

How these schools achieved excellent results in teaching reading with

Jolly
Phonics



A pilot study in Cross River state, Nigeria



Purpose of the study

The University of Calabar carried out a pilot study in six primary schools in Cross River state. The study used Jolly Phonics to measure the effect of synthetic phonics teaching on English language literacy levels with state school Nigerian children. The study also compared the effect of this teaching with the existing literacy teaching programme.

Who was in the study

The pilot study lasted for one academic year, from September 2011 to July 2012. There were 217 primary school pupils in the six schools. Training was given at the start, for two days, by a certified (Nigerian) Jolly Phonics trainer.

Design of the study

In each school, one class was taught with the Jolly Phonics method by a primary teacher and a head teacher, both received the Jolly Phonics training, while another control class was taught by conventional methods. These conventional methods taught the alphabet (by letter names, not letter sounds), along with rote learning of words.

Evaluation

At the end of the pilot study the children were tested using the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) on nine different measures. EGRA tests the skills identified by the US National Reading Panel as essential if a child is to be a successful readers and writer.



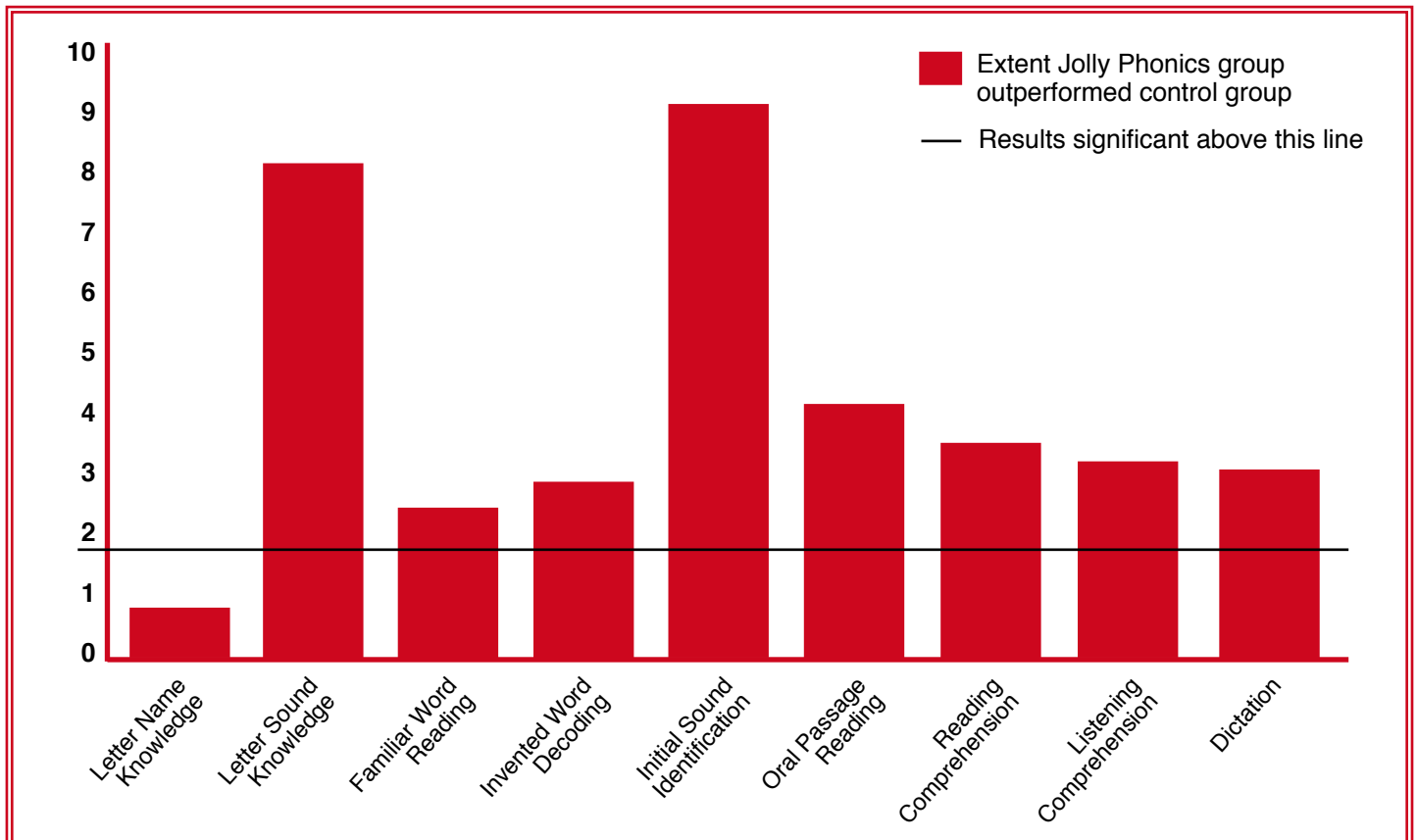
Synthetic Phonics

With synthetic phonics, children are taught how to read and write by using the 'code' of letters. They are taught the letter sounds of English (including the two-letter 'digraphs' such as 'sh'), and how to blend these sounds together for reading (d-o-g makes dog). For spelling they are taught how to segment spoken words into their letter sounds (dog segments into d-o-g). The alternative is to teach children to memorise each word in turn. Jolly Phonics is a synthetic phonics programme.



Results

The results show that the Jolly Phonics group outperformed the control group in all the measures used. The children performed much better in reading, in dictation and in comprehension. In 8 of the 9 measures the results were significantly better, while in the 9th measure, on Letter Name Knowledge, the results were better, but not significantly so.



Comments by teachers who attended the training

“Of all the workshops I have attended this one is very important because it has taught me many things, for example the correct pronunciation of some words and how to speak the English Language well.”

- Awam Christiana

“I have been attending workshops but none of them as rich and resourceful as this.”

- Egban Cecilia Jacob

“I have really gained a lot from this workshop. It’s really been an eye opener.”

“I can now go to improve my method of teaching English.”

“It has been a wonderful experience using and working with Jolly Phonics for the past 10 years. Jolly Phonics has helped me to achieve outstanding results in my reception class (4-5 year olds), allowing both girls and boys to read and write with ease. Even struggling children are able to catch up with the rest of the class in very little time. We have not had a dull moment with Jolly Phonics - learning letter sounds, actions, letter formation, songs and many more activities make learning interactive and enjoyable for children!”

Kemi Adebajo - Layton Prep School, Lagos

Consequent state adoption

As a direct consequence of the positive results in this study, the Cross River Ministry of Education adopted Jolly Phonics for every child starting school from September 2012. This bold programme was managed by the University of Calabar in association with Stepping Stones Nigeria, a UK-based charity. The scale of the adoption is shown by:

- To implement the programme, Jolly Learning donated 80,000 copies of its Jolly Phonics Pupil Books 1 and 2 so every child starting school had both books. (8,000 Teacher's Books were also donated).
- Training was provided by 20 (Nigerian) Jolly Phonics Trainers who each gave training for 9 days (giving three days training in each of 3 locations in the state). Their travel to the state, and their fees were paid for by Jolly Learning.

The motivation of the teachers and the trainers was high, with 2,950 teachers receiving the 3 days of training (which was an excellent 95% of those invited).

This major initiative has been making a difference for the next generation in Cross River, giving children the ability to read and write, the foundation of the future. It was made possible by the cooperation between the Ministry of Education for Cross River, the University of Calabar, Stepping Stones Nigeria and Jolly Learning Ltd.

Obtaining Jolly Phonics

In Nigeria, Jolly Phonics is available from Chelis Bookazine, who have branches in Lagos, Port Harcourt, Abuja, Kano, Kaduna, Enugu and Asaba. Jolly Phonics is available from distributors in countries around the world, and from the Jolly Learning online shop.



What makes Jolly Phonics special?

Jolly Phonics has a simple formula for teaching success, backed up exciting, multi-sensory materials. Children are taught the 42 letter sounds of English, with an 'action' for each one, while teaching them how to blend the sounds for reading, and segmenting them for spelling.

The positive effects seen in Cross River have been repeated in academic studies around the world. Jolly Phonics is used in over 100 countries around the world, notably in the UK, US, Canada, Australia and the UAE, as well as Nigeria. It has been adopted for all state schools in 12 countries. The teaching in Jolly Phonics has led to the change in the National Curriculum in Nigeria to adopting synthetic phonics, and previously in the UK.



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