









Tackle the summer dip in reading



| | | | |
|-------------------|---|------------------|--|
| School name: |  St Mary's Academy | School type: |  Academy Primary (4-11 years) |
| Region: |  Suffolk | Ofsted rating: |  Outstanding (July 2010) |
| Area type: |  Town | Pupil premium %: |  19.1% |
| Number of pupils: |  328 | EAL %: |  5.7% |

Why Bug Club? St Mary's Academy is a two-form entry primary school in Suffolk. Like most schools, it generally finds a 'dip' in reading progress between the end of one year and the beginning of the next. In the summer of 2012 **Kate Ruttle**, the **SENCO** at St Mary's Academy, carried out an action research project to see if access to Bug Club would impact on the 'summer holiday dip' between Year 2 and Year 3.

Key points to take away

- In the class using Bug Club, **no children 'dipped' in reading progress** during the research.
- **56%** of children using Bug Club during the summer months **made reading progress**.
- The intervention class was **more confident in their reading abilities** after the summer break.
- Results suggest access to Bug Club online made an **educational significance** to the test group.

The research premise

Our Year 2 classes were well balanced, with children in both classes achieving National Curriculum levels ranging from 1B to 3C in their Year 2 SATs. The APS* for Class I was 15.2 and for Class C it was 15.5.

We adopted Bug Club in May 2012 but deliberately delayed introducing it to all of our classes until September of that year, in order to carry out this specific research project first. We wanted to determine whether access to Bug Club during the summer holidays could mitigate the summer dip in reading we so often see between Years 2 and 3.

In July 2012, we designated Class I our intervention class, giving them access to www.bugclub.co.uk. Class C, the parallel control class for this research project, did not have access to www.bugclub.co.uk during this period.

Measures of reading progress

In order to find out whether Bug Club had an impact on the children's reading levels, we put in place two measures

to assess all of the children's reading abilities prior to and following the summer holidays:

- progress in NC levels between June and November 2012, for the whole cohort (Classes I and C).
- progress as measured by PERA** for six children in each class, as measured in the fortnight before and the fortnight after the summer holidays.

“ Sometimes in the holidays, I forget how to read, but this time I didn't. ”



The results

Against our first measure – progress in NC levels between June and November – the results for Class I were encouraging whilst the results for Class C were more

* Average Point Score, calculated by converting National Curriculum levels into numbers and finding the average for a class.

** Phonics and Early Reading Analysis, Hodder, 2012.



typical of the experience we have with other cohorts in the school. The results showed that:

- in Class I (the class using Bug Club), no children 'dipped' and 56% made reading progress.
- in Class C (the class not using Bug Club during the summer months), 11% 'dipped' and 46% made reading progress.

To determine progress as measured by PERA between July and September, we tested a boy and a girl from each class whose reading profiles were high (level 3C), mid (level 2B) and low (level 1A). A total of 12 children were tested in this way, or 22% of the cohort. The results according to this measure showed that:

- in Class I (the class using Bug Club), all PERA children made reading progress of between +1 and +7 months.
- in Class C (the class not using Bug Club during the summer months), all PERA children 'dipped' by between -1 and -5 months.

Feedback from the children and parents

In addition to the tests, we asked the children in Class I and their parents about their experiences of using Bug Club online during the summer holidays.

Parents' comments included:

- "It was good to know that we were practising reading books at the right level."
- "The summer holidays are too long without changing reading books. This was much better."

And the children liked it too. One of them said:

- "Sometimes in the holidays, I forget how to read, but this time I didn't."

The outcome – no one dipped and many progressed

Although the sample used in our project was too small to be statistically significant, and a number of other variables at play prevent us from proving beyond doubt that access to www.bugclub.co.uk had a positive impact on our children's attainment, these results do suggest that access to Bug Club online made an educational significance to the children in Class I.

As teachers, we saw much to give us confidence in Bug Club. Our Class I children were better prepared on their return to school in September and were more confident in their reading abilities. And the feedback from the children and their parents who used Bug Club online certainly showed the resources were well-used and valued during the long summer break.

Find out more

To contact your local Pearson Primary representative email primaryappointments@pearson.com or visit pearsonprimary.co.uk/impact to see more impact case studies.