

Case Study

Tiospa Zina Tribal School

Tiospa Zina is a Tribal K-12 School located in Agency Village, South Dakota. The school is administered under the auspices of the Office of Indian Education Programs which is part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Tiospa Zina has been using Let's Go Learn's Unique Reader program since 2003.

Customer Profile	
Product Used	Unique Reader (includes DORA)
School	Tribal School
Class Size	Varied
Deployment Type	Remedial reading
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easy diagnosis - Effective online reading instruction - Easy teacher control and monitoring
Results	- Measured growth in students

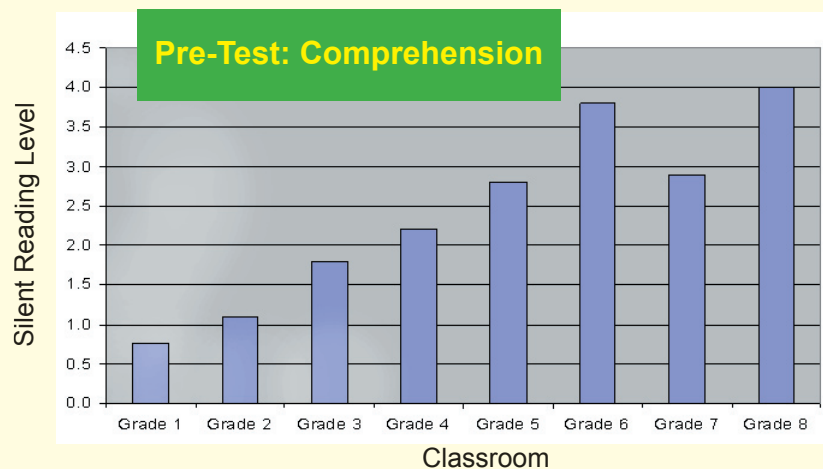
Overview:

At Tiospa Zina Tribal School, Let's Go Learn's Diagnostic Online Reading Assessment (DORA) was first administered to all students in grades one through eight to profile the reading abilities of each student. Initial assessments indicated a staggering number of students with poor word identification skills and equally poor comprehension abilities. After the 200 students who participated in the study were assessed, each student received individualized reading instruction using Let's Go Learn's *Unique Reader* program two to three times a week between 45 and 60 minutes each day. After only two and a half months using *Unique Reader*, mid-year assessment results indicated accelerated reading development.

Challenges Faced:

Tiospa Zina faces similar challenges to other schools with at-risk students around the nation but also additional challenges unique to tribal schools. Teachers and administrators at Tiospa Zina have the challenge not only of raising the literacy achievement of the students at the school but also of integrating the local tribal language and culture into their curriculum. Because access to qualified literacy specialists is difficult at Tiospa Zina, the administrators of the school and of the Bureau of Indian Affairs utilized Let's Go Learn's *DORA* and associated *Unique Reader* to provide individualized diagnostic reports of their students' reading abilities and individualized instructional programs for their students.

Fig. 1 As this graph of the initial Let's Go Learn assessment makes clear, Tiospa Zina is a school where students' comprehension skills fall below grade level expectations while the gap generally increases in the upper grades. By fifth grade, students at Tiospa Zina are 2.5 years behind grade level in their reading comprehension abilities.



Results:

Using initial data as a benchmark, at the study's end we compared the actual gain students experienced in both comprehension and relevant reading subskills with expected gain in these areas, given the one-and-a-half month length of the study (as measured by instructional time). Students in every grade level in the study experienced gains in comprehension and in most subskills as well. More significantly, all grades made gains that were higher than those expected for the time frame with regard to comprehension. The following are exemplars of the general literacy achievements students made in this study.

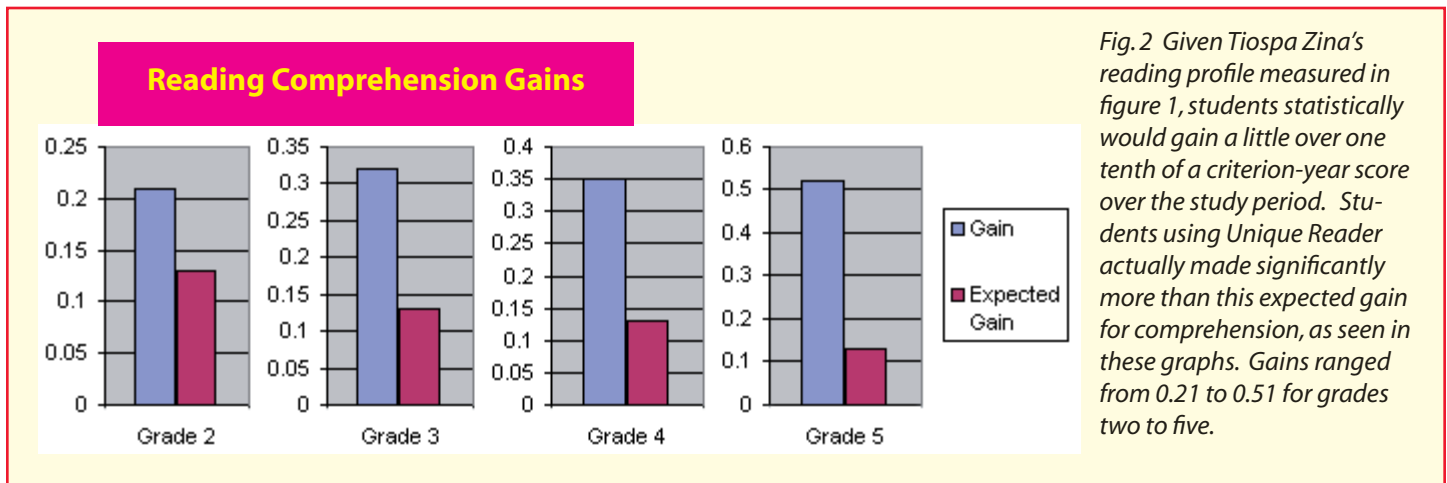
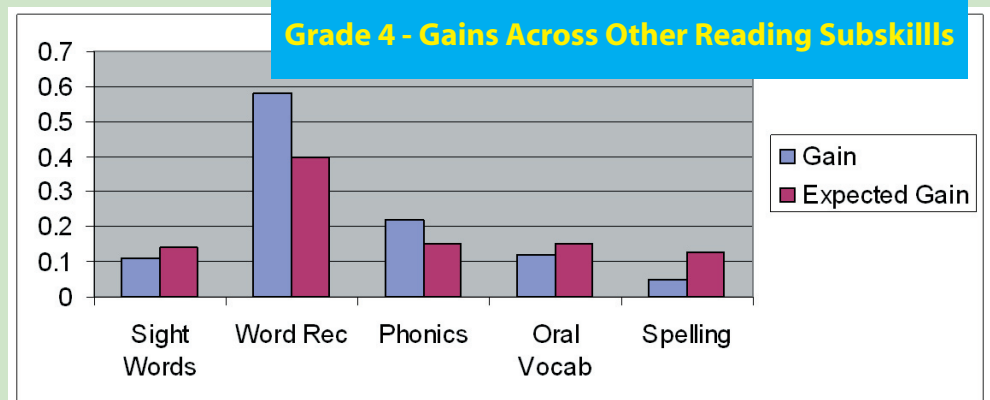


Fig. 3 The graph on the right offers another important view of the struggling readers in this study. Because the initial DORA assessment is quite thorough, it is able to pinpoint subskills of reading such as phonics and word recognition, which can ultimately affect comprehension if they are found to be areas of weakness. Unique Reader targets students decoding, vocabulary, and comprehension subskills. In this sample of 4th grade, students made gains beyond what would be expected for the given time period in decoding subskills targeted by Unique Reader. Unique Reader does not specifically target spelling. And vocabulary in DORA is a more general measure which would require a longer study period to show gains.



Summary:

The evidence from this small pilot study indicates that the combination of a sophisticated, comprehensive assessment tool with a course of study that targets individual needs in such a seamless way can be quite powerful. Students can move forward in all areas of reading when they are learning efficiently and at their own level. Students, teachers, and parents can all benefit from the power of this layered program of assessment and instruction.