



High School Reading Intervention at Washington High HISD Reading and Comprehension Upgrade Courses

Overview

Reading Upgrade Washington Pilot: Results

TAKS Results:

Pilot Students Average Gain in TAKS Reading/ELA 2004/2005:	57.3 Points
Special Needs students average gain:	60.2 points
Washington High 10 th Grade Overall Gain in TAKS Reading ELA 2004/2005	6 points
Total students measured both pre(2004) and post(2005):	35 Students
Number of students who made gains:	28 Students
Percent of students who made gains:	80%

Summary Report

During the spring semester of 2005, the Booker T. Washington High School of Houston Independent School District in Houston Texas conducted a pilot reading intervention program called **Reading Upgrade**. A group of 54 10th grade students completed two on-line reading intervention courses, Reading Upgrade and Comprehension Upgrade, during a one-period reading intervention class.

The Reading Upgrade program is a high-interest reading intervention designed to move at-risk Title I, special needs, and English learner students rapidly towards reading proficiency. The two online courses in the program use songs, video, animation, and games to engage youth in a rigorous, scientifically-based curriculum. The program covers phonics, word decoding, vocabulary, sentence and passage comprehension, and critical thinking. The goal of the program is to rapidly fill in gaps in reading basics to achieve fluency, and then to extend each student's ability to read textbooks and literature for success in school. More than 12,000 students in over 500 U.S. public schools have completed the courses.

At Washington High, teachers selected 54 students based on reading performance at the elementary level (below grade 6), including Title I and special needs students. Students were enrolled in a one-period (50 minute) intervention class that met in a school computer lab. Each student started at lesson 1 in the

Reading Upgrade course, and moved in order through all 50 lessons in this course. The students repeated lessons until mastery was reached on every lesson. Students then continued through the 50 lessons of the Comprehension Upgrade course.

At the end of the semester, most students had completed all 100 lessons in both courses. The rest were completing the Comprehension Upgrade courses at the end of the semester. Students were highly engaged by the program, and often spoke of the program to their classroom teachers and other students. Students not in the program requested to be enrolled. Many students worked toward a “Gold” certificate of mastery above and beyond the standard requirements of the program. Remarkd one teacher about student reaction, “There is a buzz at the school!”.

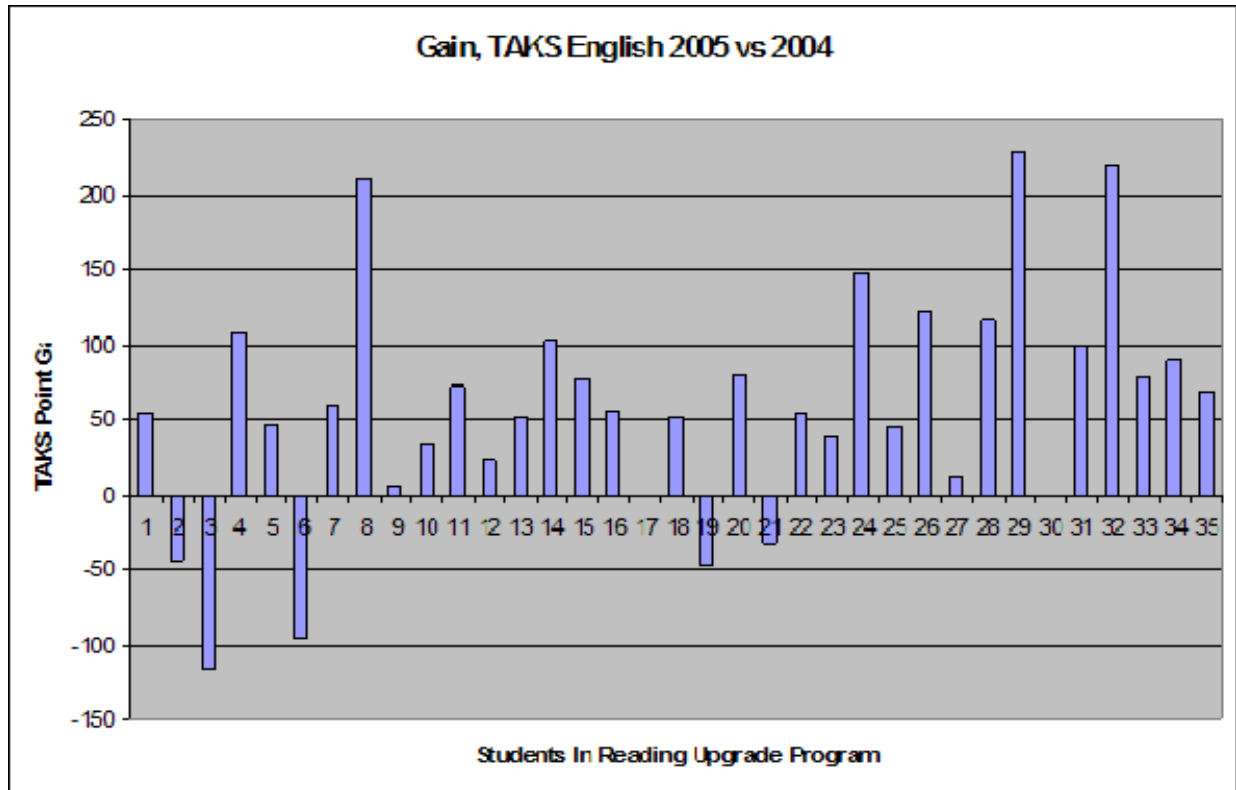
The results from the TAKS 2005 Reading/ELA test were compared with the 2004 test scores for each student where data was available from both years. The analysis showed that 80% of students in the program made a gain in the TAKS test. The average gain was 57.3 points, and the maximum gain was 228 points. Special needs students earned an average gain of 60.2 points, higher than the overall average.

The overall gain for all 10th grade students at Washington high was 6 points for the Reading/ELA test. **Thus the group of students in the Reading Upgrade pilot program made average gains over 50 points higher in TAKS Reading/ELA than the overall school.** This increased reading performance is important given that the students were selected for very low reading performance or special needs, two difficult-to-teach groups of students.

Based on the success of the pilot, Washington High is planning a school-wide deployment of the Reading Upgrade courses for the 2005-2006 school year.

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Reading Upgrade Washington High Pilot: Details

Schedule:

- One semester January to May 2005
- Daily one-period sessions (approximately 50 minutes)
- Students work at computers with headphones
- Each student works at his/her own pace through courses

Materials & Equipment:

- Reading Upgrade and Comprehension Upgrade online courses
- Teacher's Guide and Codes to Enroll Each Student
- No instructor-led classroom activities
- Standard school computers with internet connections & headphones
- No software installed, no modifications to computers

Teacher Training:

- Single one-hour training session, December 2004, with lead teacher
- Support by email and phone with Learning Upgrade staff
- Support from Harris County Office of Education staff
- Support from Unlimited Access staff