

CASE STUDY

# Students in California Improve Reading Skills Using SPIRE



Grace Miller Elementary, La Verne, CA

## Summary

Grace Miller Elementary in La Verne, California, sought to address the needs of students that were a year or more below grade level in reading. These students had gaps in many foundational reading skills that were impacting their ability to access grade level curriculum. Their goal was to provide students with a more targeted, explicit intervention in order to help them reach grade level reading benchmarks by the end of the year using SPIRE published by EPS Learning.

Various independent test measures were used including DIBELS, DAZE, STAR and Basic Phonics Skills Test (BPST) to track student progress and growth.

Growth charts listed below show average growth for the year across various independent measures for students who received SPIRE intervention. Second grade students included three students who were monitored after being exited from SPIRE earlier in the year upon meeting grade level benchmarks and two students who qualified for special education services over the course of intervention.

Second grade students made an average of 1.5 years of growth on STAR, increased 38 words per minutes on DORF, increased their phonics skills 22 points on BPST and increased their high-frequency word recognition by 72 words.

**30**

Students

**2-3**

Grades

### CHALLENGE

Students were a year or more below grade level in reading and required a more targeted, explicit intervention in order to help them reach grade level reading benchmarks by end of year.

### SOLUTION

Using SPIRE intervention along with independent test measures (DIBELS, DAZE, STAR, & BPST) to track progress and growth.

### RESULT

Using SPIRE, students in second grade achieved an average of 1.5 years of growth, while students in third grade achieved an average of 1.1 years of growth. Across both grade levels, numerous students attained catch up growth in excess of 2.0 grade levels.

SECOND GRADE PROGRESS					
Measure	BOY	MOY	EOY	Growth	
DORF	50	77	88	38	WPM
STAR	1.4	2.0	2.9	1.5	GLE
BPST	65	75	87	22	Basic Phonic Skills
HF Words	224	263	296	72	Word Recognition

Third grade students made an average of 1.1 years of growth on STAR, increased their reading fluency by 29 words per minute and improved their comprehension on the DAZE by 14 points. Third grade students included one student who was exited from SPIRE upon meeting grade level benchmarks and one student who was receiving SPIRE interventions as a supplement to their special education services.

THIRD GRADE PROGRESS					
Measure	BOY	MOY	EOY	Growth	
DORF	76	100	105	29	WPM
DAZE	6	15	20	14	Words Corrected restored
STAR	2.3	3.0	3.4	1.1	GLE

These results were very impressive in showing how the targeted groups of students were able to close the achievement gap in reading.

According to the intervention teacher, Reading Specialist Sierra Nobbs, "It was our endeavor to maximize student growth within the constraints of the times and days we had available. Due to a variety of factors, our implementation was 4 days a week, 45 minutes each day in grades 2-3. We worked with groups of a maximum of 5 students. It should be noted that students did not receive interventions during the weeks of schoolwide testing or conferences."

Sierra worked with a team of paraeducators to best meet the needs of these students.

Across each grade level, the instructional team, including the principal, identified students most in need of intervention services. They selected 15 students for each grade, and then within these 15 students, Sierra grouped them based on their individual needs (as identified using the SPIRE Placement Test, as well as their beginning of the year assessment scores). Under Sierra's supervision, they ran three simultaneous groups per grade level. The groupings were dynamic and flexible and they moved students between the groups based upon their identified areas of need and their rate of growth. Sierra moved amongst the groups on different days so she could see and work with all students. Student growth and performance was charted on a weekly basis across all groups. Sierra closely monitored and guided the implementation throughout the year, meeting regularly with the aides to discuss how the implementation was progressing and to retrain staff as needed to ensure fidelity to the program across the groups.

Their instructional room was divided up into small group "stations". Each station consisted of a kidney/horseshoe table, whiteboard and space to store the group materials and student Readers, Workbooks and Portfolios. Copied items such as Word Find Sheets, Dictations Papers, and Fluency Drills, were stored in centrally located file bins organized by Level and Lesson.

During the 2016-17 school year, Grace Miller Elementary fully implemented S.P.I.R.E. levels 1-5 with grades 2 and 3 and started a partial implementation with grade 1. In 2017-18, they

**"SPIRE combines some of the best features of other intensive intervention programs and rolls them all into one."**

Sierra Nobbs, Intervention Teacher/Reading Specialist

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