

LANGUAGE!TM

The Comprehensive Literacy Curriculum

**Middle School
Pilot Evaluation With Students
Eligible for Special Education**



VOYAGER SOPRIS
LEARNING[®]

Hawthorne School District, located in the Los Angeles County basin in Southern California, is an urban K–12 district. It is composed of approximately 10,000 students.

During the 2006–2007 school year, *LANGUAGE!™ The Comprehensive Literacy Curriculum* was implemented at all three of the middle schools in Hawthorne School District. All students in grades 6–8 who performed below the 60th percentile on a test of reading comprehension and fluency were placed in classrooms using *LANGUAGE!* as a core replacement. Approximately 1,000 general education, English language learner (ELL), and/or special education students were enrolled in *LANGUAGE!* classes for struggling readers.

Matched pre- and post-*LANGUAGE!* implementation data from the California Standards Test for English-Language Arts (CST-ELA) and/or the Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF) were available and analyzed for 775 students in grades 6 through 8.

Key Details

Total Participants: 775

Grade Levels: 6–8

Demographics:

- 93% Free/Reduced Lunch (FRL)
- 90% Nonwhite
- 42% English language learner (ELL)

Instructional Period:

- 2006–2007 school year
- 8 months of implementation

English Language Learners and Special Education:

- 59% of sample designated English language learners
- 25% of sample eligible for special education services

Measures:

- California Standards Test for English-Language Arts (CST-ELA)
- Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF)

n = number of students

Results

Findings from the retrospective evaluation of *LANGUAGE!* in Hawthorne School District suggest that *LANGUAGE!* positively impacted low-performing students’ reading gains.

Achievement Level Gains

Overall and by Grade

After the implementation of *LANGUAGE!* in Hawthorne School District, 33 percent of students in grades 6–8 overall grew one or more achievement levels on the CST-ELA from spring 2006 to spring 2007 (see Graph 1). A breakdown of the data by grade level shows 30 percent of students in grade 6, 44 percent of students in grade 7, and 22 percent of students in grade 8 grew one or more achievement levels on the CST-ELA.

By Subgroup

When the CST-ELA data for students in grades 6 through 8 were analyzed by subgroup, 44 percent of English language learners at Levels 1 and 2, and 33 percent of ELLs at Levels 3–5 gained one or more achievement levels. The percents of Hispanic and African American students who gained one or more levels were commensurate with the overall sample. Twenty-nine percent of students receiving special education services gained one or more achievement levels on the CST-ELA.

Percent of Students At or Above Basic

English Language Learners

The percentage of English language learners in grades 6 through 8 performing at or above Basic on the CST-ELA increased considerably from spring 2006 (prior to *LANGUAGE!*) to spring 2007 (after *LANGUAGE!*). Of these ELLs, 18.5 percent received special education services (see Table 1). Increases were 18 percent for ELLs at Levels 1 and 2, and 10 percent for ELLs at Levels 3, 4, and 5 (see Graph 2). During the same time period, the percentage of ELLs statewide performing at or above Basic increased by only 1 percent.

Table 1	Percent of ELLs in sample also receiving special education services
ELL Level 1 & 2	1.8%
ELL Levels 3, 4, & 5	16.7%
Total	18.5% (out of 454)

Ethnicity

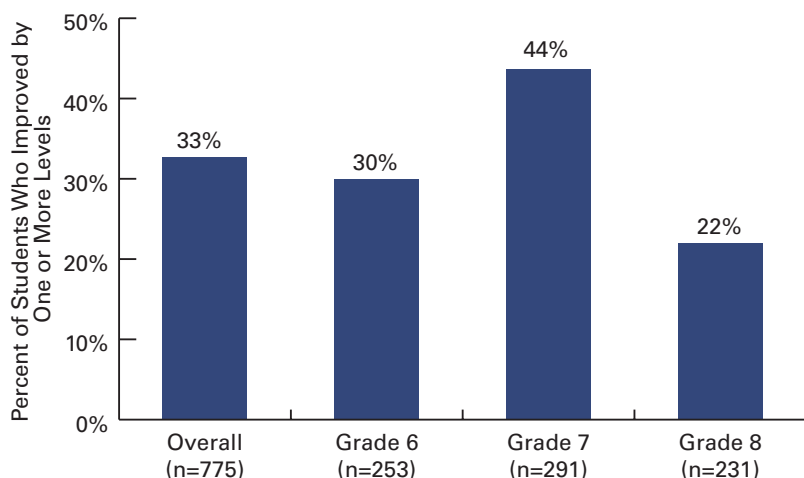
The percentage of students performing at or above Basic in the Hispanic subgroup (which included students from general education, special education, and English language learners) rose 8 percent after eight months of *LANGUAGE!* instruction (see Graph 3). A 1 percent decrease was seen at the statewide level in the percentage of Hispanic students at or above Basic during the same time period.

Fluency Gains

Finally, students demonstrated statistically and educationally significant grade equivalent increases in word reading fluency, as measured by the Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF). After eight months of *LANGUAGE!* instruction, middle school students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades showed grade equivalent increases of 1.3, 1.7, and 1.5, respectively, on the TOSWRF, indicating accelerated growth in word reading fluency (see Graph 4).

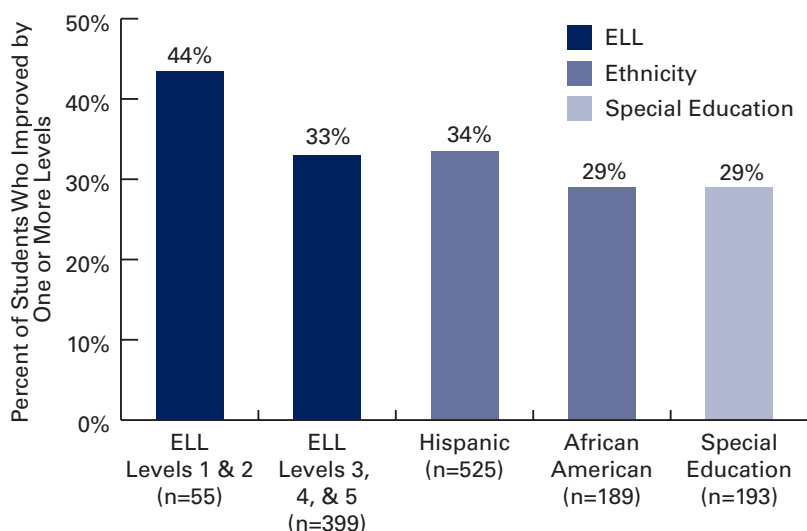
Graph 1

CST-ELA Achievement Level Gains of *LANGUAGE!* Students Overall and by Grade, Spring 2006–Spring 2007



Graph 2

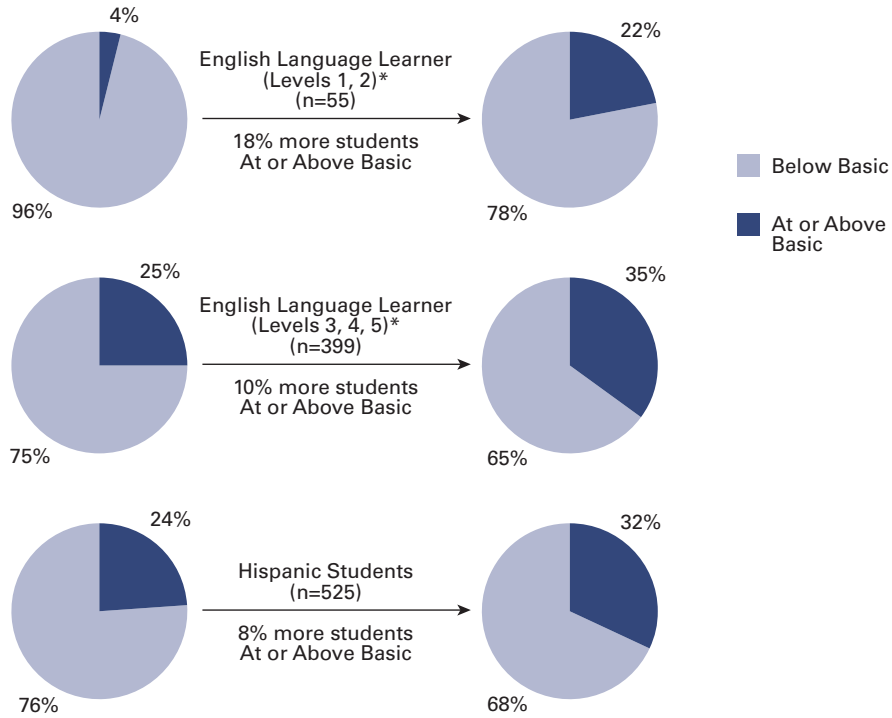
CST-ELA Achievement Level Gains of *LANGUAGE!* Students by ELL, Ethnic, and Special Education Status, Spring 2006–Spring 2007



Graph 3

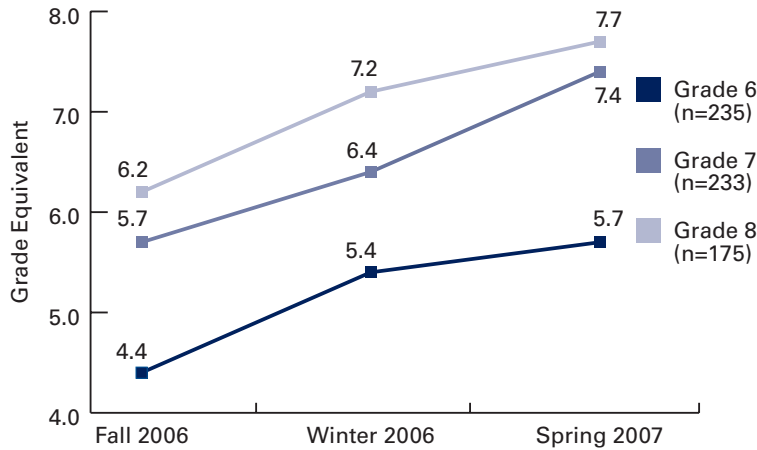
CST-ELA Proficiency Levels Before *LANGUAGE!* (Spring 2006)

CST-ELA Proficiency Levels After Eight Months of *LANGUAGE!* (Spring 2007)



Graph 4

Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF) Growth After Eight Months of *LANGUAGE!* Instruction



* These levels refer to the English language learners: Level 1 = non-English speaking; Level 2 = beginning; Level 3 = intermediate; Level 4 = basic; and Level 5 = proficient. Source: *California English Language Development Test: Technical Report for the California English Language Development Test (CELDT)*. (2005). Monterey, CA: CTB/McGraw-Hill®.

For more information, visit www.sopriswest.com/language