

World Literacy Summit 2020

Joy Allcock, leader of the *Shine* Literacy Project, and Deborah Grover, developer of the **beagle** software application used in the *Shine* Project, have both been accepted to present the results of the *Shine* Literacy Project at the World Literacy Summit at Oxford University, in April this year. They will be sharing the work they have done in this project that has led to significant improvements in students' literacy outcomes.

The *Shine* Literacy Project

The *Shine* Literacy Project has been running since May 2014. Between 2014 and August 2016 it took the form of a two-year research project designed and evaluated by Professor James Chapman, Massey University (tracking 259 students). This project was funded by donations from charitable trusts and philanthropic organisations and trialled a change in early literacy instruction using an approach called Sounds Like Fun (SLF).

Professor Chapman in his final report states:

The Trial group outperformed the Comparison group at Time 4 on assessments of word identification, reading comprehension, reading accuracy and spelling. This is an impressive outcome that corresponds with the Trial children having been exposed to the SLF approach for the first 18 months of their schooling. We can infer a causal relationship between SLF and superior literacy learning outcomes.

Equally impressive is the finding that Maori and Pasifika children in the Trial group performed at levels that were not significantly different than Pakeha Trial children. This result provides evidence that the typical gap in literacy performance between these groups has effectively been closed as a result of participating in the SLF teaching approach.” Chapman, J., 2016. Shine Literacy Project Results p.20.

Phase 2 of the *Shine* Project started in 2017 and continues to the present day, with a group of between 21 and 26 schools working together in a collaborative network to embed and enhance changes to literacy practice that have achieved significant results. These results have been evident for students from low and high socioeconomic communities, for boys and girls, for English language learners and for students from many ethnicities. During this phase we introduced the **beagle** software application to schools to assist teachers to use assessments to drive instruction, to track progress and to measure the impact of instruction on student achievement.

The results that follow tell the story of our journey, using data from tracking student achievement.

Goal 1: Disrupt the typical pattern of underachievement that exists, where those who start school with the least early literacy knowledge fall further and further behind their more knowledgeable peers

Goal 2: Ensure children who start school behind their peers are achieving at least at their chronological age by the end of Year 2

Goal 3: Close the gaps for students who have fallen behind

Goal 4: Shift achievement across a large group of children from different schools

Goal 5: Show that the same achievement profiles are possible at any school – that school decile – socioeconomic status does not determine success

Goal 6: Accelerate achievement – ensure that students make more than a 'normal' year's progress

We started with a belief that we could make a difference. We have been astounded and delighted by the difference we have made to thousands of children. The *Shine* Project shows what is possible when a group of committed professionals and the communities and organisations that supported them work together with a common goal - to improve the lives of children by improving their literacy outcomes.

Results

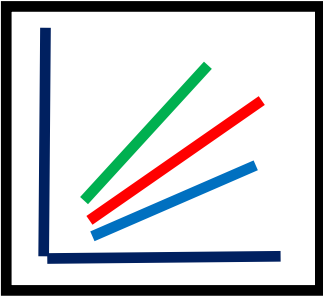
Research Project: 2014

Our Goal: Disrupt the Increasing Achievement Gap

We wanted to disrupt the usual profile of the increasing achievement gap that is typical when there is a discrepancy in the early literacy knowledge of students as they start school.

The Increasing Achievement Gap

Progress typically looks like this:

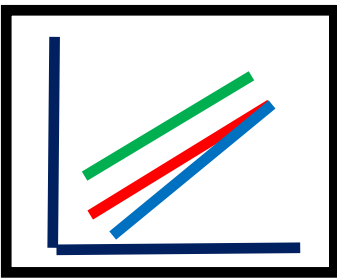


Students on the blue line start school with the least knowledge
 Students on the green line start school with the most knowledge
 Students on the red line have average knowledge

The gap that exists at school entry increases rapidly

Our goal was to achieve a profile that looks like this:

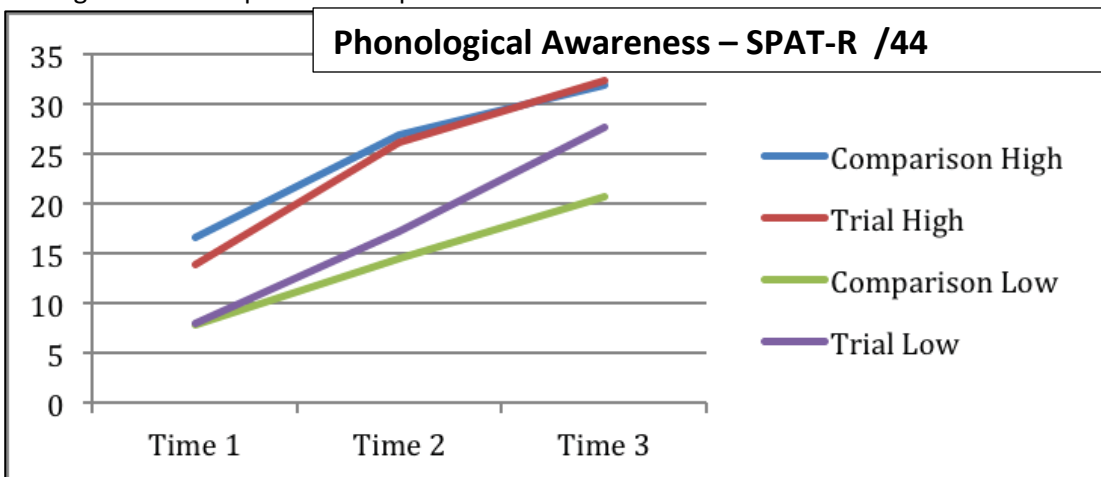
The Decreasing Achievement Gap



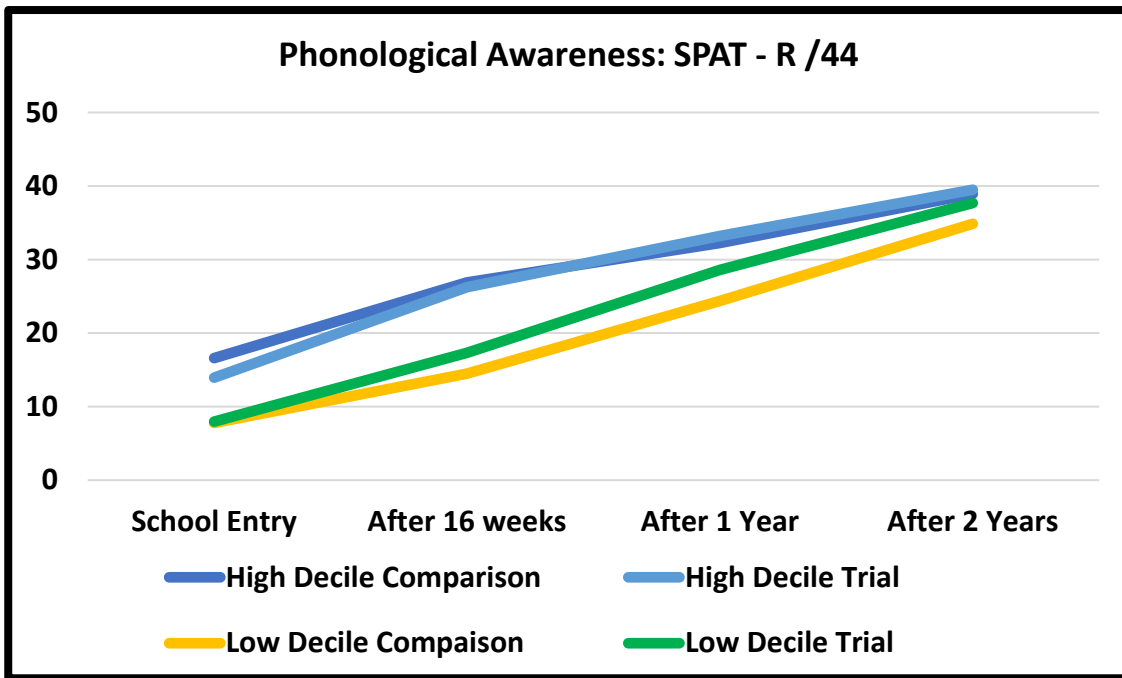
Students on the blue line – those with the least knowledge at school entry are catching up with their peers.

We reached that goal!

After one year, our results showed that we were beginning to close the achievement gap in a number of areas. Here is a sample graph for sound analysis skills (phonological awareness), a critical skill essential for literacy success, showing the decreasing achievement gap for Low Decile Trial students after one year. Even after 16 weeks (Time 2) of a change in instruction, a gap had opened up between the two Low Decile groups with the Trial group moving ahead at a faster rate. The High Decile Trial group also caught up with the High Decile Comparison Group in this short time.



The Decreasing Achievement Gap – After Two Years



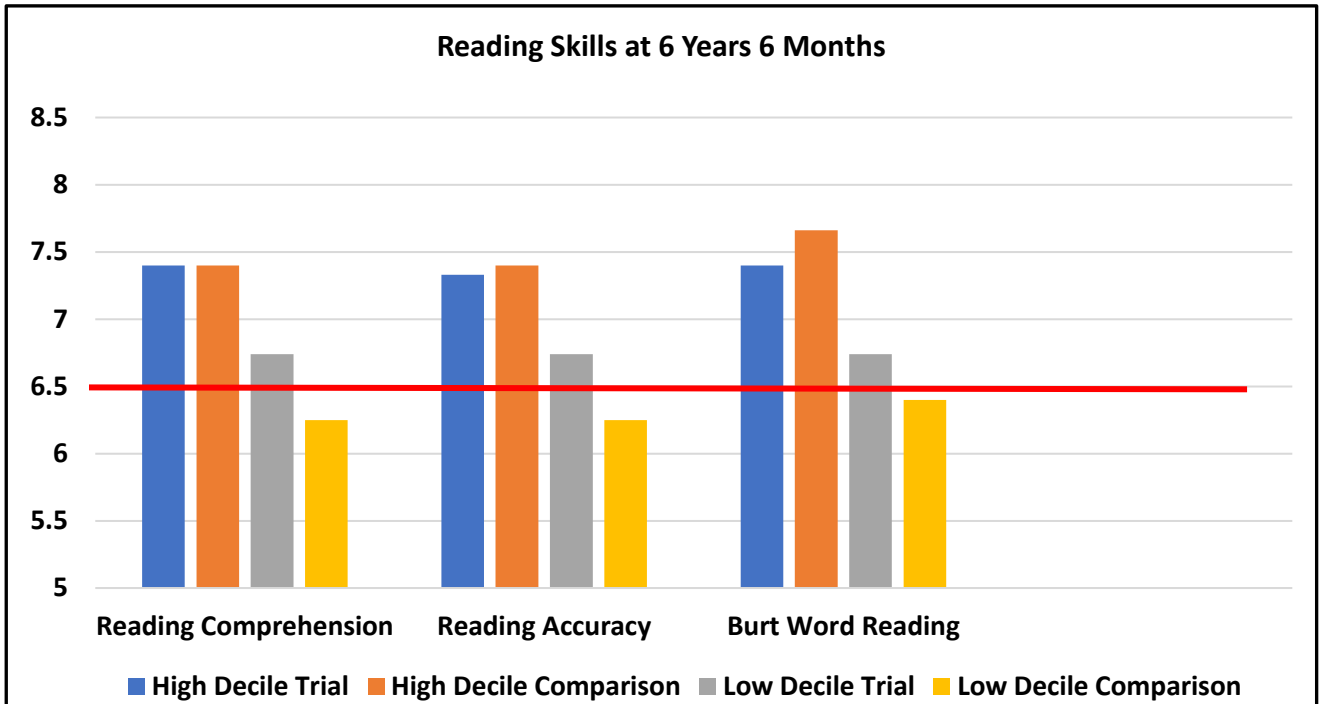
The green line is the Low Decile Trial students and the yellow line is the Low Decile Comparison students – both started well behind students in the high decile groups. After two years the gap has almost closed for the Low Decile Trial group, and after introducing the change in instruction, the Low Decile Comparison group had started to catch up.

Research Project 2015

Our Goal: Achievement is age-appropriate

We reached that goal!

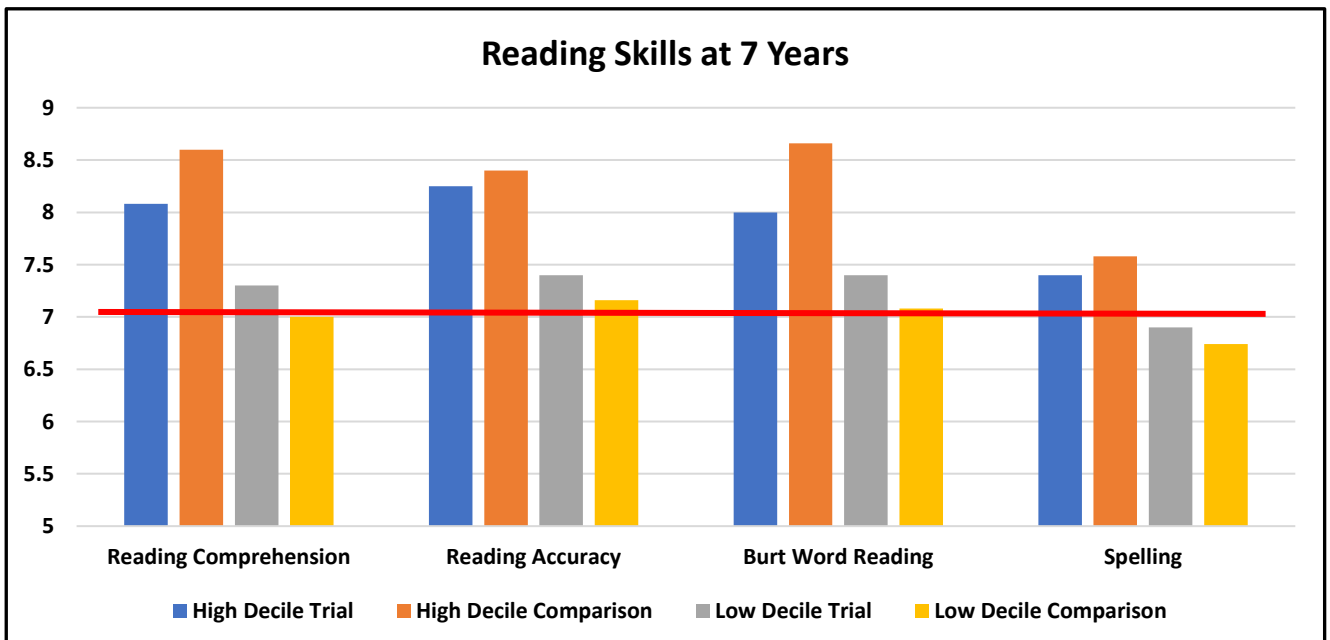
Our next goal was to ensure students who had started school with less literacy knowledge than their peers were achieving at least at their chronological age by the end of Year 2. After 18 months at school, and half-way through Year 2, High Decile students were achieving about 1 year ahead of their chronological age for reading comprehension, reading accuracy and word recognition (Burt reading). Low Decile Trial students were achieving between 3 and 5 months above their chronological age for the same measures of reading. Low Decile Comparison students were reading approximately 3 months below their chronological age. At this point there was a 5-month gap between these two Low Decile groups, although they had started with the same knowledge at school entry.



Research Project 2016

Our Goal:

Help close the gap for Low Decile Comparison students – using *Sounds Like Fun* instruction
We reached that goal!



Eighteen months into the Research Project, most Comparison schools introduced the *Sounds Like Fun* approach to instruction. After only 6 months, the Low Decile Comparison students were reading on average, at their chronological age, beginning to close the gap that had opened up between them and the Low Decile Trial group.

Shine Initiative 2017 – 2019

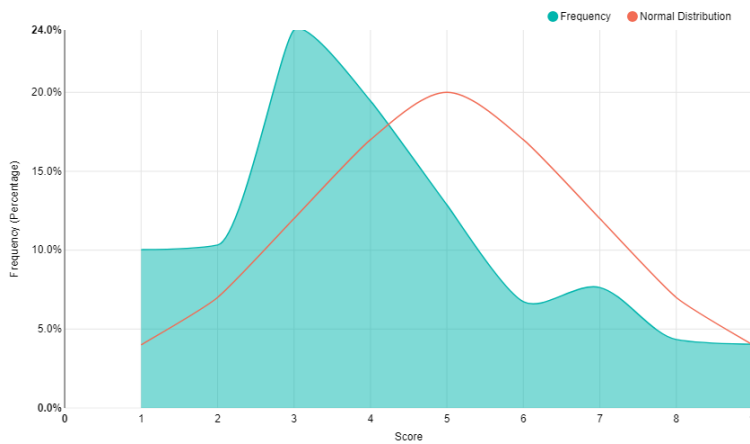
Our Goal:

Show that it is possible to shift achievement across a group of schools

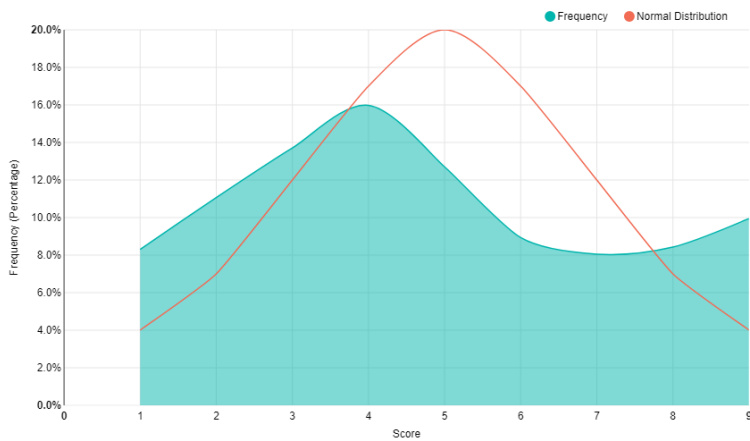
We reached that goal!

These graphs show the achievement shifts in reading for approximately 650 *Shine* Year 2 students from high and low decile schools, comparing their achievement with the normal distribution curve. The **beagle** software application enabled us to track the achievement shifts.

2018 Year 2 Start of Year: Hodder Group Reading Test



2018 Year 2 End of Year: Hodder Group Reading Test



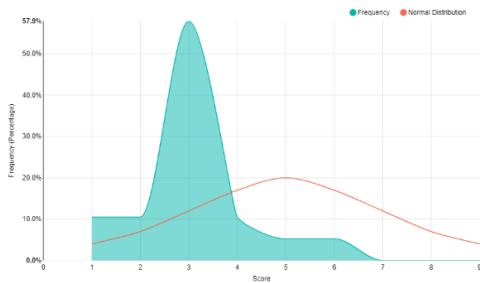
Our Goal:

Show that using the same instructional approach can produce the same pattern of increased achievement in *any* school – achievement does not need to be linked to socioeconomic status
We reached that goal!

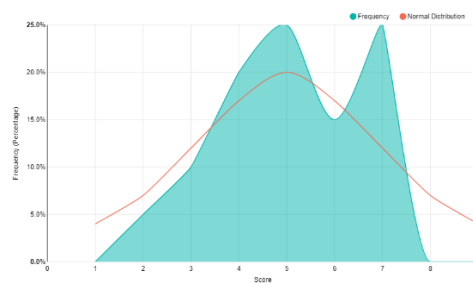
Graphs below show results for Year 2 students from two *Shine* schools – a high decile school (Decile 9) and a low decile school (Decile 1), showing progress compared to the normal distribution curve. The graphs show that decile ranking does not need to dictate achievement outcomes. Instruction makes a difference.

Hodder Group Reading Test: Decile 1 Year 2

Start of Year

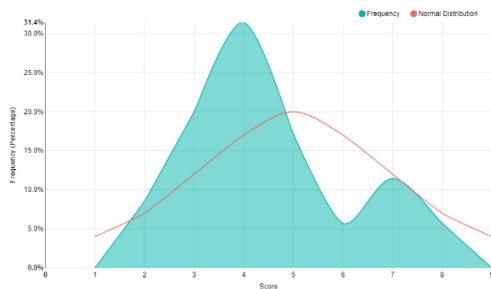


End of Year

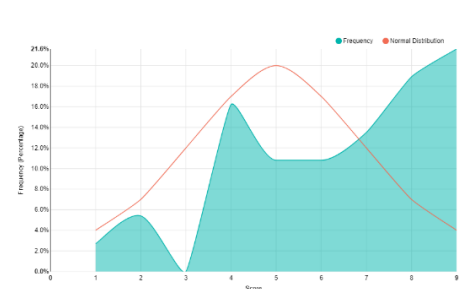


Hodder Group Reading Test: Decile 9 Year 2

Start of Year



End of Year



Our Goal:

Ensure that instruction accelerates learning beyond what is expected for a normal year's progress

We reached that goal!

We used the **beagle** software application to support teachers to use assessment data to drive their instruction and to measure the impact of teacher instruction on student achievement using Professor John Hattie's Effect Size Shift calculation. A normal year's teaching would have an Effect Size of about .23. An intervention that moves students more than would be expected in a year, would have an Effect Size Shift of .4 or more.

Here is an explanation of the significance of various Effect Size scores.

Effect Size	Impact	Progress reflected
-0.15 – 0.15	Negligible impact	Normal progress
0.15 – 0.45	Small/Medium	Up to 2 times normal rate of learning
0.45 – 0.75	Medium/Large	2-3 times normal rate of learning
0.75+	Large – Very Large	3+ times the normal rate of learning

In 2018, Year 1-3 *Shine* students (between 400 and 600 at each year level) were assessed using a range of different reading, writing and spelling assessments. All Effect Size Shifts were greater than .4. The table below shows the range of the Effect Size Shifts for each year level in 2018. Results were similar for these year groups in 2019, showing that *Shine* schools are maintaining a pattern of accelerated progress every year.

Year level	Lowest Effect Size Shift	Highest Effect Size Shift
Year 1	.8	1.5
Year 2	.8	.9
Year 3	.5	.8

Conclusion

Teachers in the *Shine* schools have made significant shifts in student achievement using these key components for success: Professional Learning Development, peer support, evidence-based instructional resources and a software application to analyse and interpret data to drive instruction and measure impact. We are looking for ways to continue to support this initiative for schools currently involved, and for schools wanting to take up the same approach. It is exciting to have the opportunity to present the *Shine* journey to an international audience at the World Literacy Summit 2020.