

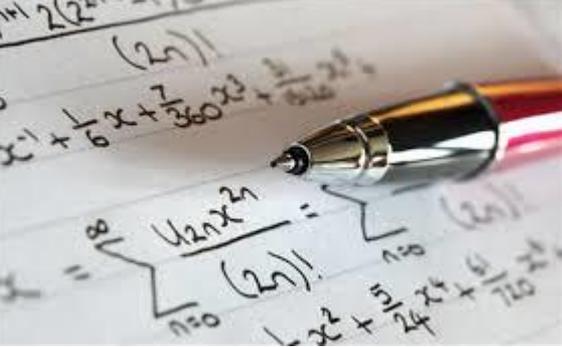


Research Project



Reading mentors

Does regular reading aloud with a partner improve reading ability?



Project choice

Choice of project came through issues being highlighted in Maths exams. The changing nature of these exams has shown that students now needed to be able to read questions and comprehend them in order to answer them, rather than just follow number questions.

Issues raised

1. Students who could previously get away with not being able to read well could now struggle with new style.
2. Improving reading ability could assist not only Maths but in all other subjects such as English and History.

Research Question



With the introduction of a new house system in school and a desire to create peer mentoring links within this meant we could link the reading issues identified to investigate the research question:

“Could regular reading out loud with a buddy help improve a student’s reading ability?”

- It would be a weekly session (15-20 minutes).
- Students would read aloud with the opportunity for correction from a trained mentor.
- This would then be measured for impact on both reading ability and attitude towards reading.

Identifying Students



Wanted to identify students who could benefit from mentor support but would not be affected by any other additional support from school currently designed to improve reading ability. We chose to:

- Work with **Year 7** students.
- Those identified with **Level 4 English** levels across all disciplines.
- Not taking part in the **‘SuccessMaker’** programme in school as this would be a key piece of additional support potentially affecting our results.

SuccessMaker®



Student Selection



- From a year group of **240** we were able to identify **32** students that met the criteria.
- From this we developed a stratified sample of students based on primary school and gender.
- This identified **16** students – **8** control and **8** readers.

However, due to a number of issues, this number was reduced to a total of **5 students**, 3 girls and 2 boys, all of whom would be readers. One of the students was also an **EAL** student. (*Identified as students A-E*)

Student Testing - Baseline



All selected students undertook a reading test (**Schonell Reading Test 1971**) where we obtained their reading level at the start of the project.

- Student **A** baseline result 60 reading age (r.a.) **10y 3m**
- Student **B** baseline result 52 r.a. **9y 3m**
- Student **C** baseline result 79 r.a. **12y 3m**
- Student **D** baseline result 74 r.a. **11y 8m**
- Student **E** baseline result 73 r.a. **11y 6m**

SCHONELL READING TEST 1971 PROCEDURE

tree	little	milk	egg	book
school	sit	frog	playing	bun
flower	road	clock	train	light
picture	think	summer	people	something
dream	downstairs	biscuit	shepherd	thirsty
crowd	sandwich	beginning	postage	island
saucer	angel	ceiling	appeared	gnome
canary	attractive	imagine	nephew	gradually
smoulder	applaud	disposal	nourished	diseased
university	orchestra	knowledge	audience	situated
physics	campaign	choir	intercede	fascinate
forfeit	siege	recent	plausible	prophecy
colonel	soloist	systematic	slovenly	classification
genuine	institution	pivot	conscience	heroic
pneumonia	preliminary	antique	susceptible	enigma
oblivion	scintillate	satirical	sabre	beguile
terrestrial	belligerent	adamant	sepulchre	statistics
miscellaneous	procrastinate	tyrannical	evangelical	grotesque
ineradicable	judicature	preferential	homonym	fictitious
rescind	metamorphosis	somnambulist	bibliography	idiosyncrasy

Instructions For Administering The Test

The Test should be given in a friendly atmosphere in which the child is thoroughly at ease. It should not take place within the hearing of other children.

Younger children or weaker readers should start the test at the beginning. Better readers can start at a later group of ten words. If any words is failed, however, the preceding group of ten words is given until all ten are read correctly. Credit is then given for all words preceding this point. Testing is discontinued when ten consecutive words are failed. The Reading Age (RA) for the total number of words correctly read is given in the table below.

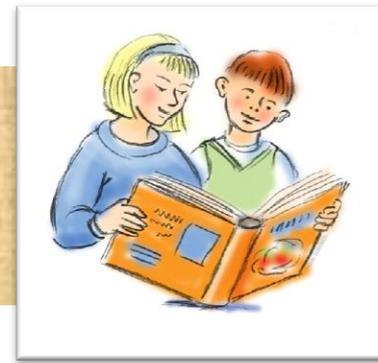
The temptation to help the child should be resisted. He should not, for example, be asked to repeat a word that he has almost but not quite pronounced correctly nor should he be given any clues as to how to attack a particular word.

Credit should not be given unless the word is clearly correct e.g. 'flowers' for 'flower' is incorrect as is 'postage' when the last syllable is pronounced as the word 'age'.

Total number of words read correctly and Reading Age in years and months

0.1 = 6y 0m	33 = 8y 3m	61 = 10y 4m
2 = 6y 0m	34 = 8y 4m	62 = 10y 5m
3 = 6y 2m	35 = 8y 5m	63 = 10y 6m
4 = 6y 4m	36-37 = 8y 6m	64 = 10y 7m
5 = 6y 5m	38 = 8y 7m	65 = 10y 8m
6 = 6y 6m	39 = 8y 8m	66 = 10y 9m
7-8 = 6y 7m	40 = 8y 9m	67 = 10y 10m
9 = 6y 8m	41 = 8y 10m	68 = 11y 0m
10 = 6y 9m	42 = 8y 11m	69 = 11y 1m
11-12 = 6y 10m	43 = 9y 0m	70 = 11y 3m
13-14 = 6y 11m	44 = 9y 1m	71 = 11y 4m
15 = 7y 0m	45 = 9y 2m	72 = 11y 5m
16 = 7y 1m	46 = 9y 3m	73 = 11y 6m
17-18 = 7y 2m	47 = 9y 4m	74 = 11y 8m
19 = 7y 3m	48 = 9y 5m	75 = 11y 10m
20-21 = 7y 4m	49-50 = 9y 6m	76 = 12y 0m
22-23 = 7y 5m	51 = 9y 7m	77 = 12y 1m
24 = 7y 6m	52 = 9y 8m	78 = 12y 2m
25-26 = 7y 7m	53 = 9y 9m	79 = 12y 3m
27 = 7y 8m	54 = 9y 10m	80 = 12y 4m
28 = 7y 9m	55 = 9y 11m	81 = 12y 5m
29 = 7y 10m	56 = 10y 0m	82 = 12y 6m
30 = 8y 0m	57-58 = 10y 1m	83+ = 12y 6+
31 = 8y 1m	59 = 10y 2m	
32 = 8y 3m	60 = 10y 3m	

Student Attitude to Reading



Along side the testing students completed a **questionnaire** looking at how often they read, did they enjoy reading, did they have the opportunity to read aloud.

The results from the survey showed that:

- 4 of the 5 students read at home for pleasure and enjoyed reading, but did not have opportunities to read aloud, especially at home.
- Student E does not enjoy reading and thinks they are a very slow reader.
- Reading amount varied across the students, from 0-6 hours a week on their own.
- Students commented that they struggle to know what books or literature to read.
- All the students were fearful of ‘messing up’ when reading aloud, especially in a classroom situation – student B went as far as to say they were ‘ashamed’ of their reading skills.

Unexpected Issues



The reduction in numbers of students involved in the project was primarily due to lack of parental consent.

- Parents were concerned that their child had been selected as they were **below an expected standard** and they felt that this may have a negative impact on them. Therefore, they did not feel that it was in their child's best interest to take part.
- There was a possible influence from student themselves who did not wish to take part due to their **negative views on reading**.

Reading Sessions



- Students and mentors were matched up, using the school house system and then met for first reading session in the library during form time, which gave **20 minutes for an informal chat and reading session.**
- Students and mentor were then given a choice as to a day and location for their session. All groups **chose to read in the library** (most stating access to further books)
- The mentors then took ownership of the sessions, organising session days and **reporting** back on session activities and guidance they had given.



Observations from the Mentors



Each mentor completed a report after each reading session recording the progress and attitude of the student.

- Initial session became part chat about books to **settle student nerves** and then sessions became more focused on reading.
- Students appear to be **increasing in confidence levels** as the sessions develop and books selected are **more age appropriate** although students still opting for ‘easy’ books.
- Students who do not have English as their first language do **not necessarily understand** the punctuation although they can read the words. Also sometimes **misted the meaning** of what they were reading so discussion of this were developed.
- **“It has been nice to work with younger students as it reminds me of the struggles I had when I was their age – I wish I had had the support.”**

Results – Reading Age



Students completed another reading test to compare to previous results.

Student A progressed from 60 to 67 words (7 months)

Student B progressed from 52 to 57 words (5 months)

Student C progressed from 79 to 83 words (highest reading score)

Student D progressed from 74 to 79 words (7 months)

Student E progressed from 73 to 77 words (7 months)

Results are based on a period of 5 calendar months (including the six weeks of the Summer Holidays).

Results - Attitude



Students were interviewed at the same time as completing their second reading test.

“I am much more confident reading out loud in class now” – Student B

“I do enjoy reading more now and having a sixth former to help has been good” - Student E

“Reading relaxes me when I am frustrated” – Student B

“I really love having someone to read aloud to someone” – Student D

“I never liked reading in class and my mentor said the same, so I feel a connection with them” – Student B

“I am not as nervous about reading aloud now” – Student A

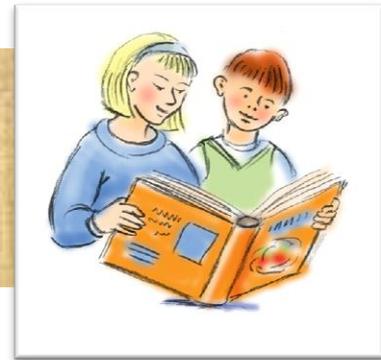
“I don’t mind as much if I get words wrong” – Student C

“It’s nice to have someone listening to me” – Student A

“My mentor has been helping me with my subject reading as well and this has been great” – Student A

“They’ve challenged me to read harder books” – Student C

The Future



- DEAR Fortnight (July 2014).
- Learning Links within the House System.
- Continuation with same students and mentors.
- 16 before you're 16 and 18 before you're 18.

16 Books to Read Before You're 16!

18 Books to Read Before You're 18!

