Effects of the Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) program on reading fluency with English language learners

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Effects of the Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) Program on Reading Fluency with English Language Learners

by

Heeyeon Chung

A Dissertation
Submitted to the University at Albany, State University of New York
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the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Psychology

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Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of the HELPS Program on the reading fluency skills of English Learners (ELs) using a multiple-baseline single case design methodology. Participants in this study included five ELs attending a public elementary school in northern New York State. Students were identified for participation through a review of available records indicating below average reading fluency skills and/or teacher recommendations based on reading fluency performance in the classroom. Visual analysis and Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) were used to evaluate Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM) scores from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) passages as primary data and the HELPS reading probes as secondary data. The results of this study produced idiosyncratic results and overall did not unequivocally demonstrate that the HELPS Program is an effective intervention for promoting oral reading fluency among elementary ELs. Potential challenges of implementing the HELPS program with ELs and future research directions in reading interventions for ELs are discussed.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Language demands in learning become increasingly sophisticated as students are exposed to different levels of reading, writing, listening, and speaking at school (O'Brien & Leighton, 2015). Research consistently shows a positive correlation between reading well, school performance, and success beyond school (Pressley et al., 2006). English Learners (ELs) who are culturally and linguistically diverse have been a longstanding and significant concern in the U.S. educational system due to their poor academic achievements compared to non-ELs (Carrasquillo et al., 2004; Kena et al., 2014; Nagy & Anderson, 1984). ELs in the United States have been frequently reported to be disproportionately presented in special education (Artiles et al., 2010; Coutinho & Oswald, 2000; Donovan & Corss, 2002; Losen & Welner, 2001; Waitoller et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2014).

As one of the fastest growing subgroups in U.S. schools, ELs have an impact on the instructional environment in U.S. schools, and the widening gap of academic achievement between ELs and non-ELs is a timely and significant concern (Huang et al., 2012; Kamps et al., 2007). To bridge the gap, both legally and systematically, educational systems have changed to promote their language and academic skills. However, data suggests the use of evidence-based, culturally and linguistically sensitive language assessment tools and interventions continue to remain limited in schools (Crosse et al., 2011; Kretlow & Helf, 2013). Moreover, there is a paucity of research studies which examine the effectiveness of interventions on ELs in the elementary school level when the achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs start to widen (Hansen & Collins, 2015; Hemphill et al., 2011; Kieffer, 2010).

For educators, understanding the underlying process of academic language development is critical, given that the EL population is highly heterogeneous in their educational backgrounds...
(Donovan & Cross, 2002; MacMillan & Reschly, 1998; McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). Therefore, evidence-based assessment tools and interventions which reflect language development can benefit teachers, educators, and ELs. Ultimately, culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogies may lead to bridge the language, cultural, and academic gaps between ELs and non-ELs (Mellom et al., 2018).

This chapter begins with a detailed description of ELs, current challenges they experience in special education programs, and their academic language development. The theoretical underpinnings of oral reading fluency (ORF) are then introduced, as the construct of ORF is relevant for the reading and academic performance of ELs. After discussing the current systems of support and interventions for ELs in reading such as the Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) program, the significance of the study is explained with an emphasis on the need for examining the effectiveness of evidence-based intervention for ELs.

**English Learners (ELs)**

English learners, or English as New Language learners, represent a group of students who are often born outside the U.S. and/or speak a language other than English in their homes and do not have adequate mastery of English to meet state standards (McFarland et al., 2017). They are simultaneously learning how to communicate in English as well as engage English language academic content which is expected in each subsequent grade level of the US school system (Garcia et al., 2010). Although ELs are one of the fastest-growing subsets of the student population (Kena et al., 2014; McFarland et al., 2017), they are at risk for school failure for several reasons. One of the most prominent reasons is that the teacher population for ELs remains largely monolingual, white, and lacking experience with culturally diverse populations (Howard, 2006). Furthermore, the demands of high-stakes testing and teacher accountability
measures can potentially create negative attitudes towards ELs (Harper & De Jong, 2009; Van de Bergh et al., 2010; Zumwalt & Craig, 2005). As shown in the literature, the prominent role of teacher attitudes and beliefs can impact student achievement (Pettit, 2011); therefore, culturally sensitive instruction, assessment, and interventions are necessary to mitigate the widening gap of academic achievement when compared to non-ELs (Mellom et al., 2018).

**Legal Educational Standards for English Learners**

The current trend in federal legislation and national and state assessments calling for a more inclusive policy for ELs first began in the 1960s following the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the landmark 1974 decision, *Lau v. Nichols* (Douglas & Supreme Court of the United Sates, 1973), and the result of *Plyler v. Doe* (Brennan & Supreme Court of The United States, 1981).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; 1997 & 2004) was amended in both 1997 and 2004 to monitor for state trends in disproportionality of ELs. In addition, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB; 2001) Act of 2001 and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA; 2015), which replaced NCLB in 2015, mandated states, school districts, and schools determine what supports and interventions are needed for all students to succeed, including ELs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2016). With the current federal government's commitment to annual high-stakes standardized testing and linking the results of testing to a school funding from the government, the comparisons of academic achievement in both groups places substantial stress on states, districts, schools, and most importantly, ELs, whose academic language development take a substantial amount of time and support (Darling-Hammond et al., 2016).

**Disproportionality in Special Education**

Even though the legal system has strived to grant ELs equal access to the education system, ELs continue to struggle academically (Linan-Thompson, 2010), and a longstanding
concern has been the disproportional representation of ELs in special education (Donovan & Cross, 2002). This disproportionality stems from a challenge when determining if an EL is academically struggling because of his or her Language deficits or because of an undiagnosed learning disability (Donovan & Cross, 2002).

There is a significant amount of evidence of ELs being both over- and underrepresented in special education programs (Artiles et al., 2005; Rueda & Windmüller, 2006; Sullivan, 2011; Sullivan & Bal, 2013; Zehler et al., 2003). Linguistic barriers, limited parental involvement, poorly designed language assessments and lack of effective instructional strategies for ELs were suggested to be the confounding factors in the disproportionality (Klingner et al., 2006; Shifrer et al., 2011; Waitoller et al., 2010).

**Achievement Gap between ELs and Non-ELs**

Both over- and underrepresentation can be harmful to ELs because students who end up in classrooms or programs mismatched to their needs can be hampered in their educational achievement (Burr et al., 2015). EL’s reading abilities depend on many factors including their literacy and language skills in their native language, reading proficiency levels in their non-native language, their disabilities, past literacy educational experiences in their non-native language, their text comprehension, background knowledge, and teacher abilities (August et al., 2009; Eskey, 2005; Grassi & Baker, 2010; Samson & Lesaux, 2009; Saracho & Spodek, 2007). Making inferences and analyzing text in English, which are critical skills in reading comprehension, can be challenging to ELs (Gersten & Baker, 2000). The achievement differences in comprehension scores between EL and non-EL tend to emerge by kindergarten, widen through fourth grade, and persist well into high school (Hansen & Collins, 2015; Hemphill et al., 2011; Kieffer, 2010). However, there is a paucity of published research studies that focus
on reading interventions for ELs at the elementary school level. Future research is warranted on effective, research-based reading interventions for ELs in the elementary grade levels.

**Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)**

Oral reading fluency, or the oral translation of text with speed and accuracy, is a complicated, multifaceted behavior which is one indicator of basic reading competence (Fuchs & Deno, 1991; Fuchs et al., 2001). It entails a reader's perceptual skills at automatically translating letters into coherent sound representations, utilizing those sound components to generate recognizable wholes and automatically assessing lexical representations, processing meaningful connections within and between sentence, relating text meaning to prior information, and making inferences to supply missing information (Fuchs et al., 2001). Early intervention in ORF for elementary school students is essential because the greatest growth in ORF occurs in the primary grades, and the relation between ORF and comprehension is the strongest in the elementary and middle school grades (Fuchs et al., 2001). However, ORF has been widely neglected in core reading curricula in the U.S. as compared to other countries (Danne et al., 2005), and ELs are one of the largest groups of learners experiencing English reading fluency difficulties (Denton et al., 2004).

**Systems of Support for English Learners**

Early interventions for ELs have been widely recommended, as early reading skills in phonological awareness, print knowledge, and oral language, which typically develop in the preschool period, mature into reading ability at school-age (Farver et al., 2009). Two systems of support for ELs are currently available for ELs: bilingual instruction and dual-language immersion and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Bilingual education students receive instruction in their native language and English while students in ESL programs are
typically taught within general education classrooms and receive a support program for ESL without instruction in their native language. Several factors such as which ELs are enrolled, how their native language and English proficiency is assessed and monitored, and the core literacy program they receive for development of native language and/or English literacy skills determine academic success amongst ELs.

Given the importance of core literacy skills, current stream of literature suggest that school districts use a response to intervention (RtI) approach with ELs to more accurately identify and provide services to students in need of support (Vanderwood & Nam 2008). Although there is a substantial amount of research supporting the use of an RtI approach when addressing reading difficulties with monolingual students, there is significantly less evidence regarding the effectiveness of this approach with ELs (Vanderwood & Nam 2008). Moreover, the number of reading interventions for EL students that have empirical evidence of their effectiveness continues to be limited (August et al., 2014; Klinger & Orosco, 2010). Considering the complexities associated with the acquisition of ORF and persistent problems associated with achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs, identifying and implementing evidence-based ORF interventions for ELs must be prioritized in current reading instruction (Denton et al., 2004; Dufrene & Warzak, 2007; Malloy et al., 2007; Ross & Begeny, 2011).

The HELPS Program

To strengthen students’ oral reading fluency, the Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) program was developed by Begeny (2009). As an academic intervention which promotes fluency building, the HELPS program uses the concepts and principles of behaviorally-based instruction to enhance student performance and encourage attention to task (Begeny & Martens, 2006). The feasibility and flexibility of the HELPS program in school
settings is one of its most notable strengths. In addition, Begeny and colleague (2009) also noted that the HELPS program can be efficiently used within a school that promotes research-based instruction and data-based decision-making within a Response-to-Intervention (RTI) framework. As the goal of RTI is to efficiently allocate school resources, the HELPS program can be integrated at each of the three tiers of RTI.

An intervention designed to improve students’ reading skills, the HELPS program integrates eight evidence-based reading fluency strategies (Begeny, 2009). The following eight instructional techniques are incorporated into the HELPS program: (1) repeated reading; (2) model reading; (3) systematic error-correction procedures; (4) verbal cues for students to read with fluency; (5) verbal cues for comprehension; (6) goal setting; (7) performance feedback; and (8) use of systematic praise and structured reward system. Despite initial evidence showing promise for the HELPS program as an effective and feasible supplement to elementary-aged students’ core reading program, only the preliminary evaluation by Begeny and colleagues (2012) and a doctoral dissertation project by Villanueva (2015) investigated its effectiveness on increasing ORF among ELs, and their results were inconsistent.

**Statement of the Problem**

There is a problem in the current American education system. Despite urgent calls for evidence-based interventions for the ELs, there is a paucity of research available on the topic of ELs and their language development. This problem has negatively impacted the EL population, which is one of the fastest growing subgroups in schools. Therefore, this study aims to address the problem associated with the limited research findings on the effectiveness of a reading intervention with the ELs. By using a multiple baseline single case study, this study could extend
research on reading fluency interventions for ELs with converging evidence from an independent study.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the present study is to add to the current literature regarding the effectiveness of the HELPS program for enhancing students’ reading fluency. More specifically, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the HELPS program for enhancing reading fluency skills in ELs with limited academic English language competency.

**Importance of the Study**

Appropriate development of ORF typically requires evidence-based literacy instruction (Fuchs et al., 2001). Moreover, an increasing achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs in reading highlights the importance of a systematic reading intervention whose effect is quantified as growth in ORF (Solari & Gerber, 2008). Although the current literature on the effectiveness of the HELPS program has suggested that it is a promising intervention for helping students’ reading fluency skills in grades K - 4, limited research has been conducted on its effects with the EL population. Considering the complexities associated with the acquisition of ORF and persistent problems associated with achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs, the present study seeks to address these needs in the current literature.

**Summary of Methodology**

Given this nature of current study, a multiple-baseline experimental design (MBD) will be used (Horner et al., 2005; Neuman & McCormick, 1995). A MBD has several benefits. First, such a design is experimental and allows researchers to determine whether a delivered intervention did result in change in a behavior. Second, it is highly feasible since strong conclusions can be made with as few as three subjects. Finally, it is the design of choice for non-
reversible behaviors, such as reading, since it does not require a return to baseline (Gay & Airasian, 2000; Kucera & Axelrod, 1995).
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Literacy skills are at the heart of learning as they are the medium by which concepts and skills are learned and assessed (Bloome et al., 2004). As a student progresses through grade levels, language demands in reading, writing, speaking, and listening become increasingly sophisticated (Carrasquillo et al., 2004; Kena et al., 2014; Nagy & Anderson, 1984; O'Brien & Leighton, 2015). This is particularly true for English learners (ELs) who are in the process of learning daily and academic English (O'Brien & Leighton, 2015). Without understanding the underlying process of academic English development, supporting ELs in mainstream classrooms would be highly challenging for educators (McCullure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). Moreover, a rapidly increasing number of ELs in U.S. schools, coupled with their frequently poor academic performance on high-stakes tests, indicates the need to address the educational needs of this growing population (Crosse et al., 2011; Huang et al., 2012; Kretlow & Helf, 2013).

Demographics of the English Language Learners

English learners represent a group of students whose English proficiency is too limited to allow them to benefit fully from instruction in English in elementary, middle, and secondary education (McFarland et al., 2017). English learners are often born outside the U.S. or speak a language other than English in their homes, and do not have adequate mastery of English to meet state educational standards (McFarland et al., 2017).

According to the data provided by National Center for Education Statistics (McFarland et al., 2017), the number of public school students in the United States who were ELs has been consistently on the rise. In the school year of 2014-2015, an estimated 4.6 million students were ELs, and the percentage was close to 10% of the overall student population (McFarland et al., 2017). Thomas and Collier (2002) predicted the population of ELs in U.S. school systems would
be at 40% by 2030. The data from NCES (McFarland et al., 2017) also indicated that the highest percentage of ELs was reported in California (22.4%), and the percentage was higher for school districts in more populated areas, such as cities and suburbs. A greater percentage of ELs was reported in lower grades as compared to upper grades in public schools (McFarland et al., 2017). Spanish was the home language of 3.7 million ELs in 2014–15, representing 77.1 percent of all ELs (McFarland et al., 2017). In addition, ELs with disabilities represented 13.8 percent of the total ELs enrolled in U.S. public schools (McFarland et al., 2017). Given the current demographic trend of ELs, they are the fastest-growing segment of the student population, and educators are increasingly becoming aware of their heterogeneity (Calderón et al., 2011).

**Legal Educational Standards for English Learners**

The current trend in federal legislation and national and state assessments calling for a more inclusive policy for ELs first began in the 1960s. Following the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a series of laws were passed to ensure the desegregation of public and educational facilities based on race, color, religion or national origin (Civil Rights Act of 1964, 1964). In the landmark 1974 decision, *Lau v. Nichols* (Douglas & Supreme Court of the United States, 1973), the United States Supreme Court established the right of ELs to have a meaningful opportunity to participate in their educational program. The result of *Plyler v. Doe*, (Brennan & Supreme Court of The United States, 1981), a later court case, also banned the denial of education funding to immigrant children (Olsen, 2000).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; 2006) was amended in both 1997 and 2004 to monitor for state trends in disproportionality of ELs. The U.S. Department of Education’s Equity in IDEA requires compliance monitoring for minority overrepresentation in special education (IDEA, 2004). In addition, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB; 2001) Act of
2001 was introduced and was passed by Congress with bipartisan support (McDonnell, 2005). It was first introduced to reduce the achievement gaps between ELs and non-ELs; the legislation, however, encouraged as a monolingual approach because students' educational backgrounds or linguistic proficiency were not considered as critical variables in academic performance on state-mandated tests (Harper et al., 2008). Under NCLB (2001), the mandated equitable education for ELs included monitoring ELs' English language acquisition process and their academic achievement on state-mandated tests like their non-EL peers. Though NCLB (2001) enforced schools to provide high-quality education to ELs, the achievement gap between ELs and their native English-speaking peers remained unresolved (Burke et al., 2014).

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA; 2015) replaced NCLB in 2015 and mandated states, school districts, and schools to determine what supports and interventions are needed for all students to succeed, including ELs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2016). The ESSA (2015) also reaffirmed the federal government's commitment to annual high-stakes standardized testing and linking the results of testing to school funding (Darling-Hammond et al., 2016). Considering the significant time requirement for ELs to develop academic language skills, the comparisons of academic achievement across both groups places substantial stress on states, districts, schools, and ELs. According to Menken (2010), the dropout rate has increased in the years since ELs were required to participate in the Regents testing requirement in the New York City where In New York City, where most of the state’s ELs reside. Since the New York state began requiring these students to pass the Regents exams to receive a diploma, the EL dropout rate has increased by about eight percentage points (e.g., 21% dropout rate in the year prior to the inclusion of ELLs in the high school exit exam requirement to 29% dropout rate for ELs after the inclusion) while the dropout rate for non-ELs has remained consistent (Menken, 2010). This finding is
consistent with national data, as the dropout rates are higher and graduation rates lower in states requiring high school exit exams for ELs (Dee & Jacob, 2006). Beyond the low graduation rates and high dropout rates discussed in the preceding section, another consequence is that because ELs typically do not perform well on standardized tests, they are more likely to receive instruction that focuses on test preparation in the form of rote memorization and drills, at the expense of teaching methods proven effective in meeting the needs of this student population (Menken, 2008).

Disproportionality in Special Education

Even though the legal system has strived to grant ELs with equal access to the education system, ELs, overall, continue to struggle academically (Linan-Thompson, 2010), and a longstanding concern has been the disproportional representation of ELs in special education (Donovan & Cross, 2002). Representation in special education refers to the extent to which a group of students is identified for special education placement in comparison with their overall representation in the general school population (Bal et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2014). Currently, there is no universally accepted percentage that indicates underrepresentation or overrepresentation of a group; it is up to a school district and an individual state to determine the identification criteria and the representation of ELs in special education (Wald & Kurlaender, 2003). Moreover, it is difficult to estimate exactly how disproportionate the rate of misidentification and placement for special education services is because there is no mandate requiring districts to report such information (Zimmerman, 2014).

There is a significant amount evidence of ELs being both over- and underrepresented in special education programs (Artiles et al., 2005; Rueda & Windmueller, 2006; Sullivan, 2011; Sullivan & Bal, 2013; Zehler et al., 2003). By grade level, ELs tend to be underrepresented in
special education in the elementary grades, but over-represented beginning in 5th grade through high school (Artiles et al., 2005). In addition, ELs were under- and overrepresented by disability category. Compared to underrepresentation in the prevalence of diagnosed emotional and behavioral disorders (Artiles et al., 2005; Hibell et al., 2010; Sullivan, 2011), ELs were overrepresented in the diagnosing of intellectual disabilities and speech and language impairments (Artiles et al., 2005; Sullivan, 2011). This is often because ELs’ emerging language is often confused with language disability or disorder and English Language Learners students are often inappropriately referred for special education services (Sullivan, 2011). Consequently, there is a disproportionate number of English Language Learners identified as having learning disabilities (Zimmerman, 2014). Linguistic barriers, limited parental involvement, poorly designed language assessments, and a lack of effective instructional strategies for ELs were also suggested to be the confounding factors in the disproportionality along with ELs’ race and ethnicity (Klingner et al., 2006; Shifrer et al., 2011; Waitoller et al., 2010).

The disproportionate placement of ELs in special education has led to the conclusion that school-related factors, including discriminatory identification procedures, explain ELs’ disproportionality in special education (Donovan & Cross, 2002; Morgan et al., 2018; Oswald et al., 2001). This systemic bias was reviewed by Morgan and colleagues (2018). Their best-evidence synthesis research yielded negligible empirical evidence that minority overrepresentation is occurring because of race, ethnicity, or language use; instead, it was suggested that these factors were leading to ELs being under-identified as having disabilities (Morgan et al., 2018). Thus, it is misleading to conclude that ELs are overrepresented in special education (Counts et al., 2018).
Achievement Gap between ELs and Non-ELs

Both over- and underrepresentation can be harmful to ELs because students who end up in classrooms or programs mismatched to their needs can be hampered in their educational achievement (Burr, Haas, & Ferriere, 2015). Additionally, when teachers fail to understand the unique needs of EL students, it increases the risk of inappropriate classification and placement in special education and may deprive them of the services and supports they need (Artiles & Ortiz, 2002).

Many classroom academic tasks require skilled reading, and ELs, who are learning simultaneously both content and the English language, are mandated to take the standardized test in English after three years of entering the school system; thus, it is not surprising that their performance results in a significantly lower percentage of ELs pass statewide tests compared to non-ELs (Abedi & Dietal, 2004; Büttner & Hasselhorn, 2011; Huang et al., 2011; Menken, 2006; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). According to the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress in the United States, fourth-grade ELs scored 37 points lower than non-ELs in reading, where 10 points is roughly equivalent to one grade level (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Making inferences and analyzing text in English, which are critical skills in reading comprehension, becomes even more challenging to ELs (Gersten & Baker, 2000). The achievement differences in comprehension scores between EL and non-EL tends to emerge by kindergarten, widen through fourth grade, and persist well through high school (Hansen & Collins, 2015; Hemphill, Vanneman, & Rahman, 2011; Kieffer, 2010). Therefore, ELs, either due to deficient language knowledge or poor learning skills (Goldenberg, 2011), often demonstrate needs for instructional support in reading (Klingner et al., 2006; Swanson et al., 2011).
**Academic Language Development**

Cummins (1979) introduced the distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) and highlighted the different time phases she theorized is required by ELs to attain conversational fluency as compared to academic language proficiency. Conversational fluency, or BICS, is often acquired within two years of initial exposure. In contrast, academic language development, or CALP, takes at least five years (Collier, 1987; Klesmer, 1994; Cummins, 1981). According to Corson (1995), typical conversational interactions in English are drastically different from academic uses of English, which implies the distinction between BICS and CALP. Therefore, educators should not assume that ELs with conversational reading fluency have overcome all difficulties with English because ELs may not have all the necessary skills for academic success (Hakuta, 2011). Also, when educators fail to take account of this difference and rely solely on the assessments of ELs’ oral or conversational language, ELs may exit from language support services prematurely (Cummins, 1984). Edelsky and colleagues (1983) disagreed with the early work of Cummins, stating that the distinction between two types of language does not reflect social practices. Despite these criticisms, the distinction between BICS and CALP provides a theoretical interpretation of academic difficulties among ELs as well as students who no longer receive English as a Second Language (ESL) services.

**Definition of Oral Reading Fluency**

Reading is a complex skill that requires instantaneous execution of a variety of components (Fuchs et al., 2001; Logan, 1997). English learners, who have limited acquisition of these skills, are at high risk of developing reading difficulties, including problems with reading accuracy and fluency (Brisk & Herrington, 2000).
Oral reading fluency (ORF), or the oral translation of text with speed and accuracy, represents a complicated, multifaceted behavior that entails (a) phonological awareness; (b) blending those sound components into recognizable wholes and automatically assessing lexical representations; (c) processing meaningful connections within and between sentences; (d) relating text meaning to prior information; and (e) making inferences to supply missing information (Fuchs et al., 2001). It also serves as an indicator of basic reading competence, as it develops gradually over the elementary school years (Fuchs & Deno, 1991; Fuchs et al., 2001). Kuhn and colleagues (2010) define ORF as follows:

Fluency combines accuracy, automaticity, and oral reading prosody, which, taken together, facilitate the reader’s construction of meaning. It is demonstrated during oral reading through ease of word recognition, appropriate pacing, phrasing, and intonation. It is a factor in both oral and silent reading that can limit and support comprehension (p.242).

As automatic word recognition is a critical component of fluent reading, phonemic awareness and letter-sound correspondences are important in the process of identifying words both rapidly and correctly (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2018). In addition to an integrated definition that includes accuracy, speed, and prosody, ORF is a critical component to build skilled reading. Samuels (2006) defined skilled reading as the ability to decode, which can be directly measured by ORF, and to comprehend the text at the same time, which is often measured by reading comprehension skills. By contributing to and possibly resulting from readers' understanding of the text, ORF bridges decoding and comprehension and creates a reciprocal relationship with comprehension (Klauda & Guthrie, 2008; Stecker et al., 1998).
Oral Reading Fluency can be indexed as words read correctly per minute and improvement can be monitored as growth in ORF over time (i.e., days; Deno et al., 2001; Fuchs et al., 2001). During initial stages of learning to read, a measure of word-level reading skills or student’s ability to ability to read words fluently is central to students’ overall reading competence (Fuchs et a., 2001). Therefore, early intervention to improve ORF for elementary school students is essential. Moreover, prior research suggests that the greatest growth in ORF occurs in the primary grades, and the relation between ORF and comprehension is the strongest in the elementary and middle school grades (Baker et al., 2015). However, ORF has been widely neglected in core reading curricula in the U.S. as compared to other countries, and 40% of U.S. fourth graders are reported to be non-fluent readers (Danne et al., 2005). Along with students with specific learning disabilities (SLD), ELs are one of the largest groups of learners experiencing English reading fluency difficulties (Denton et al., 2004).

**Theory of Automaticity**

Several theoretical conceptualizations of ORF have commonly suggested that accuracy, automaticity, and prosody all contribute to the construct of ORF (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). A prominent and frequently cited theory of reading fluency is LaBerge and Samuels' (1974) automaticity model of reading, which promoted the view that skilled reading involves the reallocation of attentional capacity from lower level word identification processing to resource-demanding comprehension functions. It is often referred to as a framework for conceptualizing ORF as an indicator of overall reading competence. According to LaBerge and Samuels (1974), there is a limited capacity of attention and working memory in cognitive processing when engaging in reading. The coordination of many components skills in reading are executed within a short time frame through an attentional load that is within tolerable limits. If each component
required attention, the performance of the complex skill would exceed attentional capacity and therefore be impossible. Because comprehension requires higher order processes that cannot become automatic, word identification must become an automatic process. When one can read words automatically, one's limited cognitive resources can be used for comprehension (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). For example, there is evidence to suggest that students with dyslexia experience reading difficulties due to an underlying deficit in automaticity (Hudson et al., 2005).

Building on the work of LaBerge and Samuels, Doehring (1976) conducted one of the most systematic studies of the development of fluency among children from kindergarten until the end of high school. According to Doehring (1976), fluent reading occurs when the graphological, orthographic, semantic, and semantic-syntactic features of word sequences are mastered. He also posited that the acquisition of rates of processing in symbols, letters, letter combinations, words, word sequences, and sentences become more rapid as a child undergoes developmental stages to accurately and fluently read texts (Doehring, 1976).

Like LaBerge and Samuels (1974) and Doehring (1976), Perfetti's (1977, 1985) verbal efficiency theory emphasized automatic, effortless rates of processing that allow the reallocation of attention. Perfetti (1985) provided a theoretical explanation of individual differences in reading comprehension due to individual differences in the efficient operation of local processes. He also highlighted that the quality of logical processes and their integration are potentially fluency-limiting factors in reading acquisition (Perfetti, 1985).
Main Constructs of Oral Reading Fluency

The definition of ORF may vary as more research is performed to decode the complexity of its development; yet, automaticity and prosody are universally considered as main constructs of ORF.

Automaticity

As mentioned above, automatic word recognition is central to the construct of ORF and comprehension (Samuels, Ediger, Willcutt, & Palumbo, 2006). According to Logan (1997), automatic processes have four properties including speed, effortlessness, autonomy, and lack of conscious awareness. Moreover, most fluent readers not only read text, but they also simultaneously comprehend what they are reading (Kuhn et al., 2010). Automatic processes occur without intention and conscious awareness, and the autonomy of lexical processing, which encompasses orthographic segmentation and phonological coding, indicates that one is a fluent reader (Schwanenflugel, Morris, Kuhn, Strauss, & Sieczko, 2008).

Prosody

Prosody, which is a second critical component of ORF, refers to the ability to read with appropriate expression or intonation coupled with phrasing that allows for the maintenance of meaning (Schwanenflugel et al., 2004). Like the language of music, it captures the rise and falls of pitch, rhythm, and stress, as well as the pausing, lengthening, and elision surrounding certain words and phrases (Hirschberg, 2002). Pitch, duration, stress, and pauses are major features of prosody (Kuhn et al., 2010). An initial rising and falling pitch conveys pragmatic information while sensitivity to stress patterns and pausing are related to the development of skilled reading (Miller & Schwanenflugel, 2008; Wood, 2006).
Assessment of Oral Reading Fluency

A key premise of ORF assessments, such as the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM), is that student's reading rate and accuracy are effective representations of general reading ability (Deno & Marston, 2006; Samuels, 2007). ORF assessments provide data to determine whether students are receiving effective reading instruction and inform teachers to intervene with students at risk to prevent later reading difficulties (Good et al., 2002; Shapiro, 2004). The use of appropriate assessments to inform instruction, therefore, has been considered a best practice (Duffy, 2007).

When assessing reading fluency, teachers listen to students read aloud and utilize systematic observation to make judgments about their word-reading accuracy, rate, and prosody (Zutell & Rasinski, 1991). Also, error analysis provides more detailed information about the student's error patterns; teachers can use this information to determine what skills the student is using effectively and what skills the student fails to use, as well if these deficiencies are the result of skills deficits, performance deficits, or a combination of the two (Hudson, Lane, & Pullen, 2005).

Studies have suggested that oral reading is more efficient measures of reading rate as compared to reading words in a list or silent reading (Jenkins et al., 2003). Timed reading is the most widely used method to measure reading rate, as the timing of a student's reading of connected text allows a teacher to observe the number of words read correctly and the number of errors made in a given time frame (Hudson et al., 2005). When measuring reading prosody, direct observation is the sole method to determine the level of student's reflection, expression, and phase boundaries. Reading comprehension can be an indirect measure of reading prosody due to their significant correlations (Hudson et al., 2005).
Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills

As a brief, cost-effective, and empirically supported measure of essential reading skills, the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS; Good & Kaminski, 2002), has emerged as one of the most frequently used screening measures for primary grades (Goffreda & DiPerna, 2010). This benchmark assessment commonly involves screening all students three times per year using standardized grade-level materials that are most relevant for identifying struggling students and making instructional decisions (Coyne & Harn, 2006; Goffreda & DiPerna, 2010; Good & Kaminski, 2002). When administering DIBELS, a team of teachers and paraprofessionals can be trained to conduct the assessment and analyze the data as a part of a team-based decision-making process (Good & Kaminski, 2002).

Studies have found that students' performance on the DIBELS can reliably and validly predict their future academic achievement. For example, DIBELS ORF (DORF) has shown high sensitivity and specificity to reliably differentiate students who have and have not acquired appropriate reading as well as high predictive validity of students' performance on statewide assessments in primary grades (Buck & Torgesen, 2018; Shaw & Shaw, 2002; Vander Meer et al., 2005). Although the need to further investigate the effectiveness of current DIBELS cut scores across indicators, grade levels, and diverse racial and ethnic groups is needed, careful administration, interpretation, and application of DIBELS for screening early primary students for learning difficulties can be one promising method to facilitate preventative measures (Coyne & Harn, 2006; Goffreda et al., 2009).

Studies have suggested that using CBM as a systematic progress monitoring tool and making instructional changes in response to the data can increase student achievement and enhance the instructional decision-making process (Fuchs et al., 1991; Stecker et al., 2005;
Stecker et al., 2008). Moreover, students' performance on CBM can predict their performance on state-mandated, high-stakes assessments which allows teachers to intervene early with students whose progress is inadequate to enhance their academic growth (McGlinchey & Hixson, 2004). When analyzing the data, the growth slope between the student's baseline and the desired rate of improvement can allow teachers to visually and quantitatively monitor students' progress (Thornblad & Christ, 2014). However, diverse recommendations on the number of CBM data points collected per week, the number of weeks for progress monitoring, and the methods to estimate and evaluate the trends of student achievement may confuse teachers when implementing CBM as a progress monitoring tool (Thornblad & Christ, 2014).

A few studies have examined the ORF growth pattern of ELs using the previously mentioned assessment tools (Al Otaiba et al., 2009; Baker et al., 2012; Yesil-Dagli, 2011). Findings suggest that the general pattern of ORF development of ELs is like that of non-ELs, although varied growth expectations of ELs were reported based on the grade levels (Al Otaiba et al., 2009; Baker et al., 2012; Baker & Good, 1995; Betts et al., 2009; Dominguez de Ramirez & Shapiro, 2006; Graves et al., 2005; Yesil-Dagli, 2011). During first and second grades, ELs accelerated their ORF growth, although during third grade the rate of ORF improvement decreased similarity to non-ELs (Al Otaiba et al, 2009; Yesil-Dagli, 2011).

**Systems of Support for English Learners**

Early interventions for ELs have been widely recommended, as early reading skills in phonological awareness, print knowledge, and oral language, which typically develop in the preschool period, are predictive of reading ability at school-age (Farver et al., 2009). Moreover, reading difficulties are the core problems for the majority of ELs receiving special education services (Al Otaiba et al., 2009), which indicates the need to develop interventions that can
provide strategies that help ELs learn English and attain academic success. Three systems of support for ELs are discussed below, including bilingual instruction and dual-language immersion, English as a Second Language classes, and Response to Intervention models. Bilingual instruction and dual-language immersion programs provide instruction to ELs in the language they understand the best, as teaching students to read in their first language promotes higher levels of reading achievement in English (Goldenberg, 2008). ELs benefit from retention and development of their native language while acquiring English, and English speakers in the immersion programs enjoy exposure to real speakers of the foreign language (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008). The program provides an atmosphere that allows students to acquire a second language and learn about another culture without sacrificing their individual identities (Alanis & Rodriguez, 2008). When Farver and colleagues (2009) compared the effects of English-only and transitional (e.g., initially in Spanish transitioning to English) curriculum on Spanish-speaking preschoolers and their emergent literacy skills, they found that both models were equally effective for English language outcomes. However, children in the transitional group performed better than children in the English-only group in the areas of Definitional Vocabulary and Print Knowledge on Spanish-language measures. The results supported previous research, which found that a targeted early literacy intervention can improve ELs' pre-literacy skills in both traditional and first language settings (Farver et al., 2009).

English as a Second Language (ESL) class is another support system for ELs in schools, and many districts are moving toward more inclusive instructional programs for ELs as early and as fully as possible (Platt et al., 2003). It represents a move away from pull-out approaches whereby ELs receive English language instruction in a setting removed from the mainstream classroom with a mix of students of different ages and proficiency levels in English
Pushing-in or co-teaching models allow ESL teachers to work alongside ELs in the mainstream classroom (McClure & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). Despite challenges associated with dynamic levels of collaboration during co-teaching, this approach is deemed as the most inclusive and efficient model to foster language and academic achievement (York-Barr et al., 2007).

**Evidence-Based Reading Interventions for ELs**

Given the importance of core literacy skills, current stream of literature suggest that school districts use a response to intervention (RtI) approach with ELs to more accurately identify and provide services to students in need of support (Vanderwood & Nam 2008; Zimmerman, 2014). Although there is a substantial amount of research supporting the use of an RtI approach when addressing reading difficulties with monolingual students, there is significantly less evidence regarding the effectiveness of this approach with ELs (Vanderwood & Nam 2008).

Investing in early reading interventions and strategies can potentially lead to long-ranging benefits for student performance across content areas and as they progress through their academic career (Torgesen et al, 2001). There has been various research published within the last 15 years that address reading instructional strategies and intervention for ELs in grades K-12 (Baker et al., 2014; Cheung & Slavin, 2012; Klingner et al., 2006; Richards-Tutor et al., 2016;). The findings consistently suggested several instructional strategies, such as: intensive vocabulary instruction; the incorporation of English language instruction into content area instruction; teaching reading comprehension strategies in student’s first and second languages are beneficial. Moreover, Keyword method (Bear et al., 2007), Proactive Reading (Vaughn et al, 2006a;
Vaughn et al., 2006b), and Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS; Fuchs et al., 1997) were suggested to be effective in promoting basic reading skills for ELs (Han, 2009).

First, the Keyword method (Bear et al., 2007) allows students to promote their vocabulary skills by learning with a booklet consisting English words to be learned, English keywords, the English definitions, and pictures to associate the keyword with the meaning of the word. Another evidence-based reading program identified in Han’s (2009) synthesis is Proactive Reading, researched by Vaughn and colleagues (Vaughn et al., 2006a; Vaughn et al., 2006b). The strength of the instruction resides in its systematic and explicit nature and its comprehensiveness, including all of the key reading instructional components except vocabulary. Lastly, PALS was identified as a promising practice based on its wide application and comprehensiveness as an explicit, skill-based instruction (Fuchs et al., 1997). Moreover, published reading programs such as Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading, and Wilson Reading were identified as interventions with good evidence of effectiveness for ELs in the elementary grades (Richards-Tutor et al., 2015).

Previous studies have consistently reported that ELs appeared to have different learning needs than non-ELs, although the number of reading interventions for EL students that have empirical evidence of their effectiveness is limited (August et al., 2014; Orosco & Klinger, 2010; Ludwig et al., 2019). The result of a recent meta-analysis conducted by Ludwig and colleagues (2019) indicated that large effects for reading fluency interventions was found from nine studies with typical and at-risk samples of ELs (Begeny et al., 2012, Bridges, 2006, Kemp, 2006, Linan-Thompson et al., 2003, Rodriguez et al., 2012; Vanderwood et al., 2014, Vaughn et al., 2006a, Vaughn et al., 2006b, Walter, 2010). However, the study concluded that the results cannot generalize the effectiveness of ORF interventions because of the large amount of unexplained
heterogeneity across samples (e.g., proficiency of ELs in English as well as in their first language) and intervention methods such as selecting progress monitoring tools (Ludwig et al., 2019). Therefore, more research is needed to find a consistent stream of results from ELs. Considering the complexities associated with the acquisition of ORF and persistent problems associated with achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs, identifying and implementing evidence-based ORF interventions for ELs must be prioritized in current reading instruction and within the RTI process (Denton et al., 2004; Dufrene & Warzak, 2007; Malloy et al., 2007; Ross & Begeny, 2011).

**The HELPS Program**

To strengthen students’ reading fluency, the Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) program, which is a supplement to students’ core reading curriculum, was developed by Begeny (2009). An intervention designed to improve students’ reading skills, the HELPS program integrates eight evidence-based reading fluency strategies (Begeny, 2009). Moreover, it allows schools and teachers to best meet the needs of struggling readers by providing them with manualized, structured intervention program and a specific set of standardized procedures and materials (Begeny, 2012). The combination and integration of eight strategies described below into one reading intervention may assist in further advancing the reading fluency of students. Moreover, the HELPS program uses CBM procedures to progress monitor each student (Malouf et al., 2014).

**Core Strategies of the HELPS program**

According to the HELPS program manual (Begeny, 2009), evidence-based practices are defined as the instructional strategies that have been supported by research and have demonstrated the ability to promote a demonstrable and meaningful growth in students' reading.
The following eight instructional techniques are incorporated into the HELPS program: (1) repeated reading; (2) model reading; (3) systematic error-correction procedures; (4) verbal cues for students to read with fluency; (5) verbal cues for comprehension; (6) goal setting; (7) performance feedback; and (8) use of systematic praise and structured reward system.

**Repeated Reading**

In the HELPS program, the repeated reading (RR) procedure is of paramount importance as it allows students to receive structured, repeated practice opportunities to orally read an ability-appropriate text (Begeny, 2009). Samuels (1979) first developed RR as a pedagogical application to use with beginning or struggling English speaking students. Repeated reading is based on the Laberge-Samuels (1974) model of automaticity: it is used to assist unskilled readers to re-read a short, meaningful passage several times until a satisfactory level of fluency is reached (Samuels, 1979). Moreover, Samuels showed that RR resulted in increased reading speed as well as a reduction of word recognition errors, not only for the given passage but also for new passages. Based on Samuels' theory, the predicted outcome of RR is that students not only become fluent readers of the text they practice, they can also become more fluid in reading and grasping new text (Samuels, 1979; Therrien, 2004).

RR has been reported to be an effective way of improving reading fluency for students with reading disability (National Reading Panel, 2000; O’Connor et al., 2007; Therrien & Hughes, 2008). Moreover, RR is often used in combination with other interventions, such as passage preview, systematic error correction, and performance feedback (Begney & Silber, 2006). In the HELPS program, RR is used in combination with seven other strategies, where students are asked to read repeatedly two to three times until their fluency goals are met to foster student’s ORF, as noted in previous studies (Chang, 2012; Therrien, 2004).
**Model Reading**

Passage previewing, or modeling, is commonly used as an intervention strategy to increase students’ ORF. Of three basic types of modeling intervention, listening passage previewing, where the student listens to a more skilled reader read the passage (e.g., a teacher, parent, more skilled peer) while following along silently is encouraged during the intervention (Begeny et al., 2009). In the HELPS program model reading procedure, the interventionist reads a short introductory statement in which she or he instructs the student to follow along with a finger while the interventionist reads the passage aloud. Additionally, to assess how well students are engaged and following along, the interventionist stops reading five to seven times throughout a passage and instructs the student to say the next word. Model reading allows for students to strengthen reading fluency skills through demonstration (Begeny et al., 2009; Daly III & Martens, 1994; Ehri, 1991; Lewandowski et al., 2006)

**Systematic Error-Correction Procedures**

Systematic error-correction procedures, or phrase-drill error correction (PD), in the HELPS program involves a skilled reader to model the appropriate way to read a difficult word and phrase and ask the student to repeatedly practice a difficult phrase from the text. By prompting the student to repeatedly practice the phrase from the text which includes the error word, PD can be a useful component in reading interventions targeting fluency and accuracy with an adequate number of response opportunities (O'Shea et al., 1984).

Phrase-drill error correction has been previously incorporated into evidence-based ORF interventions (Daly III et al., 2005). When comparing PD error correction and RR, they are similar in that the student practices the correct response in the natural context for reading and not in isolation of other words with prompts to repeatedly practice reading (Begeny et al., 2006).
difference between the two is that whereas the student practices all words with RR, the student practices only error words and the phrase(s) containing error words during PD (Begeny et al., 2006). Moreover, PD targets weaker responses more directly than RR provides by modeling correct responses. Furthermore, it may establish a negative reinforcement contingency which increases the chances the student will read the word correctly during future readings (Begeny et al., 2006).

Verbal Cues for Students to Read with Fluency or for Comprehension

Studies have suggested that cueing students to read with fluency and to remember what they read can be an effective strategy to enhance both fluency and comprehension (O'Shea et al., 1984; O'Shea et al., 1987). In the HELPS program, the introductory statements and expectations include a verbal cueing procedure and a retell check to explicitly cue the students for fluency and to encourage them to remember what they read. As previous research has demonstrated the importance of verbal cueing and retells check, the HELPS program effectively utilizes both strategies to help students improve fluency along with comprehension (O’Shea et al., 1987; Therrien, 2004).

Goal Setting

Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of goal-setting in improving students’ motivation to learn as well as their academic performance (Codding et al, 2005; Martens et al., 2007; Sweeney et al., 2003). In the HELPS program, the interventionist is required to set a goal that students can regularly meet to enhance their motivation (Begeny, 2009). Begeny (2009) indicates that when a student meets his/her goal during the HELPS sessions, it signals the interventionist that the program is effectively improving the student’s ORF. Goal-setting is often combined with reward systems in which students receive rewards for
attaining instructional goals; for instance, immediate teacher praise, a transition to a new passage, and a star earned on the student’s Star Chart may be the consequences for meeting the reading goal in the HELPS program. Goal-setting aims to positively reinforce the students’ reading performance by enhancing their motivation levels (Riley-Tillman et al., 2012)

**Performance Feedback**

Like the goal-setting procedure, the performance feedback or graphing procedure is designed to improve students' academic achievement (Alber-Morgan et al., 2007; Codding et al., 2005; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006). In the HELPS program, an interventionist is required to explicitly report the students' ORF growth with an accurate visual representation of a student's academic performance (Begeny, 2009). This positive, specific feedback is intended to be a powerful method of increasing student confidence and enjoyment in reading. Moreover, it can be combined with goal-setting and reinforcement to maximize its effectiveness (Alber-Morgan et al., 2007; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006).

**Use of Systematic Praise and a Structured Reward System**

Systematic reward procedure in the HELPS program is used in combination with the other motivational strategies (e.g., goal-setting, performance feedback, general use of teacher praise) to increase desired behaviors (Cameron et al., 2001; Alberto & Troutman, 2009; Fredrick et al., 2000). Previous research has indicated that fluency is best promoted when students are provided frequent and brief opportunities to practice a skill and when they are rewarded for improvement (Daly III et al., 1999; Martens & Witt, 2004). Moreover, rewards – both verbal and tangible – can increase task interest and enjoyment (Eisenberger & Cameron, 1996). By integrating various learning and motivational principles, a well-constructed reward procedure in
The HELPS program can be effective to enhancing motivation among students (Alberto & Troutman, 2009; Cameron et al., 2005).

Theoretical and Empirical Support of the HELPS program

The previously mentioned strategies integrated into the HELPS program align with theory and practice related to behavior analysis and behaviorally-based instruction (Martens et al, 2011). Begeny and Martens (2006) state that behavior-based instruction can be characterized by a philosophy that all students can learn; by concepts and principles related to explicit instructional antecedents and consequences; by ongoing progress monitoring, charting, and performance feedback; and by frequent opportunities for correct responding on instructional matched materials (Alberto & Troutman, 1999; Elliott et al., 1999; Skinner et al., 1996). Considerable research exists supporting its use for basic skill instruction, academic intervention, fluency building, and the development of complex problem solving (Chard et al., 2002; Johnson & Layng, 1994; Martens & Witt, 2004). As an academic intervention which promotes both basic skill instruction and fluency building, the HELPS program uses the concepts and principles of behaviorally-based instruction to enhance student performance and effort (Begeny & Martens, 2006).

Across multiple studies, students receiving HELPS made significant and meaningful reading improvements compared to students not receiving the program as HELPS program, including students with learning disabilities and ELs (Begeny, 2011; Begeny et al., 2010, 2011; Malouf et al., 2014; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006; Therrein, 2004). Moreover, studies have suggested that students who received the HELPS program performed better across multiple measures of reading (Begeny, 2011) including standardized reading assessments (Begeny et al., 2010).
In the initial study evaluating the effectiveness of HELPS (Begeny et al., 2010), second-grade students with various levels of reading proficiency received the program as a supplement to their core reading program for approximately 10 minutes per day, three times per week. The participant’s performance was evaluated across eight different measures of reading in comparison to a control group and to students who received the Great Leaps K-2 Reading Program, which is a widely-adopted reading fluency program in U. S. Overall findings from the study suggested that the students who received the HELPS program scored significantly better than students in the control group on five of the eight standardized reading assessments. However, no statistical significance was reported between the HELPS program and the Great Leaps reading intervention (Begeny et al., 2010).

In a follow-up study, Begeny (2011) varied the frequency of the intervention to determine the effects of HELPS when it was implemented at different frequencies (i.e., approximately every other day compared to every 4 to 5 days). The results indicated that students who received the HELPS program, regardless of its frequency, outperformed the control group in reading fluency, but only the students who received the program most frequently outperformed the control group in reading comprehension.

Begeny and colleagues (2011) also examined the effects of HELPS when implemented by classroom teachers. Their results suggested that the HELPS can be effectively integrated into the classroom and implemented by trained classroom teachers and teacher assistants. Moreover, implementation integrity findings suggested that other educators such as school psychologists, reading specialists, special education teachers, librarians, and well-trained school volunteers should be able to successfully implement HELPS with multiple students in a given school (Begeny et al., 2011).
Mitchell and Begeny (2014) examined the impact of HELPS when implemented by parents as tutors in the home during the summer months. The findings suggested that students participating in the HELPS program significantly improved in all relevant measures of reading fluency and comprehension, with medium to large effect sizes. Parent tutors reported strong implementation integrity and a high level of treatment acceptability, indicating that parents potentially can be an invaluable source of intervention delivery along with school personnel. In addition, the results add to the literature suggesting that the HELPS program can improve both fluency and comprehension.

The HELPS program allows for multiple methods of intervention delivery, including one-on-one or small group. Begeny and colleagues (2012) evaluated the effects of a small-group version of the HELPS program (HELPS-SG) with students experiencing reading difficulties, and the results indicated that the intervention produced little to modest improvements. As an intervention cannot be deemed as "one size fits all," HELPS-SG may be a particularly time-efficient Tier 1 or Tier 2 intervention to improve the ORF skills of elementary-aged students with reading difficulties.

Malouf and colleagues (2014) examined the effectiveness of the HELPS one-on-one program on increasing the ORF of two children identified as having severe reading difficulties. The results were idiosyncratic; both students improved in their raw WCPM scores, but their growth in reading fluency was statistically insignificant. Given how the participating students had more severe academic impairments as compared to participants in other studies, an overall positive trend in ORF indicates that future research should examine whether the HELPS program can be considered as an effective tool for students with the most needs in reading.
HELPS Program with English Learners

Despite initial evidence showing promise for the HELPS program as an effective and feasible supplement to elementary-aged students’ core reading program, to date only the preliminary evaluation by Begeny and colleagues (2012) and a doctoral dissertation project by Villanueva (2015) investigated its effectiveness on increasing ORF among ELs.

In the preliminary evaluation of HELPS program with ELs, Begeny and colleagues (2012) examined its effects on 21 second-grade Latino ELs in a one-to-one format, 2-3 times per week for 5 to 7 months. Consistent with other studies conducted with non-ELs, the results indicated that ELs who received the HELPS program significantly outperformed a control group (Begeny et al., 2012). The effect sizes for the measure of fluency and comprehension were large between groups; 69.2% of students in the HELPS group improved by more than one half of a standard deviation on the GORT Fluency and GORT-Comprehension measures, whereas less than 25% of the students in the control group improved on those measures. Although this was the first evaluation of HELPS program when implemented specifically with ELs, Latino ELs who received the HELPS Program appeared to benefit as much as non-ELs.

In the only other study reported to date regarding the use of HELPS with EL students, Villanueva (2015) evaluated the effectiveness of HELPS-SG program as compared to a small group repeated reading (RR) intervention on two reading domains: ORF and comprehension. WCPM was the primary metric measured across the study while the Woodcock-Johnson III Achievement (WJ III Ach; Woodcock et al., 2001) was used for pre- and post-test measurement to evaluate the reading growth of the participants. The participants in the study were 42 second-grade ELs who were randomly assigned to either a part of an RR intervention or the HELPS program in a small group.
The results suggested that although both groups demonstrated positive growth in WCPM, the RR groups showed slightly more improvement from pre- to post-test on all three reading subtests in the WJ III Ach test while the HELPS program group showed growth only two of the three subtests. Although there was no statistical significance between the two conditions, the RR intervention showed improvements in all areas assessed including reading comprehension. In comparing the efficiencies of the two interventions, the RR intervention took less time to implement (on average of 19 minutes to implement) and required less steps than the HELPS program (on average of 30 minutes to implement; Villanueva, 2015). Thus, Villanueva (2015) concluded that even though there were no significant differences between the groups, the RR intervention group appeared to outperform the HELPS program with greater efficiency and was, therefore, determined to be favored over the HELPS-SG program.

**Strengths and Benefits of the HELPS Program**

The feasibility and flexibility of the HELPS program in school settings is one of its most notable strengths. As time constraints often present a barrier for teachers when working one-on-one with struggling students, HELPS is designed to be implemented with a student in a feasible amount of time (i.e., approximately 10 minutes per day, 2-3 days per week). Moreover, the HELPS program enables different educators to work with the same students across different days, and this option for multiple implementers increases not only a teacher’s but also the school’s capacity for implementing HELPS. Last, the accessibility of HELPS program training and intervention materials allows educators to implement an evidenced-based intervention without significant costs.

Begeny and colleague (2009) also noted that the HELPS program can be efficiently used within a school that promotes research-based instruction and data-based decision-making within
an RTI framework. As the goal of RTI is to improve all students’ learning and more efficiently allocate school resources, the HELPS program can be integrated at each of the three tiers of RTI. For instance, some schools with high levels of resources may be able to include HELPS program as part of their Tier 1 instruction, whereas schools with more limited resources may only be able to implement HELPS at Tier 3. In general, most schools would likely benefit from using HELPS program as part of their Tier 2 supplemental instruction (Begeny et al., 2009).

**Limitations of Existing Research**

Despite its feasibility and instructional values, the most notable limitation of existing research about HELPS program is the lack of research studies with ELs to suggest the effectiveness of the intervention. In this study, therefore, a sample of ELs will be invited to participate in the intervention to address the limitation of existing research.

**Research Question**

The study is designed to evaluate the effects of the HELPS program on ORF among ELs in elementary school. Based on previous research findings, it is hypothesized that ELs participating in the HELPS program as part of this research project will demonstrate significant progress in their ORF. Analysis of the ELs’ oral reading fluency progress will be used to answer the following research question:

1. Does the HELPS program promote increases in oral reading fluency among elementary-aged ELs?

**Hypothesis**

Despite the scarcity of available literature, the HELPS program has preliminary evidence attesting to the effectiveness with ELs in elementary grades. Considering the purpose of the study and the research question within the context of the current research base, it is hypothesized
that ELs participating in the HELPS program as part of this research project will demonstrate clinically meaningful growth in their reading fluency skills.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Participants and Setting

The HELPS program was implemented at an urban public elementary school in the capital region of New York State. In 2015, it was reported that almost half of the children in the city living in poverty (Capital District Regional Planning Commission, 2015). According to the New York State Education Department (n.d.), approximately 524 students attended this school, 86% of which were economically disadvantaged. A total of 41 students (8%) were ELs in grades K - 6, and their performance on the statewide ELA and math tests across grades was reported to be significantly poorer compared to their monolingual peers (New York State Education Department, n.d.).

Under the Commissioner’s Regulations Part 154 (2015), ELs receive English language support through English as Second Language (ESL) classes every day, and the duration of ESL classes varies based on the EL’s proficiency level. The proficiency levels are determined by: (a) New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL), which is an entry examination of four modalities (writing, reading, listening, speaking) in English for all ELs who enter public education in NYS and (b) New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), which is conducted toward the end of school year. Students who have scored in the Entering and Emerging levels receive instruction 72 minutes per day and receive both pull-out and integrated ESL services. In addition, students who have scored in the Transitioning and Expanding levels receive 36 additional minutes per day, all in their classroom.

The target population for this study was EL students in elementary school attending summer school in the district. All participants were identified as having deficits in reading fluency through a review of available academic records and consultation with the students’ ELL
teacher regarding below average reading fluency performance in the classroom. Participation in the HELPS program was voluntary as an additional component of English language support provided at the school.

Six students were initially selected for participation, although one student decided that he no longer wished to participate. The five students who participated in this research project were a diverse group of students regarding gender, grade level, and home language (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Student Demographic*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Home Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Urdu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Procedures**

*Determining Instructional Level on DIBELS Passages*

The DIBELS 8th Edition ORF (DORF) passages were used as a primary source of progress monitoring data during the baseline and intervention phases. The DIBELS 8th Edition manual (University of Oregon, 2018) indicates that scores below the benchmark goal and at or above the cut point for risk are identified as *Below Benchmark*. In this range, a student’s future performance is harder to predict; the odds of achieving subsequent early literacy goals are 40% to 60%. The manual recommends that these students are likely to need Strategic Support; the HELPS program was the strategic support to improve students’ ORF in the current study. To assess the instructional level on the DORF probes, each student met with the principal
investigator as soon as the consent and assent were received. Student performance was measured by having students read a passage aloud for one minute. Words omitted, substituted, and hesitations of more than three seconds were scored as errors, and words self-corrected within three seconds were scored as accurate. The number of correct words per minute (WCPM) from the passage was used to indicate student’s oral reading fluency rate. The student’s current reading fluency rate was determined using three DORF benchmark passages at his or her expected grade-level. Then, the average of these three WCPMs was calculated. If the score fell below cut point for risk, another set of DORF passages at a lower grade level was given to students. This process repeated until the average WCPM fell below benchmark goal but above cut point for risk. This was the level at which this student was progress monitored. For instance, the average WCPM of Student 1 was at the below benchmark for the first-grade level after administering three first-grade benchmark passages; thus, her instructional level was determined to be in the first grade.

*Determining Reading Probe Level on HELPS Program*

After determining student’s instructional level using the DORF passages, the appropriate starting point in the HELPS instructional materials was determined. The HELPS placement assessment instructions (Begeny, 2009) offer teachers and interventionists a systematic procedure for identifying an appropriate starting point for students. Two assessment passages from each reading level were selected and administered sequentially until the appropriate starting passage level was determined. The starting passage level was determined when a student’s average WCPM score was within the target scores suggested in the manual. For instance, the average WCPM score of Student 1 fell within the target scores for the reading level 1; therefore,
she started with the first reading probe in the HELPS Program. The WCPM data from the HELPS reading probes was also collected as a secondary progress monitoring data.

**Establishing Baseline for the Intervention**

After identifying student’s instructional level on the DIBELS and reading probe level on the HELPS program, the DIBELS ORF passages were used to establish each student’s baseline until the intervention phase began. At least four points were collected during the phase as recommended by Kratochwill et al. (2010).

**Intervention Phase**

After establishing a stable level of baseline and the starting level for the HELPS reading probes, the intervention activities began. Students individually met with the interventionist for 20 to 25 minutes to participate in the intervention. Students were taken out of different classes each session to minimize time lost from any one class period. To prevent a practice effect among participants, they were shifted into intervention in pairs. The interventionist intended to start the second pair of students once the improvement (i.e., positive change in WCPM) was noted for the first two students. However, a short length of summer school (20 school days) prevented the interventionist to wait to see the changes in the first pair; therefore, the start times of intervention were determined after collecting at least four different baseline points even when the preceding participant did not demonstrate improvement in WCPM. When there were unscheduled absences, sessions were made up when the student returned to school. Therefore, on some days, students received more than one passage right after another. Progress monitoring data from the DIBELS passages as well as the HELPS reading probes were evaluated to determine whether the students benefit from the HELPS program at the end of intervention phase.
Dependent Measures

Oral Reading Fluency

EL’s ORF was measured by administering the DIBELS passages and the HELPS probes. During baseline and intervention phases, the interventionists noted any errors made (words read or pronounced incorrectly, omitted, read out of order, or words pronounced for the student by the examiner after a 3-second pause) and then calculated WCPM.

DIBELS Passages. DIBELS 8\textsuperscript{th} Edition is an individually administered measure of early literacy development from grades K to 8 (University of Oregon, 2018). DIBELS 8\textsuperscript{th} Edition assessments are standardized to facilitate frequent, ongoing assessment of basic skills, and formative evaluation of student progress at the beginning (fall), middle (winter), and end (spring) of the year (University of Oregon, 2018). DIBELS 8\textsuperscript{th} Edition ORF passages are carefully designed as a screening and progress monitoring tools for foundational literacy skills. Technical adequacy for DIBELS 8\textsuperscript{th} Edition ORF passages has been examined in multiple studies for its readability and efficiency in progress monitoring (University of Oregon Center on Teaching and Learning, 2018). According to the authors of DIBELS 8\textsuperscript{th} Edition, the passages selected for screening are chosen for their representativeness to all the grade-level passages and the reliability estimates are equivalent between the screening and progress monitoring passages (University of Oregon Center on Teaching and Learning, 2018).

HELPS Reading Probes. Reading probes from the HELPS program were also used as a secondary measure for ORF. A new passage was introduced consecutively once students met their WCPM goals as determined by the HELPS manual. Students read the same passage if their WCPM goals were not met in their previous sessions. Regarding the difficulty level of the passage, the manual states that the passages become increasingly more difficult for the students.
across a range of approximately 15 passages; for instance, Passage 15 should be more difficult than Passage 1, Passage 30 should be more difficult than Passage 15 and so forth (Begeny, 2009). Even within a range of approximately 15 passages, the passage difficulty becomes slightly more difficult (Begeny, 2009). For the current research study, participants received three to four different passages depending on their performance during the intervention phase; Student 1 and 5 received three passages while Student 2, 3, and 4 received four passages. Since the passages students received are considered as roughly equivalent, the WCPM data from the HELPS intervention was also reported.

**Interobserver Agreement**

Interobserver agreement (IOA) refers to the degree to which independent observers agree on the occurrence and non-occurrence of behavior (Cooper et al., 2007). Through training and frequent checks during data collection, an appropriate data collection system was established for IOA. Research studies recommend accessing IOA for a minimum of 25% of sessions with a minimum average IOA of 80% (Cooper et al., 2007). In this study, IOA was measured using percentage agreement.

According to the HELPS program manual, percentage agreement calculations are embedded in the program to evaluate IOA. Prior to collection of baseline data, the secondary investigator participated in the HELPS training sessions with the principal investigator to learn how to score in a consistent and accurate way. For each word the student reads within one minute, the interventionists compared their scores to look for Agreements (i.e., a word that both teachers scored as correct or a word that both scored as incorrect) and Disagreements (i.e., a word that one teacher scored as correct but the other scored as incorrect). The Percentage Agreement formula is then calculated as follows: 

\[
\text{Percentage Agreement} = \frac{\text{Agreements}}{\text{Total Words Read per minute}} \times 100
\]
Moreover, the principal investigator and the secondary investigator reviewed task analyses of target skills, practiced coding of behaviors, and completed practice exercises provided in the HELPS manual. Practice observations were repeated until a minimum IOA of 90% was established between the principal investigator and the secondary investigator.

During baseline and intervention phases, two investigators reviewed audio recordings of the HELPS sessions in which interobserver data was collected. One parent did not consent to record the sessions; therefore, only the sessions with the four participants were reviewed. While reviewing the audio recordings, both investigators recorded the student’s performance (WCPM). As recommended by various studies (Cooper et al., 2007; Ledford & Gast, 2018), a minimum of 80% was used as the benchmark level of IOA for this study.

**Intervention Procedure**

In the current study, a daily administration of the HELPS program was the independent measure. Students received the HELPS program individually from the interventionist as an addition to their language art instruction. Students met with the interventionist at the school in an empty classroom. Typically, the duration of the intervention was 20 to 25 minutes every day for 20 school days. The HELPS program includes eight evidence-based strategies which have been previously suggested to improve students’ reading fluency amongst ELs (Begeny et al., 2012). The interventionist followed the process described below with each student (see Appendix A for a flow chart):

1) The interventionist read introductory statements and expectations (see Appendix C).

2) The student was asked to read a passage in one minute while the interventionist checked his or her WCPM score.
3) The interventionist removed the student passage to ensure student could not review the passage during the Retell Check and asked the student to share everything he or she remembered about the story.

4) If the student met his or her WCPM goal, the interventionist provided praise and gave a new passage for them to read in one minute (1st Timed Reading). Then, the interventionist identified up to five phrases in which the student previously read a word incorrectly or less fluently, read these phrases aloud to the student, and instructed the student to re-read the phrase back to the interventionist. The student was then asked to read the passage for the second time (2nd Timed Reading), and the interventionist instructed the student to follow along in the passage with his or her finger while the interventionist read aloud. Lastly, the student was asked to read in one minute for the third time (3rd Timed Reading).

5) If the student failed to meet his or her WCPM goal after the 1st Timed Reading, the interventionist instructed the student to follow along in the passage with his or her finger while the interventionist read aloud. Then, the student was asked to read again (2nd Timed Reading), and the interventionist identified up to five phrases in which the student previously read a word incorrectly or less fluently, read these phrases aloud to the student, and instructed the student to re-read the phrase back to the interventionist. The same phase-drill procedure repeated after the 3rd Timed Reading.

6) When the student finished 3rd Timed Reading, the interventionist recorded the student’s performance, provided praise and feedback, and awarded stars on Star Chart.

7) If the student met the goal after the 3rd Timed Reading, a new passage was given in the beginning of the next intervention session.
8) Lastly, the student was asked to read the ORF probes from the DIBELS for one minute for progress-monitoring purpose.

9) At the end of each session, the interventionist reviewed treatment integrity checklist (see Appendix B).

Research Design

The purpose of the current study was to determine the effectiveness of the HELPS program by means of a multiple-baseline experimental design (Ledford & Gast, 2018). Multiple baseline designs are particularly well-suited to examine new intervention strategies in the area of reading because it is the design of choice when it is not possible for subjects to return to original baseline (Gay & Airasian, 2000).

Data Analysis

Visual Analysis

In single-case MB design, visual inspection is the primary method of interpreting the effects of an independent variable on dependent variable and the strength or magnitude of that relation (Busk et al., 1992; Kratochwill et al., 2010). The current study followed a four-step visual analysis from the recommendations from What Works Clearinghouse (Kratochwill et al., 2010) and a total of six variables were analyzed for both primary and secondary data (Fisher et al., 2003; Kazdin, 1982; Kennedy, 2005).

The first step involved documentation of a predictable baseline pattern of data; then, the data within each phase of the study were examined to assess the within-phase patterns (Kratochwill et al., 2010). Next, the data from each phrase was compared with the data in the adjacent phase to assess whether manipulation of the independent variable was associated with an effect. Then, all the information from all phases of the study was integrated to determine the
strengths of the intervention effect. A total of six variables were then evaluated based on the standards (Kratochwill et al., 2010): level, trend, variability, immediacy of the effect, overlap, and consistency of data patterns across adjacent phases (see Table 2).

**Table 2**

*Description of Variables in Visual Analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Description according to Kratochwill et al. (2010)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>The mean score for the data within a phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trend</td>
<td>The slope of the best-fitting straight line for the data within a phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variability</td>
<td>The range or standard deviation of data about the best-fitting straight line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediacy of the effect</td>
<td>The change in level between the last three data points in one phase and the first three data points of the next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlap</td>
<td>The proportion of data from one phase that overlaps with data from the previous phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of data patterns across adjacent phases</td>
<td>The extent to which there is consistency in the data patterns from phases with the same conditions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Statistical Analysis**

Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM), a multilevel modeling method that allows data to vary within nested levels, was used as a secondary data analysis method (see Moeyaert et al., 2014). Since HLM allows for the estimate of various parameters of interests, the HLM model can include average level difference in phases, average growth session-to-session ignoring phase, and the change in the growth slope from baseline to intervention in the current study. The HLM analysis was performed only on the primary data source (i.e., WCPM from the DIBELS passages). Overall, the goal was to estimate statistically significant gains on WCPM from baseline to intervention across students.
**Treatment Integrity**

Treatment integrity data allows drawing valid conclusions about intervention effectiveness and ensures that the intervention is implemented as intended in an applied setting (Hagermoser Sanetti et al., 2011). Likewise, ensuring high levels of treatment integrity is at the crux of RTI (Brown & Rahn-Blakeslee, 2009) because decisions about intervention intensity (potentially including special education placement) are based on student response to evidence-based interventions implemented with fidelity (Hagermoser Sanetti et al., 2011). The HELPS program included an Implementation Flow Chart (see Appendix B), which provided a visual representation of the intervention procedures. Moreover, the checklist (see Appendix B) allowed the principal investigator to monitor how closely the HELPS curriculum was followed. The principal completed treatment integrity checklists independently during baseline and intervention phases to document procedural reliability.

**Social Validity**

An adapted version of the Children's Usage Rating Profile (CURP; Briesch & Chafouleas, 2009a) was used to measure the participants’ perceptions of the usability of the intervention (Appendix M). The CURP consists of 21 items and is measured on a four-point Likert scale, where 1 implies that the child “Totally Disagrees” with the statement and 4 indicated that the child “Totally Agrees” with the statement. The CURP has three subscales: Personal Desirability, Feasibility, and Understanding.

Briesch and Chafouleas (2009), tested validity of the CURP in two phases. In the qualitative stage, face validity was evaluated by education specialists and fourth-grade students. No items were excluded in this phase, but six items were reworded to make them more comprehensible. The second phase was a quantitative stage, where experts assessed the content
and determined the followings: a) which category they thought the item belonged to, b) how confident they were that the item belonged in that category and c) how pertinent the items were to the category. After this, any items which violated their standards were deleted.

To calculate reliability, Briesch and Chafouleas (2009) used Cronbach’s alpha for each subscale. Inter-item correlations were measured prior to reliability coefficients, and no items were deleted for this. Subscale I (Personal Desirability), which had the highest reliability alpha of .92, consisted of nine items that indicated if the student enjoyed the intervention and would participate again. Subscale II (Feasibility), with high reliability alpha of .82, was included eight items that determined if the participant felt that intervention was too strenuous or not and if it interfered with class. Lastly, Subscale III (Understanding), with an acceptable reliability alpha of .75, contained six items that assessed if the participant understood why the intervention was used and if they believed they could utilize the intervention.
Chapter 4: Results

Baseline and intervention data were collected from six participants over a period of 20 sessions. One original participant withdrew during the intervention phase and is not included in the analysis. Students were randomly paired into three groups and the amount of time that each student participated in the HELPS Program ranged from 12 to 16 sessions. Idiosyncratic results were found overall for the five participants.

Visual Analysis

Students 1 & 2

Students 1 and 2 were initially assessed to be reading at a 1st grade reading level; therefore, 1st grade DIBEL ORF passages were used throughout the baseline and intervention phases to assess these students’ growth. Both students engaged in four sessions of baseline and 16 sessions of intervention implementation. The visual analysis of the data for Student 1 (see Figure 1) and Student 2 (see Figure 1) suggests that minimal increases in WCPM were observed during the intervention phase. The median WCPM data points in the baseline phase were 23 (Student 1) and 22 (Student 2) whereas the median of the last three intervention data points was 30 (Student 1) and 41 (Student 2). PND was calculated to be 75% for Student 1 and 100% for Student 2, suggesting that the intervention was effective in improving the students’ WCPM (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1998). However, comparison of the trend lines from baseline to intervention phase suggests that the intervention phase showed minimal change for both students.

Students 3 & 4

Students 3 and 4 were initially assessed to be reading at a 3rd grade reading level; therefore, 3rd grade DIBEL ORF passages were used throughout the baseline and intervention
phases to assess these students’ growth. Both students engaged in six sessions of baseline and 14 sessions of intervention implementation. The intervention did not show immediate effects on the reading fluency of either student. The difference in median WCPM data points in the baseline phase and intervention phase showed minimal growth: from 105 to 109 WCPM (Student 1) and from 77 to 90 WCPM (Student 4). PND analysis also indicated that there was not a meaningful difference in the students’ performance between the baseline and intervention phases (PND = 57% for both students). A visual analysis of the data for Student 3 (see Figure 1) suggests that the student’s reading behavior was variable across the intervention phase. The range of the highest and lowest scores was from 81 to 149 with a difference of 68. Considering the student’s median WCPM data points in the baseline and the intervention phases (Baseline = 105; Intervention = 109), a range of 68 WCPM is large.

For Student 4, the difference in the slope between the baseline and the intervention phase was minimal except for one outlier. Additionally, the ROI during the intervention phase (1.08) was lower than the ROI during the baseline phase (1.91) indicating an insignificant level of growth during the intervention phase.

**Student 5**

Student 5 was initially assessed to be reading at a 3rd grade reading level; therefore, 3rd grade DIBEL ORF passages were used throughout the baseline and intervention phases to assess the student’s growth. Student 5 engaged in eight sessions of baseline and 12 sessions of intervention implementation. Like the other participants, the intervention did not show immediate effects on WCPM. The difference in median WCPM data points in the baseline phase and intervention phase showed minimal growth, from 85 to 100 WCPM. PND analysis also indicated that there were non-significant differences in the students’ performance between the
baseline and intervention phases (PND = 67%). This is also supported by comparison of the trend line from baseline to intervention phase; the ROI during the intervention phase (0.55) was lower than the ROI during the baseline phase (0.69).

**HELPS Reading Probes**

The WCPM score from the HELPS reading probes was also calculated as a secondary progress monitoring data. Across all five students, the data showed positive growths in their WCPM (see Figure 1). The average ROI, which was calculated only from the passages that students successfully met their WCPM goals, ranged from 9.3 to 20.1 (see Table 4). The pattern of ROI from the HELPS reading probes did not match the DIBELS data; for instance, Student 5, showed the lowest average ROI from the HELPS reading probes while the student 3 showed the lowest ROI from the DIBELS passages. Overall, the HELPS reading probes showed more growth in WCPM as compared to the DIBELS passages despite the discordant data patterns.

**Statistical Analysis**

Hierarchical Linear Modeling was used to examine the average level difference in phases, average growth session-to-session ignoring phase, and the change in the growth slope from baseline to intervention (see Table 5 and 6). Considering the standard deviation on the distribution of the effects, students were somewhat similar in their effects, and the fixed effects were a good estimate for all students. According to the HLM data analysis, the average difference between phases across students was 1.24 WCPM across students, which was positive but was statistically insignificant ($p = 0.947$). The average growth of WCPM from each session - while ignoring which phase the data came from - was 0.77 WCPM per session. Students demonstrated upward growth after each session, although it was also statistically insignificant ($p = 0.501$). Finally, the interaction between the previous two predictors (i.e., difference in slope
between phases) was in the opposite direction from what was expected and was not significant \( (p = 0.837) \). Overall, the result of the current study indicated that the students showed minimal growth in WCPM and to a degree which was statistically insignificant.

**Accuracy of Measurement and Procedural Reliability**

Inter-rater agreement data was collected on 26% of data points in each condition by a second individual to ensure procedural reliability. Upon parents’ consent, the audio recordings of the intervention sessions from four out of five participants were reviewed. Intervention sessions were then dually scored by the researcher and a second individual. Dual scoring resulted in a 97.8% level of inter-rater reliability across the four participants (Student 1 = 98%; Student 2 = 97%; Student 4 = 97%; Student 5 = 98%).

Treatment integrity of the HELPS intervention program was monitored by using an Implementation Flow Chart, which provides a visual representation of the intervention procedures included in the HELPS manual (Appendix A) and an Implementation Protocol (Appendix B). The principal investigator completed the treatment integrity checklist independently during all sessions (i.e., throughout baseline and intervention phases) to document procedural reliability for all participants. The treatment integrity data indicated the interventions were administered as they were intended to be administered 100% of the time.

**Social Validity**

At the end of each intervention phase, social validity was assessed using the Children’s Usage Rating Profile - Actual (CURP –Actual; Briesch & Chafouleas, 2009). In the current study, the parents of Student 4 did not provide the consent to collect the CURP rating scales; therefore, social validity data was collected from four out of five students (see Table 7). Results indicated that the student participants liked the intervention (\( M=3.79, \ SD=0.50 \)), believed that it
was feasible (M=1.72, SD=1.02), and understood the procedures involved (M=3.54, SD=0.59). Students reported positively on their ability to carry out all steps of the intervention and use it correctly.
Figure 1. Words Correct Per Minute for All Participants Across Phases
Table 3

*Summary of Visual Analysis and Inter-assessor Assessment from DIBELS WCPM*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>ROI</th>
<th>PND</th>
<th>Inter-assessor Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23-24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>75% 98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16-33</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>100% 97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26-58</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>104.8</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>100-111</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>57% ---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>114.9</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>81-149</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>63-85</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>57% 97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>71-126</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>77-87</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>67% 98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>74-120</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Summary of Visual Analysis from HELPS Reading Probes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Avg. ROI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22-85</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>20-90</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>108.8</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>87-133</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>110.2</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>85-147</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>105.8</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>88-125</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The average ROI was calculated only from the passages that students successfully met the WCPM goals.
### Table 5

*Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) Fixed Effects for DIBELS WCPM*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>74.72</td>
<td>22.80</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average level difference</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>17.43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average growth</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. level difference*Avg. growth</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>0.837</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant at the 0.05 level

### Table 6

*Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) Random Effects for DIBELS WCPM*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Variance Component</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>33.42</td>
<td>1117.23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.178</td>
<td>&gt;0.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average level difference</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>20.08</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>&gt;0.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average growth</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.453</td>
<td>&gt;0.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. level difference*Avg. growth</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>&gt;0.500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant at the 0.05 level
### Table 7

*CUPR Results by Student*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Personal Desirability M (SD)</th>
<th>Feasibility M (SD)</th>
<th>Understanding M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>3.71 (0.49)</td>
<td>1.88 (1.13)</td>
<td>3.00 (0.63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>3.86 (0.38)</td>
<td>2.25 (1.16)</td>
<td>3.50 (0.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>3.86 (0.76)</td>
<td>1.75 (1.03)</td>
<td>3.67 (0.52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>3.71 (0.76)</td>
<td>1.00 (0)</td>
<td>4.00 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.79 (0.5)</td>
<td>1.72 (1.02)</td>
<td>3.54 (0.59)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>This participant did not complete the survey due to parental dissent.
Chapter 5: Discussion

The current study sought to expand the evidence base for the effectiveness of the HELPS program on ELs. The study yielded mixed results according to visual and statistical analyses, and there are important limitations to the study. Addressing the limitations may provide several directions for future research. Consequently, educators may be better able to promote effective evidence-based reading interventions to help ELs and potentially close educational gaps between ELs and non-ELs.

Main Findings and Interpretations

Based on the visual analysis of data, the study met the WWC single-case design standards with reservations (Kratochwill & Levin, 2014). The intervention was systematically manipulated across five participants, with the researcher determining when and how to change from baseline phase to intervention phase. Moreover, WCPM was measured systematically over 20 sessions by two assessors, and the inter-assessor agreement was measured by two interventionists on more than 20% of the data points in each condition. The study met the minimal threshold for the inter-assessor agreement which was above 98%. Additionally, the study included ten different baseline conditions and simultaneous intervention phases across five ELs. However, Students 1 and 2 only had 4 data points in the baseline phase while the other participants had more than 5 data points; therefore, Students 1 and 2 met the standards with reservations.

Though all students’ mean WCPM scores increased from baseline to intervention, the study yielded mixed evidence for inferring a causal connection between the intervention and outcomes. Student 2 demonstrated the strongest evidence of improvement in reading fluency in response to the HELPS Program. Visual inspection of the data revealed a higher overall level of
performance in the intervention phase in comparison to the baseline phase, and 100% of the intervention points were higher than the baseline data points. Although Student 2 showed relatively steady growth in the intervention phase, Students 3, 4, and 5 demonstrated high degrees of variability during the intervention phase. Student 1 remained flat across both baseline and intervention phases. The reasons for this pattern in the data are unknown, although measurement error may have contributed to this variability. One possible hypothesis is to consider that Student 1 was diagnosed with mild hearing loss shortly after the intervention. Her difficulty with hearing and English language gap may have affected her growth rate in reading fluency. Considering that Student 1 received the most number of intervention sessions among the students, the duration of the intervention did not appear to moderate the effect.

The WCPM from HELPS reading probes was analyzed as a secondary set of data. Visual analysis of the secondary data indicated that students’ WCPM scores increased after two to eight sessions. A steep pattern of growth was evident across all students on the HELPS reading probes, and the average ROI from the HELPS probes was higher than that of the DIBLES passages. This trend did not match with that of the DIBLES passages; therefore, it can be concluded that the improvement in the HELPS reading probes failed to generalize to independent DIBLES passages. A possible explanation to this would be that students may have shown growth in the WCPM with the HELPS reading probes due to practice effect, not because of their growth in ORF skills.

The result from the current study is discordant with the results from a research study by Begeny (2011), which varied the frequency of the intervention to determine the effects of HELPS when it was implemented at different frequencies (i.e., approximately every other day compared to every 4 to 5 days). The results from that study indicated that students who received
the HELPS program, regardless of its frequency, outperformed the control group in reading fluency, but only the students who received the program most frequently outperformed the control group in reading comprehension.

Results from statistical analysis using the HLM also implied that the intervention had a weak effect on the growth of students’ oral reading fluency skills. According to the HLM data analysis, students’ growth in WCPM from the DIBELS passages was slow in the intervention phase and was statistically insignificant ($p = 0.947$). This result is also similar to Malouf and colleagues (2014)’s result, which examined the effectiveness of the HELPS one-on-one program on increasing the ORF of two children identified as having severe reading difficulties. The results were idiosyncratic; both students improved in their raw WCPM scores, but their growth in reading fluency was statistically insignificant. It must be noted that Begeny’s initial study evaluating the effectiveness of HELPS program (Begeny et al., 2010) with second-grade monolingual students with various levels of reading proficiency produced more positive results. After the intervention, the participant’s performance was evaluated across eight different measures of reading in comparison to a control group and to students who received the Great Leaps K-2 Reading Program. Overall findings from the study suggested that the students who received the HELPS program scored significantly better than students in the control group on five of the eight standardized reading assessments (Begeny et al. 2010).

In addition, the preliminary evaluation of HELPS program with ELs, conducted by Begeny and colleagues (2012), concluded that Latino ELs who received the HELPS Program appeared to benefit as much as non-ELs since ELs who received the HELPS program significantly outperformed a control group (Begeny et al., 2012). Though the current study did not compare ELs’ growths in ORF with those of non-ELs, the result of the current study is
discordant with the preliminary study by Begeny and his colleagues (2012), as the results from the current study does not provide strong support for the HELPS Program with ELs.

Students’ instructional reading levels in the current study were found to be variable. Students 1, 4, and 5 were two or three grade-levels below their instructional level, whereas Students 2 and 3 were one grade-level below their instructional levels. Students’ instructional levels did not appear to affect the intervention outcome, as Students 2 and 3 demonstrated different outcomes in their reading fluency growth at the end of the intervention. Moreover, the students rated the HELPS program as a socially valid intervention for oral reading fluency, as measured by the CURP rating scale. Except Student 4, all students responded to items indicating that they strongly agreed that they (a) liked the intervention; (b) believed that the intervention was feasible; and (c) understood the procedures.

It must be also noted that interventionists can implement the program with a high degree of fidelity, and this is concordant with several research studies (Begeny et al., 2010; Begeny, 2011; Begeny et al., 2011; Begeny et al., 2012). Using the observation checklist for implementing the HELPS one-on-one program, the average percentage of steps accurately followed by the interventionist in the current study was above 98%. These results are consistent with results from a study by Begeny and colleagues (2011). That study examined the effects of HELPS when implemented by classroom teachers, and their results suggested that the HELPS can be effectively integrated into the classroom and implemented by trained classroom teachers and teacher assistants. Moreover, implementation integrity findings suggested that other educators such as school psychologists, reading specialists, special education teachers, librarians, and well-trained school volunteers should be able to successfully implement HELPS with multiple students in schools (Begeny et al., 2011).
Limitations

Although results from this study were idiosyncratic, this study was one of the first studies to examine the effectiveness of the HELPS Program with ELs. There are several limitations in the study, however, including (a) research design; (b) HELPS Program, (c) measurement, and (d) dosage.

Research Design

The study employed a multiple-baseline single-case research design and corresponding methodology to answer the research question. For this design, data collection is recommended to continue until data for the first participant demonstrates a change in pattern, and data collection is supposed to follow the same fashion for all remaining participants (Kratochwill & Levin, 2014). However, in this current study, data for each student was collected as soon as the previous student started to show a change after one data point, instead of waiting to see a change in level, trend, and variability. The reason for this was because the summer school was only four weeks long, and it was unclear at the time how many students would be able to participate. Therefore, data collection started for subsequent participants started as soon as the author started to see an increase in WCPM after one or two intervention sessions. Therefore, the start times of intervention did not occur when the preceding participant demonstrated a change in pattern.

In addition, one of the ways to strengthen the internal validity of a single-case design is to randomize the sample. For instance, each participant can be randomly assigned to a staggered intervention start time. However, this current study did not add randomization; instead, students were assigned to their start time based on the order of when their consent forms were received. Moreover, adding randomization was not feasible because of the limited summer school period.
**HELPs Program**

One of the major limitations of the current study is the implementation factors. In this study, one graduate student was the principal investigator who implemented the HELPS Program, rather than school-based staff. Therefore, it is unknown whether the effects of the intervention would be similar when a classroom teacher or English as New Language teacher implements the HELPS Program. Moreover, the current intervention was delivered only in one-on-one setting; a comparison between the HELPS One-on-One program and the HELPS for Small Groups (HELPs SG) would be meaningful to examine the effectiveness of the program on the ELs. In addition, no additional modifications or supplemental interventions for vocabulary and reading comprehension were available for ELs in the HELPs manual considering the academic gaps ELs present in the general education classrooms. It is possible that the HELPs Program may require additional interventions to improve ORF amongst ELs. Lastly, the HELPs Program is still in its developmental phase, and it has only examined the effectiveness with a homogeneous group of Spanish-speaking ELs (Begeny et al., 2012). Though it is difficult to account for cultural and language-based variables, future adjustments in the procedure and progress monitoring process in the HELPs Program are warranted to benefit a heterogeneous group of ELs.

**Measurement**

DIBELS, which was originally developed as a universal reading screening tool, functions as an indicator of overall reading performance — not a comprehensive assessment of student reading abilities. In addition, when using DIBELS with ELs, the linguistic and cultural responsiveness of DIBELS have not been examined nor evaluated in a research study. Therefore, it is important to consider whether DIBELS is appropriate for ELs. It would be interesting to see
how different standardized measures used in the previous research studies such as Gray Oral
Reading Test – Fluency (GORT; Begeny et al., 2012), Test of Reading Fluency (TORF; Linan-
Thompson et al., 2003) affect the intervention effect.

Moreover, social validity was assessed using the Children’s Usage Rating Profile -
Actual (CURP - Actual). A major limitation is that the CURP is a self-report. With self-reports,
it is always possible that a student would answer in a way they believe to be appealing to the
assessor. Moreover, considering the ELs’ reading level, it is unclear whether ELs fully
understood the questions on the rating scale due to a lack of its readability check. Although the
assessor initially described the directions to the ELs, it is possible that ELs did not fully
comprehend the questions.

Dosage

Dosage was composed of the intervention duration, intensity, and number of sessions
(Bowman-Perrott et al., 2013). Duration refers to the number of days students spent involved in
the HELPS program, rather than the entire length of the study, which includes baseline phase.
Intensity refers to the number of minutes students spent engaged in the HELPS program per day.
Number of sessions refers to number of times (e.g., days per week) students engaged in the
intervention across the weeks of the intervention. In the current study, the HELPS program was
administered 12 to 16 school days since it took four to eight days for students to establish
baseline. On average, students spent 20 to 25 minutes every day. The author did not change
phases (i.e., increasing duration or frequency of the intervention) when there was no growth in
the WCPM. Considering the ELs’ weak skills in reading fluency, it is unclear how an increase in
dosage may have affected the overall outcome of the intervention. Participants in the Begeny and
colleagues’ preliminary study (2012) received the HELPS program two to three times per week.
for approximately 10 mins per session for five to seven months. Moreover, all students received an average of 38.5 HELPS sessions throughout the study. Therefore, it is critical to examine whether the difference in the dosage may contribute to the overall intervention outcomes. It is possible that the dosage of the current study was insufficient to fully promote ELs’ reading fluency skills.

**Future Research Directions**

Several directions for future research can be suggested by addressing the limitations of the current study. First, future research studies can collect data points for all participants when the preceding participant demonstrates a change in pattern and add randomization when assigning participants to a staggered intervention start time. This will strengthen the internal validity of the study. Second, future research studies can incorporate different settings with more participants and researchers. Lastly, different levels of dosage and its effect on the intervention outcome must be examined in order to find the optimal duration, intensity, and number of sessions for the HELPS program to promote EL’s reading fluency. Future studies can also utilize different measurements which have norms and rate of improvement amongst ELs. Also, if a standardized reading achievement test for ELs becomes available, future studies can replicate the study using that measure in addition to curriculum-based measures. To better assess the social validity of the intervention, future studies can have the interventionist(s) and participants’ teachers complete the CURP rating scales as well, and ensure that ELs who complete the CURP are clearly able to understand and accurately answer its questions. Moreover, the readability check of the CURP rating scales is highly recommended before using it as a measure of social validity.
Conclusions

English Learners have been a longstanding and significant concern in the U.S. educational system due to their poor academic achievements compared to non-ELs (Carrasquillo et al., 2004; Kena et al., 2014; Nagy & Anderson, 1984). To bridge the gap between ELs and non-ELs, the use of evidence-based, culturally and linguistically sensitive language assessment tools and interventions is highly desirable (Crosse et al., 2011; Kretlow & Helf, 2013).

Reading fluency is a multidimensional skill made up of two distinct components at two ends of the reading spectrum – automaticity in word recognition and expression in oral reading that reflects the meaning of the text (Rasinski, 2017). However, ORF has been widely neglected in core reading curricula in the U.S. as compared to other countries (Danne et al., 2005), and ELs are one of the largest groups of learners experiencing English reading fluency difficulties (Denton, Anthony, Parker, & Hasbrouck, 2004).

As an academic intervention which promotes fluency building, the HELPS program uses the concepts and principles of behavioral-based instruction to enhance student performance and encourage attention to task (Begeny & Martens, 2006). Multiple studies have concluded that students receiving the HELPS Program made significant and meaningful reading improvements compared to students not receiving the program (Begeny, 2011; Begeny et al., 2010, 2011; Malouf et al., 2014; Morgan & Sideridis, 2006; Therrein, 2004).

However, research studies with the HELPS Program on ELs are limited; the current study is only the third study to examine the effectiveness of the HELPS Program on ELs. The results of this study produced idiosyncratic results and overall did not support the hypothesis that the HELPS Program is an effective intervention for promoting oral reading fluency among elementary ELs. Considering that the research with ELs is still in its developmental stage,
educators and other school professionals must carefully review the HELPS Program before implementing it with ELs. Moreover, more research studies should be conducted with the EL population to identify evidence-based reading interventions that can bridge the academic gap between ELs and non-EL students.
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HELPS One-on-One Program
Implementation Flow Chart

1. Teacher reads introductory statements and expectations
2. Student Timed Reading (TR) with Passage A
3. Retell Check

(Student meets reading goal) ………………………… (Student does not meet reading goal)
See table below for goals according to the student’s grade level

4a. Deliver Praise & Graph Passage A
5a. Student TR—Passage B, 1st time
6a. Phrase-drill procedure
7a. Student TR—Passage B, 2nd time
8a. Modeling procedure
9a. Student TR—Passage B, 3rd time

4b. Modeling procedure
5b. Student TR—Passage A, 2nd time
6b. Phrase-drill procedure
7b. Student TR—Passage A, 3rd time
8b. Phrase-drill procedure

10a. Graph 1st and 3rd TR of Passage B and provide praise and feedback
11a. Award stars on Star Chart
12a. Record student data on Progress Tracking Form
13a. Review steps and record on Progress Tracking Form

9b. Graph 1st and 3rd TR of Passage A and provide praise and feedback
10b. Award stars on Star Chart
11b. Record student data on Progress Tracking Form
12b. Review steps and record on Progress Tracking Form

Reading Goals according to the Student’s Grade Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>WCWP with Passage A</th>
<th>WIPM with Passage A</th>
<th>Retell Check with Passage A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>80 or more</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>Adequately retells story*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>100 or more</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>Adequately retells story*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>120 or more</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>Adequately retells story*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Grade</td>
<td>135 or more</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>Adequately retells story*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For example, student retells parts of the story for at least 30 seconds or otherwise correctly states names of characters and major events in the story. Retell of the story in the correct sequential order of major events is encouraged but not required to pass the Retell Check.

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Appendix K : 116
Appendix B: HELPS Program Implementation Protocol/Checklist

HELPS One-on-One Program: Implementation Protocol

Steps below that are denoted with an asterisk should be implemented in combination with the “HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions.”

1. *Teacher reads introductory statements and expectations—includes Verbal Cuing procedure (15 seconds)*
   - Overall, goal of program is for student to do his/her best reading. This means s/he tries to read quickly, accurately, and with good expression. Also, the student tries to remember what happens in the story and tries to remember the difficult words that s/he practices.

2. *Student Timed Reading with Passage A, as indicated on his/her Progress Tracking Form (1 to 1.5 minutes)*
   - **NOTE:** Students who meet the WCPM criterion can be stopped at 1 minute. Students who do not meet the WCPM criterion should read 1.5 minutes to allow for some additional practice (though as indicated in the scripted directions, the student’s last word read at one minute should be indicated with a bracket).

3. *Teacher asks student to say what he/she remembers about the story (Retell Check), asking the student to recall what happened in appropriate sequential order (30 to 45 seconds)*

**IF STUDENT MEETS THE READING GOAL** *(See back page if student does not meet the Reading Goal)*

The goal is met when the student (a) meets the WCPM criterion, (b) meets the WIPM criterion, and (c) can adequately recall parts of the story. *(See Table on back of sheet for all Goal criteria according to student grade level)*.

4a. When the student meets the Reading Goal, the teacher should: *(15 seconds)*
   - Provide praise for meeting the goal and immediately graph the student’s performance on Passage A.
   - Tell the student he/she will earn at least one star at the end of the session for meeting the goal.
   - Obtain the next story in the HELPS Curriculum.

5a. *Student Timed Reading of next story (Passage B) in the HELPS Curriculum (1 minute)*

6a. *Teacher implements phrase-drill error correction on all incorrectly read words (15 to 45 seconds)*

7a. *Student Timed Reading of Passage B a second time for no more than one minute (1 minute)*

8a. *Teacher models fluent oral reading of Passage B while student follows along (1 to 1.5 minutes)*

9a. *Student Timed Reading of Passage B a third time for no more than one minute (1 minute)*

10a. Teacher graphs WCPM and WIPM for the student’s first and third reading of Passage B *(15 seconds)*
   - While doing so, teacher provides specific, ENTHUSIASTIC praise (and feedback) regarding the student’s reading and praises student for reading improvements, if applicable.

11a. Teacher awards stars on the student’s Star Chart *(15 to 30 seconds)*
   - Teacher gives one star because student met the Reading Goal with Passage A.
   - Teacher gives a second star if student clearly demonstrates effort when practicing Passage B and reads more WCPM during the last reading compared to the first reading of Passage B.

12a. Teacher records all information on the student’s Progress Tracking Form and indicates which passage the student should read at the start of the next session *(30 seconds)*

13a. Teacher reviews implementation steps from flow chart and records steps missed on the student’s Progress Tracking Form *(15 seconds)*

**Estimated time of implementation if student does meet Reading Goal:** 7.5 to 9 minutes

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Continued from front of page...

**IF STUDENT DOES NOT MEET THE READING GOAL**

4b. *Teacher models fluent oral reading of Passage A while student follows along (1 to 1.5 minutes)*

5b. *Student Timed Reading of Passage A a second time for no more than one minute (1 minute)*

6b. *Teacher implements phrase-drill error correction on all incorrectly read words (15 to 45 seconds)*

7b. *Teacher implements phrase-drill error correction on all incorrectly read words (1 minute)*

8b. *Teacher implements phrase-drill error correction on all incorrectly read words (15 to 45 seconds)*

9b. Teacher graphs WCPM and WIPM for the student’s first and third reading of Passage A (15 seconds)
   - While doing so, teacher provides specific, ENTHUSIASTIC praise (and feedback) regarding the student’s reading and praises student for reading improvements, if applicable.

10b. Teacher awards stars on the student’s Star Chart (15 to 30 seconds)
   - Teacher gives one star if student clearly demonstrates effort when practicing Passage A and reads more WCPM during the last reading compared to the first reading.

11b. Teacher records all information on the student’s Progress Tracking Form and indicates which passage the student should read at the start of the next session (30 seconds)

12b. Teacher reviews implementation steps from flow chart and records steps missed on the student’s Progress Tracking Form (15 seconds)

**Estimated time of implementation if student does not meet Reading Goal:** 7 to 9 minutes

---

**Reading Goals According to the Student’s Grade Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>WCPM with Passage A</th>
<th>WIPM with Passage A</th>
<th>Retell Check with Passage A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Grade</td>
<td>80 or more</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>Adequately retells story*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Grade</td>
<td>100 or more</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>Adequately retells story*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>120 or more</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>Adequately retells story*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Grade</td>
<td>135 or more</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
<td>Adequately retells story*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For example, student retells parts of the story for at least 30 seconds or otherwise correctly states names of characters and major events in the story. Retell of the story in the correct sequential order of major events is encouraged but not required to pass the Retell Check.

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Appendix A : 102
HELPS One-on-One Program: Scripted Directions

Introductory statements and expectations (includes Verbal Cuing Procedure):
<Student Name>, you're going to be doing some reading with me today. As you read, I want you to do your best reading. This means I want you to read as quickly as you can without making mistakes, and try to read with good expression (like I do when I read to you). I also want you to remember what happens in the story and try to remember the difficult words that we practice.

Directions to administer before a Timed Reading (as part of the Repeated Reading Procedure):
1. Place the teacher copy of the reading passage in front of you but shielded so the student cannot see what you record. The teacher copy of each passage contains word counts at the end of each line.
2. Place the student copy of the reading passage in front of the student, but cover the beginning portion of the passage until you are ready for step 4 below. (Do this so the student does not begin reading while you provide directions.)
3. Say to the student, “Here is a story that I would like you to read. When I say ‘Begin’, start reading aloud at the top of the page and read across the page. Try to read each word. If you come to a word you don’t know, I’ll tell it to you. Do you have any questions? Be sure to do your BEST reading.”
4. Say, “Begin!” and start the stopwatch when the student says the first word.
5. Score the student’s WCPM and WIPM according to the Timed Reading Scoring Rules (see HELPS Teacher Manual).
6. At the end of one minute, place a closed bracket after the last word.
7. If the student reads so fast that no expression is given, remind the student that when he/she reads the next story, you want him/her to read at a comfortable rate (i.e., with good expression, like when you read).
8. Remove both copies of the reading passage.

Directions for administering Retell Check Procedure:
1. Remove the student passage in a way so that student cannot review the passage during the Retell Check.
2. Say to the student, “Now I want you to tell me everything you remember about the story you just read. Try to tell me what happened in the correct order.”
3. Start your stopwatch and stop the retell activity in 30-45 seconds. Use prompts or follow-up questions as appropriate.
4. If student clearly struggles to remember parts of the story during his/her retell, note this on the student’s tracking sheet and use this information when determining whether the student met his/her Reading Goal.

Directions for administering Phrase-drill Error Correction Procedure:
1. Say to the student, “Now we are going to practice some of the words you missed.”
2. Point to the first error word, say the word, and then say, “Read this after I do, <read the 2-8 word phrase containing the error word>. Again, Again.” In essence, allow the student to read the phrase three times. Make sure the student points to the words being read. Students will sometimes just “memorize” the phrase and repeat it. (Teachers want students to read, rather than recite.)
3. Repeat the above procedure for all unique error words in the passage (up to 5 or until time permits).
   a. If a student makes 1 or fewer errors, practice 1-3 phrases the student read less fluently. Use the procedures above, except the student should be told “Now we are going to practice some words you read correctly, but they are difficult and we should practice them.”
4. Praise the student for every two to three sets of phrase-drills.

Directions for teacher to read passage aloud (Modeling Procedure):
1. Say to the student, “Now I am going to read today’s story to you. Please follow along with your finger, reading the words to yourself as I read them. Sometimes I will stop reading to make sure you are following along. When I stop, you need to tell me the next word in the story. If you read the correct word, this will show me you are reading along with me and doing your best.”
2. Read the passage at a comfortable reading rate and with good expression for approximately 1.5 minutes or until you read the entire passage. Make sure the student is following along with his/her finger and prompt the student to do this, if necessary.
3. While reading the passage, stop 5-7 times in order to have the student read the word that immediately follows the word you stopped at.
4. At the end of the activity, praise the student for his/her effort (as applicable).
Appendix D: HELPS Program Tips and Reminders for Implementation

HELPS One-on-One Program: Tips and Reminders for Implementation

The tips and reminders listed below were developed over four years of systematically observing teachers implement the HELPS Program; they therefore represent a thorough list of rules and reminders that should assist teachers with implementing the HELPS Program effectively. The tips and reminders not only represent “best practice” for implementing the HELPS Program, but they also include important reminders about procedures teachers sometimes forget when they are first learning how to implement HELPS with their students. As a teacher is learning to accurately implement the primary HELPS procedures (i.e., those described in the Implementation Protocol and Scripted Directions), the tips and reminders should be regularly reviewed and implemented (as best possible) with the primary procedures. Depending on the intensity of training with the HELPS Program, a teacher may need to implement HELPS for at least 10-20 sessions before he/she can consistently implement all primary HELPS procedures and all the tips and reminders. However, it should be emphasized that the tips and reminders are not “optional.” Successful use of the HELPS Program requires implementation of all primary procedures, as well as the procedures listed below.

General Implementation Procedure
- Have the following materials available and organized before starting the session: (1) stop watch, (2) examiner passage, (3) student passage, (4) dry-erase marker, (5) pencil, (6) student’s graph, (7) student’s Progress Tracking Form, (8) student’s Star Chart, (9) Bonus Bag, (10) Implementation Flow Chart, and (11) Scripted Directions. Also, (12) the prize box should be in close proximity.
- Use the Scripted Directions or Abbreviated Directions as advised at the top of the Abbreviated Directions.

Repeated Reading Procedure
- After the student completes each oral reading, indicate on the examiner passage (with a bracket) the number of words read in one minute. When recording all student readings with a dry-erase marker (and before transferring the scores to the Progress Tracking Form), be sure to:
  - Put the appropriate number (i.e., 1, 2, or 3) next to the one-minute bracket.
  - Mark student errors differently during each reading (e.g., first reading = slash, second reading = underline, third reading = circle).

Retell Check Procedure
- Throughout the Retell Check, make sure the student cannot review the passage. Thus, before prompting the student to begin the Retell Check, make sure the passage is out of sight.
- Use follow-up questions to solicit the student’s retell only if the student was unable to retell the passage for approximately 30 seconds.
- Implement the Retell Check for no more than 45 seconds unless a decision was made by the student’s primary teacher to lengthen the Retell Check.

Goal Setting Procedure
- When determining whether the student meets the Reading Goal, be sure to look at the WCPM, WIPM, and Retell Check criteria. Remember that the WCPM criterion differs depending on the student’s grade level.

Phrase-Drill Error Correction Procedure
- Ask the student to practice “logical” phrases. For instance, suppose the student incorrectly read the word “staying” in the following sentence: “Dad said we will be staying right near the dock.” A logical phrase the student could practice is, “we will be staying,” or “staying right near the dock.” A poor example of a phrase would be, “be staying right,” “be staying,” or “will be staying right.”
- Tell the student to “READ” the phrases; do not ask the student to “SAY” or “REPEAT” phrases.
- Point to (or have the student point) to each word practiced.
- If the student makes 1 or fewer errors, have the student practice 1-3 phrases that were read less fluently.
- If the student practiced words that were read correctly but less fluently (see above reminder), be sure to explain to the student that he/she read the words correctly, but he/she will practice them because they are difficult.
Modeling Procedure
- Read aloud at a pace just a little faster than the student’s reading ability.
- Read with good expression. Remember that you are modeling the type of expression you want the student to develop when reading aloud.
- Read at a volume the student can clearly hear.
- Pause 5-7 times to have student read the next word in the passage. Not only does this procedure ensure the student is on-task and paying attention, but it also helps to ensure you are not reading aloud too quickly.

Performance Feedback (Graphing) Procedure
- While graphing, give verbal feedback and praise regarding the student’s WCPM and WIPM scores.
- Graph WCPM and WIPM on 2 or 3 readings (3 if the Goal was met; 2 if the Goal was not met).
- Circle the data point and session number when the student begins a new passage.
- Connect lines between WCPM (and WIPM) scores only for scores of the same passage.

Motivational (Reward) Procedure
- When awarding stars on the Star Chart, remember to accurately tell the student why he/she earned each star (e.g., “you earned one star for meeting your reading goal, and when practicing the new story, you earned another star for improving the number of words you read correctly”).
- With enthusiasm, praise specific reading behaviors (e.g., nice job reading accurately and with good expression, I like how you corrected words you missed previously) and praise the student for specific reading behaviors or improvements at the end of the session.
- Provide a minimum of five different praise statements regarding the student’s reading behavior. A primary goal of the HELPS Program is for students to experience a lot of positive feedback about their reading.
- If the student landed on OR passed a shaded square on Star Chart, allow the student to select a ticket from the bonus bag and correctly record the bonus stars written on the ticket.
- Convey to the student that improved reading skills, rather than the opportunity to earn stars/prizes, is the primary reason that he/she should put forth effort during each HELPS session. It is okay if the student likes earning rewards as part of his/her performance with the HELPS Program, but you should always emphasize for the student the importance of learning reading skills. You should not highlight a student’s success with HELPS only because he/she earns stars or prizes.

Using the Progress Tracking Form
- After finishing the session, complete the Progress Tracking Form before erasing data from the examiner passage.
- Record 2 or 3 sets of WCPM/WIPM scores on the Progress Tracking Form, as determined by whether the student met his/her Reading Goal on passage A (3 sets of scores are recorded if Goal was met; 2 sets of scores are recorded if Goal was not met).
- As needed, remember to record relevant information in the Notes column of the Progress Tracking Form (e.g., student difficulties with Retell Check, behavior problems, attention difficulties, etc.).
- Review the procedural protocol at the end of the session and correctly record the number of procedural steps implemented incorrectly (or forgotten completely) in the “# of Steps Forgotten” column.
Appendix E: HELPS Program Summary of Timed Reading Score Rules

Summary of Timed Reading Scoring Rules

While a student reads a passage aloud, the teacher is expected to mark on the teacher passage all WIPM. The following indicates how teachers should mark WIPM during the three different Timed Readings: Reading 1 (mark WIPM with a diagonal slash); Reading 2 (mark WIPM with an underline); Reading 3: (mark WIPM with a circle around the word). At exactly one minute, the teacher should draw a bracket (i.e., J) just after the last word read. The teacher then subtracts all WIPM from the TWR to get the WCPM score. For example, if the student scored: TWR = 88 and WIPM = 3, the student's WCPM for that reading would be 85 (i.e., 88 - 3 - 85).

(Part A) The following should be scored as a WIPM:
1. Mispronounced Words.
2. Substituted Words.
3. Omitted Words.
4. Reversals. When a student reverses (i.e., transposes) the words in a passage, this is counted as one error as long as the transposed words were read correctly.
5. Adding or omitting endings (e.g., -ed, -ing, -s) to words.
6. Hesitations. If a student struggles on a word for more than 3 seconds (even if trying to sound out the word), the teacher should provide the word after 3 seconds and mark the word as an error.

(Part B) The following should be scored as a WCPM:
1. Words Pronounced Correctly.
2. Self-Corrected Words.
3. Repeated Words.
4. Mispronounced Words because of Dialect.
5. Inserted Words.

(Part C) Unique Scoring Rules:
1. Omitted Lines or Multiple Words within a Line are not scored as errors, but they should always be deducted from the student’s number of Total Words Read (TWR) per minute.
2. Numbers Written As Numerals. Numbers are counted as words and must be read correctly within the context of the passage.
3. Hyphenated Words that can stand Alone. Each morpheme separated by a hyphen counts as an individual word if it can stand alone. For example, "Go-karts" is scored as 2 WCPM.
4. Hyphenated Words that cannot stand Alone. If one or more morphemes are separated by a hyphen, but the morpheme cannot stand alone as an individual word, the hyphenated word should be counted as one word. For example, "Non-productive" should be counted as 1 WCPM.
5. Abbreviations are counted as words, and must be read correctly within the context of the sentence.

As needed, teachers should also refer to the Additional Tips for Implementation and Top 10 Most Common Administration Mistakes that are listed in the HELPS Program Teacher's Manual.

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Appendix F: Example of HELPS Progress Tracking Form

### Example of Progress Tracking Form with Student Information

**HELPS One-on-One Program Progress Tracking Form**

**Grade 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name (and/or id #):</th>
<th>William</th>
<th>Passage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session #</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Day &amp; Date</th>
<th>1st story read</th>
<th>100 WCPM on 1st reading of passage A1 (Y or N)</th>
<th>WCPM/ WPM Timed Reading #1</th>
<th>WCPM/ WPM Timed Reading #2</th>
<th>WCPM/ WPM Timed Reading #3</th>
<th>Last story read</th>
<th># of Steps Forgotten</th>
<th>Student Notes and/or Steps Forgotten (if applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>W-9/16</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>71/5</td>
<td>90/4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>F-9/18</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>91/3</td>
<td>98/0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>M-9/20</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>107/1</td>
<td>82/5</td>
<td>94/3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Forgotten step 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>W-9/23</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>98/4</td>
<td>115/0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>F-9/25</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>110/2</td>
<td>70/6</td>
<td>72/3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>M-9/28</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>75/2</td>
<td>88/2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Student seemed distracted at times</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>W-9/30</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>86/2</td>
<td>91/0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>F-10/2</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>93/1</td>
<td>76/4</td>
<td>85/2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Student was moved to pg 4 bit stayed on pg 3 for three sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*When a student does not meet his/her Reading Goal, review the Teacher's Manual (pages 56-63) to determine whether procedural modifications are needed.*
NAME: William

HELPS Program: Student Graph - Grade 2

Notes: Circle Timed Reading # and first WCPM score each time student begins a new passage. Write date below first Timed Reading of the day. (Mark WCPM with dot; Mark WIPM with X) Only connect dots and Xs for readings of the same passage.

Example of Student Graph with Student Data

WCPM Goal

WIPM Goal

Appendix G: Example Graph of Student Progress in the HELPS Program
Appendix H: HELPS Program Placement Assessment Instructions

HELPs Program Placement Assessment Instructions (Appendix 5: 135)

Note: WCPM = words correct per minute. WIPM = words incorrectly per minute. When obtaining these scores as part of the placement assessment procedures, the instructor uses the CST oral reading fluency assessment procedures described previously.

General Instructions
- Administer assessment passages (2 per level) until the appropriate starting point is determined. The starting point is determined when a student’s average WCPM and WIPM score (obtained from the two passages administered at a given level) is within the following target scores:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Grade</th>
<th>Target WCPM</th>
<th>Target WIPM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>50-80 WCPM</td>
<td>5 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>70-90 WCPM</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>90-100 WCPM</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>105-115 WCPM</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedures
- Start by administering Level 1 passages (4 and 8) and determine if the student’s average WCPM and WIPM scores are below, within, or above the target scores listed in the Criteria Table above. (Note: a student’s WIPM score is considered below the target if the score exceeds the error limit listed).
- If the student’s scores are below the criteria, start the HELPS Program with HELPS Passage 1. If the student’s scores are above the criteria, administer the Level 2 passages (23 and 27) and again determine whether the student’s average WCPM and WIPM scores are below, within, or above the target scores in the Criteria Table. Note, the term Level does not reflect a student’s grade or ability level.
- Continue this process until the student’s scores are within the target scores in the Criteria Table. Once the student scores within the target criteria, discontinue the placement assessment and begin at the specified starting point. Use the Table below for specific decision-making about where to start a student in the HELPS program and when to proceed with the placement assessment.

Decision Table for Placement Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passages Administered for:</th>
<th>Student’s score is below target criteria</th>
<th>Student’s score is within the target criteria</th>
<th>Student’s score exceeds the target criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 (passages 4 &amp; 8)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 1</td>
<td>Start student at passage 5</td>
<td>Administer Level 2 passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 (passages 23 &amp; 27)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 5</td>
<td>Start student at passage 25</td>
<td>Administer Level 3 passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 (passages 45 &amp; 52)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 25</td>
<td>Start student at passage 50</td>
<td>Administer Level 4 passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4 (passages 64 &amp; 67)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 50</td>
<td>Start student at passage 65</td>
<td>Administer Level 5 passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5 (passages 79 &amp; 80)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 65</td>
<td>Start student at passage 75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If a student exceeds the target criteria with Level 5 passages, the instructor may choose to re-evaluate whether the student is likely to benefit from the HELPS Program. In some cases the student may still benefit from the program, but in other cases the student may benefit from a reading program that specifically targets a skill other than reading fluency.
Case Example Illustrating Placement Assessment Procedures

Jessica is a third grade student struggling in the area of reading fluency. That is, when reading material appropriate for her grade level, she generally decodes the words accurately, but she does so slowly and lacks good expression when reading. To assist Jessica using the HELPS program, her teacher starts the placement assessment by administering the Level 1 passages (passages 4 and 8). Jessica's scores are as follows: passage 4: WCPM = 130, WIPM = 2; passage 8: WCPM = 136, WIPM = 4. Thus, Jessica's average scores on the Level 1 passages are: WCPM = 133, WIPM = 3. Given these average scores, Jessica exceeds the grade level (Grade 3) target scores in the Criteria Table (that is, she reads more than 90-100 WCPM and read with 3 or fewer errors). As such, Jessica's teacher administers the Level 2 passages (passages 23 and 27) and obtains the following average scores between these two passages: WCPM = 118.5, WIPM = 2.5. Once again, Jessica's scores exceed the target scores for her grade, so her teacher administers the Level 3 assessment passages (passages 45 and 52). This time, Jessica's average scores between these two passages are as follows: WCPM = 96.5, WIPM = 3. Because Jessica's WCPM score is now within the target score listed in the Criteria Table, her teacher starts the HELPS program with Jessica at passage 50. If, for example, Jessica's Level 3 average WCPM score was below the target scores listed in the Criteria Table (e.g., WCPM = 84), Jessica's teacher would start Jessica at passage 25.

Additional Considerations for Placement Assessment

- If a student fails to meet the target criteria simply because s/he does not meet the WIPM criterion, the instructor should consider the degree to which the student fails to meet that WIPM criterion. For example, if the student exceeds the WCPM criterion by more than 10 WCPM and only misses the WIPM criterion by one or two WIPM, the instructor may choose to ignore the WIPM criterion in light of the student exceeding the WCPM criterion. Overall, the WCPM criterion provides a more accurate gauge than the WIPM criterion for determining the most appropriate starting point.
- If a student reads a placement assessment passage and the score is clearly invalid due to an unforeseen circumstance (e.g., the student is visibly distracted and stops reading during the timed assessment passage), the instructor should select an alternative passage within 4 passages below the invalid passage and then use that oral reading fluency score as part of the average Level score. For instance, if placement assessment passage 23 is determined invalid, the instructor should randomly choose passage 19, 20, 21, or 22 and use that passage (in conjunction with passage 27) to determine the student's average Level 2 score.
Appendix I: HELPS Program Placement Assessment Recording Form and Decision-Making Tables

HELPS Program Placement Assessment Recording Form and Decision-Making Tables

Student’s Name: ___________________________  Student’s Grade: ___________________________

Scores from Placement Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WCPM</td>
<td>WIPM</td>
<td>WCPM</td>
<td>WIPM</td>
<td>WCPM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passage 1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passage 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based upon the above scores and the tables below, this student will begin the HELPS Program at passage number: __________

Starting Point Criteria Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s Grade</th>
<th>Target WCPM</th>
<th>Target WIPM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>50-50 WCPM</td>
<td>5 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>70-90 WCPM</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>90-100 WCPM</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>105-115 WCPM</td>
<td>3 or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decision Table for Placement Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passages Administered for:</th>
<th>Student’s score is below target criteria</th>
<th>Student’s score is within the target criteria</th>
<th>Student’s score exceeds the target criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 (passages 4 &amp; 8)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 1</td>
<td>Start student at passage 5</td>
<td>Administer Level 2 passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 (passages 23 &amp; 27)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 5</td>
<td>Start student at passage 25</td>
<td>Administer Level 3 passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 (passages 45 &amp; 52)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 25</td>
<td>Start student at passage 50</td>
<td>Administer Level 4 passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4 (passages 64 &amp; 67)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 50</td>
<td>Start student at passage 65</td>
<td>Administer Level 5 passages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5 (passages 79 &amp; 80)</td>
<td>Start student at passage 65</td>
<td>Start student at passage 75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If a student exceeds the target criteria with Level 5 passages, the instructor may choose to re-evaluate whether the student is likely to benefit from the HELPS Program. In some cases the student may still benefit from the program, but in other cases the student may benefit from a reading program that specifically targets a skill other than reading fluency.

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## HELPS One-on-One Program: Implementation Integrity Recording Form

Observer Name: ___________________________  School and School Year: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation Number and Date</th>
<th>Teacher’s Name</th>
<th>If Student Met Goal Steps 1-13a</th>
<th>If Student Did Not Meet Goal Steps 1-12b</th>
<th>Write the corresponding # (e.g., 8b) for any step not completed with 100% accuracy. Write additional notes as needed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
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<td>16.</td>
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<td>28.</td>
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<td>30.</td>
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<td>33.</td>
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<tr>
<td>34.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Games that April Likes

April likes to play. She likes to play in the mud, climb trees, and build things. These are things that many boys like also. But April knows she is not a boy. In fact, she loves being a girl! She loves to play dress-up, loves her cute teddy bears, and likes to play with her long hair. When she plays with her hair, she can make it look really pretty.

But there are some games that April will not play with other girls. April does not like to play with dolls, pick pretty flowers, or play with tea sets. There are also games that April does not like to play with boys. For example, she does not like to wrestle or play with toy guns. The games that April loves the most are tag and hide-and-seek. In these games, many boys and girls can play together and all have fun. April likes games the most when all kids can play together.
Games that April Likes

April likes to play. She likes to play in the mud, climb trees, and build things. These are things that many boys like also. But April knows she is not a boy. In fact, she loves being a girl! She loves to play dress-up, loves her cute teddy bears, and likes to play with her long hair. When she plays with her hair, she can make it look really pretty.

But there are some games that April will not play with other girls. April does not like to play with dolls, pick pretty flowers, or play with tea sets. There are also games that April does not like to play with boys. For example, she does not like to wrestle or play with toy guns. The games that April loves the most are tag and hide-and-seek. In these games, many boys and girls can play together and all have fun. April likes games the most when all kids can play together.

Reading 1 (slash errors)
Total words read per minute: __________
Words incorrect per minute (WIPM): ________*
Words correct per minute (WCPM): ________*

Reading 2 (underline errors)
Total words read per minute: __________
Words incorrect per minute (WIPM): __________
Words correct per minute (WCPM): __________

Reading 3 (circle errors)
Total words read per minute: __________
Words incorrect per minute (WIPM): ________*
Words correct per minute (WCPM): ________*

*Record score on student’s Progress Tracking Form
Appendix L: Sample DIBELS 8th Edition Reading Passage

Student Copy

To Be a Poet

One summer morning, I woke before dawn and set out for Paris. I was only fifteen years old, but I was going to walk all the way to Paris to become a poet. I shut the door behind me without a sound, so as not to wake Mother.

I stuck my hands in my pockets and walked along fast, stumbling a little on the loose round stones. The sun blazed out, and the summer wheat gave off a dizzying smell. I took my hands out of my pockets and swung my arms to walk faster.

Once, I passed a small inn with an open door, but I didn't go inside. I just drank some cold water from the old well outside. Ah, I thought, that's good!

I passed no one else on the dusty white road but a man in green overalls leading a tired horse, and a group of shy schoolgirls. The man greeted me by touching his cap as we passed. The schoolgirls all blushed and ran off laughing into a field.

In the blue evening I was still walking, under a sky of winking stars. I was so tired I might have been dreaming. Am I me? Am I really a poet? Will they love me in Paris more than they did at home?
DIBELS 8th Edition Oral Reading Fluency

Examiner script

Start timer

Reminders

When student says first word.

Prompts

Student hesitates: wait 3 seconds; give correct word; mark the missed word as incorrect.

Discontinue

Student does not get any words correct within the first line: discontinue ORF.

To Be a Poet

One summer morning, I woke before dawn and set out for Paris. I was only fifteen years old, but I was going to walk all the way to Paris to become a poet. I shut the door behind me without a sound, so as not to wake Mother.

I stuck my hands in my pockets and walked along fast, stumbling a little on the loose round stones. The sun blazed out, and the summer wheat gave off a dizzying smell. I took my hands out of my pockets and swung my arms to walk faster.

Once, I passed a small inn with an open door, but I didn't go inside. I just drank some cold water from the old well outside. Ah, I thought, that's good!

I passed no one else on the dusty white road but a man in green overalls leading a tired horse, and a group of shy schoolgirls. The man greeted me by touching his cap as we passed. The schoolgirls all blushed and ran off laughing into a field.

In the blue evening I was still walking, under a sky of winking stars. I was so tired I might have been dreaming. Am I me? Am I really a poet? Will they love me in Paris more than they did at home?

Total words read _____  Total errors _____  Total words correct _____
Appendix M: Sample CURP Rating Scale

**CURP - Actual**

Directions: Think about the method that your teacher or other adult has used with you. After reading each sentence, circle the number that matches your belief about it. For example, if the sentence was "I like chocolate ice cream," you might circle "4" for "I totally agree."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I totally disagree</th>
<th>I kind of disagree</th>
<th>I kind of agree</th>
<th>I totally agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. This was too much work for me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I understand why my teacher picked this method to help me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I could see myself using this method again.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. This is a good way to help students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. It is clear what I had to do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I would not want to try this method again.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. This took too long to do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. If my friend was having trouble, I would tell him/her to try this.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I was able to do every step of this method.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I felt like I had to use this method too often.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I totally disagree</td>
<td>I kind of disagree</td>
<td>I kind of agree</td>
<td>I totally agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Using this method gave me less free time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. There are too many steps to remember.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Using this method got in the way of doing other things.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I understand why the problem needed to be fixed.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. This method focused too much attention on me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I was excited to try this method.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. This method made it hard for the other students to work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I would volunteer to use this method again.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. It is clear what the adult needed to do.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I was able to use this method correctly.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I liked this method.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>