

RESEARCH STUDY

National Tutoring Corps for Fearless Learning



In 2021-2022, the Edge program powered by Wheeling Country Day School carried out a pilot study with 3rd and 4th-grade students at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Southwest Michigan. Drs. Amy Thompson and Rachelle Miller of The University of Central Arkansas were the principal researchers on the pilot. The study gauged the effectiveness of the Orton-Gillingham program in tutoring children with low reading scores in a virtual setting. After testing to determine students' abilities, tutors utilized various Orton-Gillingham practices in hopes of the students improving their reading capabilities. At the conclusion of the study, the students were once again tested. The study had three goals:

- 1** To evaluate the efficacy of Orton-Gillingham-based tutoring conducted in an online, partner-supported environment for students with reading differences.
- 2** To determine student growth between pre-and post-assessment for students tutored.
- 3** To identify the benefits of participation in Boys & Girls Club programming or other out-of-school time programs on academic achievement.

All students participated in two thirty-minute tutoring sessions a week over an eighteen-week period. The scores of third-grade students improved on all associated measures. Fourth grade students also witnessed improved scores in two areas. They increased by 1 point in vocabulary and 25 points in reading fluency.

3RD GRADE RESULTS

 **9**
POINTS

VOCABULARY

 **20**
POINTS

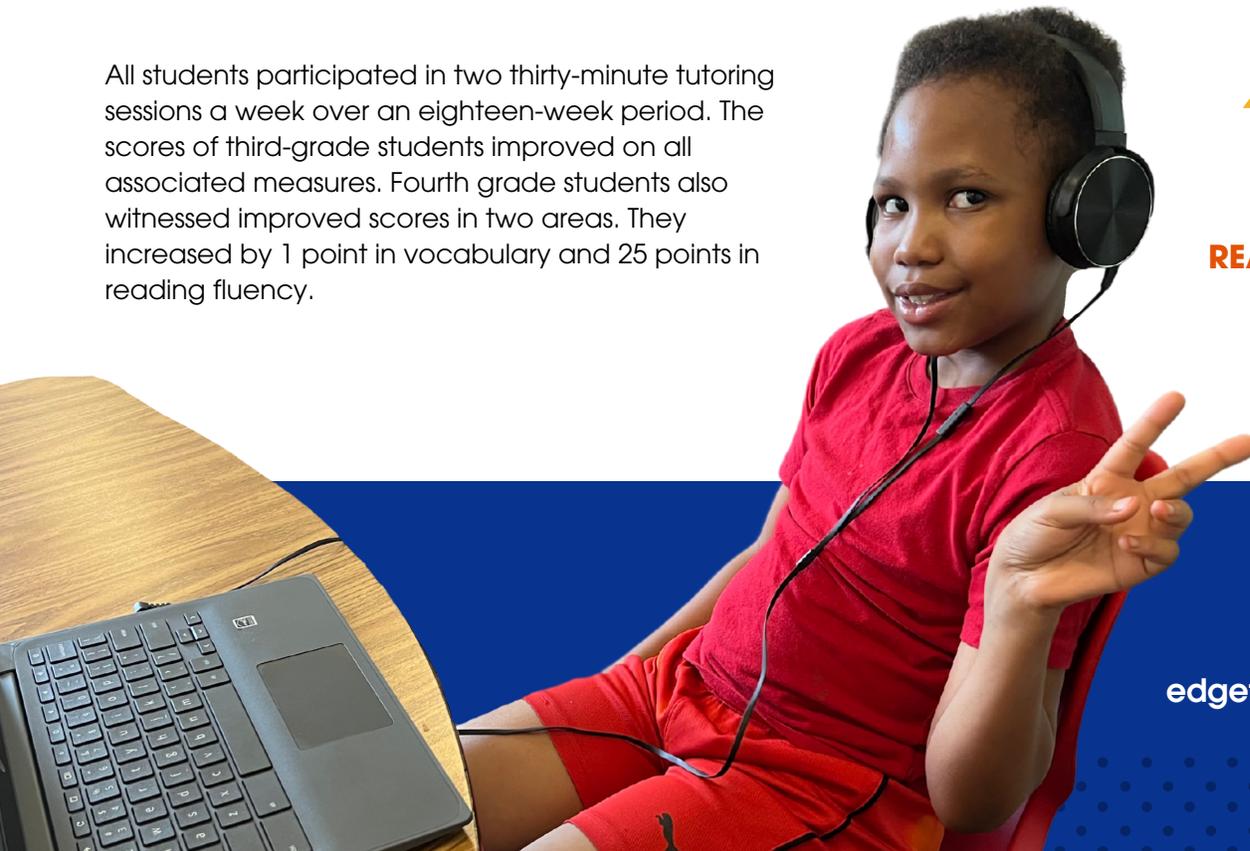
COMPOSITE SCORE

 **6**
POINTS

READING COMPREHENSION

 **13**
POINTS

READING FLUENCY



As the post-test scores demonstrate, tutoring based on Orton-Gillingham practices led to statistically significant improvements for both third and fourth graders in vocabulary and oral reading fluency. The latter is important because the program focused on the sounds of words and their pronunciation. In other words, the tutoring worked. The study provides evidence that virtual tutoring programs can help students improve their reading capabilities. In an age of budget cuts and increased calls for accountability for schools, virtual tutoring offers an avenue for all schools and out-of-school time programs.

This is particularly true of those that serve economically disadvantaged students and are starved of resources, as virtual tutoring provides the means to both create the necessary data for assessment and help students become more capable readers.

In short, the study demonstrated that tutoring based on Orton-Gillingham practices and delivered in an online format has been proven to improve the reading abilities of economically disadvantaged students. The tutoring program is replicable and can be used to assist students at other schools or out-of-school time organizations across the country.



To learn more about partnerships or to become an investor in this work, contact Theresa Kowcheck (Director) at tkowcheck@wcdsdu.com or call 304-232-2430 and ask for Edge.