

America Reads is a federal program designed to assist children in elementary schools who are struggling to learn how to read. The program at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), which is operated by the Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education (SCALE), a program in the School of Education, began in 1997 and has formed partnerships with local schools and daycares to support parents, teachers, and staff in helping children achieve their reading goals.



The tutors are so positive and supportive! My student's reading level, comprehension skills, and fluency have improved substantially since he began working with them!
~ Teacher

Methods

Using federal work-study funds, SCALE's America Reads program hires UNC-CH undergraduate students as tutors to provide classroom support and individual attention to struggling and at-risk students, with a focus on those who do not qualify for or receive specialized support services and interventions. America Reads tutors work with teachers, after-school coordinators, and administrators to provide age and school-appropriate lessons, while also utilizing a research-based curriculum to help guide tutors in their lessons. The tutors provide consistent service to the schools by working with their learners at least twice a week in 40-minute sessions for 23 weeks. All tutors are directly supervised by SCALE graduate students from the School of Education.



Training

SCALE provides high-quality, researched-based trainings to our America Reads tutors throughout the school year. During the 2009-2010 school year, each tutor received over 25 hours of training, comprised of 6 hours of initial

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training, with 19 additional hours over the course of the year. Topics covered in training are wide-ranging, and include: working with ESL students, behavior management, lesson planning and assessment, multiple intelligences, civic engagement, and working with diverse populations.

Where We Are Now

SCALE’s America Reads program currently has partnerships with five local elementary schools (Carrboro Elementary, Ephesus Elementary, New Hope Elementary, Rashkis Elementary, and Scroggs Elementary) and one day-care (Holmes Day Care at the Hargraves Center). In 2009-2010, America Reads employed 35 undergraduate UNC work-study students, as well as six graduate student supervisors. A total of 213 students were tutored through the America Reads program.

Results

Throughout its history, the America Reads program has proven to be successful in helping students improve their reading levels.

K-2nd Grade Reading Level Change*

Avg. Increase K-2	2009-10	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
Fall/Spring	+1.4	+1.1	+1.6	+2.1	+2.4	+1.6	+1.4
Entire year	+7.0	+2.3	+4.1	+2.8	+4.7	+4.6	+5.5

*Reading Recovery levels are scored on a scale of 1-20.

3rd-5th Grade Reading Level Change*

Avg. Increase 3-5	2009-10	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
Fall/Spring	+0.4	+0.3	+0.5	+0.5	+0.5	+0.5	n/a
Entire year	+0.5	+0.6	+0.6	+0.6	+1.0	+1.0	n/a

* Accelerated Reading levels are scored on a scale of 1.0-6.0.

My student is much more confident since she began working with her tutor! This sense of self-confidence has allowed her to show more enthusiasm and have a more positive attitude!
~ Teacher

This program really helped my son improve his reading skills and comprehension skills. He really seemed to enjoy working with his tutor. I hope he can be a part of this program next school year.

~ Parent

Thank you, thank you, and thank you for all the hard work, patience, and care you have shown my child.

~ Parent