Spotlight on Literacy
A Third Grade Reading Project in Rural Missouri
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Lone Jack Branch

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The Beginnings
Why?

- MCPL Strategic Plan focus on Literacy
- Need for effective school-age programming and school partnerships throughout the Library District
- MAP English Language Arts (Reading) Test Scores
  - MCPL has 21 school districts / 141 elementary schools
  - Start with Lone Jack Elementary
Research

- Evans, et al
  - Books in the home are a key indicator of academic success

- Dorsey, et al
  - Students who struggle with reading in third grade are less likely to graduate.

- Canady, et al
  - Using trained teams to provide intensive small group literacy instruction that is built into the school's schedule

- Capotosto, et al
  - Developing home-school partnership to encourage family support of third grade reading skills, motivation, and habits

- Felton, et al
  - the transition into 3rd grade provides a window of opportunity during which schools need to take both responsive and proactive measures to keep students on track for success.
Making it Happen
Where to start...

- What will or won't work?
  - Previous programs
  - Make-up of the community
    - Low Resource
    - School district vs Home School

- What should the program look like?
  - Intensity

- What should be included?
  - Books
  - Vendors

- How to pay for it?
  - Budget
  - Grant Writing
Goals

▪ Grant Goals
  ▪ Intensive focus on literacy for third grade classrooms
    ▪ 20 weekly visits
    ▪ Partnership with the school

▪ Secret goals
  ▪ Survive the program
  ▪ Collect helpful data
  ▪ Build a wider awareness of literacy/reading
    ▪ More stories/books at home
  ▪ Building stronger community relationships
This and That

- Things that worked
  - Frequency and consistency
    - As few as 5 books make a difference
  - Setting up the program and calendar
  - Be flexible

- Opportunities for improvement
  - Fewer picture books
  - Presenter evaluations
  - Student evaluations
Student Thoughts

MS. Liz
Thank you for the books and coming to read to us.

Thank you so much for all of the books. I have read almost all of the books so far. I love the LJ Library!!

Thank you for all the books and reading them to us. I've had a great time with you.

Sincerely,
Cora
Nothing but the Facts
Tools and Outcomes

- **Teacher Assessments**
  - Initial and Mid-Year Reports:
    - Current Reading Level
    - Summary of reading skills/reading attitude
  - Final Assessment also asked:
    - Effectiveness of program for students and teacher
    - Would you participate again? Why or why not?
## Tools and Outcomes

### Mid-Continent Public Library's Reading Program for Lone Jack Elementary Third Graders

**Classroom Teacher's Assessment of Student Reading Levels**

**INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name:</th>
<th>Current Reading Level (check one for each student)</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Has this program benefited your work in the classroom? Circle one.</th>
<th>If yes, please explain how.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Below Grade</td>
<td>At Grade</td>
<td>Above Grade</td>
<td>Not Yet Assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If not, what do you think the Library could do differently to better assist classroom teachers?**

**Would you offer this program to your students in the future? Circle one.**

Please explain why or why not.
Tools and Outcomes

- **Caregiver Assessments**
  - Demographic Information
  - Reading Skills
    - Teacher/school report
    - Parent Observations
  - Open ended questions
    - Describe child’s experience/attitude with reading
    - Parent goals for child's reading development
  - Final assessment included same questions
    - Changes in attitude toward reading?
    - Goals met?
    - Overall experience with program
- **Available on paper and online**
### Quantitative Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial Assessment</th>
<th>Final Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30+ Books at Home</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Together 3+ Times/Week</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Has Library Card</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Level (match Teacher)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Grade Level</td>
<td>23% (5 of 7)</td>
<td>28% (5 of 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Grade Level</td>
<td>32% (8 of 10)</td>
<td>36% (9 of 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above Grade Level</td>
<td>32% (6 of 10)</td>
<td>36% (8 of 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Skills (average)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading aloud confidently</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounding out words</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using context clues</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading smoothly</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Qualitative Results

He is more reflective about his reading. He shows improvement of summarizing, asking questions and making predictions. ~ mid-program report

She is very excited every time she gets a new book. She brings it home and reads it to the family. She ... is excited at how well she is reading. ~ mid-program report

Initial Assessment:
He is working with a tutor 3 times a week for remediation. It is getting better all the time.

Final Assessment:
He loves books! He seems so much happier to read independently. ~ reading below grade level

I felt it made reading fun, enjoyable & relaxing!

He made huge gains this year & was excited to read. ~ teacher report on reader who moved from "At" to "Above" grade level

She loved getting to bring the book home and talk about it. I like that it got her excited... helped change her attitude even for a few minutes.

... we liked having the books to read together.
Best Practices

- How the data are presented to stakeholders and decision makers is just as important as the findings
  - Quantitative Data - counts, averages, percent change
  - Qualitative Data - match pre- and post-program responses per child
- Help Library staff set goals/expectations by providing results from initial assessments as soon as possible
- Include a means for library staff to provide ongoing feedback (great for grant reports!)
Questions?
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