

Results of the Wiltshire Sound Discovery© Wave 3 Project March 2009 – March 2010

Background

- Sound Discovery© is a Wave 3 synthetic phonics intervention programme for the group teaching of reading and spelling to children struggling at the early stages of literacy skill development.
- The programme is delivered through three sessions a week of Snappy Lessons®. These lessons are highly structured, fast-paced and multi-sensory and designed to promote the phonological skills of blending and segmenting at a simple level.
- It was highlighted in the DCSF Document 'What works for pupils with literacy difficulties', 2007.
- A Pilot Project undertaken in Wiltshire in February – July 2008 demonstrated positive findings for children's reading and spelling (with 65% of 46 pupils making double the rate of expected progress). Please see 'A report of the Sound Discovery Trial Feb-July 2008', WLSS.
- Further data obtained between November 2008 and March 2009 demonstrated:
 - an overall average ratio gain for reading of 2.9 (i.e. sufficient to at least double the standard rate of progress) for 52 children
 - an overall average ratio gain for spelling of 1.9 (i.e. educationally significant progress) for 52 children.

This Project

- 51 schools were trained to use the Sound Discovery© resources by WLSS between March 2009 and March 2010
- 12 schools reported their findings for 70 children in November 2009 and March 2010
- Schools taking part in this Programme reported findings after a minimum of 9 to 12 weeks of intervention
- Schools were asked to target late KS1 and early KS2 pupils who were a minimum of 2 years behind their peers in reading.

Findings

- The **overall average ratio gain for reading from this sample was 3.1** (i.e. sufficient to at least double the standard rate of progress) with the **overall average reading age gain of 9.2 months.**
- The **overall average ratio gain for spelling from this sample was 1.4** (i.e. educationally significant progress) with **overall average spelling age gain of 4.1 months.**
- **57% of sample children achieved reading ratio gains greater than 1.4** and **60% of sample children achieved spelling ratio gains greater than 1.4** – the gain deemed appropriate for a Wave 3 intervention to be considered 'educationally significant'
- These results indicate a **good impact** for the Sound Discovery Programme in from reported data over the period from March 2009 to March 2010.

Comments from schools

The impact of the training was monitored through evaluation forms at each training event. Staff from each school trained were also asked to complete School and Pupil Evaluation Questionnaires designed to aid specific feedback.

All schools who reported findings were positive about the impact of the Programme on their targeted children and would recommend it to other schools. Particular strengths of the Programme commented on by schools included the following:

- motivating and fun for pupils concerned
- fast paced but short lessons that were easily manageable with simple resources
- repeated lesson format was helpful for pupils and provided essential consolidation and over-learning
- small group intervention rather than one-to-one
- clear monitoring and regular assessment was possible
- reading, spelling and sentence writing skills began to be transferred into the classroom.

In one school the positive impact of the Programme was widely disseminated:

Pupils, teachers, TAs, SENCO and Head are all very pleased – good progress shown on the report to Governors
(Aloeric Primary School)

In another school the Programme was felt to be helpful when whole school schemes had not been successful:

Phonics is taught through Letters and Sounds but where this is not succeeding, Sound Discovery is used.
(St Peter's Primary, Chippenham)

As before, programme deliverers were creative in their modifications and personalisation of the Programme. Many reported that they changed the Grab Game activity and some added additional games to sustain interest.

All the children asked to comment on the Programme reported that they enjoyed taking part in the lessons and several said that their favourite part was using 'Robot Arms' and playing the 'Grab Game'. Others reported on the word / sentence reading and writing as helpful and were able to recognise their own progress with these skills.

Now I sound out my words and do 'phoneme fingers' when I am not sure.
(Pupil from Colerne Primary School).