

REPORT ON RESEARCH

Read180

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MINORITY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT NETWORK

BACKGROUND

Dr. Ted Hasselbring of Vanderbilt University created *Read180* in collaboration with Dr. Janet Allen, a reading specialist from the University of Central Florida. Together they formed the Orange County Literacy Project in Florida in 1994. Scholastic joined the project in 1997 and *Read180* was formally released in 1999. *Read180* is a multi-modal program created to develop and advance students' reading abilities. Research for *Read180* was conducted with special education students in mind (Scholastic Research and Evaluation Department). Scholastic studies show student success cutting across ethnicity, learning abilities, English proficiency and gender (Papalewis, R. and Scholastic Research & Evaluation Department, 2003). The program emphasizes individual learning, student engagement and the building of self-esteem. In addition, *Read180* allows for class structure and individual student flexibility.

MINORITY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT NETWORK

Members of the Research Practitioners Council of the Minority Student Achievement Network were contacted to determine the use of Read 180 throughout the Network. Read 180 is currently being used in Cherry Hill Public Schools, NJ, Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, OH, Madison Metropolitan School District and Bloomfield, CT. Read 180 is being researched for use in Hamden Public Schools in Connecticut, Green Bay Area Public Schools, Cambridge Public Schools and Evanston Township High School District 202. Cherry Hill Public Schools is running a modified Read 180 program (due to class scheduling difficulties) for 9th graders that has shown student success through increased Lexile Scores. Dr. Ashaki Coleman, Coordinator of Research and Assessment at Cherry Hill Public Schools, reported that students love the texts- for some this has been the first time they have finished a book. Classes have seen a healthy competition between students to see who can read more, but less enthusiasm has been shown towards the computer element of the program. Dr. Coleman suggests that this lack of enthusiasm may be due to the fact that computers lack novelty for high school students in this age of technology. Some members of the MSAN have experienced technical problems with the software.

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Independent research of the *Read180* program is scarce despite its implementation starting in 1999. The majority of research concerning *Read180* has been sponsored and reported by Scholastic, the company that produces *Read180* (summarized below). Published information regarding *Read180*, independent of Scholastic, is journalistic in nature and rarely backed with scientifically based research. Most articles contain a general description of the *Read180* program and how it is implemented at the school. Articles also state that the program has improved students' scores in reading, has reduced truancy and has increased student confidence due to the program's individualized content (Lewin, T., 2004; Ryan, K., 2000; Uhlig, K., 2005 and Weaver, A., 2004).

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY SCHOLASTIC CO.

As stated earlier, research concerning *Read180* has predominately been conducted or at least sponsored and reported by Scholastic. A study conducted in the Los Angeles Unified School District of English Language Learner (ELL) students found that students using Read 180 gained more than three Normal Curve Equivalents (NCEs) in comparison to students not using Read 180 whose scores decreased by approximately 7 NCEs (statistically significant) (Papalewis, R., 2002). Students using *Read180* in Department of Defense Schools showed an increase from an average of 39.9 NCEs to 47.3 NCEs (average gain of 7.4) in comparison to non-*Read180* students who showed an increase from 37.7 NCEs to 39.1 NCEs (average gain of 1.4) (Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2002). Shiprock High School in New Mexico, conducted a study of its Native American's students achievement using *Read180*. Students using *Read180* during the 2002-2003 school year significantly improved their Lexile Scores from an average of 688L to an average of 887L (average increase of 199L) and during the 2003-2004 school year, students significantly improved their Lexile Scores from an average of 796L to an average of 923L (average increase of 126.8L). Students who participated in *Read180* in 2002-2003 but not 2003-2004 maintained their scores through fall of 2003 (starting average of 893L) but scores decreased on an average of 35L by winter of 2003 (Scholastic Research and Evaluation Department, 2004). A study by the Council of Great Schools study included schools from Boston, Dallas, Houston and Columbus. Scores of students using *Read180* in Boston, Dallas and Houston (Dallas and Houston students were randomly selected) significantly increased on the Stanford-9 by 22.94 scale points in comparison to the non-users increase of 17.24. In the same study, students in Columbus using *Read180* experienced a statistically significant increase of Stanford-9 scores by 14.41 points versus the control group which showed a that decrease of 3.77 points (Interactive, Inc., 2002). Overall, these studies show an increase in student reading scores through the use of the *Read180* program in comparison to control groups of non-*Read180* students.