

Rainbow Reading Study – St Therese School

(August - November, 2009) by Maureen Piper

St Therese's experience of using the Rainbow Reading Programme with both NESB students and native English speakers demonstrates that it has a strategic place in the development of literacy within the school. It is highly effective in developing reading fluency, comprehension, listening and oracy skills as well as building reading mileage and the acquisition of new vocabulary. It is also, importantly, a powerful source of motivation for students as it provides many opportunities for students to progress through the different levels at their own pace.

The School

St Therese is a decile two primary school in West Auckland. The school has approximately 150 students, five full-time teachers and three part-time teachers. There are 51 English language learners and 70 other students from a non-English speaking background. Year 2 to Year 8 students on the programme have three to four withdrawal classes per week directed by teacher aides.

The Purpose of the Programme

The purpose of the programme is to improve reading skills, including fluency and comprehension as well as fostering oracy, listening and the acquisition of new vocabulary. The Rainbow Reading Programme encourages students to take responsibility for their own reading progress as they acquire confidence and independence.

The Benefits of the Rainbow Reading Programme at St Therese

The Rainbow reading Programme has had a significant impact at our school. It has provided a huge source of motivation for the students who can measure their own progress on a daily basis and set new goals for the following session. Each student can read a new book as often as necessary until feeling competent to complete a series of sequencing cards, cloze exercise and independent reading of the book, as well as conferencing with the teacher aide and rereading the book independently and answering questions about the text. As continuing progress is made, each student can progress a level, encouraging motivation and independence.

The Study

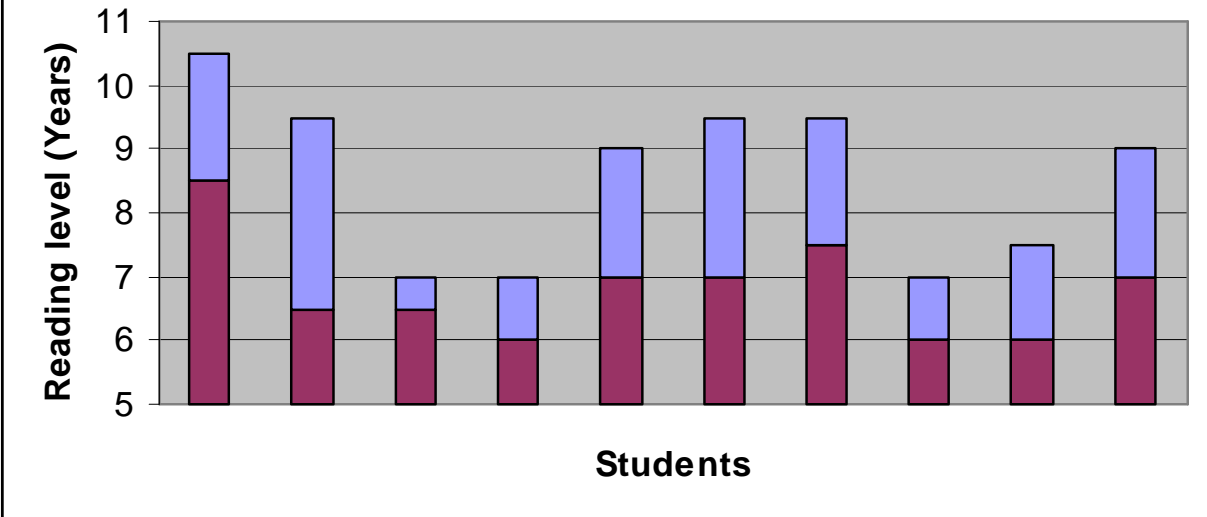
Part A

Before introducing the Rainbow Reading Programme to a group of ten Year 2 and 3 students (with reading ages either above or below their chronological ages), a series of brief assessments were conducted, including a Running Record (PM), a Burt test, a picture dictation and a Record of Oral Language. After a period of approximately 10 weeks of three to four weekly sessions of 30 minutes duration, the assessments were repeated.

Literacy Assessments – Year 2 and Year 3

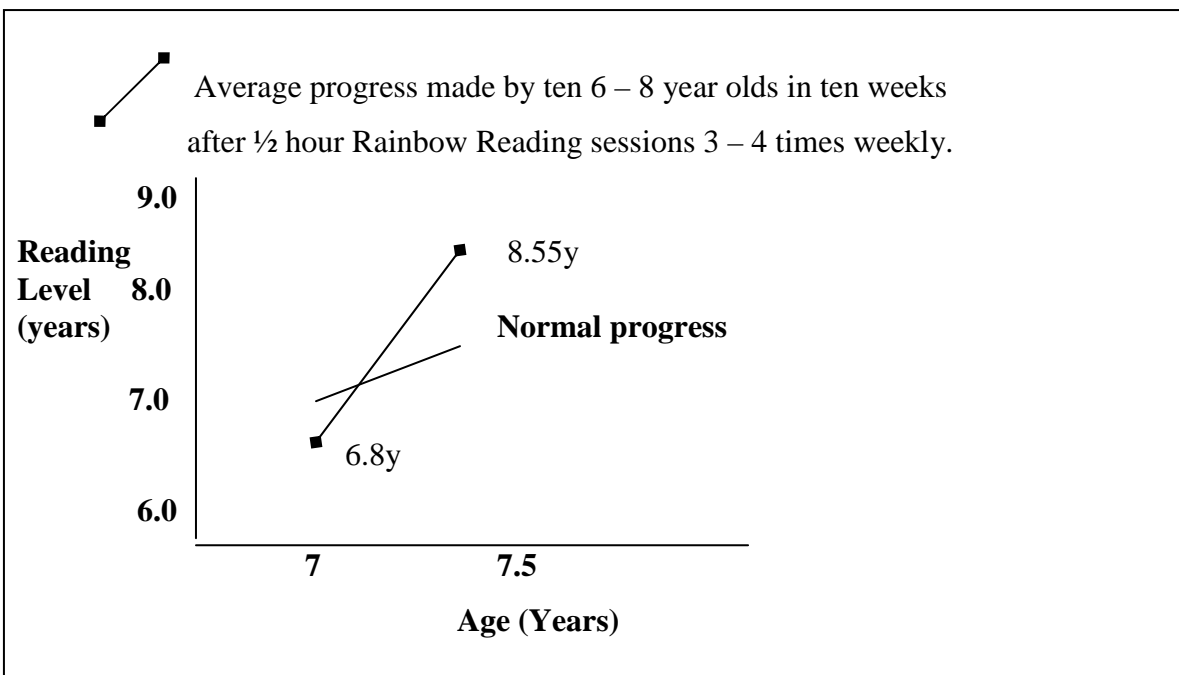
	Running Record		Burt		Picture Dictation		Oracy	
	Aug 09	Nov 09	Aug 09	Nov 09	Aug 09	Nov 09	Aug 09	Nov 09
Fale	Level 24 8.5 – 9y	Level 28 10.5 – 11y	10.04 – 10.10	<12	10/10	10/10	14/28	23/28
Tim	Level 18 6.5 – 7y	Level 26 9.5 – 10y	7.03 – 7.09	8.01 – 8.07	2/10	7/10	17/28	26/28
Salesi	Level 17 6.5 – 7y	Level 19 7 – 7.5 y	6.10 – 7.04	8.01 – 8.07	1/10	6/10	10/28	24/28
Tala	Level 14 6 – 6.5y	Level 19 7 – 7.5 y	7.01 – 7.07	7.11 – 8.05	4/10	6/10	4/28	17/28
Lupe	Level 19 7 – 7.5 y	Level 25 9 – 9.5 y	6.09 – 7.03	7.05 – 7.11	8/10	4/10	9/28	26/28
Ana	Level 20 7 – 7.5 y	Level 26 9.5 – 10y	6.06 – 7.00	7.10 – 8.04	6/10	8/10	23/28	28/28
Theo	Level 21 7.5 – 8y	Level 26 9.5 – 10y	6.11 – 7.05	8.01 – 8.07	4/10	9/10	15/28	18/28
Nelisa	Level 13 6 – 6.5y	Level 19 7 – 7.5 y	6.10 – 7.04	7.03 – 7.09	2/10	6/10	9/28	24/28
Sio	Level 15 6 – 6.5y	Level 21 7.5 – 8y	6.06 – 7.00	7.05 – 7.11	3/10	7/10	22/28	27/28
Kate	Level 20 7 – 7.5 y	Level 25 9 – 9.5 y	7.05 – 7.11	8.01 – 8.07	6/10	8/10	12/28	24/28

Running Record Results for ten 6 - 8 year olds before and after 10 weeks of 3 - 4 sessions weekly of Rainbow Reading



Analysis of Results

All students taking part in the Rainbow Reading Programme made significant gains in their reading levels and Burt test during the ten week period. With the exception of one student, everyone showed improvement in their listening skills by achieving higher scores in the picture dictation. All students advanced noticeably in their oracy scores.

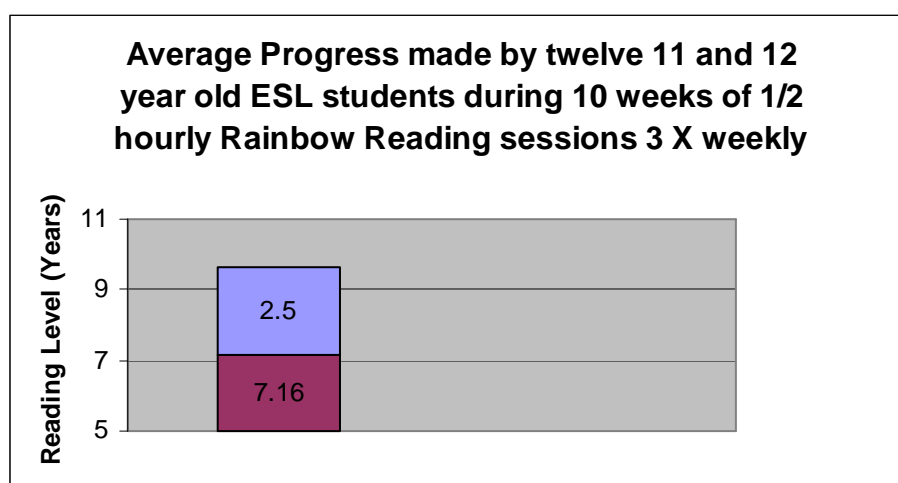


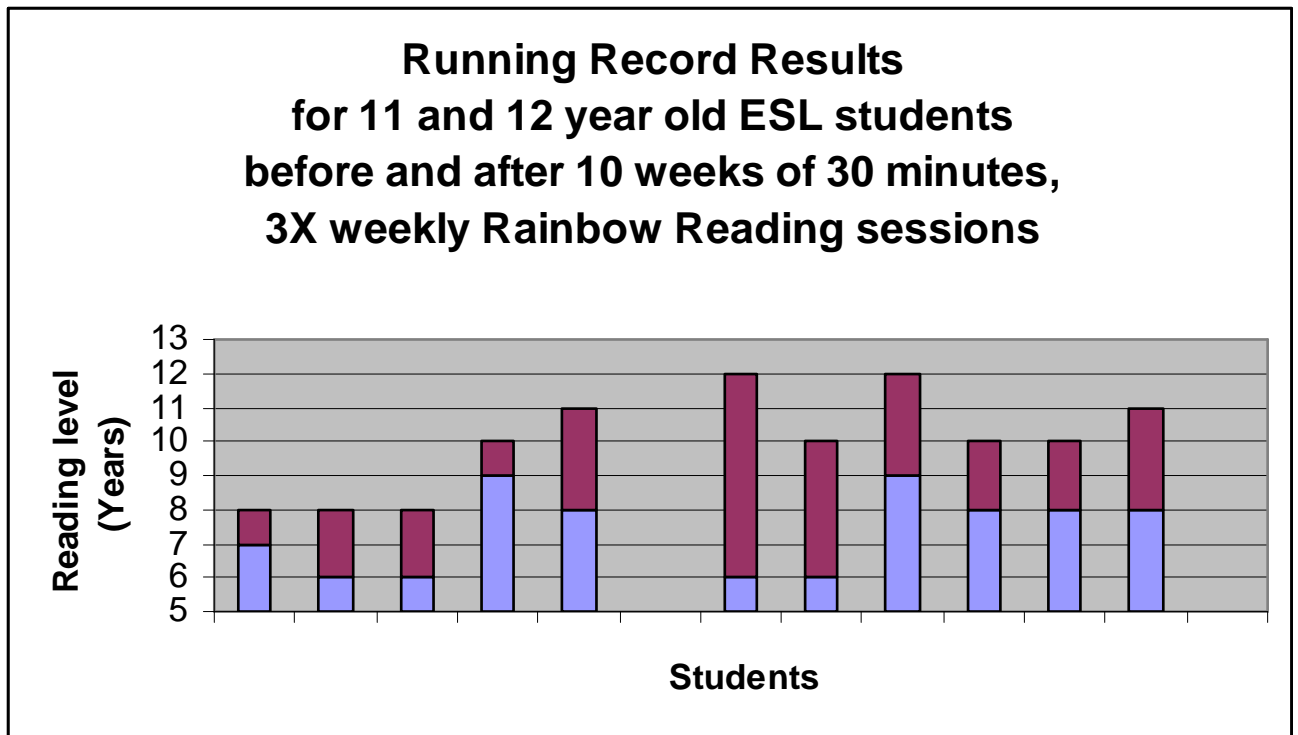
Part B

Before introducing the programme to a group of Year 6 and 7 students whose reading was below their chronological age, a Probe test was administered. After a period of approximately 10 weeks of three weekly sessions of 30 minutes duration, the Probe test was readministered.

Probe Test Scores – Year 6 and Year 7

	September	November
John	7 - 8	8 - 9
Solomone	6 - 7	8 - 9
Salesio	6 - 7	8 - 9
Verity	9 - 10	10 - 11
Maria	8 - 9	11 - 12
Shyna	5 - 6	5 - 6
Aluca	6 - 7	12 - 13
Seini	6 - 7	10 - 11
Trinity	9 - 10	12 - 13
Tane	8 - 9	10 - 11
Aroha	8 - 9	10 - 11
Charlie	8 - 9	11 - 12





Analysis of Results

Of the 12 students taking part in the study, one student made no progress in their reading age - two students improved their reading age by one year, four by two years, three by three years, one by four years and one by six years.

Conclusion

The results from the assessments of the study groups reinforce the effectiveness of the Rainbow Reading Programme in the development of literacy in the school. As shown, students improved dramatically in reading age, fluency, word recognition, listening and oracy. Based on these findings, it is intended to expand the programme throughout the classes in 2010.

Note: All students' names are fictional.