

## 2nd & 3rd GRADE NON-READERS QUICKLY DEMONSTRATE FLUENCY AND COMPREHENSION

### Case Study

#### Quick Facts:

Large Urban Elementary	60% Free/Reduced Lunch
Tulsa Public Schools	26% Hispanic
Student Population: 650	18% IEP

#### BACKGROUND

Tulsa Public Schools' Cooper Elementary serves large numbers of Limited English Proficiency (LEP), Special Education, and regular education students too severely delayed in reading to succeed in regular or even remedial instruction. During 2008, 3 groups of such "non-readers" were selected for Failure Free Reading intervention on the basis of low reading assessment scores, lack of interest in learning, and behavior.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

Failure Free Reading instruction consists of scripted, teacher-led oral language development small group lessons, followed by talking software and print reinforcement activities. Multiple exposures, specialized story content, and explicit comprehension instruction (with directions, definitions and pronunciations provided in English or Spanish) enable non-readers to immediately begin mastering age-appropriate materials with fluency and independent engagement. Participating Cooper staff received a single two hour webcast training. The students were placed at their challenge level using Failure Free's online diagnostic prescriptive assessment.

*"The students were successful on the first day... our emphasis is on developing readers who will be able to access the regular reading curriculum in a short period of time."*

*Bonnie Lanoue, LEP teacher*

#### Group A: End of year 2nd grade intervention

Twenty 2nd graders were chosen by teacher Stephanie Tate for a three week, daily 1-1.5 hour intervention at the end of the spring semester. Three groups, formed based on placement, rotated between teacher instruction, software, and print activities. Progress made by nineteen of the students indicated an approximate one grade level average gain in reading comprehension. All of the students demonstrated in discussions that they had retained and could define the words they'd learned reliably. Stephanie also reported that she had no discipline incidents -- a substantial and immediate improvement in behavior.

#### Group B: Summer School

Based on the success of the initial trial, twelve end-of-year 3rd grade students were selected from Cooper and 3 nearby schools for a 16 session Summer School. Teacher Bonnie Lanoue delivered 1 to 2 complete lessons each day, using all 8 activities per lesson. An aide assisted with classroom management. Bonnie reported that she "really pushed" the students to advance, and that "they loved the program." The students' progress was consistent with that of the first group, and they gained from 5-19% on the Summer Success®: Reading (Great Source) inventory.

### Group C: 3rd grade remedial class

This fall, Stephanie Tate is implementing Failure Free 90 minutes each day with 23 LEP, Special Education and regular education students. As was the case in the prior sessions, the students immediately began demonstrating progress. Stephanie also reported that the program's daily discussions link students' past experience and prior knowledge with the new words, and she described "the looks on their faces... the joy that they can read!" One student, who couldn't read at all, or pay attention in class, was able to independently read the first Red level Illustrated Reader booklet, cover to cover, after just 5 lessons -- in front of the principal and district reading specialist!

### RESULTS

Failure Free Reading's unique sight word (non-phonetic) approach to intervention met the unique instructional needs of early grade non-readers at Cooper Elementary:

*"They will be readers because of this program. They can spell. They're using words in context. Nobody said 'I don't want to do this', and they could all do it."*

*Stephanie Tate,  
3rd grade teacher*

- Almost every student immediately and noticeably responded to the instruction
- Almost every student demonstrated dramatic gains in comprehension and fluency (consistent with independent research on Failure Free)
- In Failure Free's online Reading Attitude Survey, administered following instruction, every student reported that they now felt positive about their reading and learning, were learning, and felt less frustrated
- All of the students initially placed in the Orange level were able to transfer into READ 180 after just 3-4 weeks of instruction
- Both teachers extended the oral language development lesson by having students create additional sentences with each lesson's new words. This enabled the LEP students to practice correct syntax, and infuse additional vocabulary into the learning, linguistically and culturally

*"These students had not experienced any success in reading until Failure Free. One student told me he didn't know how to read yet. This young man read for the principal on his first day, with confidence, and he could not wait to get home and read to his mother!"*  
*Bonnie Lanoue, LEP teacher*

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### ABOUT FAILURE FREE READING

Failure Free Reading's unique sight word-based (non-phonetic) approach to reading intervention was developed for the very lowest achieving readers by former special education director Dr. Joseph Lockavitch. In numerous quality

research studies, the programs have produced dramatic gains in reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, attitudes, positive behaviors and esteem for low incidence, LD, at-risk, and ELL/ESL populations.