

Early Literacy



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Early Literacy Can Save Lives

- Preschool and Kindergarten can influence later reading achievement in powerful ways
- Just being there makes a difference for children of low-income families

Kindergartners Today

NCES Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99

% of Kindergartners Passing Measures: Fall

	Mother w/BA	Mother w/less than HS
Letter recognition	86%	38%
Beginning sounds	50%	9%

Some Kids Learn To Read Without School

- Why Do Some Kids Learn To Read Early? “Paper & Pencil Kids”
- Bring Home Literacy Experiences To School—Dolores Durkin

Effects of Kindergarten Literacy Last Until 4th Grade--At Least!!

“The trace of the kindergarten intervention appears to be as resilient as the one for an intensive 1st grade intervention such as Reading Recovery”

[Source: Hiebert & Taylor, 2000; p. 477]

Extraordinary Project-Kindergarten Extended Day Intervention

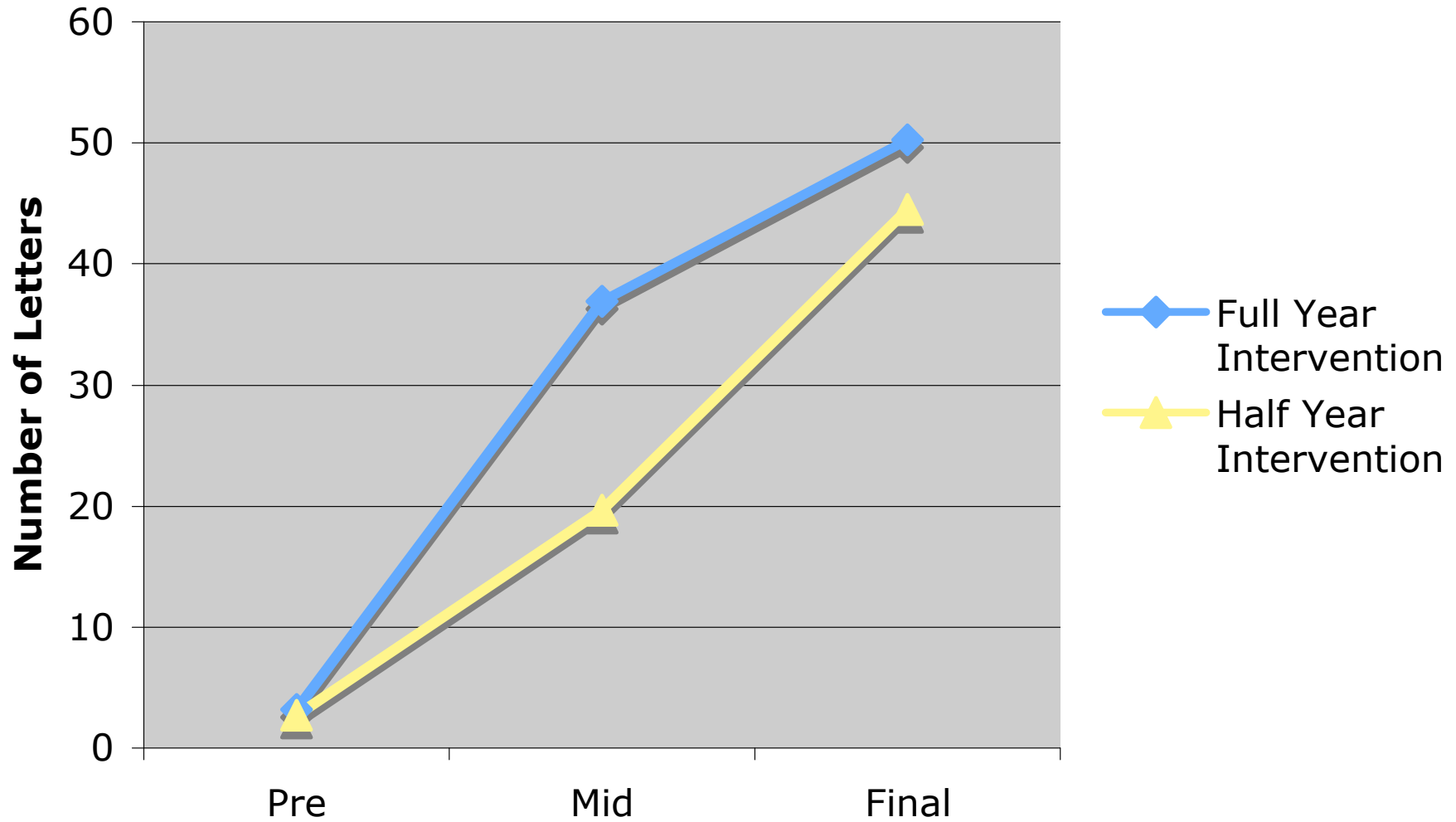
- UT & Knox County Schools Partnership
- Local Norms
- Teacher Quality Grant & Great Schools Partnership
- Pilot Interventions

Knox County Kindergartners

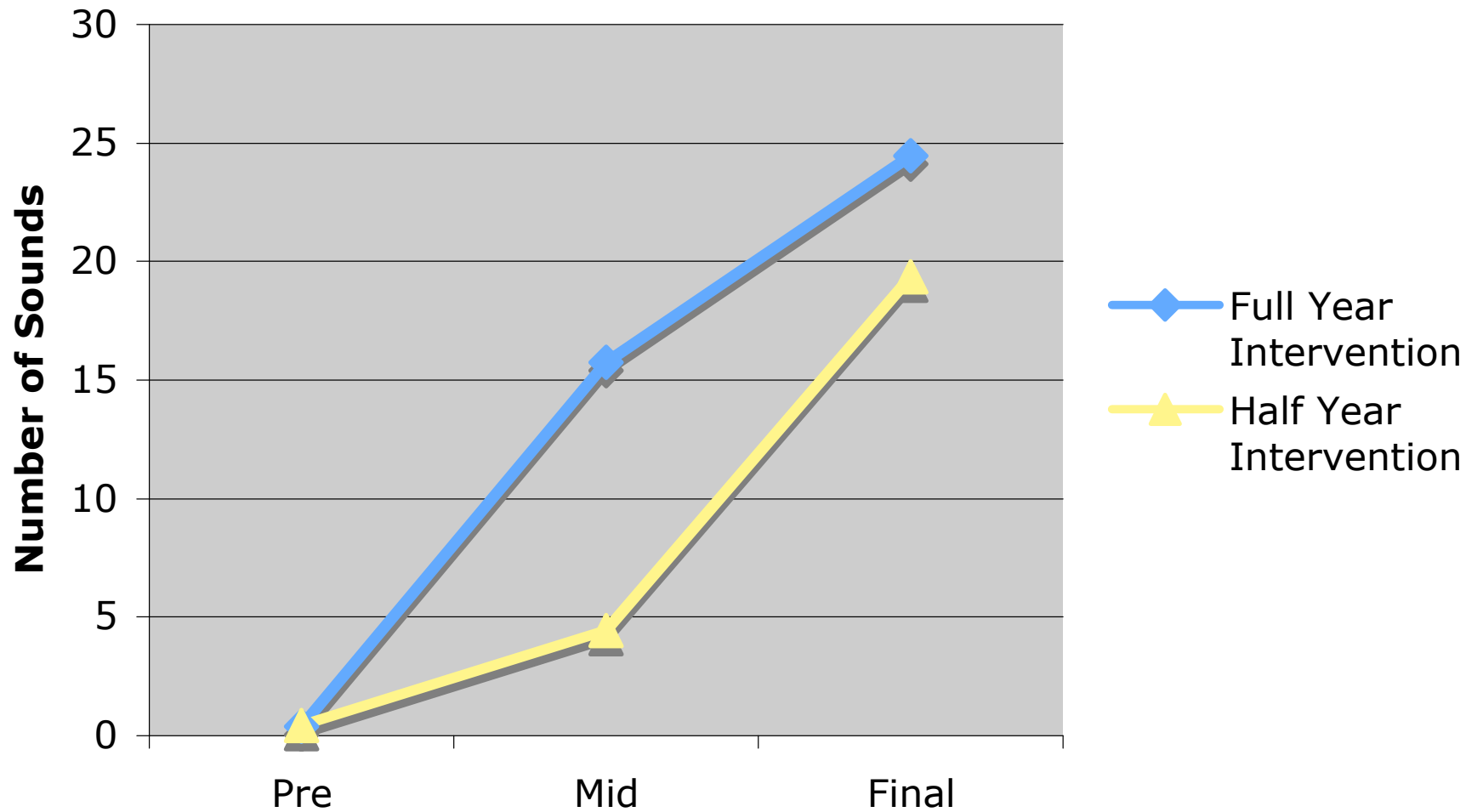
Knox County Mean Scores, Kindergarten Class of 2001-2002: Fall

	Top Q	Mean	Bottom Q
Letter recognition	43	26	7
Letter sounds	10	6	0

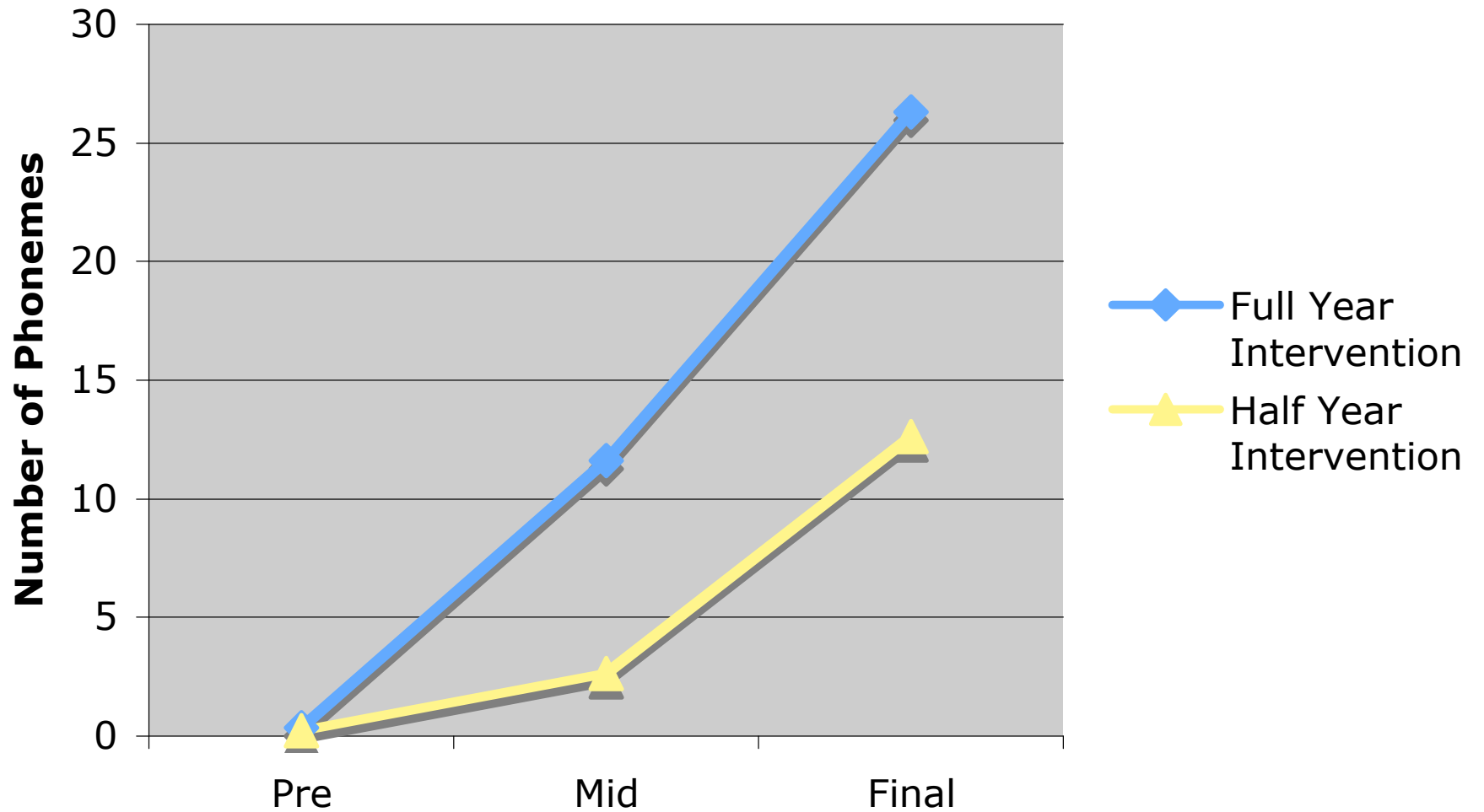
Average Letter Name Knowledge for At-Risk Students



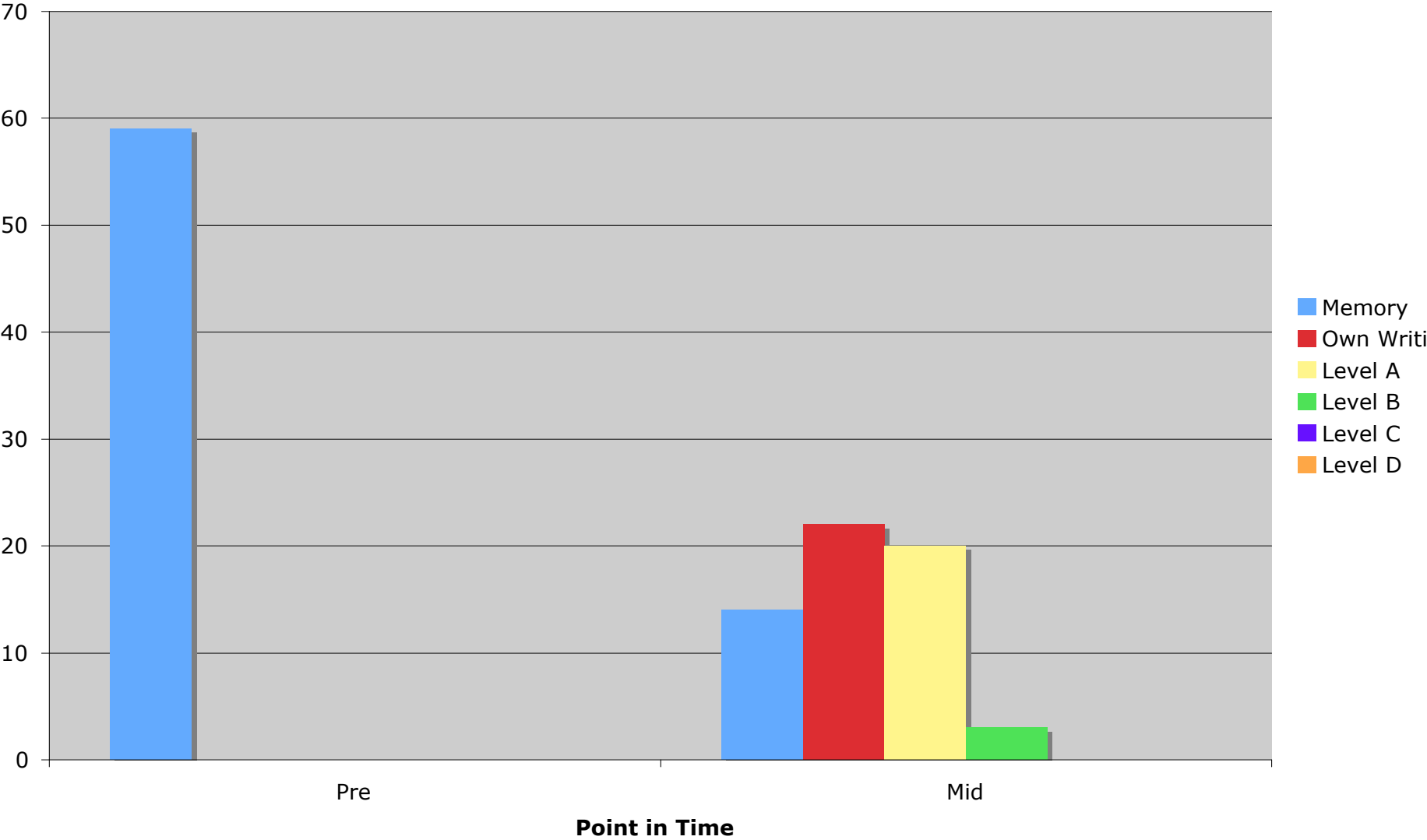
Average Letter Sound Knowledge for At-Risk Students



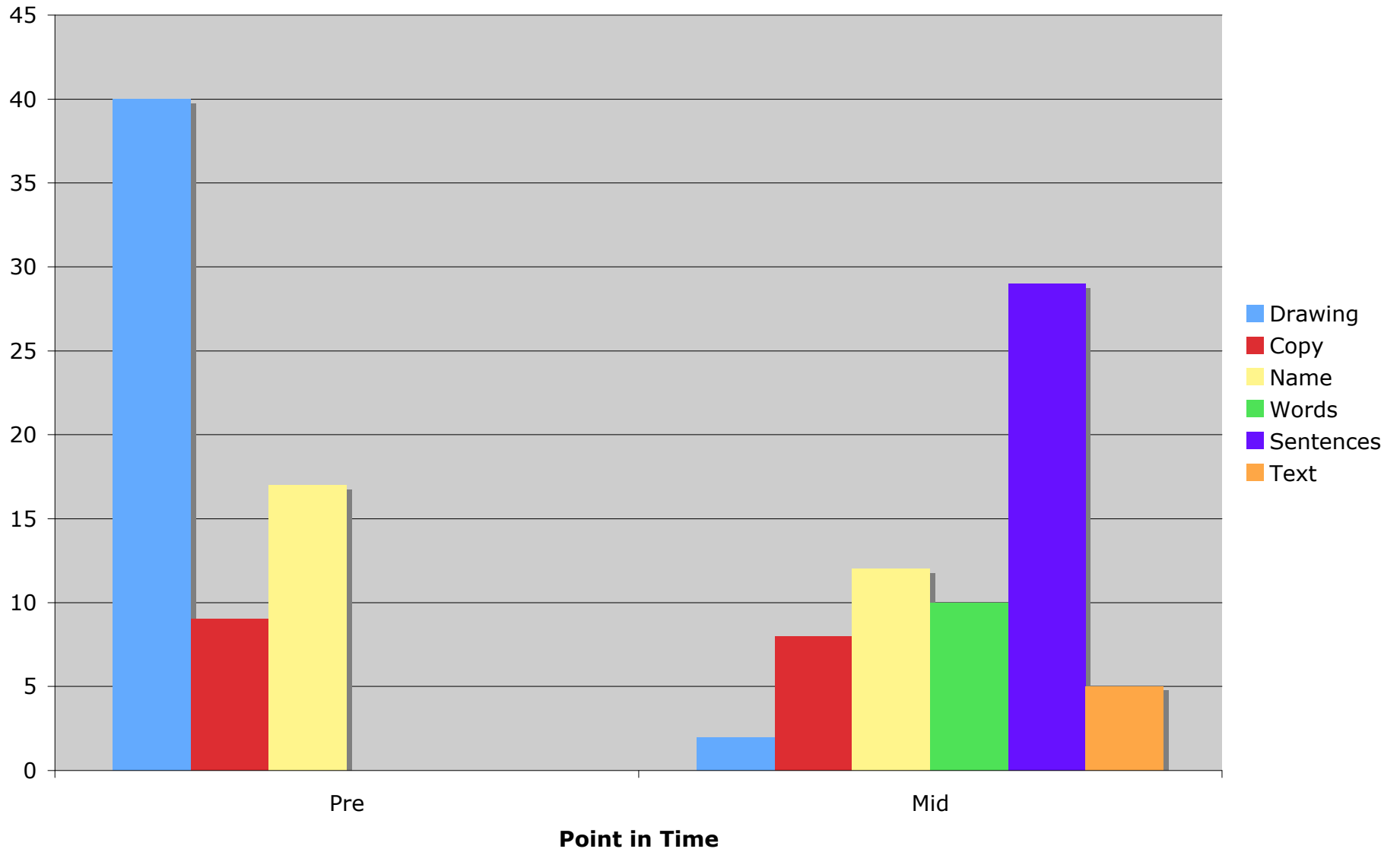
Average Spelling Knowledge for At-Risk Students



Reading Development - Kindergarten Intervention



Writing Development - Kindergarten Intervention



QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (LZW) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

What did teachers do?

- Used observation tools
- Looked for patterns in kindergartners' development
- Matched instruction to development
 - Building on strength
 - Targeting need
- Participated in collaborative professional development

Teacher-to-Teacher Learning

“In the beginning I was concerned that I would not be able to help my at-risk students. I was afraid that I would not provide the ‘right’ kind of instruction. Meeting regularly with my colleagues gave me a chance to hear that other teachers were struggling to get some students to remember the simplest high-frequency words, too. Other teachers gave kids books that were too hard, too. I was able to see how other teachers had responded to these challenges. We compared notes. We learned from each other.”

Observation Tools

- Work samples
 - Writing & spelling drafts
 - Oral reading records
- Observed behaviors
 - Sorts
 - Word reading & writing fluency
 - Print & book-handling concepts
 - Voice-print match

Good Assessment

- Many early childhood advocates equate good assessment with simple kid-watching
- Many others equate good assessment with simple letter naming or sound matching fluency
- Good assessment captures the interactivity of the process of learning about children's development
- Good assessment must engage kids in real reading and writing tasks to describe where they are--and where they need to go

8 Essential Skill Areas

- Letter names/sounds
- Rhyme & beginning sounds
- Print concepts
- Spelling
- Word reading
- Word writing
- Text reading
- Text writing

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Teachers looked for patterns of early literacy development

- “Readers”
- “Almost readers”
- “Sounds kids”
- “Letters & sounds kids”

Readers

- Fingerprint read Level A text
- Repertoire of about 25 sight words & phonetically regular words
- Use strategies to decode
 - Initial letters & letter sounds
 - Familiar words & word parts
- Use letter names & some vowels to spell
- Use sight words from reading in writing
- Know almost all letters & sounds

Almost Readers

- Track print from L to R
- Fingertpoint read (“read back”) own writing
- Know a few “anchor” words at sight
- Use memorized anchor words in writing
- Spell with single letters
- Know most letters & sounds

Sounds Kids

- Pretend read with “book language” using pictures as a guide
- Know print carries message
- Know some letters
- May know 1 or 2 sounds
- Read own name in print
- Uses random letters or letter-like forms to write

Letters & Sounds Kids

- May recognize own name
- Know fewer than 7 letters
- May pretend read a familiar story

What did teachers do next?

Matched instruction to development

- Differentiate instruction
 - Personalize whole-class literacy routines
 - Identify small groups
 - Identify kids at risk for intervention
- Select teaching strategies & materials
- Monitor learning
- Adjust instruction & groups

Instruction--What did it look like?

- Build on the familiar-family, friends, pop culture
- Strategy instruction--teacher models, models, models
- Manipulative materials for making and breaking words & sentences, sorting and classifying
- Literacy used for important work--learning names, writing messages, writing & reading back books, sharing with friends

Materials are nice, but teachers matter more

“Often we are overwhelmed with an abundance of material we don’t know how to use and that may not be appropriate for all my kids!”

Materials for learning letters & sounds

- Alphabet puzzles
- Alphabet strips
- Personal alphabet charts
- Wall words with names & photos
- White boards
- Letters in different fonts, materials, reading rods
- Magnadoodles
- Alphabet books, name books
- Blank notebooks

Materials for word study, writing & reading

- Blank notebook
- Sentence strips
- Patterned sentence charts
- Scissors
- Alphabet books, name books, Clifford books, so on
- A-level readers
- Phonics readers
- Rebus readers

How To Use Blank Notebooks?

- Teacher & child talk about something to write--child's idea
- Jointly compose--sharing the pen on one page of the notebook
- Child copies words or sentence on the other page with all words spelled conventionally
- Child reads back writing every day

How to choose words to study?

- Names
- Other words used often in writing or seen often in reading
- Words that will help the child learn new words

Word study

- Teacher models how to spell using what she knows about letters and words
- Teacher models making and breaking names and words
- Teacher provides guided or partner practice
 - Making and breaking words
 - Writing or spelling to fluency

How to use patterned sentence charts?

- Teachers and kindergartners jointly write sentences based on a pattern from a book
- Teachers and kindergartners share the reading of the patterned chart
- Teachers cut off and give each child a sentence

Children make, break, and sort the sentence

- Children sort words from all the sentences, explaining the categories (e.g., the same words)
- Children reread the words, make the sentences

How can very beginning readers read books?

- Teacher takes the students on a picture walk--through leveled readers or notebooks or student-written books
- Teacher introduces the leveled book or reminds child of the topic of the notebook writing or student-written book

How can very beginning readers read books?

- Students finger-point read the book in a small group or to a partner
- Students individually read the book aloud to the teacher

**“To know one child well is
to know all children better.”**