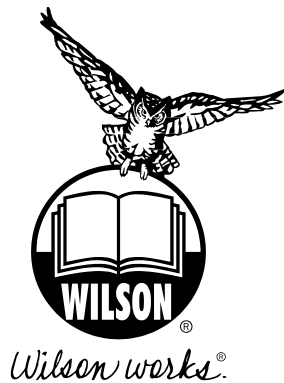


Fundations® Overview and Studies of Program Effectiveness



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Program Overview

Wilson Foundations provides all students in K-3 classrooms with a systematic program in the foundational skills for reading and spelling, emphasizing phonemic awareness, phonics-word study, high frequency word study, fluency, vocabulary, handwriting, and spelling. Although it includes comprehension strategies, it must be combined with a core/literature-based language arts program for an integrated and very comprehensive approach to reading and spelling.

The power of this supplemental program is that it uses an integrated approach to teaching skills so that a daily lesson teaches and then reinforces corresponding skills. Foundations is a multisensory, structured, systematic, cumulative, and explicit program with a clear and thoroughly documented research basis. The program focuses on student development by differentiating instruction, and actively engaging students in their learning.

Foundations is integral to a multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) model, providing scientifically based instruction in Tier 1 as well as an early intervention program for students at risk for reading difficulties. MTSS is a prevention-based model that acknowledges the diversity of reasons for why a child might struggle to learn, with a specific learning disability being only one of several possible causes. The use of an MTSS model allows educators to identify and intervene early to prevent students from developing more invasive reading deficits, and helps to more accurately identify those students who struggle to learn as a result of a specific learning disability (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). The overall goal is to prevent the domino effect of children developing weaknesses in foundational skills that over time give rise to deficits in higher-level reading skills, such as the comprehension of complex text.

To aid in the implementation of an MTSS model, progress monitoring is built into Foundations. This allows students requiring a more intensive program to be identified early before undergoing years of struggle.

The second edition of Foundations was published in the summer of 2012. This edition includes all of the successful components of the first edition with significant updates to specifically address states' rigorous college- and career-readiness standards, including the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). It provides specific, measurable learning objectives that align with states' standards.

Foundations Implementation

Tier 1: Supplemental instruction for universal instruction (general education)

Foundations provides all students with a strong, evidence-based foundation in reading and spelling skills.

- It is delivered to all students in the general education classroom for 30 minutes per day as a supplemental program or the word study block to the core literacy program.
- Foundations is universally designed to serve all students in the regular education classroom. The standard lesson plan is accessible to all students because the concepts are taught and practiced in ways that integrate multiple learning modalities.
- The lesson is flexible in that teachers select specific words to teach based upon the needs of the students in their classrooms.
- Specific guidelines are provided to address the needs of advanced students, English Language Learners (ELL), and struggling students who may need differentiated support.

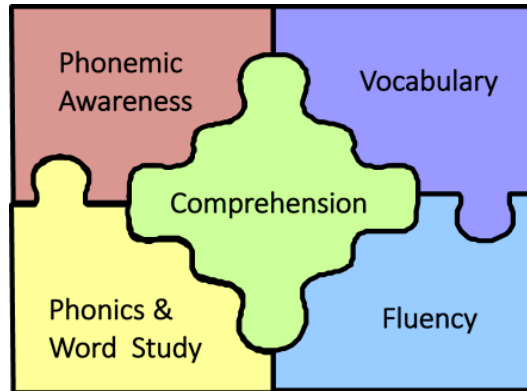
Tier 2: Intervention

For at-risk students in need of strategic intervention, Foundations is conducted in a small group setting by the classroom teacher and/or interventionist.

- If Foundations is already provided in a Tier 1, whole-class setting, this strategic intervention consists of targeted lessons in a small group for an additional 30 minutes, 3-5 times per week.
- In schools using Foundations in Tier 2 only, the Foundations standard lesson must be scheduled 5 days per week, 30 minutes each time, in small groups. The additional intervention (targeted) lessons should then be scheduled as determined by progress monitoring.

At Wilson, we align the content of our reading programs to the science of reading. We do so because this helps to ensure the success of the educators using Wilson programs to teach individuals with diverse learning abilities to read.

Figure 1. Five Components of Reading



As depicted in Figure 1, reading is the intersection of five critical components: phonemic awareness and phonics (also referred to as alphabets), fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. These skills are specified in the Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010), a

recent review of the research on adult and adolescent literacy instruction published by the National Institute for Literacy (Kruidenier, MacArthur, & Wrigley, 2010) and the report of the National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD), 2000). The scientific evidence reviewed in these and other documents reveal that focusing on some of these skills while neglecting others is insufficient to teach reading (Stuebing, Barth, Cirino, Francis, & Fletcher, 2008). Rather, all children should receive direct, systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension during grades K-3.

These skills form the foundation upon which the higher-level reading skills critical to success in college and the workforce are built. Without an ability to fluently pull print from the page and comprehend it, students lack the requisite skills to comprehend complex text, one of the best predictors of college success (ACT, Inc., 2006). It is because of the solid scientific evidence confirming direct instruction in the foundational skills of reading that we incorporated them into Wilson Foundations.

Since the publication of Foundations, several impact and efficacy studies have been performed in schools across the United States. The consensus across these studies is that, when implemented properly, students using Foundations achieve greater gains in foundational literacy skills compared to students using programs previously implemented by the schools. The section that follows summarizes the results of these studies.

STUDY OF IMPLEMENTATION AT TIER 1:

IMPACT STUDY IN SCHOOL DISTRICT OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FL

The School District of Indian River County, Florida, partnered with Wilson Language Training (WLT) to implement Foundations with fidelity and sustainability in 11 elementary schools. In these locations, Foundations was implemented as the foundational skills component of the total literacy plan. To gauge the effect of Foundations on student outcomes, the school district undertook an impact study, contrasting the gains in literacy skills made by kindergarten and first grade students using Foundations to the gains made by kindergarten and first grade students prior to the implementation of Foundations. On average, kindergarten and first grade students made greater gains in literacy skills when Foundations was being used as the foundational skills program.

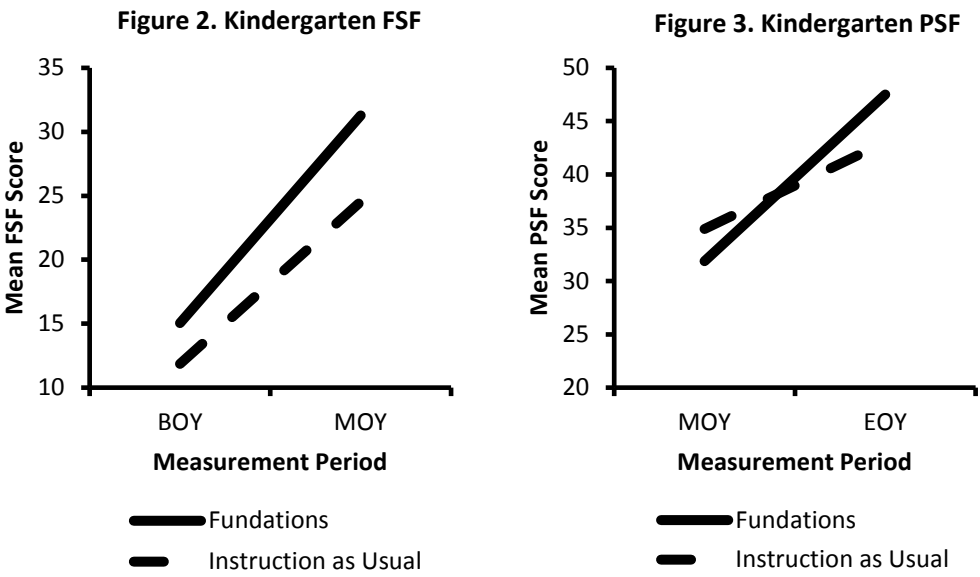
Addressing the needs of kindergarten students

Student outcome data from a total of 3,115 kindergarten students were included in this impact study. Of these students, 1,584 attended kindergarten prior to the implementation of Foundations and received a different program for foundational literacy skills (i.e., instruction as usual). The remaining 1,700 kindergarten students attended the 11 schools after the adoption of Foundations and received foundational literacy skills instruction using Foundations.

As depicted in Figure 2, kindergarten students who received Foundations instruction made larger gains in the DIBELS First Sound Fluency (FSF) measure from the beginning of the school year (BOY) to the middle of the year (MOY). The DIBELS First Sound Fluency measure is not administered at the end of the year. On average, students receiving Foundations gained 16 points, whereas students who did not receive Foundations gained 12 points. In addition, while the average FSF score for both groups was above benchmark at the beginning of the year, students using Foundations were able to maintain benchmark during the year. By the middle of the year, the average FSF score of students who received

Fundations instruction was still above benchmark, whereas the average FSF score of students who did not receive Fundations instruction fell below benchmark.

As illustrated in Figure 3, students who received instruction using Fundations also made larger gains in the DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) measure from the middle to end of the school year (EOY), gaining on average 16 points. In contrast, students who did not receive Fundations instruction gained only 8 points on average.



Addressing the needs of first grade students

Student outcome data from 2,720 first grade students were also included in the impact study. Of these students, 1,460 attended first grade prior to the adoption of Fundations and received a different program for foundational literacy skills. The remaining 1,260 first grade students attended the 11 schools after the implementation of Fundations and received foundational literacy skills instruction using Fundations.

As depicted in Figure 4, first grade students who received Fundations instruction made larger gains from the middle to the end of the school year in the number of words they correctly read on the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) measure.

Compared to the middle of the year, Foundations students read, on average, 23 more words correctly at the end of the year. In contrast, students who did not receive Foundations only read 18 additional words correctly.

Addressing the needs of kindergarten English Language Learners

The School District of Indian River County provides instruction to ELL students, allowing for a contrast to be made between the gains in literacy skills obtained by ELL students who did and did not receive Foundations instruction. In kindergarten, there were 93 ELL students who did not receive Foundations instruction and 301 ELL students who did.

As illustrated in Figure 5, ELL students who received Foundations instruction made greater gain in FSF relative to ELL students who received instruction as usual. ELL students who received Foundations instruction gained 19 points from the beginning to the middle of the year. In contrast, students who did not receive Foundations instruction gained 9 points.

Addressing the needs of first grade English Language Learners

There were 31 first-grade ELL students who did not receive Foundations instruction and 265 who did. As depicted in Figure 6, ELL students who received Foundations instruction made greater gains from the middle to the end of the year in the numbers

Figure 4. 1st Grade ORF

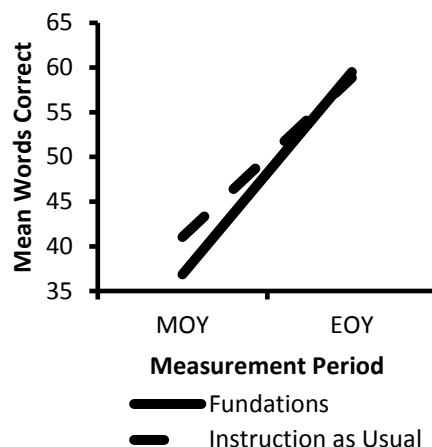


Figure 5. ELL Kindergarten FSF

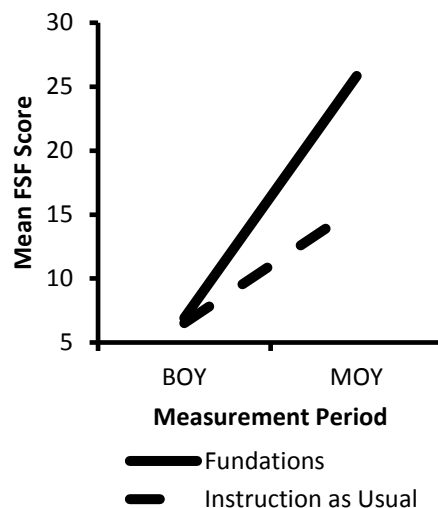
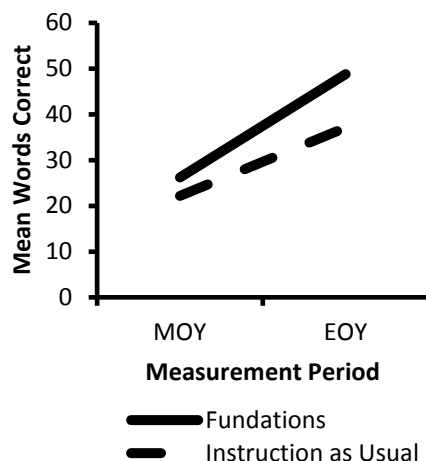


Figure 6. First Grade ELL ORF



of words they could correctly read on the DIBELS ORF measure. On average, Foundations students correctly read an additional 23 words at the end of the year. In contrast, students who did not receive Foundations only read an additional 15 words correctly.

STUDY OF IMPLEMENTATION AT TIERS 1 & 2:

URBAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BROOKLYN, NY—RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK INITIATIVE, NYC DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Working closely with the NYC Department of Education, Office of Special Education Initiatives, an RTI framework was established at an urban elementary school as a city-wide pilot initiative to improve student outcomes, reduce unnecessary referrals to special education, and to improve data-based decision making to inform instruction.

Foundations was implemented as the evidence-based program in Tiers 1 and 2. All students in grades K-3 received daily instruction in Foundations in the Tier 1 general education classroom. Students identified for Tier 2 instruction received Foundations Double Dose instruction (at least 3 sessions weekly in small groups of 3-6 students).

To ensure successful implementation, all teachers were provided Foundations training that included workshops and coaching by Wilson trainers. During the initial year of implementation, the school performed an efficacy study to characterize the gains made by kindergarten and first grade students receiving Foundations.

Outcomes

Figures 10 to 13 present kindergarten and first grade student performance data on the DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency

Figure 10. Kindergarten PSF

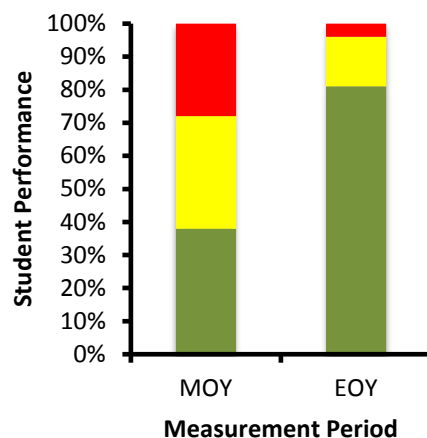
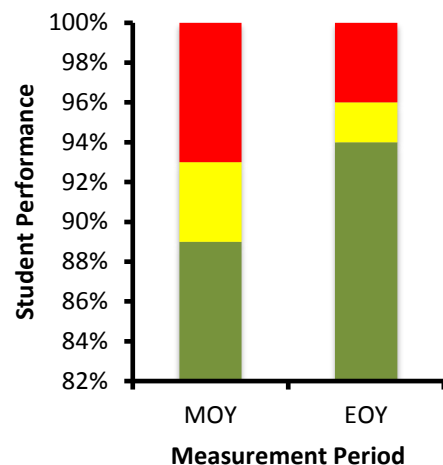
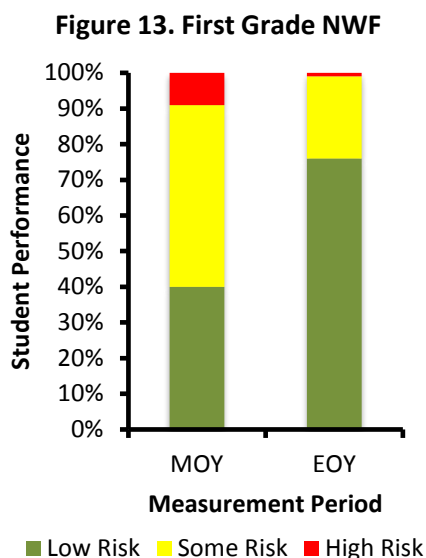
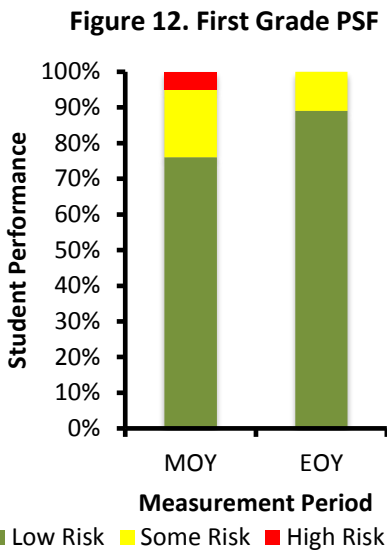


Figure 11. Kindergarten NWF



■ Low Risk ■ Some Risk ■ High Risk

(PSF) and Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) measures obtained during Year 1 of Foundations' implementation. From the middle to the end of the year, students who were at risk for future reading deficits made substantial gains, with the majority of these students no longer classified as at risk by the end of the year.



Additionally, the gains achieved by the students during the initial year of implementation were sustained. As evidenced in Figure 14, after three years of implementation, there was improvement in student performance in grade 3 based on the 2008-2009 New York State ELA Assessment when compared to the year prior to the implementation of Foundations (i.e., 2005-2006). In 2009, no students were at Level 1 (not meeting learning standards) compared to 7.8% of 3rd graders in 2005-2006. There was also a 7% increase in the number of students in grade 3 scoring at Levels 3 & 4 (meeting learning standards, Level 3; and meeting learning standards with distinction, Level 4).

Figure 14. Student performance after three year of Foundations implementation

Urban Elementary School, NYC, Grade 3 End of Year ELA Performance

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 3 & 4
0 yrs of Foundations (2005-2006)	7.8	7.8	72.5	11.8	84.3
3 yrs of Foundations (2008-2009)	0	8.6	72.9	18.6	91.4

Level 1: Not meeting learning standards
 Level 2: Partially meeting learning standards
 Level 3: Meeting learning standards
 Level 4: Meeting learning standards with distinction

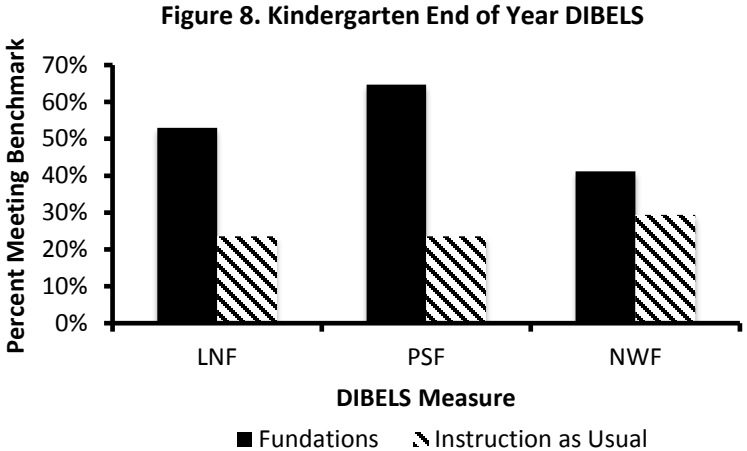
Due to the success of the pilot schools working with the NYC Department of Education, RTI expanded to 29 more schools throughout the city. In fall 2009, the school was selected as a National Blue Ribbon School.

**STUDY OF IMPLEMENTATION AT TIERS 1 & 2:
SMALL TOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, NORTHEAST, US**

An elementary school located in a small town in the northeastern United States adopted Foundations as the phonics and spelling component of its ELA block in general education kindergarten classrooms. In addition, the school adopted Foundations for use with students identified as “at-risk” for reading failure who were placed in an intensive reading and writing classroom. The school assessed the effect of Foundations on the success of these students in a pair of studies.

Meeting student needs in the general education classroom (Tier 1)

To assess the success of Foundations in meeting the needs of their general education kindergarten students, the school conducted an impact study. It randomly assigned 17 kindergarten students to receive Foundations Level K, and 17 kindergarten students to receive instruction as usual. End-of-year DIBELS scores were compared between the two groups of students. Relative to students in the instruction-as-usual condition, a larger percentage of students in the Foundations condition scored at or above benchmark on the Letter Naming Fluency (LNF), Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF), and Nonword Fluency (NWF) measures of DIBELS as illustrated in Figure 8.

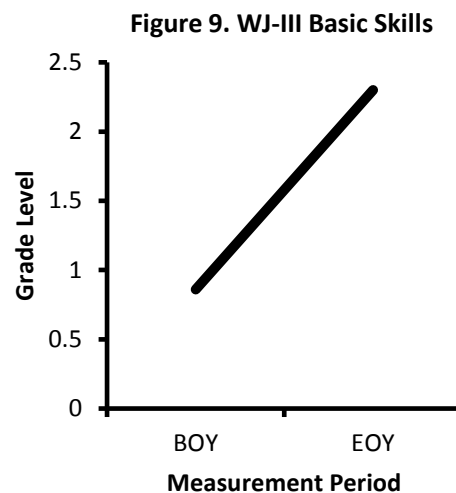


Meeting the needs of at-risk students (Tier 2)

First grade students identified as “at-risk” for reading failure were placed in an intensive reading and writing classroom, receiving Foundations as their primary decoding and spelling program. An efficacy study of Foundations was performed, and student data were collected at the beginning and end of the school year using the Woodcock Johnson III.

As illustrated in Figure 9, students made significant gains in their Basic Reading Skills from the beginning to the end of the school year, gaining on average 1.4 grade levels. By the end of first grade, 16 out of 18 students had Basic Reading Skills at or above grade level.

Additionally, 15 out of 18 students had scored at or above benchmark on the end-of-year DIBELS Phoneme Segmentation Fluency and Nonsense Word Fluency measures.



PROGRAM REVIEW BY FLORIDA CENTER FOR READING RESEARCH (FCRR)

Foundations was reviewed by the FCRR research committee. Under the direction of Dr. Joseph Torgesen, this center was one of three national technical assistance centers to support the implementation of research-based reading instruction. FCRR’s report outlines how Foundations is aligned with research and lists the strengths and weaknesses. No weaknesses were noted.

Below is a summary from the report, which can be found at www.fcrr.org.

Strengths of the Foundations Program

- Foundations is highly systematic, both within lessons and across lessons.
- Foundations is derived from research that has been proven to be successful with a wide variety of learners.
- Multisensory methods are employed in teaching children sounds, their representative letters, and their combination into words, phrases, and sentences.

- Students learn a variety of techniques to analyze multisyllabic and unknown words, and words with spelling options.
- Frequent practice and review builds mastery in students.
- Foundations can be taught in a 1:1 setting, a small group, or to a whole class, and can be used for preventative, intervention, or immediate, intensive intervention purposes.
- Many lesson activities and games are geared toward whole class or group participation.
- Materials are very teacher-friendly, and the Wilson Learning Community gives excellent demonstrations of each of the teaching activity types used in the program. A teacher can thus review each technique as needed

Weaknesses of Foundations

- None were noted

The FCRR summary rating for the Foundations program is as follows:

Program	Type of Program	Grade Reviewed	Reading Components				
			Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Fluency	Vocab	Comprehension
Foundations	Supplemental or Intervention Program	K-3	+++	+++	+++	+++	++

Key

- + some aspects of this component taught and/or practiced
- ++ most aspects of this component taught and/or practiced
- +++ all aspects of this component taught and/or practiced
- n/a Not Addressed in this program. In other words, this element of reading is not a goal of this program.

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