

memory

attention

processing

sequencing



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From dyslexia to business school— Matthew Craun gets results using *Fast ForWord*®.

Matthew Craun

Gerry Craun isn't your typical parent. A psychologist and special education teacher in the Pawhuska Unified School District in Oklahoma, she had the skills and determination to write a successful grant to get Fast ForWord into her

school. Her prime motivation: Her 14-year-old son, Matthew, needed help and just wasn't finding it anywhere else.

"Matthew was seeing a private speech therapist who

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Fast ForWord®
Family of Products

was familiar with *Fast ForWord*. She had already done the Lindamood-Bell program with him, as well as a lot of other programs. When she recommended *Fast ForWord*, I wrote a grant to get it."

Many programs, no big impact.

Identified as learning disabled with dyslexia in third grade, Matthew had always had good language skills and could express himself well verbally, but reading and spelling were perennial problems. Besides the private speech therapy, he had tried Hooked on Phonics and had been to Sylvan Learning Center in Tulsa, but neither program was making the impact his educator parents were looking for. (Matthew's father is a teacher as well.)

"I drove him every Saturday morning to Tulsa, an hour away, to go to Sylvan, which is a good agency," Gerry says, "but it just didn't meet his needs the way *Fast*

ForWord did. That was where we saw the big jump."

In eighth grade, Matthew used *Fast ForWord Basics* every single day for about 9 weeks, then switched to *Fast ForWord Language to Reading* for another 9 weeks. The results were impressive: Matthew's reading improved by two grade levels, bringing him almost up to his peers when he had always been behind.

"He finally made the sound/symbol connection, and his reading shot right up," says Gerry. "I noticed right away that there weren't so many reversals, you know, "was" for "saw" and those kinds of things." Gerry also noticed other changes in Matthew. "His concentration and focus were better," she remembers. "And most important, his self-confidence improved a great deal."

Motivation can make a big difference.

Unlike all the other programs Matthew had tried, he never gave up on *Fast*

ForWord. "A lot of times in the past he'd say, 'Do I have to keep doing this?' But with *Fast ForWord*, he wanted to stay with it until his scores got up to where they needed to be."

Gerry credits a lot of this to *Fast ForWord's* continuous feedback, a feature she believes kept Matthew going with more enthusiasm than she'd seen before. "I think he felt more in charge. He liked the idea of looking at his scores each day and seeing how much improvement he made. The program seemed more concrete to him."

To his mother's surprise, Matthew even became more willing to work on his spelling. "He even asked his teacher if she would spend more time with him on spelling," Gerry recalls. "I never saw anything like that before!"

A surprise: college business classes are on the horizon.

Matthew is now enrolled in Vocational-Technical School,

studying automotive mechanics and repair. "Just the other day he surprised me and said that when he's finished with this, he wants to go to college and take some business classes," Gerry reports. "I don't know if he would ever have developed the confidence to go off and pursue these things if he hadn't had that big jump in his reading skills."

Gerry is now a solid fan of *Fast ForWord*. "We still use it in our school district, and I just called Oklahoma City to try to convince other school districts to try the product." This July, she ran a group of at-risk children through *Fast ForWord* in summer school. "I'm a firm believer in it," she says. "I know how much reading impacts a child's future. *Fast ForWord* can make a big difference in what that future is going to look like."

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