



 School Specialty
Literacy and Intervention

MCI (Making Connections Intervention) Level: Aqua (Beta Version)

CUSTOMER IMPLEMENTATION REPORT (EFFECTIVENESS OVERVIEW)

**Belleville East High School
2011-2012 School Year**

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Introduction

This report examines the effectiveness of the Making Connections Intervention (MCI) program with high school students attending Belleville East High School in Belleville, IL. These students used the demo version of the program during the first half of the 2011/2012 school year (September to December 2011).

Information presented includes MCI fidelity measures (e.g., number of units completed, time spent in each unit) and student gains on the Academy of READING[®] Placement Test (e.g., initial reading ability, reading ability improvements). Analyses focused on gains indexed by the Academy of READING[®] Placement Test.

Students

The data from 38 students in grade 9 who used the MCI program during the beta study were selected if they were pre-tested and post-tested with the Academy of READING[®] Placement Test.

Implementation Fidelity and MCI Test Performance

Table 1 shows how many units students completed.¹

Table 1. Number of units students completed.

Number of Units Completed	Number of Students	Percent of Students
2	4	10.5
3	6	15.8
4	26	68.4
5	2	5.3
Total	38	100

The majority of students (89%) completed 3 or more units of the MCI program.

Table 2 summarizes fidelity and test performance measures on each unit of MCI. Only students who had fully completed that particular unit were included in this table.

¹ A unit was considered completed if a student had finished all three unit tests.



Table 2. Fidelity of implementation and test performance by unit.

Unit	N	Time on Task (Minutes)	Mean Unit Test Grade (out of 10)			Overall Unit Score (out of 30)	Time on Passage 1 (Minutes)	Time on Passage 2 (Minutes)
			Test 1	Test 2	Test 3			
1	38	66.53	7.87	9.21	7.34	24.42	18.12	12.56
2	38	61.42	8.87	7.50	7.32	23.68	13.02	13.86
3	34	61.71	8.94	9.06	6.76	24.76	15.68	14.96
4	28	51.60	8.32	7.75	6.07	22.14	11.36	11.98
5	2	47.41	7.00	7.50	5.00	19.50	8.57	6.49
		60.71	8.48	8.39	6.91	23.78	14.64	13.30

Note. Only students who have completed a full unit are included at each unit level. No students completed all 6 units of the MCI program.

On average, students spent approximately one hour training on each unit. Students tended to score a bit lower on the third unit test relative to the first and second tests. On average, students spent approximately 15 minutes on passage one and 13 minutes on passage two. The product best practice recommendation is that students spend approximately 40 minutes reading and marking passages. Relative to this standard students spent little time reading the passages when using the MCI program.

The unit tests that were administered assess students' understanding of the target comprehension skills of the three lessons within each unit. They are not designed to assess gains from the start of a unit to the end.

Academy of READING[®] Placement Test

Students whose data was considered for this report completed the Academy of READING[®] Placement Test. The Academy of READING[®] Placement Test is an assessment of reading ability. It is a CLOZE paragraph test, in which students are presented with a paragraph of text with certain words removed and a list of potential words with which to fill each blank. From this list, students must try to select the correct word: the one which makes most sense in the context of the surrounding sentences. The Academy of READING[®] Placement Test strongly correlates with the standardized Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT) and various state tests.

Students receive a score which indicates their grade level equivalent (GLE) reading ability. This test was administered before and after the study to examine the gains students achieved by training with MCI.



Student Gains

MCI is designed for students whose reading comprehension skills are below their current grade level. A student's proficiency gap was calculated by subtracting their pre-test proficiency-score (GLE) from their actual grade level. As a result a student with a proficiency gap score of zero is performing at their grade level and a student with a *positive* proficiency gap score is performing *below* their grade level. For example, a grade 5 student with a proficiency gap score of +2 is performing at a grade 3 level.

Therefore, only students with a proficiency gap greater than zero were included in the following analyses. Furthermore, to ensure the fidelity of intervention only students who had completed at least 3 units of MCI were included ($n = 26$).

Student scores on the Academy of READING[®] Placement Test both before and after training in MCI are displayed in Figure 1.

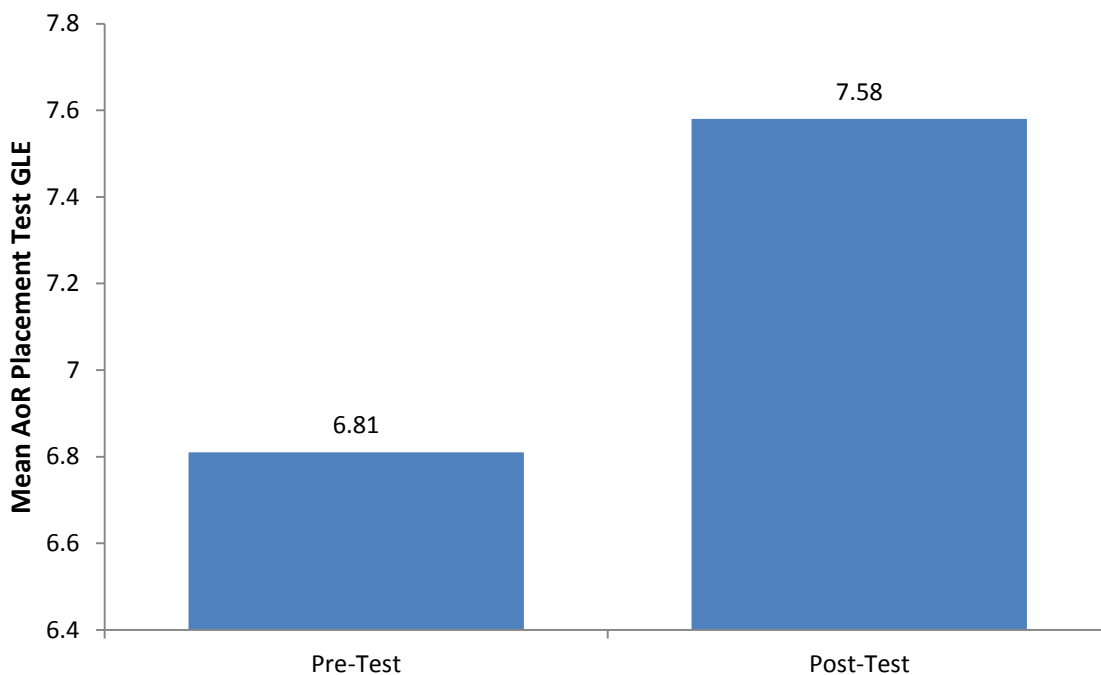


Figure 1: Mean student GLE scores before and after training on MCI.

Students reading ability significantly improved from the pre-test to the post-test, $t(25) = 2.70$, $p = .01$. On average, students reading ability increased by 0.77 GLE from the start to end of the intervention. These results are particularly positive as students were only trained from September to December using MCI.



Proficiency Gap Analysis

Students' gains on the Academy of READING® Placement Test were examined based on their proficiency gap. The results of this analysis are presented in Figure 2. As only one student had a proficiency gap of 4 that student was grouped with students who had a proficiency gap of 3.

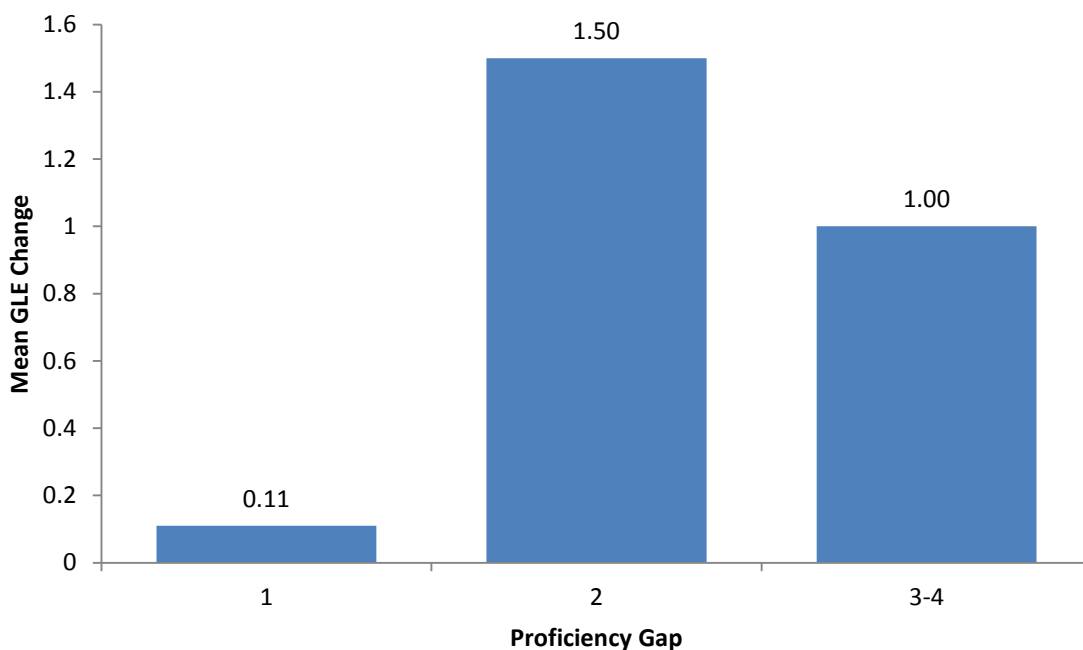


Figure 2: Mean GLE gains by proficiency gap.

The greatest gains were achieved by students who performed two or more grade levels below their actual grade level. On average, they achieved gains of 1.50 grade level.

Summary

Overall, the results of this report are positive. Over a short period of training (i.e., September to December) students struggling with reading who completed at least 3 units on MCI made average gains of 0.75 grade levels. In general, the greater a student's proficiency gap the more gains they made after training.



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