



## Teacher Newsletter



Educational Solutions

February 2005

### Students' Success Attracts Attention

An Interview with Judy Hoffpauir  
North Shore Middle School  
Galena Park, Texas

Email: [jhoffpauir@galenaparkisd.com](mailto:jhoffpauir@galenaparkisd.com)

*"Other kids are buying into My Reading Coach because of the changes they see in my first eight students. They want to know how they can use that program."*

Eight students participated in the My Reading Coach after school tutoring program. Miguel was one of them.

#### Miguel's Success

Miguel, almost 16 years old, came to Galena Park from a school district where he had been stuck in the 4th grade. In the fall he was placed in the 7th grade and scored 1st grade 3rd month on the Star Test. The following spring, he scored 6th grade 7th month – **more than 5 years growth in only eight months!**

When Miguel began My Reading Coach, he grumbled, fussed, and cussed out the online coach, but he never missed a day. He began speaking to the online coach. I overheard him say, "Oh coach! So that's why you put the C-K there and not just K." I watched the gaps in Miguel's understanding collapse rapidly!

Once success took hold, Miguel's appearance improved, and his involvement in gangs decreased. He became a positive role model for other Hispanic students. This was a dramatic change from spending many hours in detention for his abusive language.

#### My Reading Coach Makes A Difference

As their skills and comfort level improved, Miguel and the other students began meeting me at my classroom door after school. We walked to the lab, a good distance away. They stayed glued to My Reading Coach until the last moment of class time. **Best of all, their other grades improved, and they began to participate in their classes.** Consequently, both teachers and other students wanted to know what was going on. I told them about My Reading Coach. Soon, students were asking if they could try it.

My Reading Coach is also proving successful in my dyslexia class. These students are more confident with their own abilities and are now participating in their classes, too. The parents love it and have become a part of the learning process. I can now work one-to-one with my entire class. This leads the way for tremendous success for everyone.

### Students Enjoy My Reading Coach

An interview with Amparo Colquitt  
Marian Manor Elementary School  
El Paso, Texas

Email: [acolquitt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:acolquitt@sbcglobal.net)

*"Students approach My Reading Coach sessions feeling happy and confident. They are improving their reading performance and enjoying the process."*

#### Pilot Program

Six bilingual 5th and 6th graders, who were part of a pilot group of 70 students, completed 61 lessons before Christmas. They began in March of 2004 and attended summer school. By the end of December most of these 70 students gained approximately 1 to 2 grade levels without having finished the program.

**Rodolfo, the first student to complete the Program, demonstrated a 4.5 reading level gain in 6 ½ months.**

After scoring 1st grade 6th month on the STAR Test, he was motivated to improve his reading score. He had a goal, and he worked very hard to accomplish it. He was the first to arrive and last to leave the reading lab. After lesson 30 he was able to read passages at the 10.5 grade level in the comprehension portion of the lesson. This motivated him even more. The day he received his My Reading Coach Certificate, this quiet, conscientious student took it and rushed out the door.

#### Student Improvement

One fifth grade girl spoke little English when she came to our school mid year. Once she was placed on My Reading Coach, her pronunciation improved, and her spelling got better because she was beginning to understand the rules. She is currently reading up to 8th grade passages after completing lesson 51. **Teachers are noticing the reading, writing, and spelling improvements for bilingual students who are on My Reading Coach.**

I currently have 105 students from grades 3 through 6 on the program. Seventy-eight percent of them began the program in September after scoring two or more levels below grade level on the STAR Test. I retested the students before the holidays. I was pleased to find that, although students had not completed the program, the majority of them showed at least a 1 to 1.5 year reading level gain in 4 months.

We are excited by the progress our students are demonstrating on My Reading Coach!

## My Reading Coach Gets High Praise

An interview with Melissa Mathis  
K- 8 Curriculum and Title One Director  
Chattooga Schools, Georgia  
Email: [mmathis@chattooga.k12.ga.us](mailto:mmathis@chattooga.k12.ga.us)

My Reading Coach was a key factor in the success of the third grade summer tutorial for Chattooga County Schools. The results have convinced me to use it in our regular instruction for all students. **By Investing in My Reading Coach, I am investing in a model teacher for each student.**

### Summer Tutorial Program

As a result of the recent Georgia promotion and retention law, all third grade students must achieve grade level scores on the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT) in reading to be promoted to the fourth grade. Twenty-three of our 238 third graders did not meet expectations. They were referred to the summer tutorial.

**The children worked on My Reading Coach approximately 15 days. Seventeen of the 23 made passing scores on the retest. They averaged a 17.2 point gain. These results are amazing. One student had a 40 point gain in just three weeks.**

My Reading Coach contributed to these results because it is simple, individualized, and comprehensive. It is engaging and well paced. The program supported the tasks these students were being asked to do in the classroom. It was not a game. Tardiness and absenteeism as well as inadequate attention contributed to the lack of meeting expectation for six students. "If the children engaged, they succeeded."

### Success Leads To Expansion

One principal was blown away by the level of success of his students. He approached me saying, "I will tell you right up front, I didn't think it could be done. We must have this product." Menlo Elementary found the funds to make My Reading Coach happen in their school.

We are seeing noticeable progress with other students too. I like that My Reading Coach individualizes interventions and helps teachers monitor student progress. The strongest selling point for me is the modeling and interactivensness of the Program. Our literacy coaches sing the praises of My Reading Coach. I take these experts seriously because they have years of experience evaluating so many different products and strategies.

Because of collaboration throughout our school system and the word of mouth reminder about our tutorial success, My Reading Coach is being used with more students. "I want to have it in every classroom, and we are going to get there."

## The Power of Monitoring (Part one)

Tips from Marci Goforth  
Elementary Dyslexia Specialist for Victoria ISD  
Victoria, Texas  
Email: [marsha.goforth@visd.com](mailto:marsha.goforth@visd.com)

My Reading Coach takes a student to mastery at his/her own pace. In the process it identifies students who need help and gives the teacher opportunities to work with them. **We learned that monitoring students is critical to the success of the Program.**

The following suggestions came out of our summer school experiences as well as the experiences of ISD teachers:

- **Print Student Error Reports for each student daily.** Have students review the Error Report and keep a written list of the types of words they misspelled. Go over this list with the student before the Review Test. They have a better chance to correctly spell the words they have missed.

The Error Report also can be used to show a student how close they are to spelling the word correctly or what kind of mistake they are making (piece/peice, tak/take). Discussing this report with the student also cures the student who plays around on the computer writing anything for a word (mfjrieu/school).

- **Sit with the student, observe, and intervene when necessary.** Sometimes just walking the student through a couple of words is all that is needed. For some students, knowing a monitor will be visiting is enough to keep them focused and on task.

We had one student who was unable to process speech at a normal rate. He constantly missed a word until the Coach repeated it slowly, the third time. We sat with him and repeated the word at a slow rate the first time the Coach gave him the word. Then we taught him to repeat the word slowly, write the word, and then read what he wrote before clicking on the Coach. This student was able to move through My Reading Coach without repeating most lessons multiple times.

*"Never underestimate the power of monitoring; it is the key to the success of My Reading Coach."*

## Help Us Help You!

Tip to share in the newsletter?  
Want to brag about your students?  
Have a question about the program?  
Something you would like us to change or improve?  
Get answers to your questions or send your tips to  
[mail@mindplay.com](mailto:mail@mindplay.com)