

# **Fast Track Reading**

2001–2002

Nationwide Research

Study Results



**Wright Group**

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### Program Overview

## Program Overview

The Fast Track Reading program, first published by Wright Group/McGraw-Hill in 2001, has been carefully and purposefully developed to help students become effective and proficient readers. This comprehensive and intensive intervention program is based on current research of theoretical models of reading, instructional design and methodologies, and the specific needs of delayed readers.

The program is designed to accelerate delayed readers to grade level proficiency and standards as quickly as possible by helping the teacher accurately assess student needs and then deliver intensive, targeted instruction. Approximately 20% of the students in our schools have significant difficulties with reading acquisition. These students need high-quality instruction designed to accelerate their reading development (Foorman et al. 1997; Shaywitz, Fletcher, and Shaywitz 1994; Aaron and Joshi 1992; Allington and McGill-Frazen 1989). The Comprehension Placement Assessment enables teachers to determine the skills and strategies each student needs, so valuable instruction time is targeted to their needs.

Fast Track Reading is an intensive intervention program that addresses the core linguistic deficits underlying reading failure. The instruction is comprehensive, continuous, and inclusive of all the major components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonemic decoding skills, word- and passage-reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, spelling, composition, and related language skills (Moats and Lyon 1996).

This intervention program includes the Comprehension Strand, the Word Work Strand, and the Fluency Strand. Students need to understand how to extract information from the text and combine it with prior knowledge and experience in order to make meaning. Clark et al. (1999) suggest that students benefit from explicit and specific teacher modeling in which the teacher explains the reasoning involved in arriving at an answer. Many national studies recognize fluency is one of the essential components of reading development (CIERA 2001; National Reading Panel 2000; Heibert et al. 1998). Research concludes guided practice, repeated reading, and independent reading have a clear and positive effect on fluency (National Reading Panel 2000; Dowhower 1989; Allington 1983).

The Word Work Strand, authored by Dr. Judith Cohen, is based on her 25 years of experience with learning disabled students using the six highly reliable vowel syllable patterns she formatted into a neurological organization chart, coupled with a unique syllabication strategy. This strand includes phonemic awareness, phonics, high-frequency word study, and structural analysis lessons organized in a sequential and systematic way. Fluent and automatic application of skills is crucial for student success (National Reading Panel 2000).

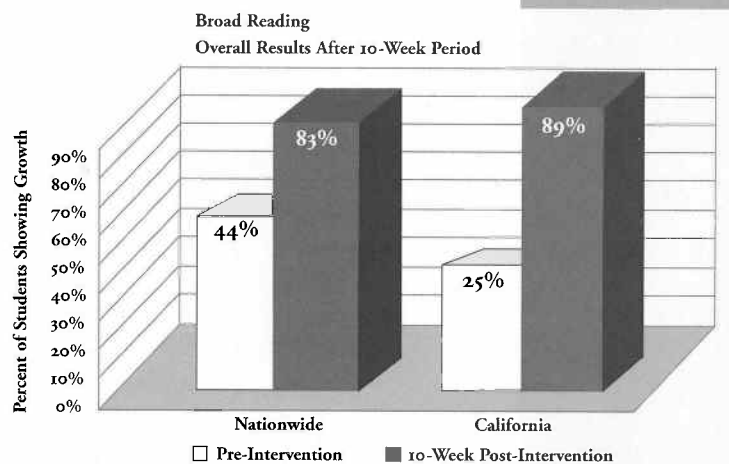
All lessons are scripted with the direct and explicit instructional strategies of “demonstrate, coach, apply, and assess.” These strategies allow the teacher to model each skill or concept with scaffolded support for students and opportunities for practice. The focus on continuous assessment enables rapid acceleration of student progress.

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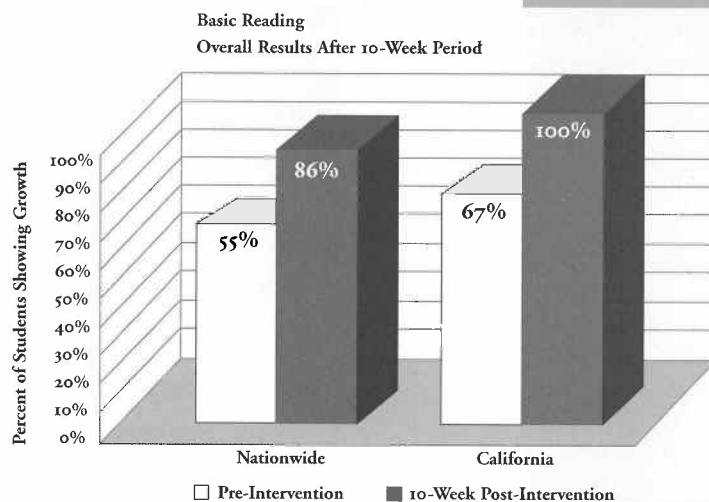
Research sites were first selected in California, followed by other sites nationwide. At the pre-intervention stage, only 25% of the California students scored within one standard deviation of the mean on Broad Reading, which tests letter-word recognition, reading fluency, and passage comprehension.

In the nationwide study, 44% of the students scored within one standard deviation of the mean on Broad Reading. After ten weeks of explicit, systematic instruction using Fast Track Reading, 89% of the students in California and 83% of the students nationwide scored within one standard deviation of the mean.

***This represents a 64% and 39% increase respectively in student achievement on Broad Reading over the ten-week period.***



In the California study, 67% of the students scored within one standard deviation of the mean on Basic Reading at the pre-intervention stage, which tests letter-word recognition and word attack. Of the students tested nationwide, 55% scored within one standard deviation of the mean on Basic Reading. After ten weeks of explicit, systematic instruction using Fast Track Reading, 100% of the students tested in California and 86% of the students tested nationwide scored within one standard deviation of the mean. ***This represents a 33% and 31% increase respectively in student achievement on Basic Reading over the ten-week period.***



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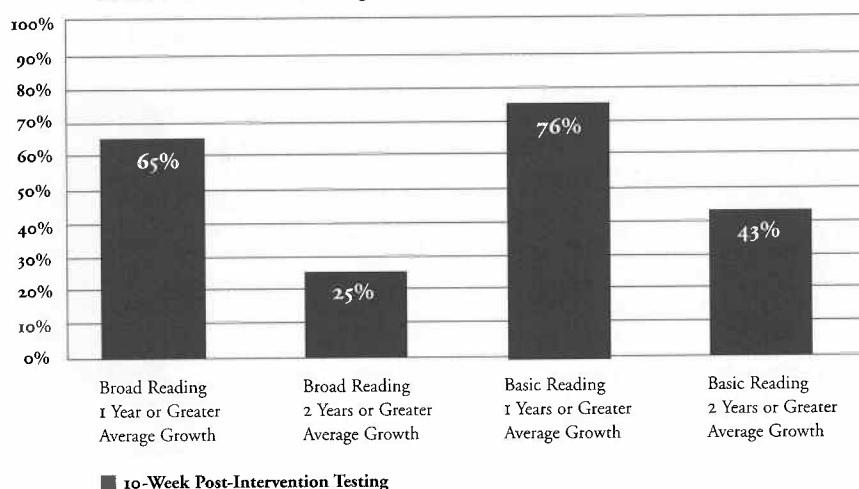
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### Nationwide Results

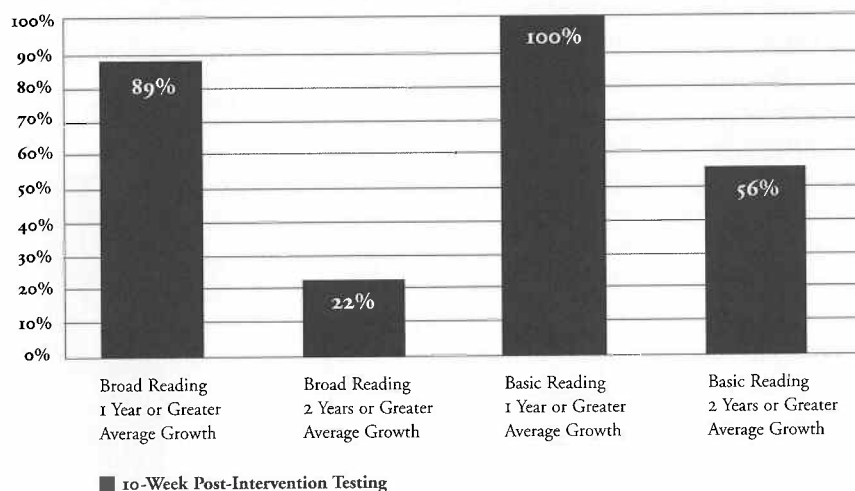
After ten weeks of explicit instruction, at least 65% of the students in all of the test sites (from both the nationwide and California studies) improved their Broad Reading scores by at least one grade equivalency, and about one-quarter improved their grade equivalency by two years or greater.

Over 75% of the students improved their Basic Reading scores by at least one grade equivalency, and 43% improved their grade equivalent scores by two years or more.

Percent of Students Showing 1 Year or Greater & 2 Years or Greater Growth  
Based on Broad and Basic Reading Nationwide Scores



Percent of Students Showing 1 Year or Greater & 2 Years or Greater Growth  
Based on Broad and Basic Reading California Scores



## Fast Track Reading

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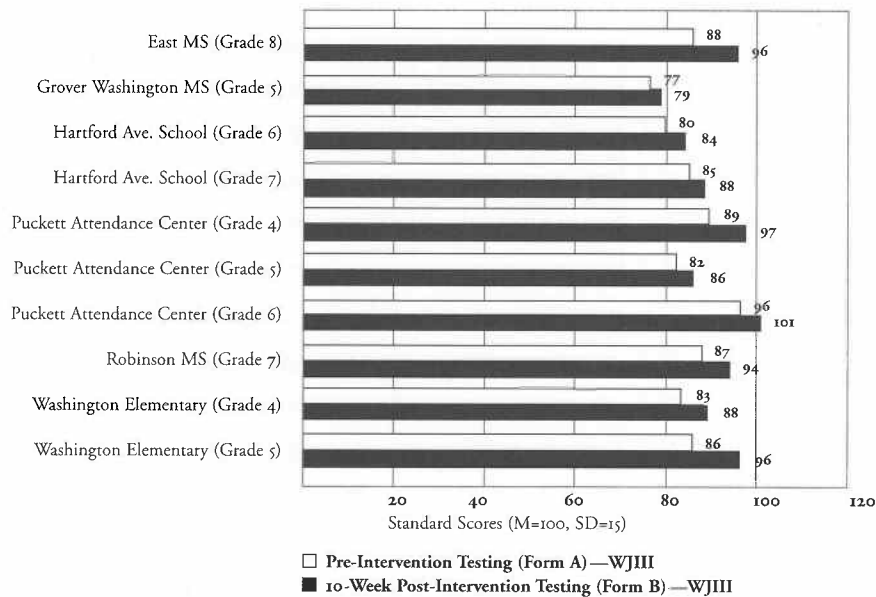
Nationwide Research  
Study Results

### Nationwide Results

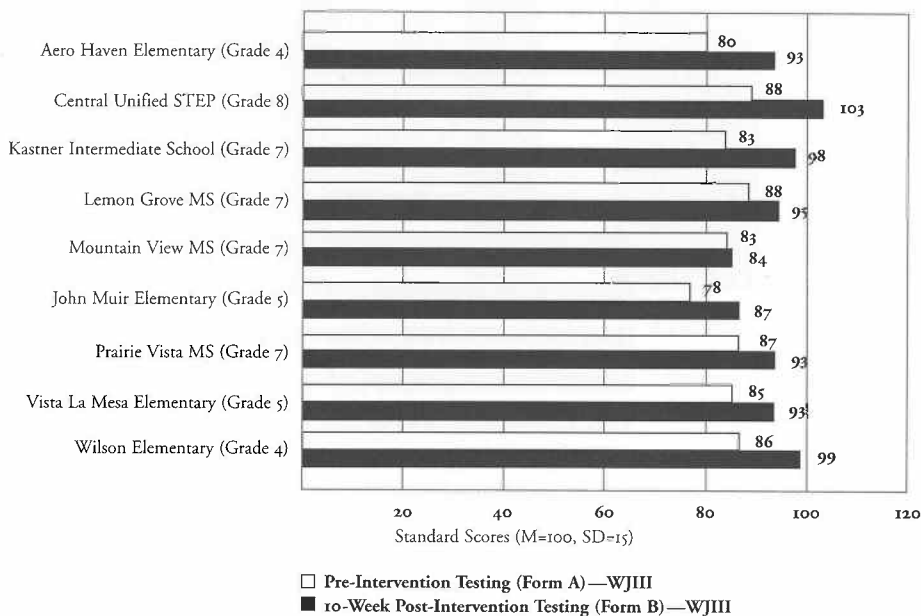
Fast Track Reading helped a diverse group of students nationwide increase their Broad and Basic Reading scores. Large gains in average scores were made by students in both highly diverse and less diverse classrooms, and by students of varying socioeconomic status.

Schools in California had an average increase in Broad Reading scores of 10.4 points; while nationwide the average increase in Broad Reading scores was 5.6 points.

**Average Increase in Broad Reading Scores After 10-Week Period  
Nationwide Results**



**Average Increase in Broad Reading Scores After 10-Week Period  
California Results**



## Fast Track Reading

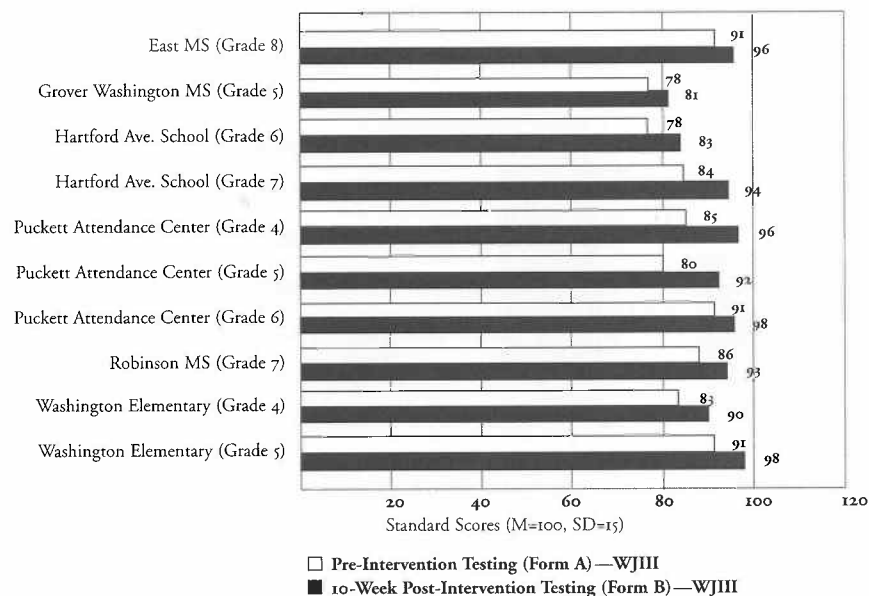
### 2001–2002 Nationwide Research Study Results

#### Nationwide Results

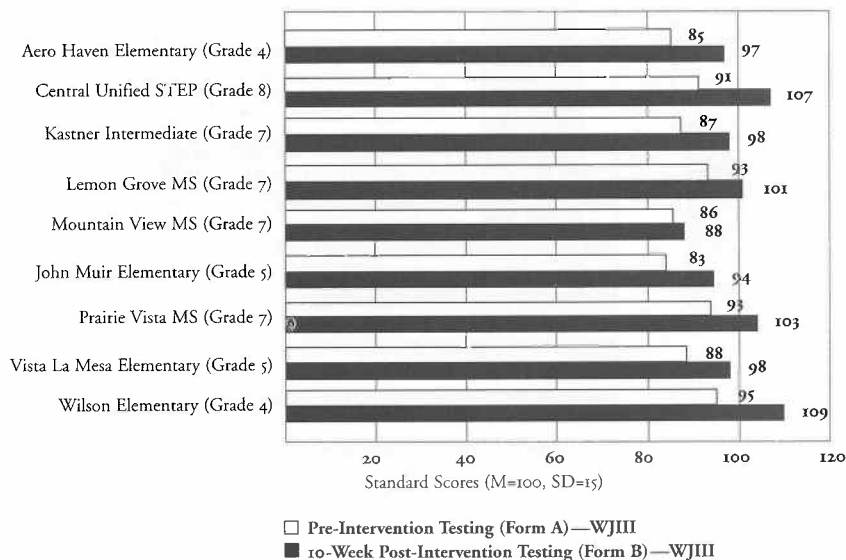
Students also made large gains in Basic Reading scores. Students who participated in the research study nationwide increased their scores by an average of 7.4 points, while

students in the California sites increased their Basic Reading scores by an average of 10.4 points.

Average Increase in Basic Reading Scores After 10-Week Period  
Nationwide Results



Average Increase in Basic Reading Scores After 10-Week Period  
California Results



## Fast Track Reading

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Study Results

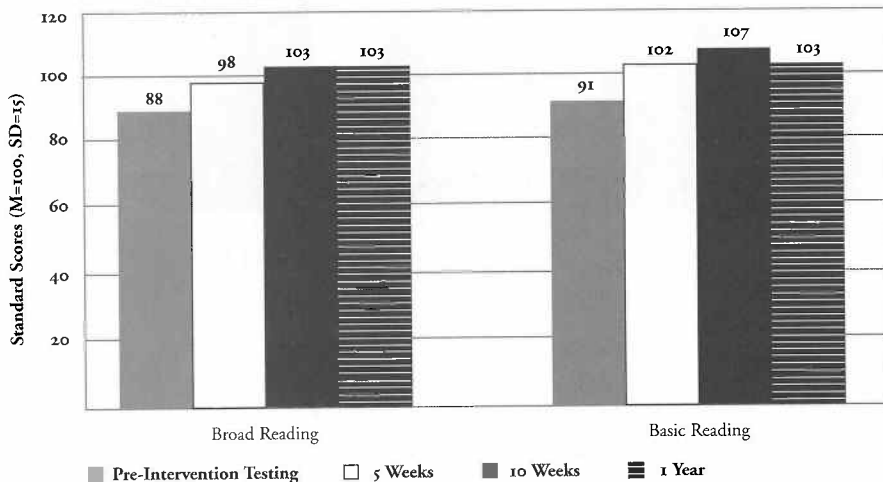
## Longitudinal Research Results

### Central Unified STEP

Progress of students in three California schools was tracked for one full year. At Central Unified STEP, seventeen students in grade 8 were instructed with the Fast Track Reading program for one year during class and after school for a total of two and one-half hours a day. Broad Reading scores from these seventeen students averaged 88 at the pre-intervention stage, 98 after five weeks of instruction, and 103 after ten weeks and after one year. Basic Reading scores for these students averaged 91 at the pre-intervention stage, 102 after five weeks, 107 after ten weeks, and 103 after one year. Overall, this represents a 16% increase in Broad Reading scores and a 13% increase in Basic Reading scores over a one-year period.

Central Unified is a Title I school in a rural district of Fresno, CA. Eight of the students were Hispanic and seven were Caucasian. About 40% of the students in this school were eligible for free or reduced priced lunch.

Average Increase in Broad and Basic Reading Scores After 5 Weeks, 10 Weeks, and 1 Year Central Unified STEP





## Fast Track Reading

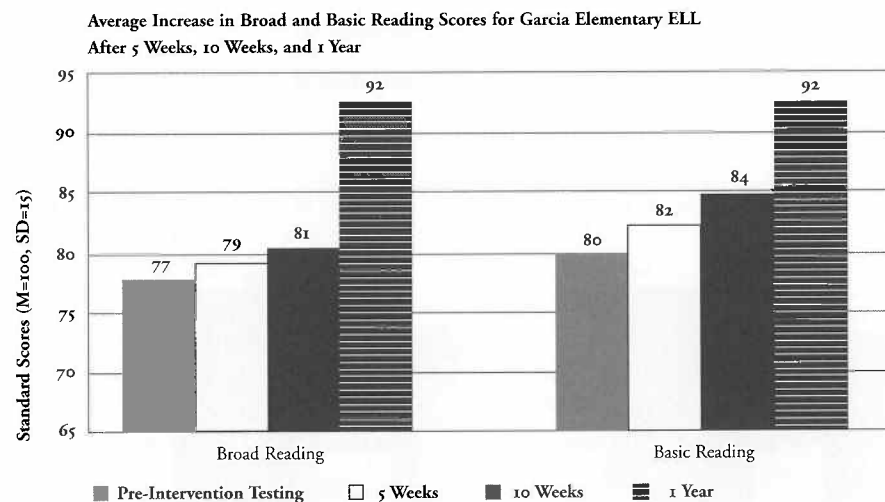
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### Longitudinal Research Results

## Garcia Elementary ELL Program

Broad Reading scores from fourteen students in the Dr. Ernest Garcia Elementary School's ELL program were an average of 77 at the pre-intervention stage, 79 after five weeks of instruction, 81 after ten weeks, and 92 after one year. Basic Reading scores for this group of students were an average of 80 at the pre-intervention stage, 82 after five weeks, 84 after ten weeks, and 92 after one year. Overall, this represents a 19% increase in Broad Reading scores and a 15% increase in Basic Reading scores over a one-year period.

Dr. Ernest Garcia Elementary School is a Title I school located in the urban Rialto School District in Southern California. Of the fourteen students from the ELL program that participated in this study, eleven were Hispanic, two were African American, and one was Caucasian. About 65% of students in this school were eligible for free or reduced price lunch.

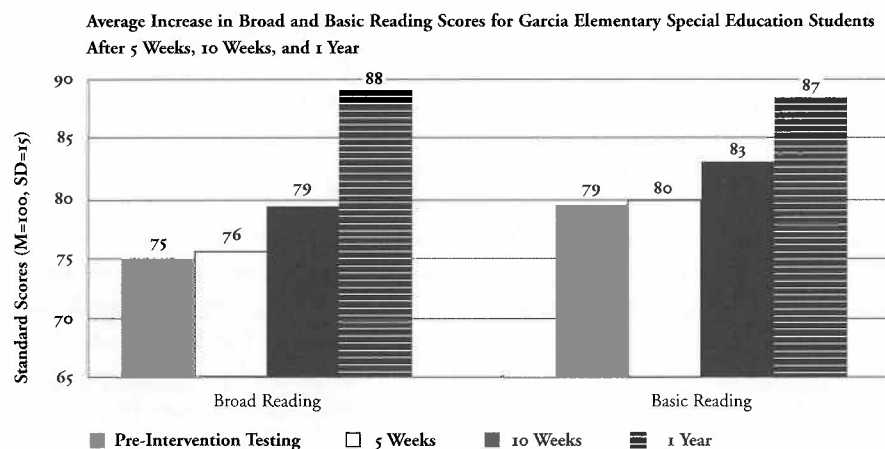


## Garcia Elementary Special Education

Broad Reading scores for six students in the Garcia Elementary Special Education program were an average standard score of 75 at the pre-intervention stage; an average standard score of 76 after five weeks of explicit, systematic instruction; an average standard score of 79 after ten weeks of instruction; and an average score of 88 after one year. Basic Reading scores were an average standard score of 79 at the pre-intervention stage, an average standard score of 80 after five weeks, an average standard score of 83 after ten weeks, and an average standard score of 87 after one year.

Overall, this represents a 17% increase in Broad Reading scores and a 10% increase in Basic Reading scores over a one-year period.

Of the eleven students from the special education program that participated in this study, six were Hispanic, four were African American, and one was Caucasian.



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### Procedure Research Methodology

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## Procedure

The initial research on Wright Group/McGraw-Hill's Fast Track Reading program was conducted with twelve California schools in the fall of 2001 with the purpose of monitoring children's success using Wright Group/McGraw-Hill's Fast Track Reading program. Field test sites were then set up in six schools in five districts across the US in the spring of 2002. The grade levels that participated in both studies ranged from grades 4 through 8, and a cross section of students from different ethnic and socioeconomic groups were included. A total of 95 students from nine schools participated in ten weeks of the California study. The follow-up nationwide study involved a total of 66 students from six schools who participated in the full ten-week study.

No control groups were used in either the California or nationwide study. The students were not randomly selected, but instead were chosen based on their need for an intervention program. A group of eligible students was first assessed and then the final participants were chosen based on the likelihood they would attend classes regularly. Students with learning disabilities were not included in the study.

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## Research Methodology

The students in both studies were individually pre-tested on Form A of the Woodcock-Johnson III Test of Achievement in order to develop a baseline or pre-intervention level. The students were then instructed using the Fast Track Reading materials for a total of ten weeks. In the California study, Form A of the Woodcock-Johnson III was administered at the ten-week point. In the national study, Form B of the Woodcock-Johnson III was administered at the ten-week point. The standard scores for each student on each reading cluster score were entered into a statistical analysis spreadsheet and mean averages were computed. Results are reported within one standard deviation of the mean, which measures how widely values are dispersed from the average value (the mean). Both the Broad Reading score and Basic Reading score have a mean reliability of .93.

The teachers were trained for a half-day before the study, with follow-up support provided in the form of observation and modeling. The teachers collected assessments from the Fast Track Reading program, and a third party collected the scores for the Woodcock-Johnson III assessments.

Educational Consulting Services, a third party, conducted all pre- and post-assessments.

## Demographics

Location	Participating Grades	Race/Ethnicity	Title I	% Eligible Free/Reduced Lunch	Teaching Method
Aero Haven Elementary; N. Highlands, CA (suburban)	grade 4	14% African American; 2% Asian; 27% Caucasian; 57% Hispanic; 1% Native American	✓	77%	In class/Pull out, 90 min./day
Central Unified STEP; Fresno, CA (urban)	grade 8	6% African American; 3% Asian; 32% Caucasian; 59% Hispanic; 1% Native American	✓	40%	In class/After school, 2 hrs. 30 min./day
East Middle School; Waukegan, IL (suburban)	grade 8	26% African American; 1% Asian; 6% Caucasian; 66% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	53%	In class, 57 min./day
Dr. Ernest Garcia Elementary; Colton, CA (urban)	grade 4 grade 5	24% African American; 2% Asian; 11% Caucasian; 62% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	65%	Pull out, 45 min./day
Grover Washington, Jr. Middle School; Philadelphia PA (urban)	grade 5	67% African American; 13% Asian; 3% Caucasian; 16% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	100%	In class, 90 min./day
Hartford Avenue School; Milwaukee, WI (urban)	grade 6 grade 7	73% African American; 2% Asian; 17% Caucasian; 7% Hispanic; 1% Native American		67%	In class/Pull out
John Muir Elementary; Modesto, CA (suburban)	grade 5	6% African American; 5% Asian; 59% Caucasian; 29% Hispanic; 1% Native American	✓	63%	In class, 90 min./day
Kastner Intermediate School; Fresno, CA (urban)	grade 7	4% African American; 15% Asian; 60% Caucasian; 19% Hispanic; 1% Native American	✓	18%	Reading Strategies Class, 2 hrs. 45 min./day
Lemon Grove Middle School; Lemon Grove, CA (urban)	grade 7	28% African American; 6% Asian; 35% Caucasian; 30% Hispanic; 1% Native American	✓	90%	Pull out, 50 min./day
Mountain View Middle School; Moreno Valley, CA (suburban)	grade 7	27% African American; 6% Asian; 24% Caucasian; 43% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	57%	90 min./day
Prairie Vista Middle School, Hawthorne, CA (urban)	grade 7	34% African American; 6% Asian; 2% Caucasian; 58% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	90%	Pull out, 50 min./day
Puckett Attendance Center; Puckett, MS (rural)	grade 4 grade 5 grade 6	31% African American; 0% Asian; 69% Caucasian; 0% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	50%	Pull out, 45 min./day
Robinson Middle School; Little Rock, AR (suburban)	grade 7	30% African American; 0% Asian; 69% Caucasian; 0% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	NA	In class, 50 min./day
Vista La Mesa Elementary; La Mesa, CA (suburban)	grade 5	26% African American; 12% Asian; 25% Caucasian; 37% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	75%	Pull out, 2 hrs. 30 min./day
Washington Elementary; Waukegan, IL (suburban)	grade 4 grade 5	11% African American; 2% Asian; 9% Caucasian; 78% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	53%	Pull out, 45 min./day
Wilson Elementary; Santa Ana, CA (suburban)	grade 4	0% African American; 1% Asian; 0% Caucasian; 98% Hispanic; 0% Native American	✓	85%	Pull out

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### Research Base

## Research Base

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### Research Base

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