



About the School:		About the Students:	
Grades:	K-8	African American:	2%
Number of Students:	425	Caucasian:	94%
Test(s):	WRCT	Hispanic:	-
Reduced Price Lunch:	7%	Asian:	4%
		Other:	-
		ELL	-



## Wisconsin Teachers Use Horizons to Customize Reading Lessons

When Classical Charter School opened its doors at the start of the 1999-2000 school year, Direct Instruction's *Reading Mastery* was implemented in Grades K-3. At the start of 2002-2003 school year, teachers changed to another Direct Instruction program, *Horizons*, in Grades K-1 and used *Reading Mastery* in Grade 2 because the combination allows them to match the different levels to the specific needs of each young student. Their efforts paid off. Since 2003, 100% of Grade 3 students have scored proficient or advanced in reading on the Wisconsin Reading Comprehension Test (WRCT).

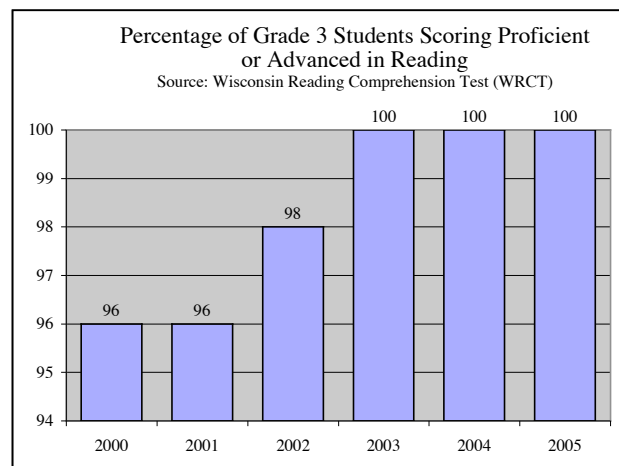
*Horizons* includes two different levels. For example, Level A teaches beginning decoding and basic comprehension, resulting in mastery of approximately 700 words. About half of the Kindergartners at Classical Charter School begin here.

Level B expands the decoding, word recognition, and comprehension skills taught in Level A. Children who complete Level B have a reading vocabulary of about 2,000 words and are ready to enter any Grade 3 reading program. Grade 1 students at Classical Charter School progress to Level B. (Level A-B is a fast track program that covers all the skills in Levels A and B in only one year. The other half of Kindergartners start in A-B.)

*Reading Mastery* continues in Grades 2-3 at Classical Charter School; however, the program often begins in Grade 1 for accelerated students who have completed *Horizons* Level B.

"The combination of *Horizons* and *Reading Mastery* allows students to work ahead at their individual speeds," explained Classical School Board Member Nancy Fischer. "Some students in Grade 1 are working two years ahead in *Reading Mastery III*. By using both programs, teachers are able to customize reading lessons based on each child's skill level."

The combination of programs works well, as demonstrated by high scores on the WRCT. In addition, the school has achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year since the federal government mandated it in 2002.





Fischer said those scores are a product of *Horizons* and *Reading Mastery*.

“People look at our scores and say, ‘Wow, what incredible scores!’ but what they don’t know is our students have a very typical range of abilities,” she said. “What we also have are phenomenal teachers and dedicated parents who believe strongly in the reading programs and reinforce skills at home.”

As a previous teacher, Fischer said she knows first-hand the Direct Instruction model is foolproof.

“With the right professional development and practice, teachers can really make a difference with Direct Instruction programs like *Horizons* and *Reading Mastery*.”

#### **About Horizons**

*Horizons* is a Direct Instruction reading program for Grades K-4. A detailed sequence of daily lessons provides explicit, systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics/decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension.

#### **About Classical Charter School**

Serving approximately 425 students in Grades K-8, this school’s student population is 94% Caucasian, 4% Asian, and 2% African American. Seven percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. For more information about Classical Charter School, visit [www.classicalcharter.com](http://www.classicalcharter.com).

#### **For More Information**

If you would like to learn more about success with Direct Instruction programs in your school or district, please contact us today at **1-888-SRA-4543**.