



Reading Recovery®  
Emporia State University  
Kansas Regional  
Reading Recovery Center

# Executive Summary 2014-15

## A Proven Intervention

Even with excellent classroom instruction, approximately 20% of children have difficulty learning to read. Early intervention and powerful, accelerated instruction are essential in helping students who struggle the most in learning to read and write. Highly-trained Reading Recovery teachers work with students an average of 12-20 weeks in daily, one-to-one, 30-minute sessions.

Reading Recovery serves as part of a comprehensive approach for the lowest achieving children and is supplemental to good classroom instruction. During this intervention, approximately 81% of Kansas students who receive a full series of lessons make accelerated progress, catch up with their peers, and obtain the ability to work independently in an average group setting within the classroom. Reading Recovery also serves as a pre-referral program for the small number of students who need longer-term support.

In late 2008, Reading Recovery was ranked number one in general reading by the USDE's What Works Clearinghouse and received high ratings across all four domains evaluated: alphabetic, fluency, comprehension, and general reading achievement. Reading Recovery is a strong example of a data driven, research-based program meeting this standard of excellence.

## Reading Recovery® at Emporia State

Under the direction of the Emporia State University Training Center, multiple Kansas school systems, teachers, and children were served during the 2014-15 academic year. Reading Recovery was implemented in 45 systems, including 70 elementary schools in Kansas. A total of 674 students received individualized lessons through the instruction of 94 highly trained Reading Recovery teachers. Four teacher leaders provided quality professional development for Reading Recovery teachers and also tutored children.

Reading Recovery teacher training is conducted each year. During the 2014-15 academic year, 16 new Reading Recovery teachers were trained through Emporia State. All 16 were trained through the generosity of the i3 federal innovations grant. Additionally, two teachers from Tonganoxie participated in seven graduate hours offered at ESU. All 18 certified teachers involved in the Reading Recovery training worked with individual children while engaging in the theoretical understanding of literacy. Two teacher leaders were also trained: Nichole Kuhn from Topeka and Christine Mercer from Riverton. Nichole was trained through a national, competitive Reading Recovery Council of North America scholarship and Christine was trained through the i3 grant.

## Program History

The work of developmental psychologist, Marie M. Clay, yielded a set of research-based procedures found to reverse the cycle of failure for most children in a relatively short period of time. The early intervention was developed in New Zealand in the mid-1970s. Since then, the program has expanded to the United States, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom.

Reading Recovery was established at The Ohio State University in 1984 and at Emporia State University in 1998. Reading Recovery has since expanded to include implementation in 41 states and the Department of Defense Schools which serve the children of the United States military families abroad. Today, Reading Recovery is used in one out of five elementary schools in the US containing first grade classrooms and has served over two million students nationally.

In the US, there are 19 universities training Reading Recovery teacher leaders and 253 sites training Reading Recovery teachers. Nearly 5,875 teachers in more than 3,735 schools are involved in Reading Recovery in 42 states. During the 2014-15 academic year, 46,849 students had Reading Recovery and 569 had Descubriendo la Lectura lessons, which is a reconstruction of Reading Recovery for Spanish-speaking students. Outcome data for all students were collected and reported to the International Data Evaluation Center.

## Outcomes

Reading Recovery collects data for all children served, regardless of the number of lessons they received. Because the goal is successful grade level performance, children's lessons are ended as soon as there is evidence they can progress in classroom literacy instruction without further one-to-one help. Rigorous criteria are applied to ensure students are independent in their literacy processing skills before their lessons are ended.

Of the total number of children served (674) under the Emporia State University Training Center, 62% of all children successfully completed their lesson series, reaching the average level of their classrooms in reading and writing during the 2014-15 school year. Twelve percent were recommended for further specialist help after an intervention of 12-20 weeks; 20% were in Reading Recovery at the end of the school year with insufficient time to complete a full 20-week intervention; 3% moved while being served; and 3% were classified as none of the above (see Figure 1). The average length of a successful series of lessons was 15 weeks; less than 40 hours of actual instruction.

Of Kansas children who had an opportunity to receive a full series of lessons, 84% (416 students) successfully completed the lesson series and reached grade-level proficiency. This means 84% of the lowest achieving first grade students reached at least average reading levels of their peers after 12-20 weeks of instruction (see Figure 2). Kansas students entering Reading Recovery intervention at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year were reading at 4.0 levels lower than the state random sample average. The Reading Recovery students gained an average of 19 reading levels by the end of the school year, which is evidence of accelerated literacy growth.

Figure 1. End-of-Program Status of All Reading Recovery Children Served, 2014-15

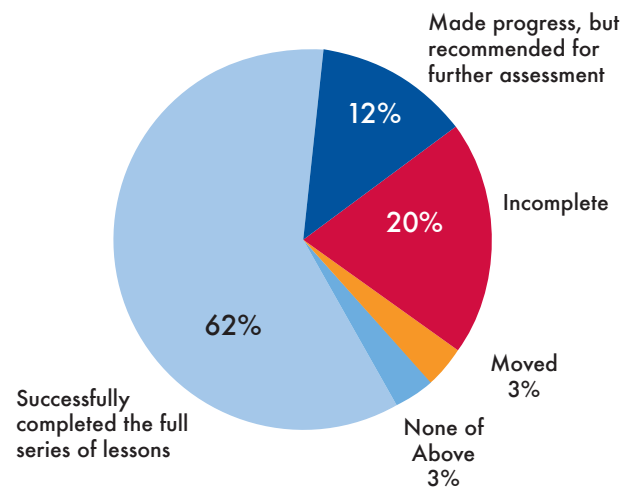
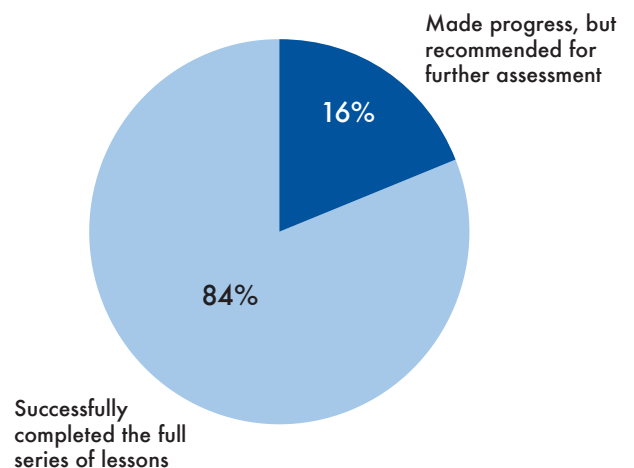


Figure 2. End-of-Program Status of Full-Program Reading Recovery Children Served, 2014-15



## Literacy Gains

Reading Recovery students who complete the intervention make dramatic changes in reading group placements across the school year as reported by their teachers (see Figure 3). In the fall, 48% of students who received a complete intervention were considered well below average in reading performance by their classroom teachers compared to 1% at year-end. Classroom teachers considered 79% of these students to be average to above average in their reading performance at year-end.

Reading Recovery demonstrates it can help close the literacy gap between higher achieving students and those who struggle to learn to read and write (see Figure 4). This is noteworthy when schools are looking for programs to ensure all students meet the federally mandated literacy goals. In order to “leave no child behind,” it is necessary for students who struggle the most to be brought up to class averages at an accelerated rate so they may continue to benefit from classroom instruction.

Figure 3. Classroom Reading Group Placement - Reading Recovery Children with Complete Interventions, Kansas 2014-15

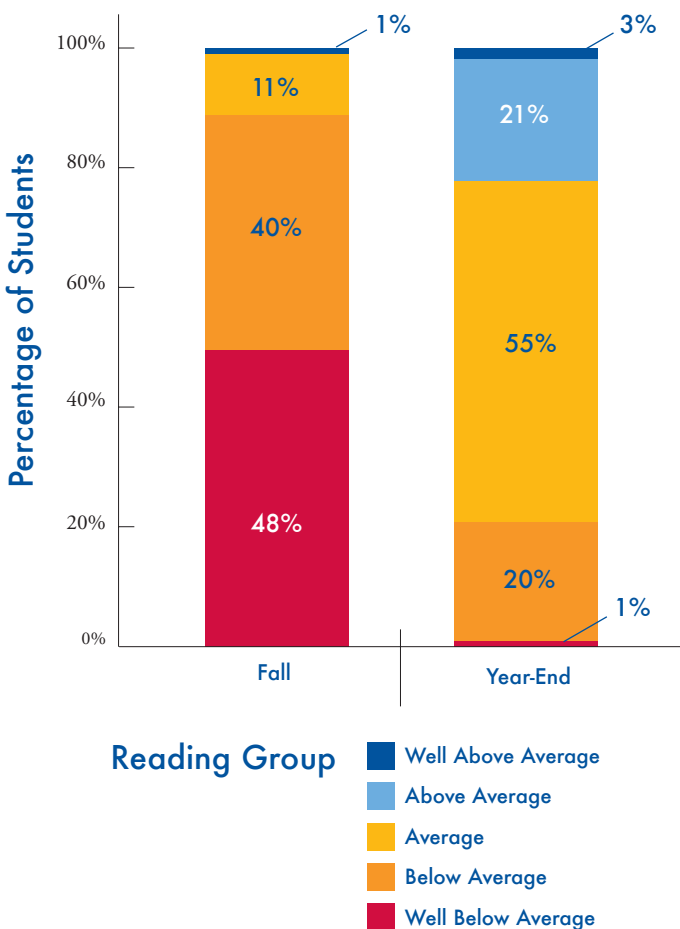
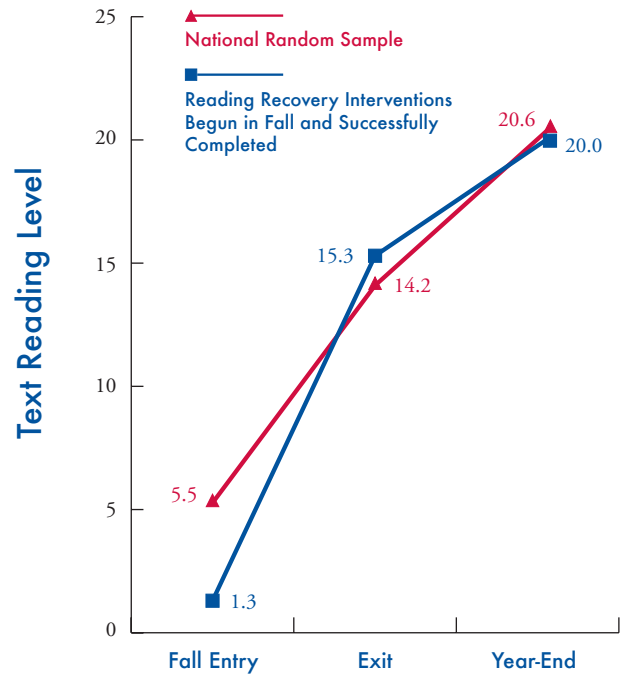


Figure 4. Text Reading Level Progress, Kansas 2014-15



## One-to-One Instruction & Beyond

Reading Recovery teachers receive intensive, high-quality training to teach children having the most difficulty learning to read and write. Once trained, the teachers use their knowledge and skills to not only work with four first-grade students daily, but with other students during their daily teaching assignments. Reading Recovery teachers work with an average of 50 students per year through their roles as classroom teachers, Title 1 teachers, reading specialists, ESL teachers, special education teachers or staff developers.

## Kansas College and Career Ready Standards

Reading Recovery helps schools meet the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards by scaffolding for teachers and parents a shared understanding of what students are expected to learn regardless of where they live. Because of its effectiveness as an early intervention, Reading Recovery can play a vital role in ensuring students are able to meet the goals of the standards and are proficient in literacy by the end of high school. With this purpose in mind, Reading Recovery empowers students to achieve the knowledge and skill necessary for their future success.



## Reading Recovery® and MTSS

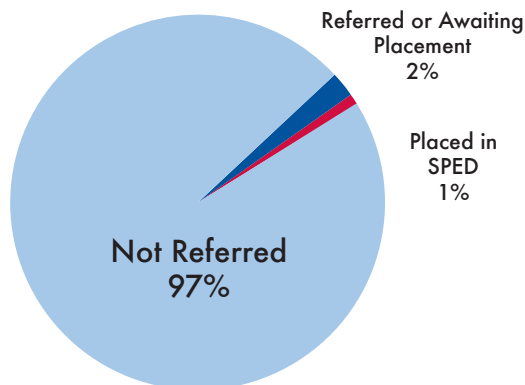
Reading Recovery is a major component of a comprehensive literacy plan. The Kansas response to intervention, Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS), is a concept that believes in the success of all students. Success is the result of (1) prevention, (2) implementation of evidence-based interventions, and (3) progress monitoring. Through the Observation Survey, Reading Recovery systematically assesses the needs and strengths of individual students. Once the students who are most in need are selected, a series of individual lessons are implemented over a span of 12-20 weeks. Efficient and designed for individual students, Reading Recovery is an intervention that prevents literacy failure. Research has validated the effectiveness of Reading Recovery through more than 30 years of implementation in the United States and exemplary ratings from the US Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse. Each student is monitored daily through a running record analysis and lesson records. Teachers make ongoing instructional decisions based on observations and analysis in order for the student to achieve accelerated learning.

## Prevention & Cost Effectiveness

The potential reduction of referrals and placements in special education is one of the cost benefits of the Reading Recovery intervention. Reading Recovery serves the lowest literacy achievers in first grade and prevents further problematic strategic literacy behavior. The goal is successful grade level performance; the majority of students achieve this goal.

In 2014-15, 97% of students who successfully completed their Reading Recovery lesson series were not referred for special education. Only four (1%) Kansas students who successfully completed their series of Reading Recovery lessons were referred and placed in special education. Only six (1%) await special education screening. Without the Reading Recovery intervention, many more students would have been referred and placed in special education services. The potential savings are enormous given the high cost of special education services. Prevention not only saves in educational funding, prevention—most importantly—promotes success and contributes to sustained gains in literacy.

**Figure 5. Referral to Special Education for Children with Complete Intervention**



## Reaching More Students: Expert Literacy Training

Special education teachers may enroll in Reading Recovery year-long training in order to extend the benefits of Reading Recovery to a larger population of students. "It is because these procedures are designed for adapting the instruction to the learning needs of individual children that they can be applied to many beginning readers who are in some kind of special education" (Clay, 2005). Reading Recovery training is available for all certified educators interested in understanding reading and writing processes, systematic observation, and helping students who have extreme difficulty in learning how to read and write. Please contact a teacher leader or the director for more information.

## Kansas Regional Reading Recovery® Teacher Training Sites 2014-15

Garnett USD 365  
Betsy Bunnel, Teacher Leader

Hays USD 489  
Rita Vonada, Teacher Leader

Jones Institute for  
Educational Excellence  
Suzanne DeWeese, PhD  
Teacher Leader

Tonganoxie USD 464  
Christine Coulter, Teacher Leader

## New Training Sites Established in 2015

Topeka USD 501  
Nichole Kuhn, Teacher Leader

Riverton USD 404  
Christine Mercer, Teacher Leader

For more information about  
Reading Recovery® in Kansas,  
please contact:

Annie M. Opat, PhD  
620-341-5828 or 1-877-378-5433  
aopat@emporia.edu  
[www.emporia.edu/readingrecovery/](http://www.emporia.edu/readingrecovery/)

**EMPORIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY**