With Cognos you can use a function to return only part of a field in your report. In the sample below, the report returns the whole student name. We will change the format so that only the first five characters of the name are returned. This is called **Substring**.
Follow these steps to return only part of a field:

1. Open or create your report in Cognos Report Studio
2. Double click in the field that you want to format - in our example it is **Name**
3. The Data Item Expression Window will open
4. Click inside the Expression Definition field before the expression

5. Type the word 'substring' then insert a left parenthesis ( 
6. Click at the end of the Expression Definition
7. Enter ,1,5) - you are telling Report Studio that you want to display only the first (1) through fifth (5) characters of the name field
8. Only the first five (5) characters of the field display
Returning Only Part of a Field

For additional information regarding Cognos, policies and access, or modifications to the ODS, contact the Business Intelligence Team at cognos@kent.edu. For technical assistance, contact the IS Help Desk at 672-HELP (4357).