

Slipping Past the Summer Slide

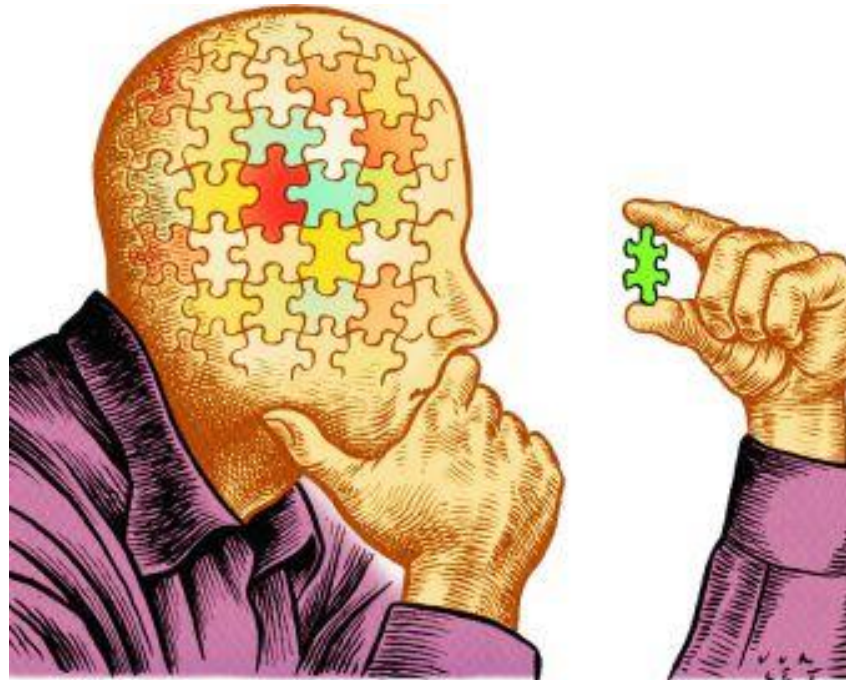
Capstone Project By:
Lauren Updegrove
2013 - 2014

Lauren Updegrove: In a Nutshell

- **2011 – 2013** Collaborated in creating and writing curriculum grade 3 in math, reading and writing
- **2011 – 2012** Grant recipient: Aligning K-4 Informational Text Units
- **2011 – 2013** The Teaching Studio: Grade 3 ELA Consultant
- **2012 – 2013** Mentor Teacher for Brown University MAT program
- **2013 – 2014** Common Core Consultant to H.A.B.I.T. A.T (Human Animal Bond in Teaching and Therapy)
- **2013 – 2014** TLI Participant
- **2014 – Present** Literacy Specialist with the Greater Boston DSAC

Why TLI?

Upon relocating to Arizona I was desperate to find a community of professional colleagues and life long learners. Out of nowhere a friend sent me the description of the TLI program and it seemed to fit what I was looking for. I applied and the rest is history.



Instructional Leadership



The choice to pursue instructional leadership seemed like a natural one for me. Throughout the later half of my career I was intimately involved with creating and implementing instruction aligned to the common core state standards. Throughout this time, I gravitated towards individuals who shared a passion in instruction, pursuing collaboration opportunities around curriculum. Additionally, I found myself at a crossroads – ready to make the step out of the classroom with the hopes of landing a role as a curriculum and instruction coach within a school district.

Competencies

Community Awareness, Engagement, and

Advocacy: In the beginning I was in the emerging stage of this competency. I understood the importance of community action and awareness, however I lacked taking a larger role in implementing these ideas.

Interpersonal Effectiveness:

Starting the TLI project I was in the developing phase of this competency. I sought out opportunities and become more effective with colleagues. Many of these opportunities never came through – however I continued to try to build relationships and trust with my peers within my school community.

Slipping Past the Summer Slide



My experience working in a title 1 school and my desire to address the community awareness, engagement and advocacy competency led me to this project. I had begun to notice working at different Title 1 Schools that the F&P assessments I administered showed the majority of my students scores in the beginning of the year tended to be lower than their previous scores in the spring. Research has proven this to be a reality prevalent in lower income communities where students do not have access to resources and materials sufficient for maintaining their learning capacity with lack of formal instruction.

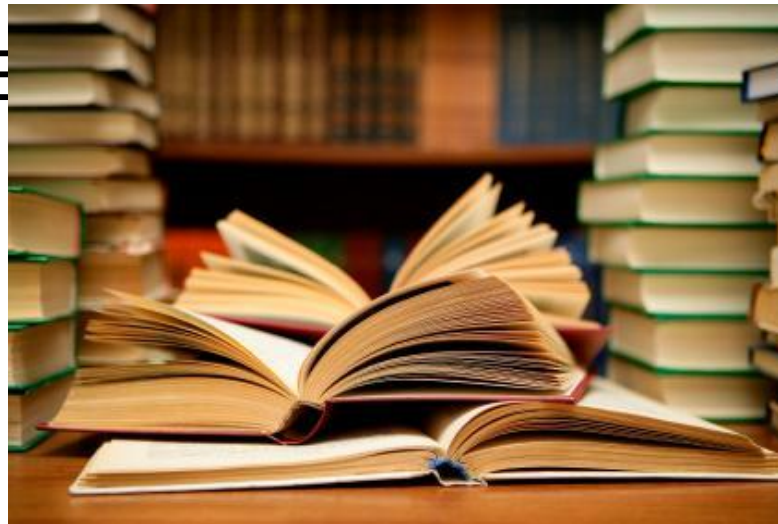
Supporting Research

The Impact of Summer Setback on the Reading Achievement Gap

Author(s): Richard L. Allington and Anne McGill-Franzen

Lasting Consequences of the Summer Learning Gap

Author(s): Eason, 2003




Summer Reading



Action Plan: Raise \$3000 to purchase 450 books for a summer reading initiative for 45 at-risk third grade students. Children will select 10 books *at their reading levels* to establish a personal, permanent home library and take these new books home for summer reading. Participating families will attend a one-time workshop and sign a commitment to support their child's summer reading goals. This workshop is intended to help strengthen the connection between school and home, encouraging families to take an active role in their students' education.

Rationale: A profound achievement gap exists for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, when compared with achievement scores from students of higher socioeconomic backgrounds (Allington and McGill Frazen, 2001). One explanation for this gap is that at-risk students typically develop a 2-month to 3-month decline in reading proficiency over summer breaks. By the end of grade 5, this gap grows to nearly 3 years largely due to the lack of access to reading materials (Entwisle, Alexander and Olson, 2003). Our action plan aims to bridge this gap by supplying these books so that students *have* those reading materials at home over the summer.

|  | Enrollment 2013-2014 | Free/Reduced Lunch | English Language Learners |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Title 1 Demographics | 755 | 73% | 30% |

Continued.....

Measuring Success: Using the Fountas and Pinnell Assessment of Oral reading Accuracy and Comprehension, students will be pre-tested at the end of this school year (May 2014) when they receive the books and post-tested in August 2014 when they begin the new school year. The primary goal is to significantly reduce the predicted summer reading gap as evidenced by maintenance of the May reading levels, or increases in August levels, when compared with May 2014 scores. The secondary goal is to continue to foster a love of reading as we live up to our mission of developing lifelong learners. If this pilot proves successful, we intend to expand the home library program every year so that each of our students read at or above grade level when school starts, closing that summer reading gap once and for all.

How can you help? Please make a contribution to put books in our students' hands and homes. Checks may be made payable to: **Tavan Elementary School**

Subject Line: **Third Grade Summer Reading Initiative**

| Contribution | \$500 | \$1,000 | \$1,500 | \$2,000 | \$2,500 | \$3,000 |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Buys | 75 books | 150 books | 225 books | 300 books | 375 books | 450 books |

*A child's volume of reading is the single best predictor of test score performance and success in school.
Terrance Paul, American Reading Company*

Any questions please contact Lauren Updegrave at (703) 489-7912, lupdegrave@susd.org

Lights... Camera....

ACTION

This project I believed fit into the parameters of the Capstone requirements, as it was research based and would require the commitment and stamp of approval of my administration, but also reach into the surrounding community. Not only would I “hit the streets” looking for donors willing to help fund my project, I would work with my student’s families to educate and help support the role they can play in being an activate participate, regardless of socio economic or language restrictions in supporting the growth of their students.

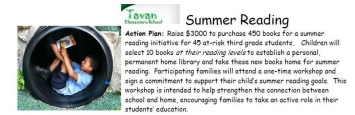
Hitting the Streets

After numerous revisions, I started to brainstorm with the help of a colleague, a potential list of donors. I emailed, spoke with and distributed many of my “one pagers” throughout the community.



Additionally, I selected a local book distributor, The Phoenix Book Company, who I would use to purchase books once the funds were collected. My hope was to keep the purchase of books, allowing the project to have some local roots.

Finally, I created a donor's choose project to fund the purchase of three favorite read alouds from the school year: Charlotte's Web, Because of Winn-Dixie and Franny K Stein: Lunch Walks Among Us. This way the students would be able to not only choose books they wanted to read, but have some beloved favorites as a reminder of the school year.



Rationale: A profound achievement gap exists for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, when compared with achievement scores from students of higher socioeconomic backgrounds (Allington and McGill-Fraser, 2003). One explanation for this gap is that at-risk students typically develop a 3-month to 3-month decline in reading proficiency over summer breaks. By the end of grade 5, this gap grows to nearly 3 years largely due to the lack of access to reading materials (Cohen, Alexander and Olson, 2003). Our action plan aims to bridge this gap by supplying these books so that students have those reading materials at home over the summer.

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DonorsChoose.org
Teachers ask. You choose.

Trudging Along



Pretty quickly we were able to secure our first donor. **Sprouts Farmers Market** donated \$500. I was hopeful, excited and felt like this may actually happen.

Unfortunately, the buck stopped there.... for a long time. Despite my networking, sending emails, and speaking to my principal it was hard to secure other donations. The school year was beginning to wind down. Even the donor's choose website, which had secured some minor donations (thanks mom!), had not hit it's target. I was beginning to feel discouraged, but was satisfied that at the least, my students would have a few books to choose from thanks to the Sprouts donation.

Moving Quickly

With only a month left of school, the pace started to pick up. Not only did I have a lot going on in my personal life (we were packing up and getting ready to make a 3,000 mile move back to the east coast), the project sprung back into life in August.

1. **1/2 Price Books** was holding their yearly teacher book giveaway. I secured a sub, and rushed over to the book store. I walked away with 6 boxes full of books varying in age range, content, etc. However, out the the boxes I was able to secure 180 books to be used in the book giveaway, and donated the rest to the library, faculty and staff.
2. We were able to secure \$2,000 in donation bringing our total to \$2,500!
3. The **Donor's Choice** was funded. The problem: there were 2 weeks left of school. So the pressure was on.



Moving Even Faster

With the \$2,500 I decided to shop at two places:
Scholastic Warehouse and The Phoenix Book



The last weekend before the last day of schools, I book shopped, and set up the library with over 1,300 titles of books ranging from graphic novel, the chapter books to informational text.

Book Shopping

Monday, before and after school students and families were from my class and the ELL inclusion class were invited to come and book shop. I had preselected 2 “just right books” for each student, and they were allowed to choose 13 more titles along side their family members. Families who came with siblings from other grades were also allowed to select 2 books.



Book Shopping



There was a brief presentation where I spoke about the importance of summer reading. We had a translator on sight to incorporate all our families.



Book Madness

On Tuesday, the rest of my students were able to book shop. I wanted to honor those who came with families to have first choice. Out of my 25 students, 15 families accompanied their child to the book giveaway on Monday. There were still PLENTY of titles available for my remaining class to shop. Once everyone had their time to choose books, we went back to the classroom to sort our books, write our names in them and share titles and books with one another. The buzz around the room was infectious, and after each had their time to share, they could not wait to dive in and start to read. One student, who struggled all year to dive into a book begged me

SE read...

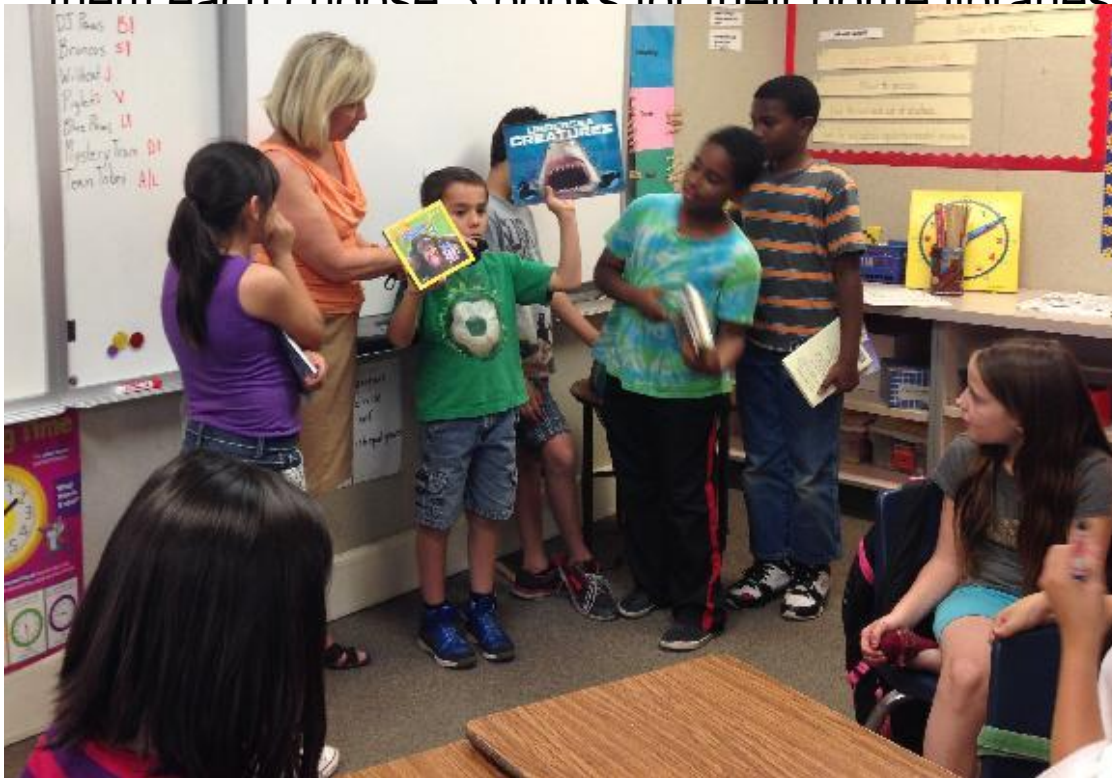






3rd Graders Taking Action

After our book shopping, there were still **over 500 books left over**. As a class we sat down and brainstormed what we could do with the remaining books. The class decided that the remaining three 3rd grade classrooms should also have a chance to book shop. My class became ambassadors. They went to the three 3rd grade classrooms to invite them and spoke about why summer reading is so important. When the classes came to bookshop, my class “buddied up” and walked the other students through our “book fair” to show them titles, talk about genres and help them each choose 3 books for their home libraries.



Finally, with the still remaining books, we donated sets to the literacy library on campus, and built “starter libraries” for the two new third, new second and fourth grade teachers joining the school next year. This was **100%** their idea.

Evidence of Effectiveness

I believe many of the pictures speak for themselves. What I loved about this project was watching the excitement and enthusiasm that came around books. Students who were below grade level or did not identify as a reader left the year truly believing they were a “reader”. Hearing pleads of “Ms. Up when can we read?!” and “Ms. Up can I PLEASE go and get a book?” allowed me to know this was a success. Additionally, seeing children interact with their “grownups” showing them books, reading exerts, regardless of language was empowering. Finally, my students ability to “pay it forward” by deciding to invite other classrooms, think about other teachers and the literacy room let me know they understood that this was a gift – a gift they were willing to pass along and share with others.

My only “wish” was that I would have been able to follow up with these students at the beginning of the new school year to see what they read and to compare benchmark data. But – life happens and I was off to Boston. I found this to be sentimental closure to my time at Tavan.

Reflections on Leadership Growth

I began my TLI experience hoping to grow and build my knowledge around coaching and mentoring. This project led me down a different path, but I do think I grew as a leader regardless. My ability to multi-task and need to be extremely organized (not only with my time, but with the materials and resources). I truly believe that TLI pushed me to take this idea and make it a reality. It provided the structure and push necessary to take it to the next level.

Community Awareness, Engagement and Advocacy:

I believe I began my TLI year in the developing phase. After the completion of my capstone project I believe I have transitioned into the performing phase. Through this project I believe I was able to include the community and have them come together with the goal of enhancing their child's education. Additionally, this was an authentic experience for the school community to see a project like this in action – and something that can be done and not just talked about.

Interpersonal Effectiveness:

In the beginning I identified myself in the emerging phase. Upon completion of the TLI, I not believe I have entered into the performing phase. I hope that this project inspired others to take action, and that they can singlehandedly make a difference and have an enormous

Questions? Comments?



Lauren Updegrove

Lauren.Updegrove@gmail.com

<http://gbdsacliteracy.blogspot.com>