

## **Summary and Progress Report for the 2021 Kirksville First-Grade Summer School Program Madison County Schools, KY**

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### **Background on KV Summer School (First Grade)**

- We conducted 18 half-day sessions between May 25th and June 24th
- We invited 18 first-grade students to attend. Two parents declined and one student accepted a slot but did not attend. Thus, we worked with 15 first-grade students across the 5 weeks of instruction.
- Our daily schedule included multiple components aimed at improving all facets of early literacy. Specifically:
  - Morning discussion groups (30 minutes) aimed at critical thinking, vocabulary, speaking and listening and social-emotional learning
  - RISE literacy rotations (1 hour) which included word work (word solving and new word learning); reading and rereading a new text with support, and writing.
  - One-on-one (20-30 minutes per child) for reteaching, consolidation of prior learning, and assessment
  - Book Joy (20 minutes) aimed at building a love of literacy as well as giving students an opportunity to engage with the meaning and language of more complex texts.

### **Student Growth Goals**

At the onset of summer school, our team established the following growth goals for each child:

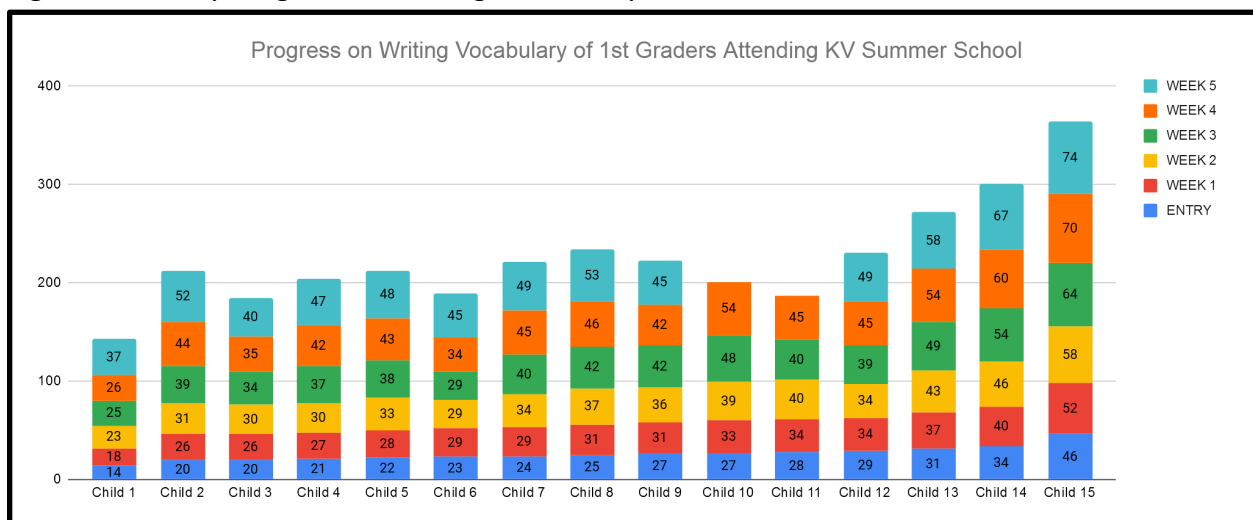
- Every child would increase the number of words in their reading and writing vocabularies by at least 20 words.
- Every child would increase their text reading level by at least 2 levels

Although these are quantitative goals, there is an important qualitative aspect to determining if and when a child has successfully met them. In other words, regardless of the child's score on a single assessment, we did not consider the goal met unless students demonstrated strategic actions that reflected the sophistication required at that text level and evidence of consolidated learning such as the automaticity with which they enact literacy processes on isolated items or within a context.

### **Evidence of Student Progress Toward Growth Goals from Measures of Reading and Writing Vocabulary and Text Reading Level**

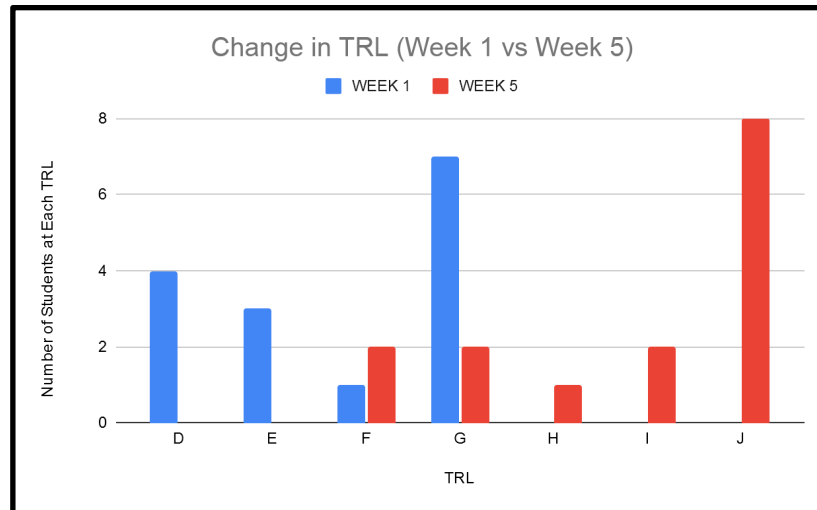
Each week we measured progress on both text reading level and the acquisition of the target vocabulary words. The following section includes our data displays and a discussion of the results.

Figure 1: Weekly Progress on Writing Vocabulary



The number and complexity of words students can write *automatically* is highly-correlated to the eventual reading outcomes of young readers. Thus, we created a list of important and useful words that were previously unknown to our students and intentionally taught and practiced these throughout the instructional day. We gave students multiple opportunities to engage with the words in different ways (via manipulatives, reading and writing them in both isolation and within context) and assessed students on the target words each week. Our aim was to increase the student's writing vocabulary by at least 20 words across the series of weeks. Figure 1 illustrates the weekly gains on this measure for each child. Every child (except 1) met the goal of 20 new words. *NOTE: The child who failed to meet the goal only attended 9/18 days and still increased their writing vocabulary by 18 words.* Clearly, this data shows a rapid rate of consolidation of new words for all of our students. As well, many of the students depicted in Figure 1 surpassed our initial goals, several by a significant amount. This data is important because it suggests that our students have not only acquired processes for learning new words quickly, but that their reading and writing vocabularies now include a larger repertoire of words and word parts to access in the service of problem-solving unknown words.

Figure 2: Change in Text Reading Level (Week 1 to Week 5)



The most critical growth goal was to move students into higher, more complex, text levels. Figure 2 illustrates the number of students at each text level at the beginning (blue) and end (red) of summer school. *NOTE: Text level I is the standard benchmark for the beginning of 2nd grade.* The data clearly shows that the distribution of students at the lower text levels (D-F) dramatically shifted to the right end of the figure by the end of summer school. **EVERY student MET** the TRL growth goal of increasing at least two levels across the five weeks. Remarkably, **10 of the 15** students exceeded that goal, increasing 3 or more levels in only 18 instructional days. Research suggests that rapid growth and quick changes in problem-solving is especially important for students finding literacy learning difficult. In essence, Figure 2 is a graphic depiction of this type of accelerated learning in action.

Table 1: Percentage of Students at Each Text Level in Relation to Second Grade Benchmark at the Beginning and End of Summer School

Distance from 2nd Grade Benchmark	Significantly Below			Approaching		Meeting	Exceeding
TRL	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
% of Students at Beginning	27%	20%	6%	47%	0%	0%	0%
% of Students at End	0%	0%	13%	13%	7%	13%	54%

Figure 2 depicted the actual number of students at each text level at the beginning and end of summer school. Table 1 illustrates what these text levels mean for our students as they enter second grade. The goal for the beginning of second grade is text level I. Thus, we consider any student reading at levels D-F *significantly below* and G-H as *approaching the benchmark*. At the beginning of summer school (Table 1), all of our students were below benchmark and over half (53%) were significantly below. By the end of summer school, only 13% (two students) were

significantly below the benchmark, 20% (three students) were approaching the benchmark, and 67% (10 students) were meeting or exceeding the benchmark. It is hard to overstate what these shifts in text level imply for the success of our students next year. We also hope that these gains lessen the burden on our second-grade colleagues in fall of 2021.

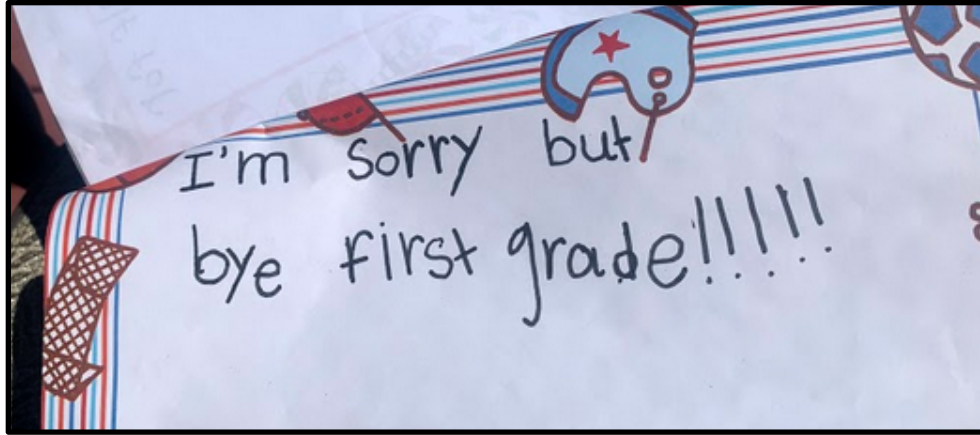
### **Summary of Data:**

We are excited about these quantitative gains and the implications they may have for our students in second grade. Our children met and surpassed our quantitative goals. But, as important, is the fact the records of their reading illustrated that they were:

- reading harder texts more strategically in terms of taking multiple actions at difficulty;
- solving unknown words in multiple and more sophisticated ways;
- reading more fluently (sounding like a good reader);
- demonstrating better understanding (comprehension) of the stories they read as they responded to our discussion questions and through their written responses to stories.

We are proud to share data that is evidence of incredible student learning. However, some things aren't measurable in numbers. Although we were highly-focused on helping students achieve their growth goals, we also based our decisions about instruction around processes to empower students, give them agency, and build their identity as learners. On the last day of summer school, we asked them to write a ["Six-Word-Memoir"](#) reflecting upon their experiences in summer school and how they felt about themselves as literate human beings. Our children's messages are **the most compelling evidence** of the success of this program. Their memoirs revealed themes of pride, growth, the power (and reward) of engaging in challenging work, the joy of story and the importance of every child having access to texts that feed their minds and spirits. Perhaps the clearest evidence that our work was successful is the number of students who said they're ready to move on to second grade. Thus, we end this report with the words of one of our students, who wrote the Six-Word-Memoir depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Kason's Six Word Memoir at the end of Summer School



Indeed, the most important data in this report is that our children feel ready and confident to take on the challenge of second grade.

#### **A Final Note:**

We, as teachers, were also profoundly impacted by this experience. We learned so much about how we might improve. Thank you to everyone who gave us this opportunity. Most especially, to Starla Browne, who trusted us to do it...our way!

