

# 40% increase in percentage of sixth-graders making learning gains; 15% increase in percentage of ninth-graders

## Implementation Objectives

During the 2008-2009 school year, 7,431 students in the Polk County Public Schools used Fast ForWord. Students were in kindergarten through high school, and most were performing well below grade level. This study focuses on 6<sup>th</sup> graders and 9<sup>th</sup> graders who were at FCAT Reading Level 1 or Level 2.

## Methodology

School personnel tested the students' reading achievement in 2008 and 2009 with the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT). Students were also evaluated with Reading Progress Indicator before using Fast ForWord, and again after completing each module.

The academic success of Fast ForWord participants, as determined by those who made or exceeded annual learning gains (ALG), was compared to the success of non-participants.

According to the Florida Department of Education, students make ALG if they: 1) Improve FCAT Achievement Level from one year to the next; 2) Maintain a proficient FCAT Achievement Level from one year to the next; or 3) Remain at FCAT Level 1 or Level 2 but demonstrate more than one year's growth on the developmental score where one year's growth on the Reading test is 134 or more points for sixth graders, and 78 or more points for ninth graders.

## Schedule of Use

Schools in Polk County started using the Fast ForWord Reading modules between September and December of the 2008-2009 school year. The schools used the 40-Minute protocol which calls for students to use the modules for 40 minutes a day, five days per week for nine to thirteen weeks. Students are recommended to complete at least two modules each school year. By the end of the school year, the sixth-graders had averaged 93 days of use while the ninth-graders had averaged 56 days of use.

## Assessment Results

During the 2008-2009 school year, Level 1 and Level 2 participants improved significantly more on their FCAT Reading scores than non-participants.

### Reading Progress Indicator Results:

- At all grades with at least 30 students, students made significant improvements on Reading Progress Indicator.

### Greater Improvements for Students who Complete Two Modules:

- 64% of the sixth-graders who completed two or more modules made ALG compared to 49% of students who completed fewer than two modules.
- 55% of the ninth-graders who completed two or more modules made ALG compared to 44% of students who completed fewer than two modules.

### Annual Learning Gains Results:

- In 2008-2009, 59% of the FCAT Level 1 and Level 2 sixth-graders who used Fast ForWord made ALG compared to 42% for the 2007-2008 FCAT Level 1 and Level 2 sixth-graders (non-participants). This represents a 40% year-over-year increase.
- In 2008-2009, 47% of the FCAT Level 1 and Level 2 ninth-graders who used Fast ForWord made ALG compared to 41% for the 2007-2008 FCAT Level 1 and Level 2 ninth-graders (non-participants). This represents a 15% year-over-year increase.

### Students Moved to Proficiency in Reading (Level 3) from Level 1 or Level 2:

- 22% of sixth-grade participants achieved proficiency (FCAT Reading Level 3 or above).
- 9% of ninth-grade participants achieved proficiency (FCAT Reading Level 3 or above).



## Program Study Statistics

**School Year:** 2008-2009

**Number of Students:**  
2,564 students

**Grade Levels:**  
6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Ethnic Breakdown:**  
White: 40%  
Black: 29%  
Hispanic: 28%

**Classification:**  
English Language Learners: 16%  
Students with IEP's: 25%  
Economically Disadvantaged: 76%

**Modules Used:**  
Fast ForWord Reading Prep  
Fast ForWord Reading 1  
Fast ForWord Reading 2  
Fast ForWord Reading 3  
Fast ForWord Reading 4  
Fast ForWord Reading 5

**Assessment Tool Used:**  
Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT)

## Suggestions for Future Use

Start as early in the school year as possible.  
Encourage all Level 1 and Level 2 students to use Fast ForWord.  
Increase number of modules used.  
Expand to other grades.

**Customer Service:**  
Phone: 888-358-0212 (US & Canada)  
Phone: 701-298-6376 (International)  
Email: [customerservice@scilearn.com](mailto:customerservice@scilearn.com)

Scientific Learning®