

PARKER, EMILY G., Ph.D., August 2009

SPECIAL
EDUCATION

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE READING INTERVENTION *LANGUAGE!* ON
STATE READING PROFICIENCY SCORES FOR SECONDARY STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES (83 pp.)

Director of Dissertation: Robert W. Flexer, Ph.D.

This investigation sought to measure the impact of the literacy curriculum *LANGUAGE!* on students with disabilities, at the middle and high school levels, in an urban Northeast Ohio public school district. More than one year's growth in fluency and comprehension is expected with the completion of one book in the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum. Characteristics of students who showed growth in fluency and comprehension were identified to assess progress in the curriculum and the characteristics of students who also progressed on their state reading proficiency subtest were identified to test transference of skills acquired.

Participant students (n=166) in this study were IEP students in 6th-12th grade who progressed at least one book in the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum in the 2007-2008 school year. Existing data in the areas of fluency, as measured by the Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency (TOSWRF), comprehension, as measured by the Degree of Reading Power (DRP) test and Ohio Content Standards for Reading, as measured by the Reading Proficiency subtest of the Ohio Achievement Test (OAT) at the middle school level and the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) at the high school level were observed for growth and comparison. Means and standard deviations for these measures were determined and t-

tests done to evaluate growth in TOSWRF and DRP and to test consequent growth on proficiency.

The researcher concluded that the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum had a positive impact with students with disabilities at the secondary level. The majority (60%) of the students with disabilities who participated in the *LANGUAGE!* curriculum averaged more than a year's growth in fluency and comprehension. A majority of those students (60%) showed improvement on their OAT/OGT Reading Proficiency scores. When implemented as intended, students achieved meaningful progress and in some cases transferred these skills to the state reading proficiency.