tool adapted from the work of Kame'enui & Simmons (1999) and recommended by Dawn Reithaug. This assessment looks at the concepts of:

- Sound and Word Discrimination
- Rhyming
- One-to-One (Understanding the difference between letters, words and sentences)
- Oral Blending of Sounds
- Oral Segmenting of Sounds

Results:

We were very pleased with the results. Each of the children in the program made significant gains and were able to do what most students are able to do by the end of Kindergarten.

There were a total of 16 students, 6 males and 10 females. Eight of the students were ESL and 1 was of Aboriginal ancestry.

Focus	Number of Students at Threshold	
	Entry (n = 16)	Exit (n = 15)*
Crossover (Crossing the Midline)	8	15
One-to-one word correspondence	4	11
Rhyming	6	10
Oral Blending of Sounds	3	12
Oral Segmenting of Sounds	Not assessed	11

*Note: 1 student left the program prior to exit assessment.

Students were chosen to attend the program at different schools for different reasons. The reason for selection for one student may have been because s/he may have been seriously at risk, another may have been selected to solidify skills, and another still due to socialization difficulties. The key results are that all students showed some growth with the overall outcome being students who are more ready for grade one.

GENERAL REMARKS AND CONCLUSIONS

Read and Rec'

The results from the Summer of 2009 show excellent overall improvement in reading skills for the cohort involved. The summer Read and Rec' program makes it possible for students, struggling in reading, to acquire the reading strategies that will bring them close to, or for many, up to the average skill level of others in the same grade entering school in September, 2009. As teachers will tell you, many of these kids would not read during the summer if not for this program and that, in itself, makes the program worthwhile.

Other important aspects of the program are the social gains of students and the confidence that they gain. Some of the children, boys and girls or English as a Second Language students take off and become readers. Past analysis shows that these students continue to be competent readers.

Read and Rec' is allowing struggling grade 1, 2 and 3 students to succeed, making it a key intervention for our district.

The Rhyme and Rec' Pilot

The Rhyme and Rec' program provided 16 students with early intervention at its best and allowed each of them a better chance of being successful in their future learning. Research shows that students must master the skills that were focused on by the end of the first term of Grade 1 if they are to be successful in their acquisition of reading.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Read and Rec'

- Consider combining the Tuc-el-Nuit Elementary and Oliver Elementary programs. This recommendation is being made after consideration of attendance in both programs which saw only 8 students attend 12 or more days at either school.
- Consider using a single teacher at Okanagan Falls and reducing the number of students to 12 – 14. A second person in the school for safety reasons should be considered. Six students were already at Exceeding Expectations levels upon entry and were included for social reasons and because space was available.
- Continue to run the program for students in grades 1, 2 and 3. Priority should be given to students in the Not Meeting and Minimally Meeting bands and in grades 1 and 2.
- Run the program for a minimum of 15 days (16 days over 4 weeks or 15 days over 3 weeks). Although results show that it is better to have students attend for all 4 weeks, even students who attend for two weeks benefit from time in the program.
- Provide a minimum of 3.5 hours of Reading instruction with integrated crafts and recreation activities. If another agency is used for the recreation portion, ensure that the activities enhance the literacy portion of the day.
- A recreational/craft thematic approach works best. Make the program fun!
- Careful consideration for selecting of students must be exercised. Questions asked should include:
 - Does the student exhibit behaviour difficulties? In a 4 week program, behaviour training is wasted time.
 - Can the child make suitable progress in the program? (a gray-area child as opposed to a student requiring extensive learning assistance)
 - Can this group of children be sorted into “workable guided reading groups”?
- Classroom teachers and principal must support the program by dialoguing with parents and communicating the benefits of the program. A prioritized list of students needs to be created. Principals must confirm participation. Some students will fail to show up, replacements are required.
- Program pre-meeting with parents must stress that the program is limited in the number of students it can enroll. Parents need to commit to having their children attend daily and for the duration of the Read and Rec' program. Parents need to be aware of the expectations for the program, all its routines and activities.
- Have the Read and Rec' teacher meet with the participants prior to the end of June to inform them about the program and the fun activities and to help motivate them.
- If a child does not attend the first two days of the program and an attempt has been made to contact the home, be prepared to add children from a wait list to the program.

- Each site must have an experienced lead teacher who is in charge. Although not always possible, it is beneficial to have a lead teacher who is from the host school and knows the students and has had an opportunity to meet with the students' teachers. Teachers who have just completed their teaching degree have proven to be as effective as a second experienced teacher. Other programs have found that volunteers do not work well.
- Bring lead teachers together by the end of May for a collaborative meeting to connect and network.
- Continue to monitor the students involved to see if there are long term benefits.

The Rhyme and Rec'

- Rhyme and Rec' is proving to be a valuable program for students needing an extra boost in phonological awareness prior to entering Grade 1 and therefore we should attempt to provide a program to at-risk kindergarten students.
- Standards for the entry of students into the program vary. Selection, however, is based on solid evidence that the students will benefit in some manner. This should continue as a school by school decision.
- The pre/post assessment requirements will be standardized in our revised Kindergarten screener.
- Continue to look for ways to integrate this program with Read and Rec' to minimize personnel costs.

Respectfully submitted,

James Insley
Assistant Superintendent