reading plus®

Effective Reading Instruction for English Learners (ELs)

Reading Plus is a comprehensive reading development program with a strong research foundation that addresses the critical dimensions of reading success for students in grades 3-12, including ELs.

English learners are the fastest-growing K-12 student population in the United States. Regardless of their native language literacy backgrounds, all ELs must develop and master English literacy skills to succeed in school.

Reading Plus is a WIDA-certified resource[1] that aligns with TESOL's "Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners."[2]

Reading Plus excels in a variety of areas that support EL students, such as:

- ✓ presenting students with texts that match their proficiency levels
- ✓ following state and national standards for language development
- ✓ providing scaffolding supports to aid students in their progress.

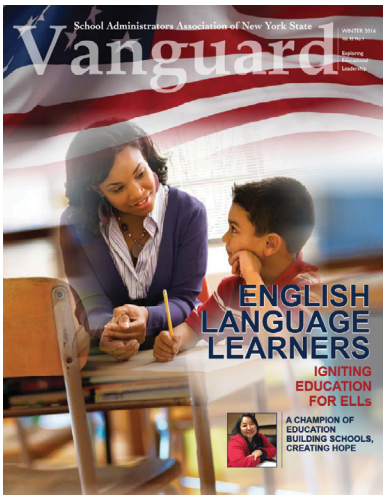
COMPLETED BY A WIDA PRIME V2 CORRELATION WIDA-TRAINED CORRELATOR ™

tesol international association



PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH STUDY:

Structured Silent Reading Practice: Effective Educational Support for EL Students



This peer-reviewed research study of Reading Plus instruction in a large district in South Florida involved large numbers of EL students in multiple grade groups and all academic achievement levels. Results provide compelling evidence that structured silent reading instruction and practice with Reading Plus is a highly effective educational support for developing reading proficiency in EL students.

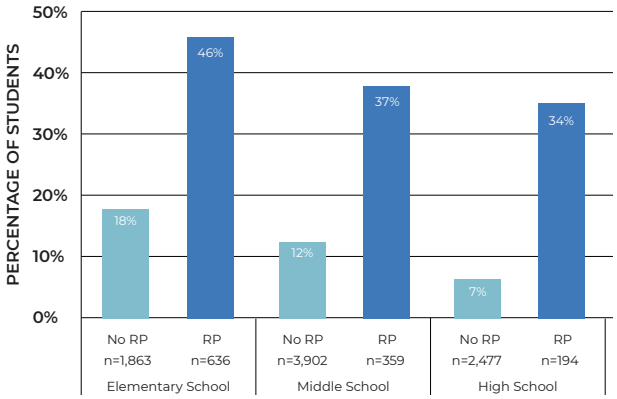
Across all grade groups (elementary, middle, and high school), EL students who engaged in Reading Plus instruction (~30 hours) were more likely to advance from below-satisfactory to satisfactory levels on their state test than their EL and non-EL peers who did not engage in Reading Plus practice. In addition, EL students who engaged in Reading Plus instruction were nearly as likely to advance from below to at/above satisfactory levels on their state test than their non-EL peers who engaged in Reading Plus instruction for the same amount of time (~30 hours).

Publication: *Vanguard*, special issue: "Supporting English Language Learners." Latham, NY: School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS), 45(1), 23-25, 2016
Authors: Alexandra N. Spichtig and Jeffrey P. Pascoe

Study Profile
Type of Study: Research Review
Participants: Grades 4-10 (n=27,910)
English Language Learners (Levels 1-4; n=9,431)
Measure: FCAT

Significant Achievement Across All Grade Groupings

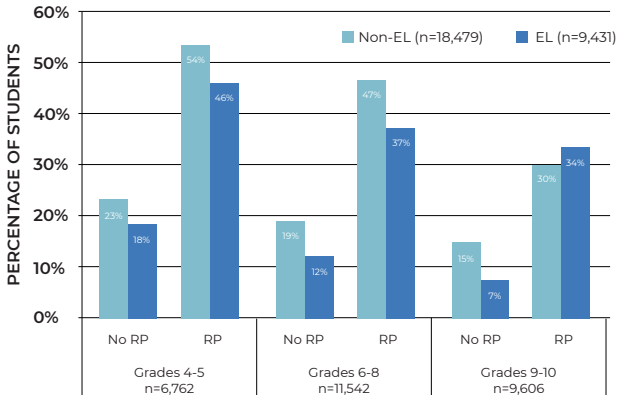
EL Students Who Advanced from Below Satisfactory to Satisfactory



Significantly higher percentages of EL students who completed Reading Plus instruction advanced from below to satisfactory or higher levels in reading as compared to their peers who did not use the Reading Plus program (X^2 tests, $p<.001$ in each comparison).

Achieving Equality with Non-EL Peers

EL and Non-EL Students Who Advanced from Below Satisfactory to Satisfactory



EL students who engaged in Reading Plus were also more likely to transition to satisfactory performance levels on the state test compared to their EL and non-EL peers who did not engage in Reading Plus instruction, and they nearly matched the percent of non-EL students who engaged in Reading Plus practice in transitioning from below to at/above satisfactory levels on their state test.

The TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) International Association provides an authoritative summary of guidelines for instruction for English learners. The table below lists TESOL's "Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners"[2] and describes how Reading Plus aligns with these principles to meet the needs of English learners.

How Reading Plus Aligns with TESOL Principles

Principle 1: Know Your Learners

Practice 1: Teachers gain information about their learners.

"Teachers collect information about their students' linguistic and educational backgrounds to determine correct placement for students."

Reading Plus begins with an adaptive literacy assessment designed to provide each student with a personalized instructional path. A student's EL status is taken into account during this process. The assessment responds dynamically to a student's performance, adjusts test difficulty accordingly, and provides information about each student's level of reading motivation, vocabulary level, comprehension level, and silent reading rate. This information is then used to define each student's instructional path, including placement within assigned instructional components and recommended instructional intensity.

Practice 2: Teachers embrace and leverage the resources that learners bring to the classroom.

"Teachers tap their learners' prior knowledge purposefully in their teaching. They try to determine what gifts and talents students bring to the classroom, what interests motivate them, what life experiences they have had that are curriculum-related, and what else in their backgrounds has influenced their personalities and beliefs."

Reading Plus provides personalized and adaptive instruction, utilizing an extensive library of engaging informational and literary selections that support instructional objectives through student-centered learning. Students choose from an array of selections that enable them to see themselves in what they read, relate to shared experiences, and discover the world around them.

Lesson plans, comprehension skill sheets, and online activities allow for independent, small group, and teacher-directed instruction. Writing prompts encourage students to make connections between what they read and their background experience, as well as expand upon what they have read.

Principle 2: Create Conditions for Language Learning

Practice 1: Teachers demonstrate expectations of success for all learners.

"Student achievement is affected by teacher expectations of success. Teachers must hold high expectations and communicate them clearly to all their students—English learners and other classmates—which will motivate them to perform at a high level."

With **Reading Plus**, teachers are given the tools to help ALL students master grade-level content. Each student has access to texts that are appropriately matched to his or her proficiency level. Further, while students may begin their instruction at a different starting point, the system dynamically adjusts the instruction, providing scaffolds as needed to ensure students are always appropriately challenged toward reaching grade-level mastery.

In the student dashboard, students clearly see where they are in their current level, the work needed to make progress toward the next level, as well as where they are heading long-term. Within the educator management system, teachers are provided with monitoring tools that enable them to review student progress and share feedback and expectations with individuals as well as with groups of students.

Practice 2: Teachers plan instruction to enhance and support students' motivation for language learning.

"We know that motivation is an important condition for language learning, so teachers need to engage their learners and motivate them to work persistently at learning the new language."

Reading Plus is the only reading intervention that measures student motivation. Educators can use this data to understand their students' level of motivation, prioritize motivational supports, as well as gauge how student motivation increases along with fluency and comprehension.

Students self-select texts through eight interest filters that provide choice and control over reading material. A student who is passionate about sports, for example, can filter selections by the "Get in the Game" category. Within this category, the student will find a wide variety of sports-related texts from global sources that support the acquisition of knowledge in curriculum areas of STEM, social science, and literature.

The Reading Plus Learn Site provides teachers with an assortment of motivational strategies and ideas. The program also provides motivational incentives, including award certificates to print and display for students who advance in the program.

Principle 3: Design High-Quality Lessons for Language Development

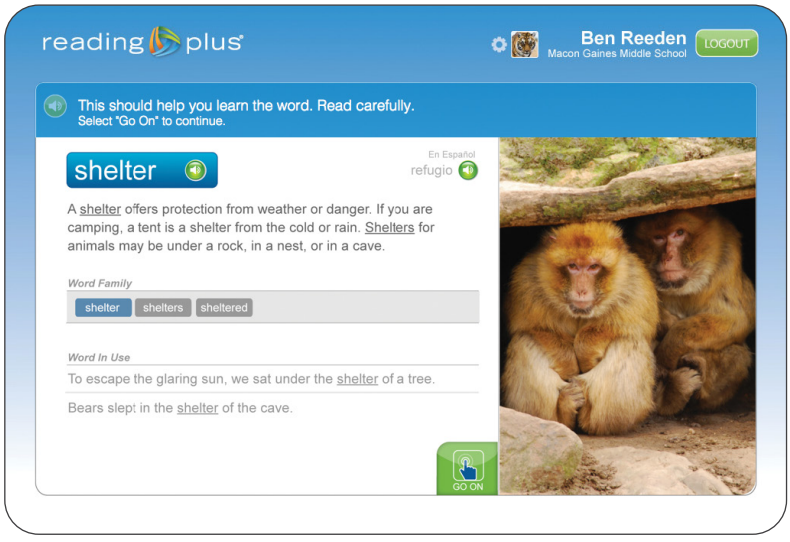
Practice 1: Teachers use comprehensible input to convey information to students.

"Comprehensible input is of primary importance for progress in the target language. Whether oral or written, comprehensible input helps English learners understand the meaning of the communication. Teachers scaffold the language input in multiple ways to aid learner perception and promote understanding."

Due to the fact that **Reading Plus** provides personalized and adaptive instruction, each student is working at a level that matches his or her language ability. Depending on a student's instructional needs, selections may be accompanied by lush photographic images that enhance the learning experience, as well as reading scaffolds that support student success. Dynamic scaffolds provide extra assistance to those students who need it. For example, texts may be segmented into smaller reading units, and rereads with clues are available during comprehension tasks.

Reading Plus provides five levels of high-interest, low-readability selections that are available to students in grades six and higher who are reading on a first-grade through fifth-grade level. This content provides older struggling readers with age-appropriate, engaging selections that have suitable text complexity for their growing skill levels.

In addition, Reading Plus' adaptive vocabulary instruction and practices teach students "2,400 Words to Master," a research-based compilation of highly valuable, cross-curriculum, general academic vocabulary. Mastering these words helps students glean the meaning of complex texts across curriculum domains.

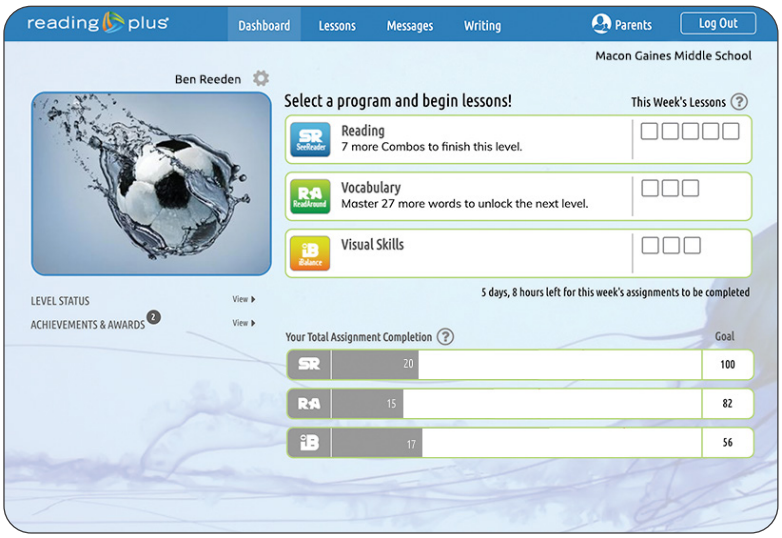


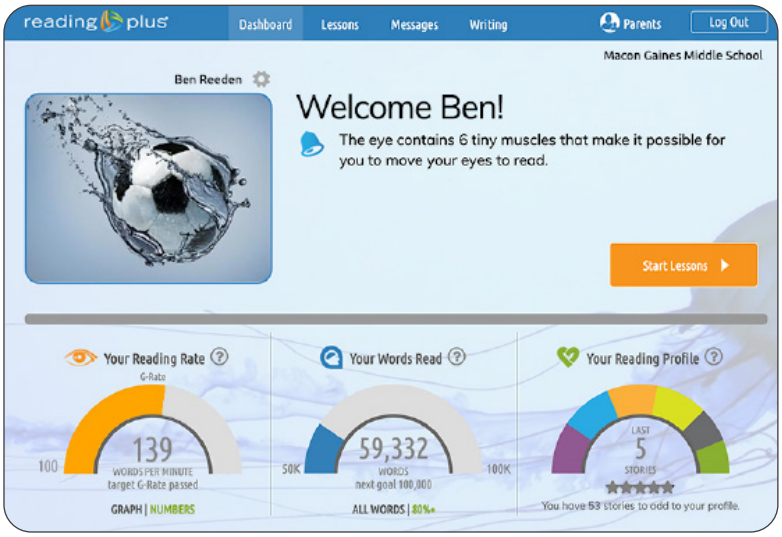
Practice 2: Teachers communicate clear instructions to carry out the learning task.

"Teachers use and teach consistent classroom management practices and routines throughout the school year in an effort to help students understand what is expected of them in a classroom and throughout a lesson. Teachers use simple directions with patterned language that they repeat each time."

Instructional rules and expectations are clearly communicated and supported by visuals in **Reading Plus**. Progress toward reaching goals is displayed both in terms of short-term (weekly) and longer-term (e.g. grade-level) goals. The student dashboard is designed to encourage students to take control of their learning and maintain accountability as they see their progress toward their goals at a glance.

Reading Plus encourages students to take an active part in their success. Through personalized practice and adaptive instruction, students gain independence in the classroom as they engage in instructional tasks that meet their instructional needs as well as motivate them.





Principle 4: Adapt Lesson Delivery as Needed

Practice 1: Teachers check student comprehension frequently and adjust instruction according to learner responses.

"To teach effectively, teachers need to evaluate what students know and what they do not know, in real time. We do not want to wait until the end of a lesson or the end of a unit to discover that our students have misunderstood a key concept or have incorrectly learned critical vocabulary."

Reading Plus' adaptive instruction is continuously collecting data on student performance in order to dynamically customize instruction for every student. If students are struggling, instructional scaffolds are enhanced to provide additional support (e.g. students may be provided with just-in-time rereads and/or clues to support understanding when they experience difficulties). As students demonstrate higher levels of success, supports are gradually reduced and instructional difficulty is increased.

Students receive immediate feedback on their performance with comprehension questions and vocabulary tasks. When students show signs of struggle, the program makes decisions on how to dynamically adjust the instruction and practice parameters to best assist them in progressing through the learning objectives.

Educators are provided with individual reports and grouping filters to identify groups of students with similar challenges for targeted small group instruction. Lesson plans and various offline learning tools are provided for targeted supplemental individual and small group instruction.

Practice 2: Teachers adjust their talk, the task, or the materials according to learner responses.

"If teachers notice student confusion or misunderstanding during a lesson, they make adjustments so that all learners can meet the learning goals.... They might adapt a task by adding more time, finding supplemental resources, or pulling a small group of students together for reteaching."

Integrated formative assessment logic allows **Reading Plus** to adapt instruction dynamically at any point in time. Instructional scaffolds may be intensified if needed, removed if students are ready for greater independence, or instructional difficulty may be increased if students demonstrate readiness for an increase in challenge.

The teacher is also alerted if a student struggles with a program component; the student may be temporarily paused in the program until the teacher can review and meet with the student to discuss difficulties as well as provide direct instruction. Educators have access to an extensive bank of targeted teaching tools for whole group, small group, and individual instruction.

Principle 5: Monitor and Assess Student Language Development

Practice 1: Teachers monitor student errors.

"By interacting frequently with our students, we can acquire a great deal of information about their progress. Some teachers record the results of their interactions (e.g., correct and incorrect uses of English) in an anecdotal way, use a checklist, or change student grouping patterns and/or partners, depending on their newly developing proficiency."

As students engage in practice, performance data are collected and evaluated continuously. Teachers have access to an assortment of actionable reports to review each student's individual performance (including performance history) as well as performance patterns for entire classes or custom groups. Ongoing performance data are available for general academic vocabulary mastery, discrete comprehension skills, comprehension based silent reading rate, and overall proficiency, as well as data on program use and performance over time.

Reading Plus may automatically assign targeted skill instruction based on a student's performance with these skills. The program also groups students who experience similar skill challenges, facilitating small group instruction.

Practice 2: Teachers provide ongoing effective feedback strategically.

"A teacher's feedback in response to a learner's error is delivered strategically and in a timely manner.... The feedback can be positive or corrective. It is important that the feedback be specific and related to what learners are doing well in addition to what they can improve."

Ongoing formative assessments enable the **Reading Plus** program to automatically and continuously adapt instruction in terms of pacing, level of difficulty, necessary scaffolds, and the amount and intensity of practice required.

Progress is also monitored by the teacher throughout the year with the support of the educator dashboard and custom reports that serve as the basis for providing each student with targeted feedback. Real-time, actionable, data-informed reports present teachers with an overview of student and class progress, providing them with valuable insights throughout the year.

REFERENCES

[1] Reading Plus WIDA Prime V2 Correlation
https://www.wceps.org/widaprimev2/instructionalMaterials/ReadingPlus.pdf

[2] The 6 Principles for Exemplary Teaching of English Learners, TESOL International Association,
https://www.tesol.org/the-6-principles/about

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