

EFFECTIVENESS REPORT

CASE STUDY

Superkids Improves Reading Scores for Lowest Performing Students at Massachusetts School

The Superkids program was used to teach first-grade students at the lowest reading ability levels at Davis Hill Elementary School.

Key Results

- Students made substantial improvements on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment from the beginning to the end of the school year.
- Teachers report that children identify with the Superkids characters and view them as friends. The Superkids help make learning to read fun and keeps children motivated.

School Profile

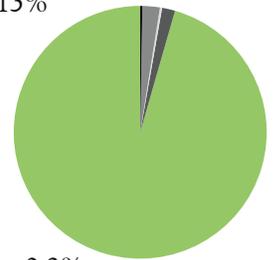
Davis Hill Elementary
Holden, MA
Public, Grades K - 5
Enrollment: 480

Demographics

NCES locale¹: Suburb
Free or reduced lunch: 4%
English language learners: 3%
Identified disability: 13%

Race/Ethnicity

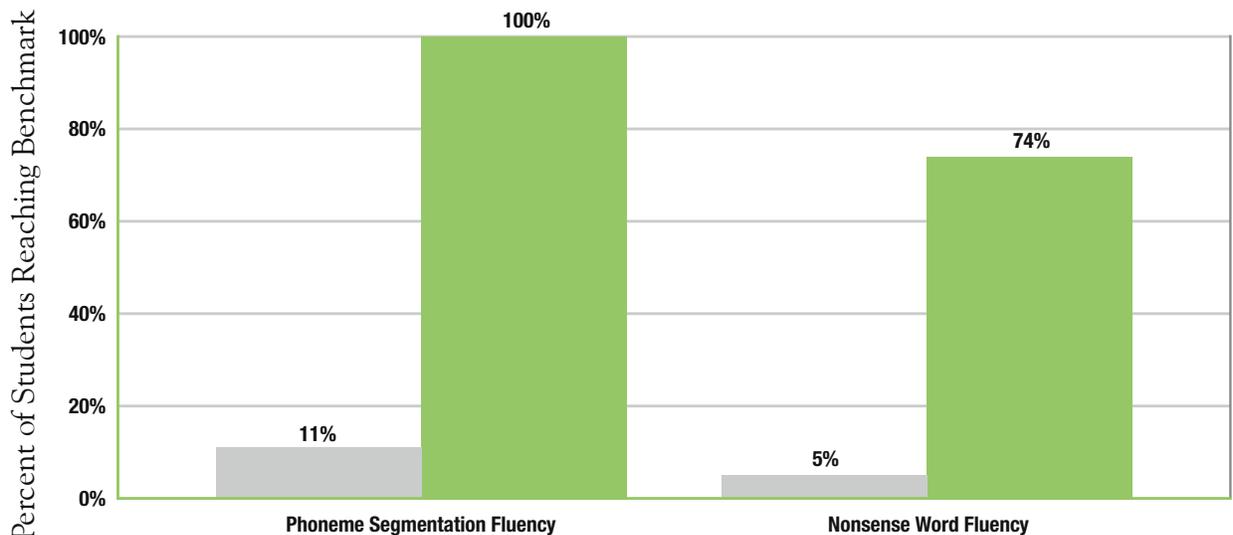
- African American: 0.4%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 2.1%
- Native American: 0.2%
- Hispanic/Latino: 1.9%
- White: 95.3%



¹ National Center for Education Statistics locale classification.

DIBELS Assessment Scores from a First-Grade Superkids Classroom

Davis Hill Elementary, 2004 - 2005



DIBELS First-Grade Subtests

■ Fall Total % of Students Reaching Benchmark Goal ■ Spring Total % of Students Reaching Benchmark Goal

(more information on back)

Setting

Davis Hill Elementary School in Holden, Massachusetts, is a public school serving kindergarten through fifth-grade students. The two first-grade teachers who used the Superkids program in the 2004-2005 school year reported strong gains in their students' reading ability from the beginning to the end of the school year. Their students were in the lowest quartile of reading achievement at the beginning of the school year. Of the 19 students in this study, 10 received their reading instruction in a regular first-grade classroom. The other nine students received most of their reading instruction from a special education teacher who worked with all first-grade students needing the most help with reading. Here are some of the teachers' comments regarding the Superkids program:

"I like the Superkids program because the kids like it. They identify with the characters and really enjoy the songs. I like the way the program moves along. The student booklets are great and the students enjoy taking them home when they are finished."

– From a first-grade teacher at Davis Hill Elementary with 29 years of teaching experience

"The kids really like the program. The tapes and songs get them enthused about reading, which increases their motivation to learn. I like the sequence in which the letters are introduced."

– From a special education teacher at Davis Hill Elementary with 33 years of teaching experience

Results

In this study, two subtests of the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy (DIBELS)¹ assessment were used to measure growth in reading ability. During the 2004-2005 school year, the school administered the DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency and Nonsense Word Fluency subtests to all 19 students in the classrooms that used the Superkids program.

The graph on the front page shows the percentage of these students who reached the recommended benchmark levels on the DIBELS subtests. A student who achieved the recommended benchmark score on a subtest was considered to be at grade level or higher for that skill. The graph shows that while only 11% of the students reached the recommended benchmark for Phoneme Segmentation Fluency on the fall assessment, 100% reached the benchmark on the spring assessment. Similarly, 5% reached the benchmark on the fall assessment of the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest, but 74% reached this level on the spring assessment. These data indicate that the students, all of whom started the year in the lowest 25% of first-grade children at the school in terms of reading ability, ended the year nearly at grade level.

The results of this study show that the Superkids program, in the hands of capable teachers, is effective in teaching first-grade children to read. Superkids helps get students excited about learning, keeps them motivated, and works well with all students, including those who begin with low reading scores.

¹ The DIBELS assessment is designed for early identification of children with potential reading problems. The Phoneme Segmentation Fluency measure is designed to assess a student's ability to segment three- and four-phoneme words into their individual phonemes fluently. The Nonsense Word Fluency subtest measures the ability to link letters with sounds (the alphabetic principle) and use that knowledge to decode three-letter syllables that are nonsense words. See <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/> for more information on the DIBELS assessment.



ROWLAND READING FOUNDATION

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