

# Reading Recovery in Arkansas

## 2001-2002 Executive Summary

### Introduction

Reading Recovery is a short-term early literacy intervention that provides intensive instruction for children with the lowest reading performance in first grade. Students receive 30 minutes of daily one-to-one instruction in reading and writing for a period of 12 to 20 weeks from a highly trained certified teacher who teaches Reading Recovery for approximately half of the school day. During the other half of the day the teacher works with classes or small groups of kindergarten through third grade students having reading difficulty.

Reading Recovery enables a child to make accelerated progress, catch up to his or her peers and benefit from regular classroom instruction. In the last twelve years, over 10,000 children in Arkansas have benefited from Reading Recovery and over one million nationwide.



### Reading Recovery

**Reading Recovery is not a program.** It is a collaborative effort between local school districts, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Arkansas Education Service Cooperatives, the Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Legislature. For the last 12 years, these partnerships have provided intensive training for new teachers and teacher leaders along with high-quality ongoing professional development in an effort to change the lives of children.

**Reading Recovery is based on scientifically based reading research.** Reading Recovery incorporates components identified by the National Reading Panel as being necessary for effective reading instruction, including phonemic awareness, phonics, guided oral reading, comprehension and fluency.

**Reading Recovery students maintain their gains after first grade.** State studies from Arkansas, Indiana, Ohio, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Texas, Georgia and South Dakota have reported that Reading Recovery children sustain their gains beyond first grade, as measured by standardized tests.

### Reading Recovery in Arkansas 2001-2002

In 2001-2002, 2,430 children received Reading Recovery lessons from 243 Reading Recovery teachers (see Table 1). This figure does not include children who were taught in small groups by Reading Recovery teachers during the other half of their working day in classrooms or small groups.

Reading Recovery teachers received ongoing professional development from Reading Recovery teacher leaders, who themselves received professional development from the Reading Recovery trainer at the Reading Recovery Training Center at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Slightly more males than females received Reading Recovery in the 2001-2002 school year. Over half of these children received free or reduced lunches. Most of the children served were either White or African American.

**Table 1 — Reading Recovery Sites in Arkansas, 2001-2002**

Arkansas Reading Recovery Sites	Total Teachers <sup>1</sup> 2001-2002	Teachers Trained	Students
Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative	10	0	87
Central Region	75	5	668
Dawson Education Service Cooperative	53	6	496
Fort Smith School District	9	5	216
Little Rock School District	17	2	139
Northeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative	43	6	375
Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative	28	14	371
Van Buren School District	8	8	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>2430</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes Teacher Leaders and Teachers-in-Training.

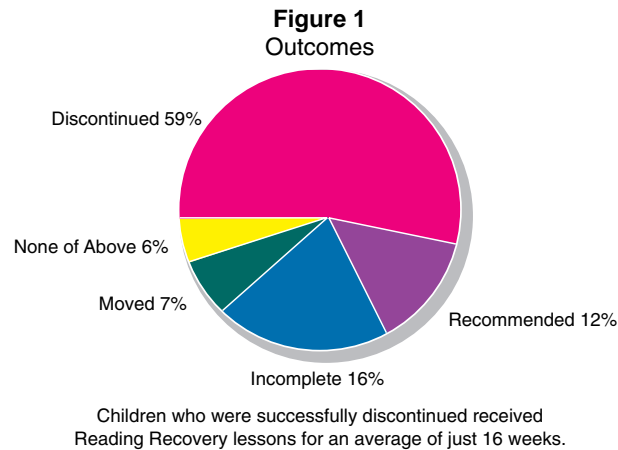
Hispanic numbers have increased every year, mainly in Northwest Arkansas. Most of these children spoke English as a second language. Table 2 shows the sex, lunch costs, race/ethnicity, and native language of Reading Recovery and Random Sample students.

**Table 2—Sex, Lunch Costs, Race/Ethnicity, and Native Language of Reading Recovery and Random Sample Students, 2001-2002**

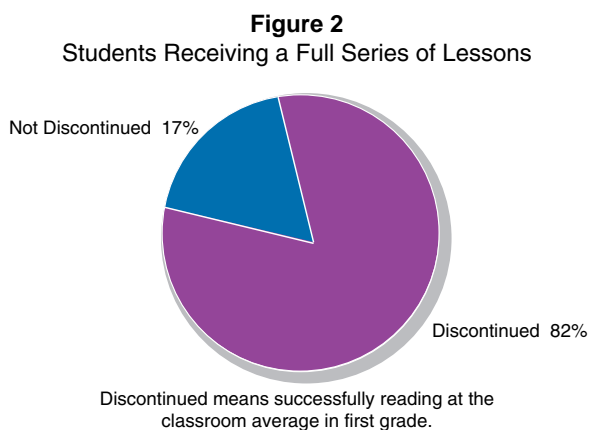
Description	Reading Recovery		Random Sample	
	n	col%	n	col%
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	1421	58%	384	49%
Female	1019	42%	403	51%
<b>Lunch Costs</b>				
Free	1211	50%	292	37%
Reduced	148	6%	61	8%
Regular	481	20%	280	36%
Info. Unavailable	599	25%	153	19%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
Native American	10	0%	12	2%
Asian	15	1%	17	2%
African American	716	29%	170	22%
Hispanic/Latino	199	8%	51	6%
Pacific Islander	3	0%	1	0%
White	1479	61%	527	67%
Multiethnic	19	1%	9	1%
<b>Native Language</b>				
English	2252	92%	729	93%
Spanish	172	7%	42	5%
Chinese	0	0%	1	0%
Other	16	1%	15	2%

## Results

Reading Recovery reports on all students served. There are five possible outcomes: **discontinued** successfully from the intervention having reached an average reading level; **recommended** for further assessment or consideration of additional instructional support after receiving a full series of lessons of at least 20 weeks; **moved** before completing the series of lessons, and **incomplete** series of lessons, usually because the school year ends while the student is being served. **None of the above** is a rarely used category for outcomes that do not fit any of the above categories (for example, a student is placed back in kindergarten).



A total of 1784 children served had the opportunity to receive a full series of lessons of at least twenty weeks. Of those, 81% discontinued successfully, reaching average levels of reading and writing.



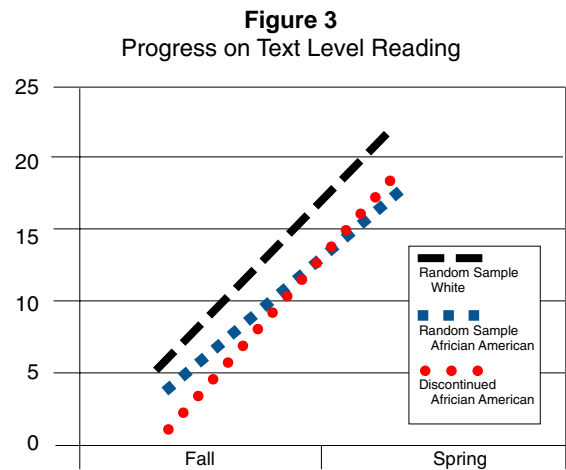
## Closing the Achievement Gap

Evidence from national research shows that an achievement gap exists along racial lines. Although this literacy achievement gap exists in Arkansas as well, we now have evidence that shows Reading Recovery students are closing the gap when compared to the progress of a random sample group.

In 2001-2002 this random sample was disaggregated by race and compared to discontinued African American students. As shown in Figure 3, African American

students in the Random Sample began the school year reading slightly lower than White students. As the year progressed, the disparity between the two groups widened.

By contrast, African American students who were successfully discontinued from Reading Recovery began the year several text levels below either random sample group. By the end of the first grade year, these successfully discontinued Reading Recovery students were closing the gap with their White peers. This valuable finding provides evidence that their accelerated progress goes against the trend for low achieving students.



## Reading Recovery— Part of a Comprehensive Model

In Arkansas, Reading Recovery has been most effective when implemented as an integral part of a comprehensive approach to literacy including effective classrooms, small group instruction and one-to-one intervention. Research has shown that the lowest achieving children need a one-to-one intervention. Some need continued supplemental help in the form of small group intervention. To ensure that “no child is left behind,” a range of services including Reading Recovery is essential. Arkansas has been a leader in providing effective literacy instruction for struggling readers.

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