

Summer Reading Program Effectiveness Study

Mid-Continent Public Library has been working within the Greater Kansas City Metropolitan community to promote reading during the summer for the past 40 years. This work motivated MCPL to partner with the Kansas City Area Education Research Consortium (KC-AERC) to study how participation in the Summer Reading Program can positively affect the reading assessment scores of students who use the program to maintain their reading throughout the summer.

Summer Learning Loss is often defined as the loss of reading comprehension skills over the course of a summer break. Previous studies have shown that students who do not read over the summer can be affected by this summer loss, and can actually score lower on their fall reading tests than those taken in the spring.

In 2012, the KC-AERC started working with three local school districts to gather and assess the reading scores of students both before and after summer break. With a small sample size in the pilot study, there were not definitive conclusions, but the research suggests that summer reading program participants demonstrated gains in reading achievement from spring to fall.

KC-AERC and MCPL are currently planning for an expansion of this study in hopes that the data gathered will help illustrate the power of summer reading.

• What Does This Mean For My Student(s)?

Data on students who participate in the Summer Reading Program at MCPL will be used in the expanded study of the effect of summer reading on fall test scores.

• How Are You Protecting My Information?

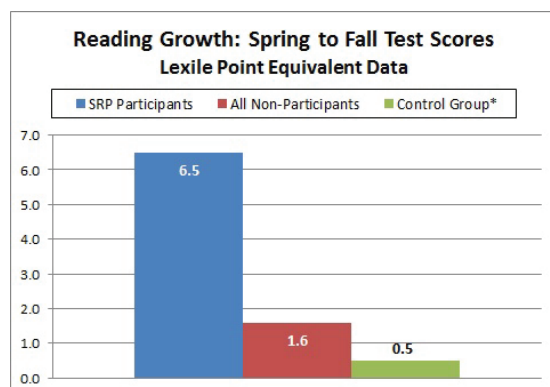
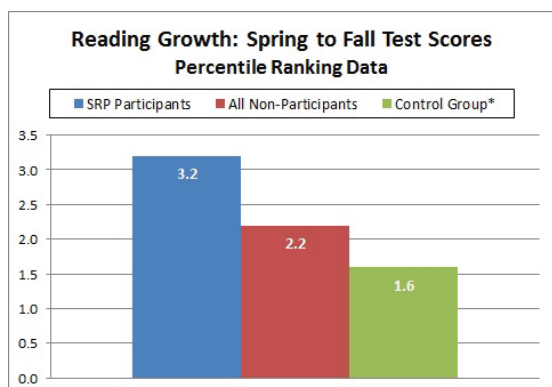
MCPL prides itself on protecting the privacy of our customers. By working with an autonomous, non-partisan organization like KC-AERC, schools, districts and MCPL can safely share their respective student data, thus protecting your information. MCPL receives no information on students' school performance and schools only receive the number of total students that participated in the Summer Reading Program.

• What Can I Do To Help?

Encourage your students to participate in the Summer Reading Program and earn free books by reading and logging their reading totals. The study researchers are actively engaging more school districts in the KC area to share data and further the reach of the study. The more students who participate, the better the data.

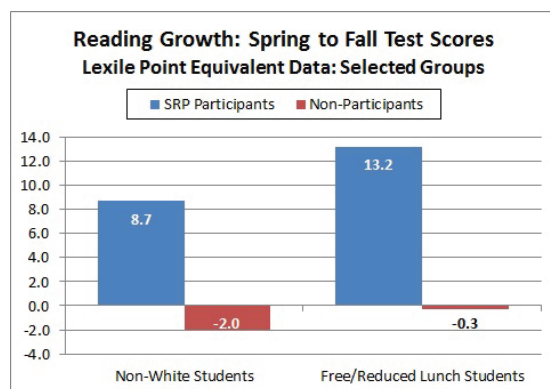
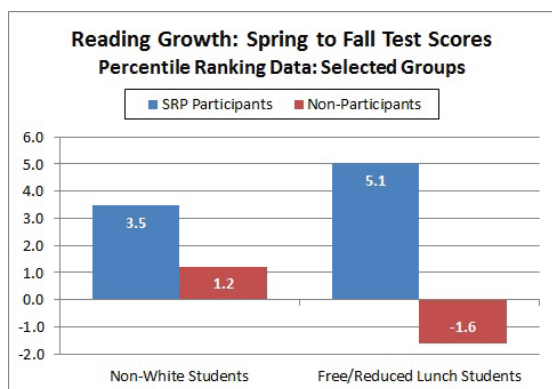
Score Big with Summer Reading

In 2013, the KC-AERC partnered with Turn the Page Kansas City (TTPKC) to take a look at the reading assessment data for students in grades K-4 at three area school districts. This study included the data from Mid-Continent Public Library's Summer Reading Effectiveness pilot study. The results suggest that participation in summer reading programs improved student scores on their fall assessments--whether by percentile ranking or Lexile Point equivalents.



Minority and Low Income Students Have Even More to Gain

Previous research has also shown that neither gender, ethnicity, nor IQ appear to have consistent influence on summer learning loss. On the other hand, socioeconomic status does appear to be correlated with loss. The TTPKC findings suggest that minority and low-income students in the metro area may have more to gain by reading over the summer.



It is not just reading scores that are affected by a lack of reading; one of the studies also found the loss of spelling skills is even more pronounced for those who do not take the time to read while on break.

For more information: Cooper, H., Nye, B., Charlton, K., Lindsay, J., and Greathouse, S., "The Effects of Summer Vacation on Achievement Test Scores: A Narrative and Meta-Analytic Review," *Review of Educational Research*, 66 (3), pp. 227-68, 1996.

The Future of the Study

While only portions of these Kansas City metropolitan findings are currently statistically significant, they do show the need for further research to prove how much summer reading impacts student performance in school. Additional school districts have signed on to participate in the study and larger results will be available after fall 2014 assessment testing.