"Explicit teaching of high frequency words in context to Prep students, will improve their prose reading accuracy and increase their bank of known words."

Abstract

Cognitive development includes development in the areas of perception, attention, and memory. As with all cognitive abilities these three areas change and develop over time more over individual differences in these areas of development. Cognitive dimension of becoming literate are complex and ever changing.

Children arrive at school with a variety of cognitive life and literacy experiences. To enhance one's reading abilities you need to facilitate and encourage oral skills, phonemic awareness, letter identification, vocabulary development, word knowledge and promote reading success in the early years of school.

Prep students predominately arrive at school with limited with high frequency word banks, which hinders automatic reading fluency.

The aim of this Action Research Project was to implement, monitor and assess efficient and effective teaching practice in light of instructional levels and increased work banks in the Prep level.

Sixteen students were chosen as a result of C.L.a.S.S. (*Childrens Literacy and Success Strategies*) Literacy pre-testing. Both teaching and control groups consisted of an equal number of students from the low to the middle range.

Case study XOX design was implemented for the purpose of this Action Research Project. Explicit teaching of high frequency words through guided reading texts were administered to the eight students in the teaching (intervention) group. Whilst the remaining eight students were part of a control group. Progress was monitored through recall of high frequency words, Rapid Automatic Naming Speed and text level recall and accuracy. A comparison was made of the two groups comparing the practice of teaching words in context as a means to improve reading accuracy and text level through an increasing high frequency word bank.

The results indicate that a substantial improvement in both control and teaching group when measuring attainment of a high frequency word bank. Gains in text level were more significant with children who exhibited confidence in oral language, vocabulary and literacy experiences.

Introduction

Children as they enter school are often unable to read. They can be developmentally not at the Zone of proximity for beginning stages of reading or they have lacked the necessary exposure to begin this phase. There are many components that are vital and necessary for reading acquisition to occur. A sound oral language background is paramount. The ability to automatically recall letters, sounds and link these spontaneously to letter patterns to read words is important. (RAN – Rapid Automatised Naming). Children's knowledge of High Frequency words is often limited or non-existent as they commence school due to lack of experience to text. Therefore, there is a definite need to implement and support activities in the initial stages of learning that promote phonological awareness and orthographic knowledge. Similarly, the establishment of a bank of high frequency words is also necessary to promote and foster the road for a confident and successful reader.

Reading is a complex and continuous pathway. Its conception does not occur simply as the reading of text but as a result of a series of many stages in the development of a child. John Munro emphasises that reading begins with oral language vocabulary development and how these words are stored, linked and used in grammatical language in a context that is meaningful.

The Early Years Research literature supports oral language as the means by which we communicate with other people and they reciprocate in the formative years. It states that "Wherever there is language interaction between people, values are being formed, attitudes influenced and relationships established. The language interactions are never neutral or restricted to the face value of the words."
C.A. Lyons (2003 P.56) concurs and supports the idea that thought and language although not the same are"…tightly interwoven and inseparable. Individuals think in words. Communication- both verbal, through language and emotion and non-verbal, through body movement and gesture–is important to children's ability to adapt to their environment cognitively, emotionally and socially at home and in school." Marie M. Clay (2005) also refers to the significance of children who come to school speaking any language that they will have a preparation for literacy learning that is to be valued whatever the prior language.

Children's oral language acquisition equates to empowerment. The development of words and meanings through experience opens up an avenue of expression. It serves to provide children with the relevant and necessary language and skills to articulate themselves in a relevant and purposeful way.

Therefore, the experiences afforded to children in their early years are vital and necessary in building a profile for reading. Exploration of language and ideas through talk provides opportunity to build up a store of experience and language necessary to assist in reading development. Lyons (203 p.57) emphasises that "every child is capable of learning given

the right opportunities, context and assistance. Through language children learn to make sense of and interact with their environment which is critical to learning."
Marie M. Clay (2005) also refers to the significance of children who come to school speaking any language that they will have a preparation for literacy learning that is to be valued whatever the prior language.

The development of oral language leads to an awareness of the concept of a word and the beginning of word banks. Their phonological awareness develops as they link speech to sounds and in turn letters to words. This pathway can extend to the beginning of writing, letters and sounds and sequence of words into sentences, grammar in its earliest phase.

Research consistently reiterates that language development in the early years is strongly linked to the acquisition and proficiency of reading and writing. Levine (2002 cited in Lyons 2003) strongly argues the point that conversations with parents, carers and other prominent adults is necessary and paramount in language proficiency and the development of good readers and writers.

There are specific behaviours that are recognised in the development of reading. Beginning readers are required to learn about print and the formation of words. There must an understanding about how a text works, directionality, where it commences and ends. They need to be able to rely on memory to store words. These early behaviours are linked to a child's auditory and visual perception. Children must be explicitly taught how to organise and focus on visual features of text and their auditory processing skills.

Students that exhibit the most difficulty in reading are those who are experiencing difficulty or a means of organising these strategies. They are yet to master or link them in a way that they can usefully retrieve them in order to acquire greater knowledge and information.

As a junior level teacher the time spent in exposing children to experiences and text is an invaluable one. It is the most important aspect in providing your child with a language rich environment as they commence school. The discussion and questioning as a result of an oral language experience or text seeks to surround students with the oral interaction necessary to develop and expose them to letters sounds and the high frequency words that are needed for the process of reading. Positive reading experiences should be regularly encouraged and the student enabled the chance to interpret and understand that texts are written for enjoyment, to explain information or purpose. Text can expose children to nursery rhymes, stories, songs and factual information. Texts take on a variety of forms and these are not necessarily in book form, they can be posters, signs, labels etc all print which can be exposed as a matter of life experiences in the early years.
Therefore the entry level for beginning readers must factor in the students own language experience events and language patterns that may be familiar in order to provide links and meaning through text.

Marie M. Clay (2005) suggests that 80-90 percent of students will learn to read in a diverse range of classroom programs and texts. The initiation of the Guided Reading

Programme serves as a means to tackle and expose students to a broader spectrum of texts. Students of similar reading standard are presented texts at an instructional Level. (level best suited for the acquisition of learning/Zone of Proximal Learning) The students are explicitly taught before, during and after reading strategies to build upon and enhance their reading capacity. These opportunities allow the student to engage and discover the relationship between print and the message. As students develop more confidence they use a variety of strategies, including structure, meaning and visual information cues to identify and comprehend words in text. The reader adapts their reading to accommodate a variety of texts. They recognise a bank of words and are willing to take risks with new text. Ferreiro (cited in Clay p.5 2005) conveys that as children gain more confidence and develop risk taking, they allow themselves to be "…challenged by texts and discover new ways to go beyond their current operating power and lift their literacy processing." This stage is critical in order to form the habit in the development of reading for meaning. Clay (2005 p3) defines "…reading as a message getting, problem solving activity and writing as a message sending, problem solving activity. Both activities linking invisible patterns of oral language with visible symbols." She also states that in early literacy "…as children get better at finding the links they look for more opportunities to engage in these activities."

Clay (2005) purports that a considerable majority of written language is presented in continuous text and therefore the means to attainment for the learner would be advantageous if presented in such a format. Thus, teaching letters and words in isolation is not necessarily an appropriate means to teach students how to read. There are times when slight deviation for a particular word may occur but as a means to clarify and proceed in context .It can complicate the process and make it difficult for some students to use their prior knowledge to make those necessary reading links.
However, there is a definite need for the teaching of high frequency words as students need to be able to retrieve a sufficient back of these words (conjunctions, prepositions) to read fluently and make sense of their reading. It is imperative that students are able to automatically rely (RAN) and commit these words to memory in order to free memory space to accumulate greater word knowledge. Letter work, word work and the development of familiar word banks should be a part of the text in which a student is working on. This enables the student exposure on a more regular basis through literature in a variety of contexts. It provides the student with an opportunity to see reading as a sequential and continual process. This process involves problem solving of simple texts, through to a more sophisticated use of strategies to read more complex texts. The mastery of these strategies enables the student to see himself or herself as a "Reader".

Early Years Reading Research and C.L.a.S.S. (Children's Literacy Advance Success Strategy) are two bodies of research that clearly promote and express the importance of early reading success. Reference is also made to the importance of the phonological skills that are necessary for beginning readers. This is also noted by (Shankweiler & Fowler cited in Martin-Chang, Levy & ONeil 2006) as a vital component in reading acquisition. It would be suggested that teaching words in contexts would lead to a greater recognition of words as opposed to the teaching of words in isolation. Words that are taught in isolation address the graphophonic and phonemic aspects whilst context provides additional cues such as syntax and semantics.

There are significant research studies that debate and counteract the teaching of high frequency words in context and isolation. Early research by Nemko delved into the efficiency of early reading through teaching words in isolation versus that of context. His studies indicated that the performance results of students from both groups were comparatively equal. Martin-Chang, Levy & O'Neil (2006) have recent research that investigates whether reading in context enhances reading development opposed to individual word reading or alternatively that context reading detracts from the attainment of individual word reading and skill development. Their study was a comparative one that dealt with the effects of training words in isolation (flashcard) and context training (presenting words in stories) on the acquisition, retention and transfer of novel printed words. The results of the study revealed that context training promotes word acquisition transfer and retention when read in a text rather than isolated word training. However, results from memory performance of words trained in both conditions were similar. It was noted that transfer was maximised when similar conditions were applied in training and testing. This suggests that for students to read in context training also needs to occur in context.

The objective of this study is to extend the existing research by introducing and teaching target words in the context of simple text to increase the reading accuracy and Instructional level of the student as well as develop a bank of high frequency words.

Therefore, my Prediction is that "Explicit teaching of high frequency words in context will improve their prose reading accuracy and increase their bank of known words,"

Method

The study uses a XOX design. The study is a comparison between two groups of students in a teaching group (intervention) and a control group. It involved explicit teaching of high frequency words to a group of students through Guided reading sessions and in addition through isolation. The process involved monitoring the progress and gains of students in Text level reading accuracy, the recall of high frequency words and automatic naming speed.

The hypothesis formulated for the purpose of this study was to ascertain whether the teaching of high frequency words in simple texts would launch and enhance the students reading levels and hence word accuracy. Those selected were Prep students whose ages ranged from 5 years to 6years 3 months. The students with predominantly lower text level scores were selected as a result of the pre literacy Observational Survey testing done in March of Term One. Initially the students were chosen due to their low score in Instructional teaching level. This is the suggested level at which the student is most receptive to learning; it is sometimes referred to as "The Zone of Proximity". The teacher's role was to act as a catalyst in assisting the student in the learning process of the instructional level. Each group had a comparative combination of students from age levels and from Instructional Text levels whose range was predominantly zero with the exception of a Level 1 student in the teaching group and two level 1 students in the control group. These latter students all had extremely high letter identification scores hence another reason to include them in the study as equivalents for this research study.

(See Table 1) Teachers from the P.A.L.T.'s (Professional Action Learning Teams) were consulted in the selection of students. Hence the majority chosen were in the lowest scoring range for Text Levels, Letter identification and Burt Word Score with the exception of 3 for comparative purposes. It was envisaged that this early intervention would be a beneficial boost for those students identified as having initial needs. The students were pre tested and post tested in withdrawal conditions. Please note that a period of approximately 7 weeks had elapsed between the completion of the explicit teaching and the post- test results being conducted. Thus varying the initial design and altering the results due to the exposure to elements of the design in the normal course of teaching during this elapsed time period.

The students chosen were all born in Australia and spoke English; however 6 out of the 16 had at least one parent from an ESL background. One of these students had a language other than English as their first language spoken at home. All children attended kindergarten or Child Care Centre prior to their arrival at school. One student in the teaching group and one out of the control group had received intervention through a speech pathologist since the age of 3 and 4 respectively due to difficulties in speech and oral language acquisition.

TABLE 1

STUDENT	Teaching/ Control group	Age Yrs/Mnths 31/2/07	ESL	Earlier Intervention	EMA	Text Level Pre	Burt Pre	Letter I.D Pre/54	50 M100W Pre
A	Teaching	5y 11m	N	N	N	0	1	33	0
B	Teaching	5y 10m	N	Y	N	0	0	34	0
C	Teaching	5y 11m	N	N	N	0	0	22	0
D	Teaching	5y 0m	N	N	N	0	0	21	0
E	Teaching	6y 0y	N	N	N	1	19	51	5
F	Teaching	5y 8m	Y	N	Y	0	0	33	1
G	Teaching	6y 2m	N	N	N	0	2	33	2
H	Teaching	5y 10m	N	N	N	0	2	35	1
AVERAGE							**3**		**1.13**
I	Control	5y 0m	N	N	N	0	0	27	1
J	Control	5y 3m	N	N	N	0	0	32	0
K	Control	5y 7m	N	N	N	0	2	29	0
L	Control	5y 3m	N	N	N	0	0	28	0
M	Control	6y 3m	N	Y	N	0	0	42	1
N	Control	5y 0m	N	N	N	0	1	49	0
O	Control	6y 1m	N	N	N	1	8	52	4
P	Control	5y 6m	N	N	N	1	9	50	5
AVERAGE							**2.5**		**1.38**

Materials

Pre testing for this research required the results from some of the Observational Survey Tests (Clay 2002) that were administered in late March to all Prep students as a part of C.L.a.S.S. There were 50 target words (high frequency words) that were also used in the

research design. The students selected were administered a test for the retrieval speed of single letters and number digits known as RANL and RAND. (Munro & McCusker, 2005)

Listed below is a summary of all pre and post testing assessments:

- Bench Mark Levelled Texts
- Running Records (Clay, 2005) formats. Ascertained the Instructional Text Level of students
- BURT Word reading Test (Clay, 2002). Commence with commonly used words that rank students word isolation knowledge. Raw score tabulated as initial score were low.
- RAN Tests (Munro & McCusker). Used to score the student's ability to rapidly retrieve letters and digits automatically.
- MIOOW 50 test (MIOOW Magic word list/100 most commonly used words- Teacher designed). Used to test students bank of high frequency words.
- Letter Identification Pre Test only. (Part of Observational Survey) 54 letters (26 upper case and 28 lowercase/different fonts used to assist and validate development of orthographic knowledge of students. Raw scores included.

Pre and post- test scores are tabulated in Appendix C and D.

Procedure

The intervention group were withdrawn within the 2hour literacy block on 10 consecutive days for approximately 10, 20-30 minute lessons. The duration of the explicit teaching of the high frequency words thus was over a 2week period. The lessons were designed to cater for a variety of learning styles and thus incorporated visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities. The subject matter of most texts was selected due to the likelihood of exposure related to background experiences or vocabulary of most students in the group. Simple texts were selected to expose and target the high frequency words. The lessons were designed to give an overview of the frequency words each lesson in isolation through flashcards and games. This was followed up by explicit teaching through identification of the high frequency words through reciting, tracking, locating words and patterns in the simple instructional texts. The text levels selected were in the 0-1 Instructional range due to the initial pre test levels of the students. Follow up activities included worksheets to draw write and sequence the words in sentences.

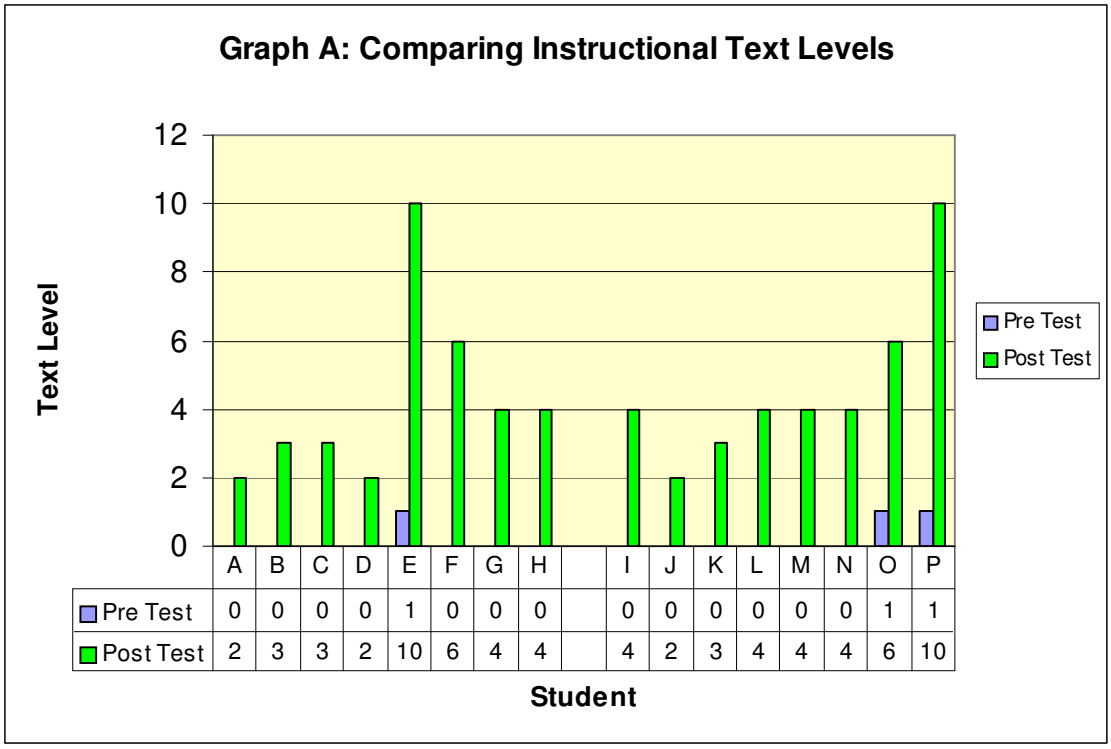
The remaining 8 students in the control group simultaneously exposed to the same target words, however in isolation. These activities began as flashcard followed by games such as concentration, snap and the making and spelling of words from magnetic letters and writing in sand etc. The parent body were able to facilitate the activities of the students in the class involved in other tasks whilst the teacher worked with the control group.

Following the 10 sessions the teaching group and the control group were to be post tested using benchmark text levels accompanied with Running Records. Other Post-tests included 50 MIOOW Test Burt word test and RANL and RAND Tests. Due to uncontrollable circumstances the post testing of the teaching and control group did not

occur until after a period of 7 weeks had elapsed. Consequently, this period of time has tainted the validity of post- test scores as Guided Reading sessions took place during this time. Thus, exposing children to aspects of the design, such as, letter identification, high frequency words and Instructional Texts.

Results

The data collected as a result of this action research project indicates that students made gains in all areas. It can be assumed that this supports the hypothesis that " explicit teaching of high frequency words in context to Prep students, will improve their prose reading accuracy and increase their bank of words. It is however open to conjecture, how much progress can be attributed to the explicit teaching alone due to the elapsed time period and further exposure to guided reading sessions. Appendix C indicates pre and post- test results.



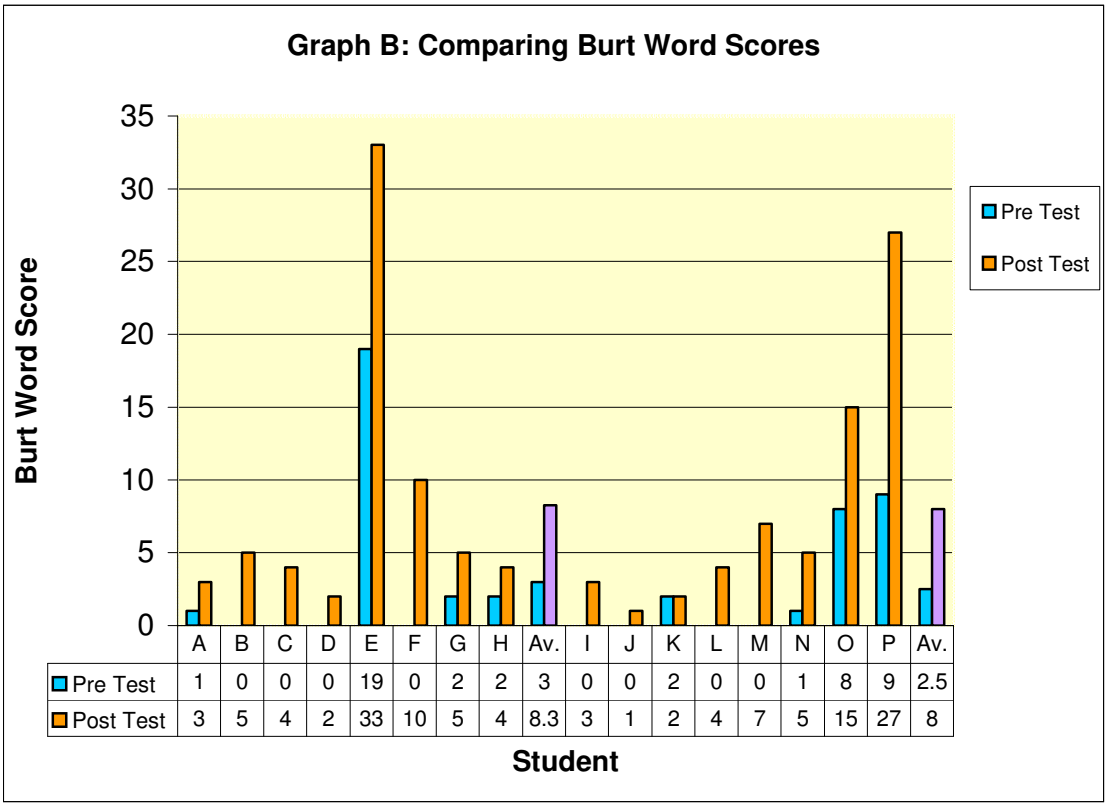
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Pre Test	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Post Test	2	3	3	2	10	6	4	4		4	2	3	4	4	4	6	10

Graph A

The Instructional Text Level changes are depicted in Graph A. Pre test results indicated that the only three students, E (teaching group) O and P (control group) achieved an entry level. The Text Levels entry for all these students was 1**.** Post-test results signify that all students in the teaching group achieved an increased reading level between level 2 and 9. In this intervention group the majority of students improved by a text level range of 2-6. However, there has been a marked improvement in Student E moving from text level 1 to 10. Students A, and D moved 2 levels whilst students B and C 3 levels, G and H 4 levels

were gained and student F improved by 6 Levels. All students in A-H are beginning to read using increased word banks (See Appendix C).
Post Test results signify that all students in the control group made progress in Instructional Level reading. The increased text levels ranged from 2-10. The highest gaining student P increased their Instructional Reading level by 9. Therefore, the students with the maximum gains from both groups were comparable. Student J progressed 2 levels, K by 3 and students I, L, M, N improved their Instructional Level by 4. Student O had a considerable gain of 6 Levels. Both groups of students demonstrated greater gains using picture cues and word knowledge. The students with the greatest gains had greater orthographic letter identification at the onset of the research (see Appendix C).

Generally, students from both groups with the least gains generally had lower orthographic letter identification initially and relied on picture cues, guessing and trying to memorise the text not always successfully. This is a concern and there are definite teaching implications for students whose Instructional Level is 2 given that these post test scores were documented 7 weeks after the initial teaching groups were conducted.

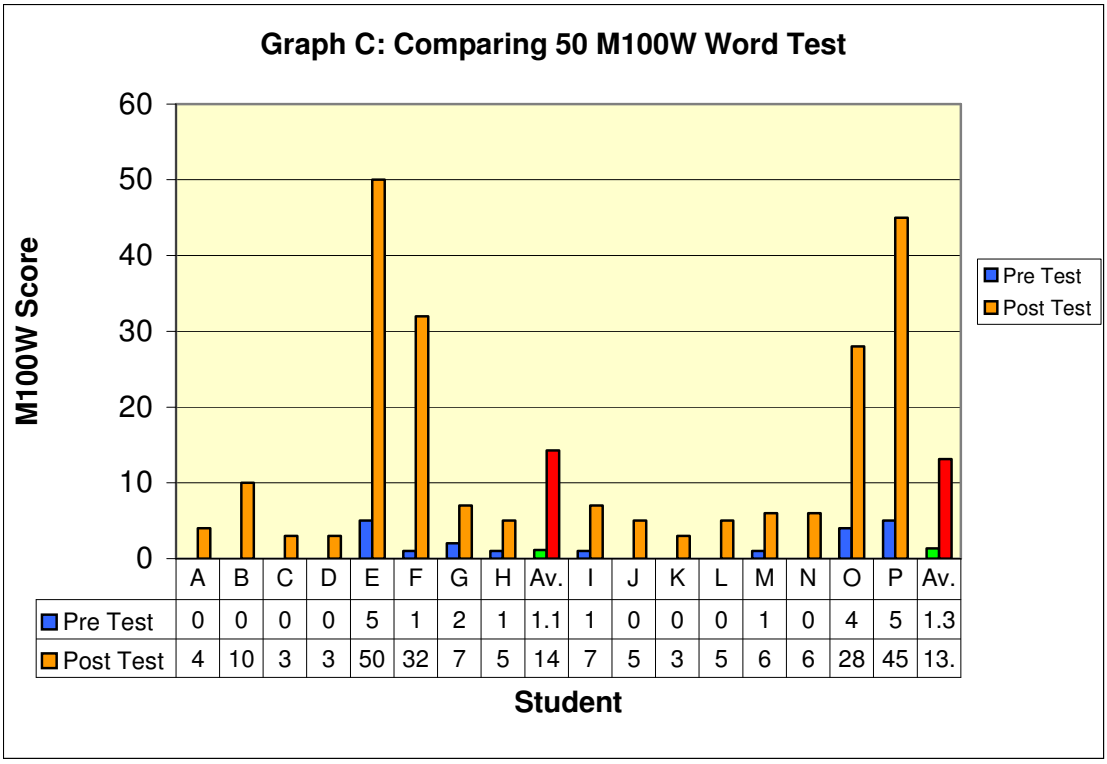


	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Av.	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Av.
Pre Test	1	0	0	0	19	0	2	2	3	0	0	2	0	0	1	8	9	2.5
Post Test	3	5	4	2	33	10	5	4	8.3	3	1	2	4	7	5	15	27	8

Graph B

Burt Word Score Results are indicated in Graph B. In the pre test scores the average word reading level was slightly higher for the Teaching group (0.50) than the control group. The average score however for the teaching group is not truly indicative of the majority of this group as the scoring of student E (19) escalates this average. The pre test scores

for the remainder of the students in this group ranged from 0-2 correctly read Burt words thus the average is respectively lower. The average pre test scores for the control group reveal that two students O and P were able read 8 and 9 Burt words respectively whilst the majority of students have managed to read 1or 2 words. In the post testing the teaching group average reading word scores improved from a 3 to 8.25 average and the control group improvement was from 2.5 to 8 average Burt word score. The words read by the intervention group ranged between 2-14 words whilst the control group had a range between1-18 words. For the majority of students there have been positive gains in the progress of students in reading words. Both groups had students that showed marked improvement, student E increased their bank by 14, student P by 18 words. However students A, D and H have improved their Burt reading scores by a minimal margin of 2 words. Most of these students' letter identification scores were relatively low and ranged from 21-35. (See Appendix C). Students A, D and J are at instructional text level 2 at the lower end of improvement.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Av.	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Av.
Pre Test	0	0	0	0	5	1	2	1	1.1	1	0	0	0	1	0	4	5	1.3
Post Test	4	10	3	3	50	32	7	5	14	7	5	3	5	6	6	28	45	13.

Graph C

Results relating to pre and post testing of MIOOW are contained in Graph C. There were reasonably pleasing gains for most students in their development of high frequency words. In the pre test students from the teaching group were able to identify between 0-5 words, the majority at an entry level of zero. The average reading scores for this group equated to 1.13 words. The control group had a similar range from 0-5 words, most readers scoring zero. The average score for this group was marginally higher at 1.38 words. The post- test results reveal that the teaching group had a slightly higher average

(1.13-14.25) than the control group (1.38-12.63) the difference of averages being 1.87 higher. There were students from both groups, student E (increase 45 words, O (24 word increase) and P (40 word increase) whose success in scores paralleled those of the Burt word test. Whilst student F showed marked improvement in the acquisition of the MIOOW by increasing the post- test score by 31more words read. The remainder of the group increased their reading word level in this task by a score ranging from 3 to 10. The teacher group had explicit lessons that were followed by exposure to the MIOOW words for a period of time before post testing was completed. The control group on the other hand whilst not given the explicit teaching did have an opportunity for exposure to these words in the time that elapsed prior to post testing. This has implications for the results as both scores may have been exaggerated due to the time that elapsed. The intervention group may possibly have scored higher due to the fact that they were afforded greater exposure time than was initially envisaged.

C	Poppy
D	Chelsea
E	Amiriya
F	Daniel
G	Andrew
H	Mitchell
Control	
I	Emma Mc
J	Eloise
K	Brianna
L	Finlay
M	Xavier
N	Alysha
O	Emma C
P	Tessa

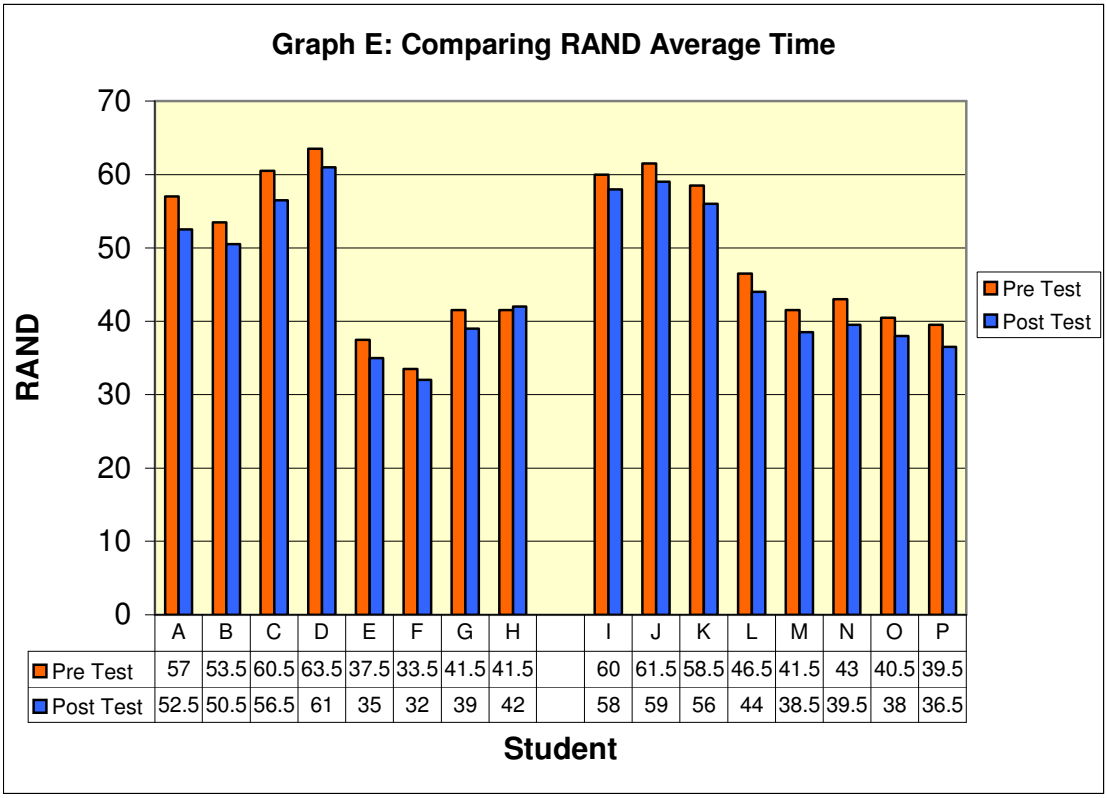
APPENDIX D: RANL 1&2 TIME IN SECONDS

		PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
Teaching/ Control group	**STUDENT**	**RANL 1**	**RANL 1**	**RANL 2**	**RANL 2**	**Average**	**Average**
		TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	**TIME**	**TIME**
Teaching	**A**	60	57	59	53	59.5	55

Graph D

The RANL results are indicated in Graph D. The results indicate that all students in the teaching group improved in the time taken in seconds to recall the letters or respond in the post- test. The students that recorded the fastest responses were E (33second average post- test) and F (31 second average post test). Those exhibiting the slowest average times were students C (59 seconds) and D (58.5 seconds).(See Appendix D) In the control group the majority of students improved the recall time taken in seconds. The fastest responses were recorded by students O and P, 38 and 36 seconds respectively, these times were closely followed by students M (40 seconds) and N. (45 seconds) However, there were two students whose recall time increased. Students I and J took 0.5

average seconds longer in the post- test. It must be noted that the students with a quicker recall time in seconds in both the teaching and control group are the same students whose letter identification, Burt and MIOOW scores indicate the greatest improvement. Likewise the students with the least improvement in these areas have a slow RANL recall. There are also correlations to the instructional level reading development for these higher and lower achieving groups. The higher scoring students are reading at higher instructional text levels than those with the lesser scores. Thus it can be implied that good RAN can facilitate the reading of words and the development of words in the sentence, or text level.



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Pre Test	57	53.5	60.5	63.5	37.5	33.5	41.5	41.5	60	61.5	58.5	46.5	41.5	43	40.5	39.5
Post Test	52.5	50.5	56.5	61	35	32	39	42	58	59	56	44	38.5	39.5	38	36.5

Graph E

The post- test average time scores for both intervention and control group showed a reduction in time and thus, improvement. The fastest responses in the teaching group were student E and F followed closely by student G. These students scored an average time that ranged from 32 to 39 seconds. Student C's average score time was 56.5 seconds and student D was significantly lower at 61 seconds. The control group whilst improving had scores that were on average higher than those in the intervention group. The fastest scores ranging from 36.5-39.5 were from students M, N, O, and P. The lowest average times were from students I, J, K whose range was from 56-59 seconds. There was one child who scored 44 seconds and that was student L. Once again there are correlations between the RANL and RAND results. Basically the same students who performed well in RANL did so in the RAND post test scores. There were a few more students that

performed better in the number component in both the intervention and control group. This suggests that students that have a better recognition of number have the potential or greater ability to recall numbers at a faster rate. There was also no control factor in regard to the teaching of number in the explicit teaching period that may account for the continual development of number and hence improved time taken for students in both groups.

Discussion

The research study revealed that students with significant gains overall were students E, O and P. This indicates an improvement ratio of intervention: control of 1:2. However, if we take these high achievers out of the equation when examining this research project the teaching group and the control group had an improved in text level reading score between 2-9, the control groups average success rate being marginally higher.
The series of lessons were taught to the teaching group and isolated word activities to the control group over a 2week period. However due to exceptional circumstances both groups were exposed to guided reading sessions that incorporated aspects of the initial intervention program. This has implications for the validity of the results in light of the original hypothesis. The progress was more significant due to the fact that aspects of the intervention program continued for both the teaching and control group. As expected all children being exposed to this multisensory approach increased and improved their prose reading accuracy and bank of high frequency words. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not teaching high frequency words in context or through isolation was more affective. It can be assumed that this change in format may have in fact accelerated the learning and produced greater results.

It is well understood that if children are given the opportunities to develop key language skills the struggle to overcome difficulties will be prevented. This is the premise on which my research was based. Velasco and Zizak (2001) describe a program for improving word analysis skills in order to increase sight- reading, reading accuracy and fluency. After reviewing and analysing the problems of the target group of their study Velasco and Zizak implemented the block, “Working With Words” from the “Four Blocks of Literacy” Program. The “Four Blocks of Literacy” is a multisensory program targeting different learning styles; auditory, visual, kinaesthetic and tactile. Multilevel lessons are those planned in order to target the different levels of the students in the classroom.

“ The working analysis skills taught during “Working With Words” lessons appear to have transferred to the students ‘ word analysis skills. The number of students reading independently at or above grade level increased for both the second and third grade graders on both assessments.”(Velasco and Zizak, 2001) Further conclusions made related to the successful transference of word analysis skills learnt during the lessons to other areas of learning. The results from this study although from higher grade levels, reveal similarities to this research project. The design of the teaching group involved a multisensory approach that was implemented for children that would benefit from an intervention program. Once the explicit teaching of the intervention group was completed both groups were exposed to guided reading using multisensory aspects. Results indicate

that both teaching and control groups increased their text levels and word reading accuracy as in the study conducted by Velasco and Zizak. Therefore, I believe that meaningful reading activities promote skills that lead to reading success.
Marie Clay emphasises the importance of effective teaching by introducing new words allowing the child to use something that is already familiar to the student. It is much easier to learn about the unknown from the very well known. The text levels chosen for this research were most likely to be related to experiences or vocabulary that the students have an appropriate meaningful association. This enables the student to engage in the lesson more confidently and capture the attention of the brain to allow the new learning to take place.

Martin-Chang, Levy and O'Neil (2006) state that "Successful reading instruction entails not only acquiring new words but also remembering them after training has finished and assessing their word specific representations when they are encountered in new text." The results in this research project are similar in that all students were able to attain improved text level word reading ability and accuracy. Furthermore, this research supports my findings relating to the success of all students in both groups. The initial results have provided the impetus for the students to continue on their pathway to successful reading.

Therefore, students need the opportunities to develop key language skills, such as phonological awareness in order to develop reading skills. Direct instruction of other crucial literacy skills such as letter recognition, oral language, and vocabulary development should be taught as early as pre-school. According to Riley (1998, cited in Velasco and Zizak, 2001) " the basic skills learned at this early age are essential for a quality education"

Therefore this has implications for teachers of kindergartens and child care centres as reading begins with what we know. Pre school children need to be exposed to letters, words rhymes, songs, chants, books, stories, labels and all sorts of multimodal texts. Games that require memory development need to begin at the preschool stage and continued and built upon in the primary school years, as do the above-mentioned components. This has implications for my approach for the teaching of literacy skills. It is vital that planning incorporates these components in order to cater for the different learning styles and entry levels of these students.

The importance of early literacy invention is evident with VELS (Victorian Essential Learning Standards) and the accountability of teachers. Some standards are based on the milestones that students should achieve at certain developmental stages/ages. Students should understand that the order of words in a sentence is important. They should also learn skills to decode and encode words. The Early Years and C.L.a.S.S. Research Projects have come to the conclusion that if students master these concepts and skills they will most likely read more easily than those who do not learn these skills. All children should be given appropriate opportunities and conditions to develop and reach their full potential. It is crucial that intervention is provided for students that are experiencing reading difficulty.

In today's classrooms there are students reading at many different levels therefore, programs need to be multileveled and multi sensory to cater for these different students. It is imperative that a student establishes a word bank to become a successful reader. The more familiar a student is with the high frequency words the quicker they will be able to decode words. This leads to increased fluency and comprehension. This is essentially the ultimate goal of reading to assist and increase a students' knowledge so that they can in turn make sense of their literate world.

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APPENDIX A

There were eight students in the intervention group who took part in ten sequenced lessons. The teaching sequence used targeted high frequency words (from the M100W list) to be taught to prep students in the reading component of the two hour literacy block, each day over a two week period.

The duration of each session took approximately twenty minutes. Books from the PM+ series were used to introduce the ten targeted words. Each book was used for two sequential lessons. Part A and B consisted of the same format over five lessons introducing one or two target in each new text. The simple repetitive was contained in each book and the target words chosen consisted of one, two or three letters.

Charts and lists were provided to each student with the new target words that were introduced at the beginning of each session and were revised through repetitive tracking and games.

Children have different fundamental learning styles that range from visual auditory and kinaesthetic. Therefore planned techniques resources and activities were integrated and presented in order to cater for the learning needs of the students.

TARGETED WORDS

at	**the**	**we**	**go**	**up**
in	**my**	**is**	**I**	**am**

The words were chosen from M100W lists Golden, Red and Blue.

SESSION 1 FORMAT AND PROCEDURE

Part A

- Introduce to children the M100W Golden, Red and Blue words in a chart. Children are given smaller individual charts to look at.
- Discuss 'What words do you know?' Think and pair.
- Children take turns sharing words from chart.
- Teacher points to each of the target words on a chart and children repeat.

TARGETED WORDS

at	**the**	**we**	**go**	**up**
in	**my**	**is**	**I**	**am**

- Teacher uses M100W cards to play a game of Tic, Tac, Toe. Teacher to guide, praise and offer assistance.
- Teacher to introduce PM+ book 'In the Garden'.
- Orientation, discuss the front cover 'What do you see?'
- Teacher reads front cover.
- Students track words as teacher reads title.

- Teacher asks students to trace over letter in words with fingers.
- Teacher leads discussion 'What types of creatures do you think are in the garden?'
- Orientate each page discussing pictures.
- Teacher reads each page to students
- Teacher asks the questions 'Can you see any word patterns in the text?'
- Discuss the pattern 'Look **at the**…' and their target
- Teacher asks the question 'Count how many times you can see the (target) words **at** and **the**?'
- Teacher explains worksheet activity. Teacher scribes the finished sentence for students

Look **at the** **…….**
Look **at the** **…….**

Teacher collects target word sentences to collate into a book.

SESSION 2 FORMAT AND PROCEDURE
Part B (Follow up session)

- Teacher refers to target word chart 'What words do you know?'. Locate words in, at and the.
- Teacher reads each word, students recite.
- Play Tic, Tac, Toe with target word cards.
- Shared reading from Session 1 'In the Garden'.
- Use PM book 'In the Garden' revise what students saw in the book.
- Students take turn to read a page. Teacher takes a short running record of each student.
- Teacher scribes sentence strip eg. 'Look **at the** butterfly.' Student read strip.
- Explain worksheet activity cut sequence and paste words on a page to make original sentence

butterfly.	Look	**the**	**at**

- Students make sentence, illustrate and take home to read to parents**.**

(Completion of book 1 'In the garden.')

The same format and procedure for session 1 and 2 for the following 8 sessions, substituting books, target words and activities.

SESSION 3
Part A

Book:	Going on Holiday
Target words:	***we, go***
Worksheet activity: Teacher scribes students illustrate.	We go in a ……

SESSION 4
Part B (Follow Up Session)

Book:		Going on Holiday		
Target words:		***we, go***		
Worksheet activity: Cut paste and sequence words to make sentence We go in a car. Students illustrate.				
go	**in**	**We**	**car.**	**a**

SESSION 5
Part A

Book:	Up in the sky
Target words:	***up, in***
Worksheet activity: Teacher scribes students illustrate.	The kite is up in……

SESSION 6
Part B (Follow Up Session)

Book:	Up in the sky
Target words:	***up, in***
Worksheet activity: Cut paste and sequence words to make sentence We go in a car. Students illustrate.	

up	**The**	**is**	**sky.**	**bird**	**in**	**the**

SESSION 7
Part A

Book:	My Little Cat
Target words:	***my, is***
Worksheet activity: Teacher scribes students illustrate.	My little cat is……

SESSION 8
Part B (Follow Up Session)

Book:	My Little Cat
Target words:	***my, is***
Worksheet activity: Cut paste and sequence words to make sentence We go in a car. Students illustrate.	

the	**cat**	**My**	**bag.**	**little**	**in**	**is**

SESSION 9
Part A

Book:	We dress up
Target words:	***I, am***
Worksheet activity: Teacher scribes students illustrate.	I am Dad. Here are my ……

SESSION 10
Part B (Follow Up Session)

Book:	We dress up
Target words:	***I, am***

Worksheet activity: Cut paste and sequence words to make sentence We go in a car. Students illustrate.

hat.	**is**	**I**	**Dad.**	**am**	**my**	**here**

APPENDIX B
Sequence of target words taught and texts used. All PM texts were Level 1 as all students were reading at

SESSION	TARGET WORDS	TEXT
1	***at, the***	In the Garden
2	***at, the***	In the Garden
3	***we, go***	Going on Holiday
4	***we, go***	Going on Holiday
5	***up, in***	Up in the sky
6	***up, in***	Up in the sky
7	***my, is***	My Little Cat
8	***my, is***	My Little Cat
9	***I, am***	We dress up
10	***I, am***	We dress up

APPENDIX C

TABLE OF PRE AND POST TEST SCORES

STUDENT	Teaching/ Control group	Age Yrs/Mnths 31/2/07	ESL	Earlier Intervention	EMA	Letter I.D Pre/54	Text Level Pre	Text Level Post	Burt Pre	Burt Post	50 M100W Pre	50 M100W Post
A	Teaching	5y 11m	N	N	N	33	0	2	1	3	0	4
B	Teaching	5y 10m	N	N	N	34	0	3	0	5	0	10
C	Teaching	5y 11m	N	N	N	22	0	3	0	4	0	3
D	Teaching	5y 0m	N	N	N	21	0	2	0	2	0	3
E	Teaching	6y 0y	N	N	N	51	5	14	19	33	5	50
F	Teaching	5y 8m	Y	N	Y	33	0	6	0	10	1	32
G	Teaching	6y 2m	N	N	N	33	0	4	2	5	2	7
H	Teaching	5y 10m	N	N	N	35	0	4	2	4	1	5
AVERAGE						**32.75**	**0.63**	**4.75**	**3.00**	**8.25**	**1.13**	**14.25**
I	Control	5y 0m	N	N	N	27.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	3.00	1.00	7.00
J	Control	5y 3m	N	N	N	32.00	0.00	2.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
K	Control	5y 7m	N	N	N	29.00	0.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	0.00	3.00
L	Control	5y 3m	N	N	N	28.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	5.00
M	Control	6y 3m	N	N	N	42.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	7.00	1.00	6.00
N	Control	5y 0m	N	N	N	49.00	0.00	4.00	1.00	5.00	0.00	6.00
O	Control	6y 1m	N	N	N	52.00	1.00	6.00	8.00	15.00	4.00	28.00
P	Control	5y 6m	N	N	N	50.00	1.00	10.00	9.00	27.00	5.00	45.00
AVERAGE						**38.63**	**0.25**	**4.63**	**2.50**	**8.00**	**1.38**	**12.63**

APPENDIX D: RANL 1&2 TIME IN SECONDS

		PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
Teaching/ Control group	STUDENT	RANL 1	RANL 1	RANL 2	RANL 2	Average	Average
		TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
Teaching	A	60	57	59	53	59.5	55
Teaching	B	53	48	49	44	51	46
Teaching	C	63	60	62	58	62.5	59
Teaching	D	65	64	59	53	62	58.5
Teaching	E	37	35	34	31	35.5	33
Teaching	F	36	32	33	30	34.5	31
Teaching	G	46	43	45	40	45.5	41.5
Teaching	H	48	45	42	40	45	42.5
Control	I	48	51	47	45	47.5	48
Control	J	68	70	64	63	66	66.5
Control	K	57	53	55	50	56	51.5
Control	L	47	45	45	42	46	43.5
Control	M	44	40	41	40	42.5	40
Control	N	49	47	46	43	47.5	45
Control	O	43	41	38	35	40.5	38
Control	P	40	38	39	34	39.5	36

RAND 1&2 TIME IN SECONDS

		PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
Teaching/ Control group	STUDENT	RAND 1	RAND 1	RAND 2	RAND 2	Average	Average
		TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME	TIME
Teaching	A	58	55	56	50	57	52.5
Teaching	B	55	52	52	49	53.5	50.5
Teaching	C	60	58	61	55	60.5	56.5
Teaching	D	67	63	60	59	63.5	61
Teaching	E	40	38	35	32	37.5	35
Teaching	F	35	34	32	30	33.5	32
Teaching	G	42	40	41	38	41.5	39
Teaching	H	41	44	42	40	41.5	42
Control	I	61	59	59	57	60	58
Control	J	62	60	61	58	61.5	59
Control	K	59	57	58	55	58.5	56
Control	L	48	45	45	43	46.5	44
Control	M	42	40	41	37	41.5	38.5
Control	N	44	40	42	39	43	39.5
Control	O	41	40	40	36	40.5	38
Control	P	39	38	40	35	39.5	36.5

GRAPH D: COMPARING RAN L AVERAGE TIME

Teaching/ Control group	STUDENT	RAN L Pre	RAN L Post
Teaching	A	59.5	55
Teaching	B	51	46
Teaching	C	62.5	59
Teaching	D	62	58.5
Teaching	E	35.5	33
Teaching	F	34.5	31
Teaching	G	45.5	41.5
Teaching	H	45	42.5
Control	I	47.5	48
Control	J	66	66.5
Control	K	56	51.5
Control	L	46	43.5
Control	M	42.5	40
Control	N	47.5	45
Control	O	40.5	38
Control	P	39.5	36

GRAPH E: COMPARING RAN D AVERAGE TIME

Teaching/ Control group	STUDENT	RAN D Pre	RAN D Post
Teaching	A	57	52.5
Teaching	B	53.5	50.5
Teaching	C	60.5	56.5
Teaching	D	63.5	61
Teaching	E	37.5	35
Teaching	F	33.5	32
Teaching	G	41.5	39
Teaching	H	41.5	42
Control	I	60	58
Control	J	61.5	59
Control	K	58.5	56
Control	L	46.5	44
Control	M	41.5	38.5
Control	N	43	39.5
Control	O	40.5	38
Control	P	39.5	36.5

APPENDIX E

FIRST 50 WORDS (FROM M100W LIST)
NAME:
DATE:
SCORE:

a	**I**	**it**	**the**	**and**
in	**of**	**to**	**be**	**is**
that	**was**	**all**	**but**	**he**
on	**they**	**as**	**for**	**her**
one	**we**	**are**	**had**	**his**
said	**with**	**at**	**have**	**not**
so	**you**	**an**	**do**	**if**
my	**or**	**by**	**go**	**me**
no	**up**	**big**	**has**	**off**
see	**can**	**him**	**old**	**she**