

## Evaluation Study: Chicago Public Schools 2003-2004

Dr. John W. Young  
Associate Professor of Educational Statistics and Measurement  
Dept. of Educational Psychology  
Rutgers University  
New Brunswick, New Jersey  
(732) 932-7496 x8322  
[jwyoung@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:jwyoung@rci.rutgers.edu)

### About KidBiz3000®

KidBiz3000 is an Internet-based learning system that improves reading skills for students in grades 2-8. It uses a proprietary software engine to deliver differentiated instruction directly to students. The program's primary focus is on reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.

KidBiz3000 is in use in 85 Chicago public schools, funded by the federal Technology Innovation Challenge Grant. An independent analysis of performance data from twelve of these schools found a statistically significant link between use of the KidBiz3000 software and reading performance. Schools that used KidBiz3000 demonstrated dramatically higher gains on the end-of-year standardized reading tests. These data are presented in the sections that follow.

### Case Study

*Evaluation period:* September, 2003 - May, 2004

*Schools:* Beidler, Bethune, Calhoun North, Cather, Grant, Henson, Herbert, Johnson, Melody, Orozco Academy, South Loop, Webster

*Areas:* 7, 8, 9

*Grades evaluated:* 2-8

*Assessment:* Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)

*Curriculum:* KidBiz3000

*Goals:* The major goals of the KidBiz3000 program were to:

- Improve student reading achievement
- Improve standardized test scores, particularly in reading
- Increase integration of technology in the classroom

### Methodology

The KidBiz3000 program was introduced to classroom teachers in the twelve schools in September. Teachers were encouraged to provide students with the opportunity to access the program 1-3 times weekly. Students used the KidBiz3000 software from October, 2003 through May, 2004. ITBS reading tests scores from May, 2003 were used as a benchmark assessment. The ITBS test was administered again in May, 2004. The change in school-wide national percentile rankings from 2003 to 2004 was used as a measure of each school's progress in reading.

Each of the twelve participating schools was matched to a school that did not use KidBiz3000, based on physical location and demographic characteristics. The study compared school-wide national percentile rankings on the ITBS reading test from last year (May, 2003) and this year (May, 2004), in the KidBiz3000 and the comparison group.

## Hypothesis

Schools using KidBiz3000 would demonstrate higher gains on the ITBS reading tests.

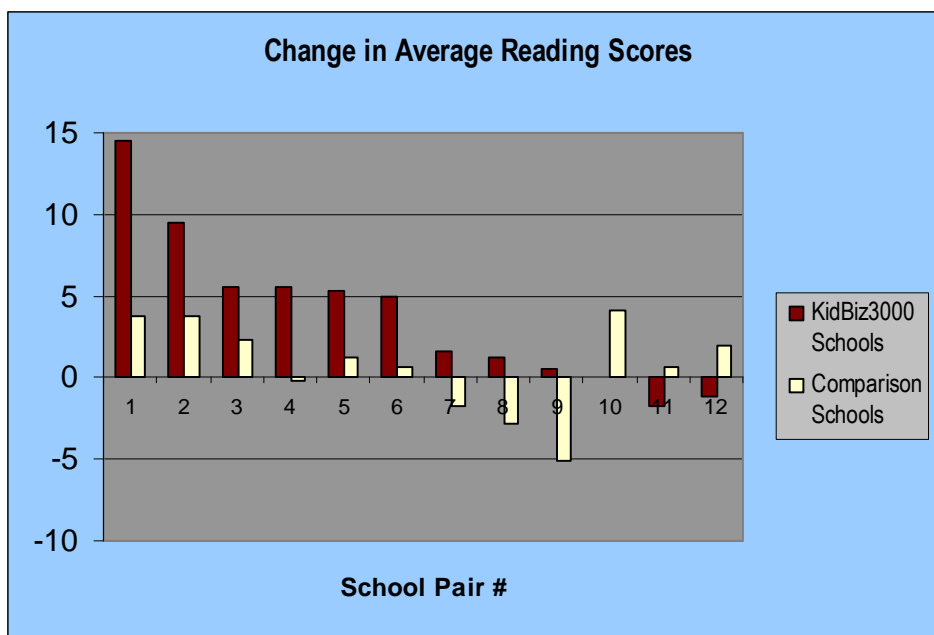
## Findings

The schools that used KidBiz3000 during the 2003-04 school had significantly better scores while the comparison schools, matched on demographic characteristics, showed only marginal improvement.

Using reading scores from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the schools using KidBiz3000 showed an increase in their average national percentile from the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile at the beginning of the school year to nearly the 34<sup>th</sup> percentile at the end of the year. This is a substantial and statistically significant ( $p < .02$ ) increase in test scores for the more than 4,000 students who used KidBiz3000. In comparison, the schools that did not use KidBiz3000 demonstrated a small, but non-significant, increase from the 32<sup>nd</sup> percentile to the 33<sup>rd</sup> percentile.

A comparison of the change in national percentiles during the school year for the two groups of schools is shown below:

| School Pair #      | Average Reading Gain |                   |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
|                    | KidBiz3000 School    | Comparison School |
| 1 (South Loop)     | 14.5                 | 3.7               |
| 2 (Melody)         | 9.5                  | 3.7               |
| 3 (Johnson)        | 5.6                  | 2.3               |
| 4 (Cather)         | 5.6                  | -0.2              |
| 5 (Webster)        | 5.3                  | 1.2               |
| 6 (Orozco)         | 4.9                  | 0.6               |
| 7 (Henson)         | 1.6                  | -1.7              |
| 8 (Herbert)        | 1.2                  | -2.8              |
| 9 (Grant)          | 0.5                  | -5.1              |
| 10 (Beidler)       | 0.0                  | 4.1               |
| 11 (Calhoun North) | -1.2                 | 2.0               |
| 12 (Bethune)       | -1.7                 | 0.6               |
| AVERAGE            | 3.82                 | 0.70              |



Note that one-half (6 out of 12) of the schools using KidBiz3000 had a larger increase in scores (a gain of 4.9 percentile or higher) than the best of the comparison schools (which increased 4.1). Clearly, the schools that used KidBiz3000, on average, had dramatically greater improvements in reading scores