

Case Study

Hampton City Schools, VA Special Education Students Excel with Let's Go Learn

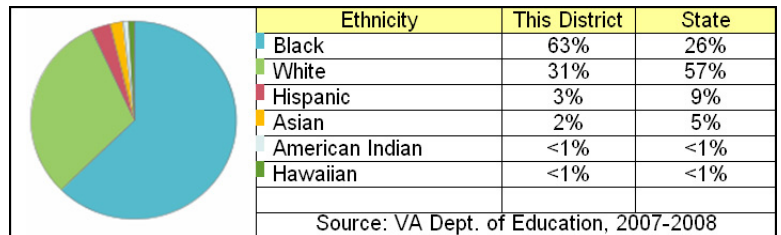
"Our teachers enjoy the peace of mind that comes with knowing that they are armed with a powerful diagnostic tool that also provides individualized instruction to meet the diverse needs of their students."

- Nancy Sweat, District Language Arts Curriculum Leader

At a Glance...	
Product Used	<i>DORA, Unique Reader</i>
Schools	<i>6 schools, 41 SPED students</i>
Time Period	<i>7 Months</i>
Deployment Type	<i>Special Education Reading</i>
Benefits	<i>- Students enjoy UR - Online Diagnostic assessment - Supplemental instru.</i>
Results	<i>Students had measured growth</i>

Customer Profile:

Hampton City Schools in Virginia has been using Let's Go Learn's *DORA* assessment since 2004 with just under 7000 of their students. The school district serves a large population of students that are eligible for the free or reduced lunch program; 44% of the student body is eligible, compared to the Virginia state average of 15%. Hampton City Schools understands the value of the diagnostic data *DORA* provides when dealing with the needs of a diverse student body. Their teachers have been trained to use this diagnostic data to drive individualized instruction in each classroom.



Study Methodology and Data:

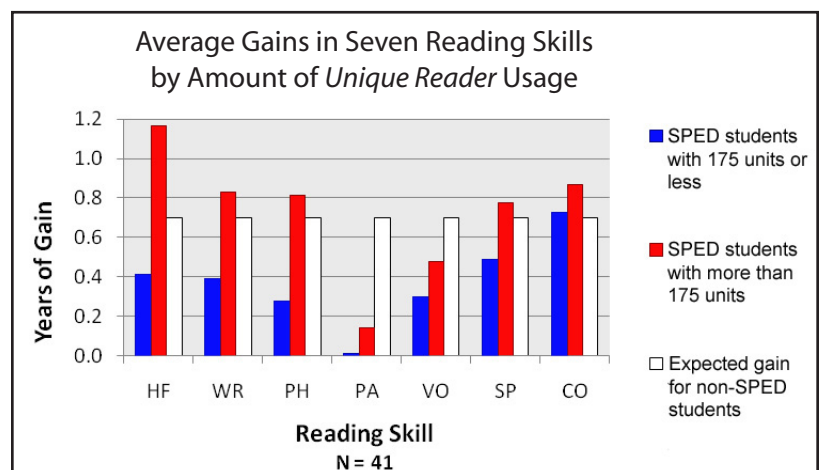
All 41 students completed a *DORA* assessment prior to the introduction of *Unique Reader*, and they also completed a post assessment after approximately 7 months of using *Unique Reader*. The before and after scores from these students were divided into groups based on *Unique Reader* usage. 175 units or less on *Unique Reader* is considered 'Medium' usage. More than 175 units is considered 'High' usage. The medium-use group spent on average 11 hours on the program. The high-use group spent on average 23 hours on the program.

Results:*

The students in the high-use group had higher gains than the medium-use group for all 7 of the reading subskills tested by *DORA*. Except for Phonemic Awareness for the medium-use group, gains are statistically greater than zero on all skills for both usage groups. High-use students' average gains exceed medium-use average gains for every reading skill, and this difference is statistically significant for word recognition, phonics, and phonemic awareness. The blue bars show amount of gains for the medium-use group and the red bars show gains for the high-use group. For purposes of comparison, the white bars show the amount of gain that would be expected for typically developing non-special needs students using *Unique Reader* during the same 7-month period: one grade-level increase per school year, approximately 10 months.

Conclusions:*

Children with special needs and their teachers benefit from *DORA* assessment and from the *Unique Reader* learning environment. Teachers who better understand the specific reading-skill learning needs of individual students are better able to meet those needs. Years of experience have shown that typically developing students benefit from the challenges that *Unique Reader's* rich skills-focused learning environment tailors precisely to their level. It is now becoming clear that the same is true for students with special needs. For five of seven reading skills, students with special needs in the high-use *Unique Reader* group gained on average more than the average gain expected for typically developing students. The data from these Hampton students indicate that this often under-served population can make important advances in reading skills, and that *DORA* and *Unique Reader* provide the kind of support they and their teachers need to realize those goals.



DORA Subskills: HF=High-Frequency Words, WR=Word Recognition, PH=Phonics, PA=Phonemic Awareness, VO=Vocabulary, SP=Spelling, CO=Comprehension

* Data Analysis performed by Stephen Moore, Associate Director, Berkeley Evaluation and Assessment Research Center, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Berkeley.