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Summer Reading Institute 2013

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September 18, 2013

Executive Summary

The 2013 Summer Reading Institute is a five week long summer reading program. The primary goal of this program is to improve Reading and Language Arts skills of participating students that are currently living in one of Louisville's homeless shelters. This program will serve all grade levels. The program met three hours a day, four days a week. During the three hours, the students worked with teachers, used academic computer programs (SuccessMaker or Study Island), and went to the library (approximately once a week). The teachers for this program were familiar with subject, grade level, and knowledge of aligning lessons with Kentucky Core Academic Standards.

Although the data was not conclusive in the short-term on whether it improved students' reading, this program was well received by the students and especially the parents. The following list will show "Commendations", those areas that were shown successful, and "Recommendations", those areas which can improve.

Commendations:

- ❖ When the students were asked what they liked most about the program, using the computers and getting to read were the top two responses to this question.
- ❖ Students were significantly more likely to agree with the statement "I enjoy going to the library."
- ❖ 100% of the K-2nd grade students agreed with the statement, "I like the summer Reading Program."
- ❖ Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the program with 100% of the parents stating that they would recommend this program.
- ❖ Teachers liked the facilities (rated 4.11 on a 5 point scale), the time of the program (rated 4.44 on a 5 point scale), and the teacher: student ratio (rated 4.44 on a 5 point scale).
- ❖ 100% of all site coordinators would like to participate in this program in the future.

Recommendations:

- ❖ There needs to be more structure to ensure that the three hours are being used effectively. Teachers mentioned that the structure did not always work, especially when there was internet issues. Additionally, if possible, provide a snack and break as part of the structure. A couple of teachers mentioned that they thought this would help.
- ❖ Provide a wide range of reading material/curriculum to meet the individual needs of the students. Teachers mentioned there was not always enough age appropriate curriculum/materials available.
- ❖ Improve computer access and timeliness of getting logins and passwords. The internet access was a problem with at least one of the sites. Additionally, there was difficulty getting students their log in information in a timely manner.
- ❖ Use computer adapted scoring to get the students' lexile scores. When talking with a JCPS Reading Specialist about the lexile scores, one of the possible reasons scores did not show improvement was "test fatigue". For example, one of the paper copies had over 50 reading questions. By using the computer program, the computer will scale the questions up or down based on the student's ability and will more likely produce a more valid score.
- ❖ Work on improving attendance. Approximately one fourth of the students were in attendance for 15 days or more, while over half the students were there less than 10 days.

Background

The 2013 Summer Reading Institute is a five week long summer reading program. The primary goal of this program is to improve Reading and Language Arts skills of participating students that are currently living in one of Louisville’s homeless shelters. This program served all grade levels.

The program is three hours a day, four days a week. During the three hours, the students worked with teachers, used academic computer programs (SuccessMaker or Study Island), and went to the library (approximately once a week). The teachers for this program were familiar with subject, grade level, and knowledge of aligning lessons with Kentucky Core Academic Standards.

Program Evaluation

The program evaluation has multiple components. These components include:

- Pre- and post-test,
- Student surveys,
- Parent surveys,
- Teacher surveys, and
- Site coordinator surveys.

The primary research questions addressed include:

- 1) Did the students make significant increases in their reading levels during this program?
- 2) Did the students’ perceptions change of themselves as readers?
- 3) What were the parents’ perceptions of the program?
- 4) How can the program be improved to become more effective for the future?

Student Attendance

There were 62 students that participated in the Summer Reading Institute. There were a possible 19 days of attendance. There were 9 students that were in attendance at least 15 days or more, while there were 25 students that were in attendance 5 days or less. *Table 1: Attendance* shows the number of students in attendance by number of days.

Table 1: Attendance

# Days	# Students	# Days	# Students	# Days	# Students
1	12	8	3	15	3
2	4	9	3	16	1
3	4	10	6	17	0
4	3	11	2	18	4
5	2	12	1	19	1
6	2	13	4		
7	2	14	5	AVG	8.05 Days

Student Demographics

There were 49 of the 62 student participants in JCPs schools. When examining the demographics, some of the summary points include:

- ❖ Nearly 2 out of every 3 of students were in grades K-2 (63.2%),
- ❖ There were more African-American student participants than any other race (61%),
- ❖ Slightly more female students participated (57%),
- ❖ Almost all of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch (93%), and
- ❖ Nearly 20% were classified as ECE.

For a complete listing of participant demographics, see *Table 2: Student Demographics*.

Table 2: Student Demographics

GRADE	% Students	RACE	% Students	FREE/REDUCED	% Students
K	22.4%	African-American	61.2%	Free	89.8%
1 st	18.4%	White	34.7%	Reduced	4.1%
2 nd	22.4%	Two or More	4.1%	Paid	6.1%
3 rd	14.3%				
4 th	4.1%	GENDER	% Students	ECE	% Students
5 th	6.1%	Female	57.1%	ECE	18.4%
6 th	4.1%	Male	42.9%		
7 th	4.1%				
8 th	2.0%				
10 th	2.0%				

Student Reading Growth

To determine if there was reading growth during the program, a pre- and post-test were given to each student. Three assessments were used based on the age and ability of the student. These were:

- ❖ *Scholastic Reading Inventory™ (SRI): Using the Lexile Framework™*
- ❖ Letter Identification, and
- ❖ Fry’s First 100 words.

There was no measurable difference between the pre-tests and the post-tests. It should be noted that a) it is rare that a five-week program will show significant reading gains, and b) teachers at one site noted that students did not try as hard on the post-test as the pre-test, which could cause validity issues.

A follow-up for students that were in the third grade or higher (2013) can be completed in September/October (2014) examining reading growth percentiles.

Student Survey Data

Along with the pre- and post-reading tests, students were given a pre- and post-surveys. The statements on the kindergarten-second grade survey had three possible responses: “Yes”, “Sometimes”, and “No”. The statements on the third-twelfth grade survey had five possible responses: “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree”, and “Strongly Disagree”. There were five questions on the pre-survey for both groups and nine questions on the post-survey for both groups. Some of the most notable results of the survey after completing the program are:

- ❖ Students of all levels were significantly more likely to agree with the statement “I enjoy going to the library”,
- ❖ 100% of the K-2nd grade students agreed with the statement, “I like the summer Reading Program”, and
- ❖ Other areas showing the most growth from the pre- to post-survey are: “I have a favorite book” (3rd-12th grade: .41), “I am a good reader” (K-2nd grade: .37), and “I like to read” (3rd-12th grade: .32).

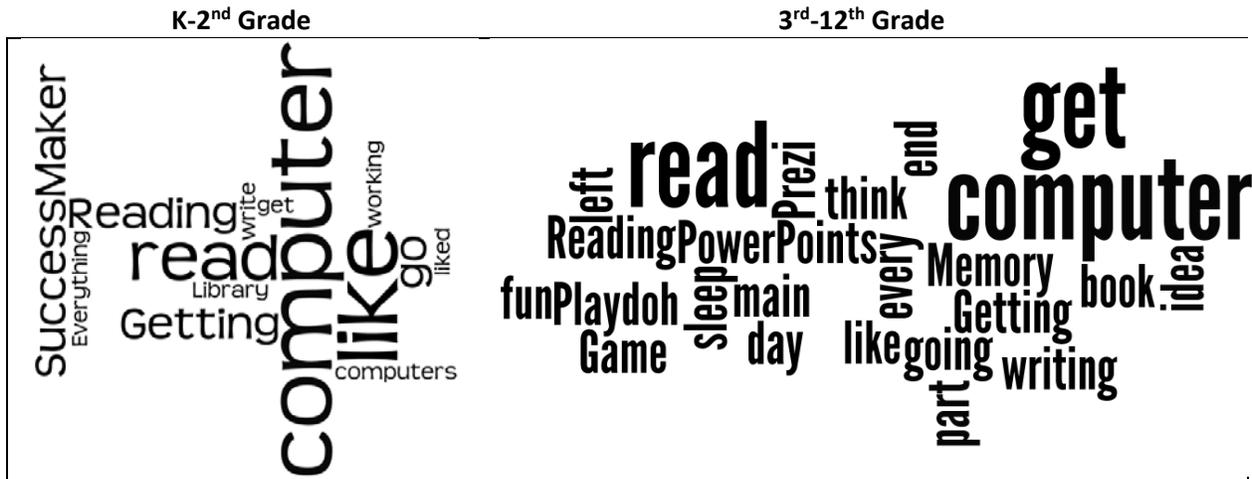
Table 3: Student Surveys has a summary of the results.

Table 3: Student Surveys

Statement	Pre-Survey	Post-Survey	Pre-Mean	Post-Mean	DIFF	Significant
K-2nd Grade	% YES		1=No 3=Yes			
I like to read	<i>n</i> =28 82.1%	<i>n</i> =15 73.3%	<i>n</i> =28 2.71	<i>n</i> =15 2.73	.02	n.s.
I am a good reader	64.3%	80.0%	2.43	2.80	.37	n.s.
I have a favorite book	85.7%	86.7%	2.71	2.80	.09	n.s.
I enjoy going to school	78.6%	86.7%	2.71	2.80	.09	n.s.
I enjoy going to the library	78.6%	93.3%	2.64	3.13	.49	p<.05
I like the Reading Program	NA	100%	NA	3.00	NA	NA
The summer teacher helped me a lot	NA	93.3%	NA	2.93	NA	NA
I liked to work on the computer	NA	93.3%	NA	2.93	NA	NA
3rd-12th Grade	% Agree or Strongly Agree		1=Strongly Disagree 5=Strongly Agree			
I like to read	<i>n</i> =27 67.7%	<i>n</i> =12 75.0%	<i>n</i> =27 3.85	<i>n</i> =12 4.17	.32	n.s.
I am a good reader	77.8%	83.3%	4.19	4.42	.23	n.s.
I have a favorite book	66.7%	66.7%	3.67	4.08	.41	n.s.
I enjoy going to school	66.7%	66.7%	3.74	3.67	-.07	n.s.
I enjoy going to the library	70.4%	83.3%	3.74	4.50	.76	p<.05
I like the Reading Program	NA	58.3%	NA	3.75	NA	NA
The summer teacher helped me a lot	NA	83.3%	NA	4.33	NA	NA
I liked to work on the computer	NA	75.0%	NA	4.08	NA	NA

When asked what they liked most about the program, the students had a variety of responses. Using the computers and getting to read were the top two responses to this question. *Figure 1: What I Liked Most* shows for each group the most frequent words used. The larger the font, the more frequent that word was used in the responses.

Figure 1: What I Liked Most



Parent Survey Data

The parent survey data was overwhelmingly positive. Twenty parents completed the survey. There were six “Yes” or “No” questions. *Table 4: Parent Survey Results* shows all parent responses and comments.

Table 4: Parent Survey Results (n=20)

Statement	Yes	No	Blank
I liked the idea of the Summer Reading Institute for my child/ren	100%	0%	0%
My child/ren liked the Summer Reading Institute	100%	0%	0%
I will try to take my child to the library to encourage their reading	100%	0%	0%
I would recommend the Summer Reading Institute <i>Comments: “encouragement”, “prepares them for next year”, “because it is a great program to keep kids learning”, “because all kids should read during the summer break”, “it’s an opportunity to continue progress over the summer months”, “it helps keep them learning throughout the summer”, “it helps strengthen their skills in reading and pronouncing out words – Thanks!”, and “The program is educational and the point that it keeps the children reading over the summer.”</i>	100%	0%	0%
I saw my child/ren reading more this summer than normal	95%	5%	0%
The scheduling of the Summer Reading Institute worked well for my child/ren and myself <i>Comments: “because I might be working at the time”, “maybe two days early and two days late, and “sometimes it was too early for my children to get there: maybe move the time later.”</i>	75%	10%	15%

Additionally, parents had the opportunity to make comments or suggestions. These comments included:

- ❖ 3 comment of thanks and praise for the program. These comments included, “Thank you so much for helping my son with his reading. I am sure it will carry him a long way --- Thank you again”, “This is an excellent program for all ages. The teachers were marvelous with encouraging my children to read more. I would love to praise the staff (teachers) for their patience with my children. As a parent, I would recommend this program to any parent that’s willing to help their child succeed in reading”, and “Just keep coming back☺ Thank You!!”.
- ❖ 2 comments were about the time of the program. These comments were: “Maybe shorten the class each day from 2 hours to 1 ½ hours” and “Change the time maybe to two days early and two days late”,
- ❖ 1 comment was a general suggestion. This comment was “I think the program would benefit from earlier advertisements.”

Teacher Survey Data

Teachers were sent an electronic survey to get their feedback on the program and to work on improvements for next year. Of the 11 teachers, 9 completed the survey. The teachers were asked to rate different aspects on a five point scale ranging from “Very Unsatisfactory” to “Very Satisfactory”. The survey further asked teachers to provide an explanation of any “Very Unsatisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory” ratings. Some of the primary outcomes from the teacher surveys were:

- ❖ Program structure, Reading/Classroom Materials, and The Computer Programs had the highest percent of teachers mark were “Very Unsatisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory”, and
- ❖ The Time, Teacher/Student ratio, Room facilities, and The Library Trips had the highest percent of teachers mark “Very Satisfactory” or “Satisfactory”.

Table 5: Teacher Survey Results provides a summary of each aspect.

Table 5: Teacher Survey Results

Aspect	% “Very Unsatisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory”	% Neutral	% “Very Satisfactory” or “Satisfactory”	Average (“Very Unsatisfactory” = 1 and “Very Satisfactory” = 5)
Program Structure	44.4%	22.2%	33.3%	2.89
Reading/Classroom materials	44.4%	22.2%	33.3%	3.00
The Computer Programs (SuccessMaker/Study Island)	44.4%	0%	55.6%	3.00
The Library Trips*	0%	25%	75%	3.88
Pre/Post-test materials	33.3%	22.2%	44.4%	3.11
Room facilities (i.e. space, lighting, temperature, ...)	11.1%	11.1%	77.8%	4.11
Time of the program (morning, afternoon, evening)	0%	11.1%	88.9%	4.44
Teacher: Student ratio	0%	11.1%	88.9%	4.44
Overall Program	33.3%	22.2%	44.4%	3.22

* 8 respondents instead of 9

The explanations provided for the “Very Unsatisfactory” and “Unsatisfactory” were almost exclusively about technology issues and program structure. These comments were:

- ❖ “Not enough appropriate materials for k-2 or High School age students.”
- ❖ “There was no curriculum or structure. We created the structure with minimal materials. With older kids, I had to find or create my own resources since we had known. SuccessMaker and Study Island logins did not work most days.”
- ❖ “Most students couldn't get on programs because they didn't know their passcodes (Elementary Students) and it was difficult finding who we could contact to remedy the problem. When they finally got access (the last couple of weeks), we couldn't get internet access sometimes or the program didn't recognize login information. As professional we were able to compensate with other reading strategies, but if the computer reading programs were the main focus than they were not good. We used Reading Eggs for some of the students and the students really liked the program. We had no problems using that program.”
- ❖ “Network access for Study Island and SM needs attention.”
- ❖ “As a teacher I found the program was too long and unstructured for the materials provided. The program was 3 hours but only 30 minutes was to be spent on the computer programs. While students could cycle through the program two times, most did not choose to do this as it is highly focused work. Also, the materials provided - reading texts - were not sufficient to fill the remainder of the time and keep students interested and engaged. As a teacher I found myself bringing in new and different materials, looking for reading games and using all the tools I had available to keep my students - most of whom were in first or second grade - engaged. I also feel students would have benefited from both a break time and a snack time.”
- ❖ Please have a contact person assigned to SuccessMaker and Study Island specifically for enrolling for TEACHERS.

The teachers were asked what aspect of the program they found most beneficial. The answers were:

- ❖ “The time of the program and the teacher to student ratio.”
- ❖ “Working with the students and fellow teachers who were committed to helping the students reading skills grow.”
- ❖ “Getting to help families in need.”
- ❖ “I think that the student teacher ratio as well as the weekly library visits were most beneficial to the program. Teachers could identify struggling areas much quickly than a traditional classroom setting and put into place positive interventions/strategies for each student immediately. Library visits were a wonderful way to give the students time to practice what they've learned in class. Students were able to select books of "their" choice to read and respond to.”
- ❖ “Being able to work one on one or in very small groups was highly beneficial for many of the students. This is something that is not possible in regular school days.”
- ❖ “The computers and learning programs.”

Lastly teachers were asked to make suggestions to improve the program for the future. These suggestions included:

- ❖ “Better materials and more structure.”
- ❖ “Easier access to materials specific to each child’s needs, more reliable technology access”
- ❖ “Create a curriculum for specific age groups.”
- ❖ “Get networking issues resolved.”
- ❖ “To improve the program, I would suggest having student codes for SuccessMaker and Study Island readily available at the very beginning of the program. In addition, I would ensure that each location site has computers that support the two learning programs. Secondly, students were often times hungry. It would be beneficial to have the food truck stop by each site daily. If not, make arrangements to supply students with daily snacks. Thirdly, ensure that the appropriate pre and post tests are available for each student. Some students took tests that were readily available to them; not necessarily their correct level.”
- ❖ “1. Provide a more detailed and structured curriculum 2. Provide materials that include hands on activities and reading games 3. Allow for a break and snack time 4. Place teachers according to their certification grade levels (middle school teachers with middle school students, etc...).”
- ❖ “Please do not force students to read the same Rigby books they read all school year in reading groups. It is not fun for them, especially when we were only provided non-fiction books. There is soooooo much you can do with fiction and non-fiction TRADE BOOKS. That makes it more real life and interesting for the students.”

Site Coordinator Survey

The site coordinators at the shelters were surveyed to get their perceptions of the Summer Reading Institute. Of the nine coordinators, five completed the survey. The first series of questions asked the coordinators to “Please rate the quality of the program based on insight gained from your clients or your observations.” All of the coordinators marked either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” for a) Quality of teachers, b) Quality of materials, c) Time of the program, and d) Room facilities (i.e. space, lighting, temperature). The statement regarding the library trips were rated as 80% “Unsure”.

The second series of questions asked the coordinators to “Please rate your own experience with the Summer Reading Institute.” Almost all of the ratings were either “Satisfactory” or “Very Satisfactory” for a) Quality of communications prior to the start of the program, b) Quality of communications during the Summer Reading Program, c) Program organization, d) Time of the program, e) Teacher professionalism, f) Quality of this program for student participants, and g) Quality of this program for the parents of the participants. One response indicated that the Quality of communications prior to the start of the program marked “Unsatisfactory” and one response marked that the Quality of communications during the Summer Reading Program as “Neutral”. The comment explaining the rationale for both of these ratings stated: “Communication/confirmation of when the program was to begin was last minute and parents had already made other arrangements for their children.”

Coordinators were asked, “Would you want to participate in this program in the future?” All of the coordinators responded “Yes”.

Lastly the coordinators were asked to comment on what aspect(s) they thought were most beneficial and to give any suggestions to improve the program for the future. The comments regarding the most beneficial aspects were:

- ❖ “The teachers were wonderful and engaging!” and
- ❖ “The individual instruction for students most in need of the extra time, attention and instruction.”

The one suggestion for improvement was:

- ❖ “Change time start time to 10am. I think it was hard for some families to get to the program at 9am.”

Table 6: Site Coordinator Survey Results reports more details.

Table 6: Site Coordinator Survey Results

Aspect	Unsure	% “Very Unsatisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory”	% Neutral	% “Very Satisfactory” or “Satisfactory”	Average (“Very Unsatisfactory” = 1 and “Very Satisfactory” = 5)
Question: Please rate the quality of the program based on insight gained from your clients or your observations:					
Quality of teachers	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.8
Quality of materials	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.6
Library trips	80%	0%	0%	20%	---
Time of the program	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.4
Room facilities (i.e. space, lighting, temperature, ...)	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.4
Question: Please rate your own experience with the Summer Reading Institute					
Quality of communications prior to the start of the program	0%	20%	0%	80%	4.0
<i>Comment: Communication/confirmation of when the program was to begin was last minute and parents had already made other arrangements for their children.</i>					
Quality of communications during the Summer Reading Program	0%	0%	20%	100%	4.0
Program organization	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.2
Time of the program	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.2
Teacher professionalism	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.6
Quality of this program for student participants	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.6
Quality of this program for the parents of the participants	0%	0%	0%	100%	4.2
Question: Would you want to participate in this program in the future?					
	Yes 100%	No 0%	Unsure 0%		

Conclusion

This is the first year of the Summer Reading Institute. Although the data was not conclusive in the short-term on whether it improved students' reading, this program was well received by the students and especially the parents. The following are list will show "Commendations", those areas that were shown successful, and "Recommendations", those areas which can improve.

Commendations:

- ❖ When the students were asked what they liked most about the program, using the computers and getting to read were the top two responses to this question.
- ❖ Students of all levels were significantly more likely to agree with the statement "I enjoy going to the library."
- ❖ 100% of the K-2nd grade students agreed with the statement, "I like the summer Reading Program."
- ❖ Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the program with 100% of the parents stating that they would recommend this program.
- ❖ Teachers liked the facilities (rated 4.11 on a 5 point scale), the time of the program (rated 4.44 on a 5 point scale), and the teacher: student ratio (rated 4.44 on a 5 point scale).
- ❖ 100% of all site coordinators would like to participate in this program in the future.

Recommendations:

- ❖ There needs to be more structure to ensure that the three hours are being used effectively. Teachers mentioned that the structure did not always work, especially when there was internet issues. Additionally, if possible, provide a snack and break as part of the structure. A couple of teachers mentioned that they thought this would help.
- ❖ Provide a wide range of reading material/curriculum to meet the individual needs of the students. Teachers mentioned that there was not always enough age appropriate curriculum and materials available.
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