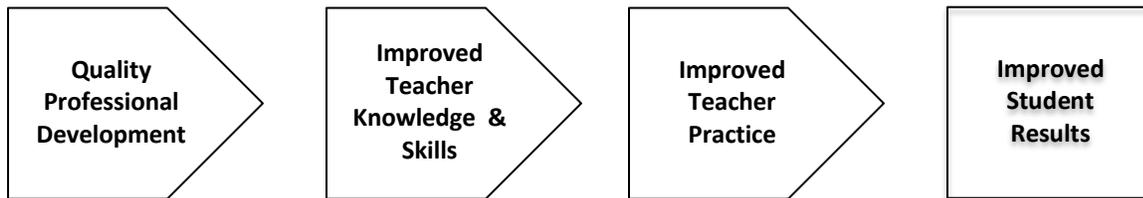


Keys to Literacy Professional Development: *Real Results and Learning that Lasts*

Quality instruction, not programs teach students to read and write. Professional development gives teachers the knowledge they need to deliver evidence-based, effective literacy instruction.



To meet these objectives, we have built our practice on a strong set of research-based beliefs about quality professional development. We believe that quality professional development:

- uses research-based instructional practices that are linked to student performance;
- promotes deep understanding of a topic;
- is supported until new skills become a seamless part of instruction;
- creates sustainable capacity;
- is measured and evaluated based on teacher use and student performance;
- embeds instructional practices in existing content materials; and
- is planned and delivered to engage all teachers.

We have worked with hundreds of districts and thousands of teachers to implement research-based instruction for comprehension, vocabulary, and writing.

The following provides an overview of the results of our teacher training. Our hope is that this provides the necessary information to evaluate our services and determine whether our content literacy professional development meets your requirements and standards for success.

TEACHER USE AND PRACTICE

During the 2009-10 school year, Keys to Literacy was selected by 22 Massachusetts school districts as a partner in a statewide literacy professional development project. Overall, 1,069 teachers received content literacy training in our *Key Comprehension Routine* or *Key Vocabulary Routine*. When surveyed 6 months after the completion of training, teachers reported the following:

- ***98% increased their knowledge of content literacy strategies***
- ***92% learned instructional strategies from the training that they will use in their teaching***
- ***83% saw an increase in their use of comprehension strategies***

In 2009, we surveyed teachers who had used *The Key Comprehension Routine* for at least 6 months. As the following results indicate, there is a very strong carryover from training to classroom practice:

- **99% use at least two strategy activities**
- **90% use at least three strategy activities**
- **65% use all four strategy activities**

In the spring of 2013, Grade K-12 Teachers in Pittsfield, MA and Brattleboro, VT were surveyed to determine the impact of *Primary Comprehension* (grades K-3) and *Comprehension* training (grades 4-12) on their classroom instruction. Teachers completed a survey before training and then completed the same survey 3-4 months after follow up training. The post training results show a large increase of use versus the pre-training baseline for both groups.

Overall, use of the strategies increased +34% among teachers in grades K-3 and +22% among teachers in grades 4-12. Results were similar for our *Vocabulary* program, where overall use of strategies increased +12%.

Results for *Primary Comprehension* Grades K-3

Instructional Strategy	Brattleboro % Increase of Teacher Use	Pittsfield % Increase of Teacher Use
I use a consistent graphic organizer to teach literacy elements in narrative text	23%	14%
I use a consistent set of graphic organizers to teach students expository text	38%	30%
I use a graphic organizer to provide an overview of reading content	59%	50%
I teach categorizing skills as a way to introduce main idea skills	36%	23%
I provide explicit instruction for how to identify and state main ideas of paragraphs	54%	9%
I show students a specific format for taking notes	80%	65%
I provide explicit instruction on the difference between main ideas and supporting details when taking notes	89%	38%
I provide explicit instruction for how to generate an oral or written summary	65%	No Change
I teach students how to use a template, graphic organizer, or notes to generate an oral or written summary	52%	21%
I teach students to use basic transition words when they write summaries	36%	No Change
I provide explicit instruction for how to generate questions at different levels of thinking from read aloud or reading	38%	7%
I teach students specific question terms they can use to generate questions from read aloud or reading	58%	10%

Results for *Comprehension* Grades 4-12

Instructional Strategy	Brattleboro % Increase in Teacher Use	Pittsfield % Increase in Teacher Use
Before students read, I use a graphic organizer to provide an overview of reading content	17%	15%
I provide explicit instruction for how to identify and state main ideas from paragraphs and reading passages	3%	5%
I teach students to use a specific format for taking notes	24%	29%
I ask students to take notes that include main ideas and key details for assigned reading	6%	24%
I provide explicit instruction for how to write a summary	No Change	15%
I teach students how to use a template, graphic organizer, or notes to write a summary	23%	24%
I teach students to use transition words when they write summaries	19%	19%
I provide explicit instruction for how to generate questions at different levels of thinking from reading materials	46%	36%
I teach students specific question terms they can use to generate questions from reading material	36%	46%

In addition to the teacher surveys, we engaged a firm to interview administrators who were responsible for bringing Keys to Literacy professional development into their school or district. Their comments about teacher use indicate the strong connection between Keys to Literacy training and results:

"It gave teachers the tools to make content more meaningful for their students...there were many kids in those classrooms who were struggling and are now making sense of the content."

Gail Briere, Assistant Superintendent, Nauset Public Schools (MA)

"The models used in the Keys to Literacy Routines are easily and quickly understood and used by teachers. Teachers for technical subjects and subjects such as Math, Social Studies, and Science can also quickly and easily utilize the Keys tools to enhance literacy instruction and increase student skills using the subject specific content. They have developed high quality instructional tools that each and every teacher in the district can understand, relate to, and utilize immediately within their classroom."

Tami Hicks, Director of Professional Learning, Wabash Valley Education Center (IN)

"By providing teachers a simple set of strategies that are well-organized, we were able to have more effective instruction and tangible results."

Shelly Fachini, Principal, North Adams Public Schools (MA)

"Kids are thriving from the structure, teachers are thinking at a higher level."

Kim McCaughey, Director of Reading, Pawtucket School Department (RI)

"Keys to Literacy PD gets rave reviews from our teachers. The best thing about it is that the strategies the teachers are learning can be used in any grade and any discipline."

Patrick Larkin, Assistant Superintendent, Burlington Public Schools (MA)

“Keys to Literacy truly jump started and redefined the way we teach writing at Cawley Middle School. Our teachers have a common and consistent language that is shared across grade levels. Keys to Literacy has helped us design authentic writing experiences for our students. As a result of our work with Keys to Literacy, we now have a structure in place with clear expectations for teaching writing.”

Matt Benson, Principal, Cawley Middle School, Hooksett, NH

“We have had a wonderful experience working with KTL. It’s great to have such an engaged think partner when developing high quality PD for teachers. From the planning to the delivery, they are organized, committed and very well received by our educators.”

Lori Gallivan, Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Saugus Public Schools (MA)

“The Key Comprehension Routine helped to significantly build our teachers’ content knowledge of reading and writing, allowing them to feel more confident in the instructional decisions they were making.”

Debora Moncayo, Executive Director Educator Effectiveness, Roosevelt School District (AZ)

“Keys to Literacy epitomizes the high-quality service provider. They are innovative, strategic, consistent in keeping up with the latest research-based instructional practices, and consummate professionals who tailor their work to the needs of your district. By far, they are one of the best PD providers I have worked with over the past ten years.”

Rashaun Martin, Social Studies Curriculum Director, Haverhill Public Schools (MA)

“KTL Comprehension is changing the way Burlington teachers are instructing their students. It has brought much needed consistency to the strategies teachers in grades 6-12 are using in their own content curriculum. The trainers are knowledgeable, energetic, and fun. Most importantly, our teachers are finding the strategies useful and beneficial to all students.”

Renee Sacco, District Literacy Coach, Burlington Public Schools (MA)

“Our work with Keys to Literacy in Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Writing has benefitted our staff in the development of interventions that enable students to meet state standards. Our initial self-assessment found teachers struggled with recognizing the literacy strategies that best support those standards and needed help thinking through their implementation. Keys to Literacy was able to provide the structure and on-going support to identify and implement best practices. In addition, we believe that the ANSWER Key strategies were the variable that improved MCAS scores.”

Karen McGovern, House Master, Higgins Middle School, Peabody (MA)

STUDENT RESULTS

Early University Research Results Demonstrate Success with Students

In 2011, the efficacy of *The Key Comprehension Routine* was studied in two urban schools in neighboring states located in the northeast by university researchers from The University of Massachusetts, Amherst and Lehigh University.

The quasi-experimental group design studies were conducted simultaneously in multiple inclusive classrooms serving students in grades 4-6. **The findings show that overall, students in the experimental classrooms significantly outperformed students in the comparison classrooms in reading subtests and in writing performance.** Specifically, significant differences were found between the 5th grade experimental and

comparison classrooms in the Total Comprehension Raw Score subtest of the TORC (a standardized, norm-referenced assessment of reading comprehension), and significant differences were found in researcher-designed assessments of written summary scores within 5th and 6th grade classes. This information has been presented nationally and data analyses are ongoing.

Teachers Strongly Believe Students Improve

In the spring of 2009, we polled teachers from 12 schools that had been trained in *The Key Comprehension Routine* to hear their thoughts on how the strategies were working with students. As you can see, teachers overwhelmingly believe that our *Key Comprehension Routine* is helping students learn. Of the teachers surveyed,

- **92%** agree/strongly agree that *The Key Comprehension Routine* **helps students better comprehend what they are reading.**
- **89%** agree/strongly agree that *The Key Comprehension Routine* **enhances students’ ability to learn subject-area content.**
- **94%** agree/strongly agree that *The Key Comprehension Routine* is **easy for students to use.**
- **85%** agree/strongly agree that *The Key Comprehension Routine* **helps students study for tests.**
- **85%** agree/strongly agree that *The Key Comprehension Routine* **enhances their ability to teach.**

During the 2012 - 2013 school year, we surveyed 500+ teachers (gr K-12) from 24 schools who had been trained in *The Key Comprehension Routine* to understand how teachers believed the strategies were working with students. Of the teachers surveyed, the percentage who *Strongly Agree* or *Agree* with the following statements showed strong support for the program.

	% Strongly Agree & Agree: Grades K-12
The strategies are practical and readily adaptable	94%
The skills and strategies are easy for students to use	84%
The program enhances my ability to teach content	91%
The program works well with various grades and subjects	93%
The program enhances my students’ ability to learn my subject area content	88%
The program helps students better understand what they are reading	90%
The program enhances students’ ability to write about content	92%

Educator comments also indicate that our content literacy strategies positively impact student learning:

*“We showed an **increase in MCAS ELA scores** in both general education and special education students.”*
Shelly Fachini, Principal, North Adams Public Schools (MA)

*“My teachers quickly saw the benefits in the classroom, they were extremely excited because **they were seeing success with the kids.**”*
Kim McCaughey, Director of Reading, Pawtucket School Department (RI)

*“We believe it has helped us increase, particularly in the middle grades, our aggregate student performance on MCAS ELA and our teachers and administrators are attributing this as one of the pieces **helping to close the achievement gap.**”*
Mary Borque, Assistant Superintendent, Chelsea Public Schools (MA)

State Assessment Scores Increase

In addition to this survey of teachers, we also reviewed state ELA assessment results for districts and schools using our programs from 2007-2009. This group included the following: Timberlane Regional School District (NH); ConVal School District (NH); Nauset Public Schools (MA); and Chelsea Public Schools (MA). The analysis included grades 6, 7, and 8 in 18 schools. While we are aware that other activities could contribute to assessment results, all the schools in the analysis had one program in common: *The Key Comprehension Routine*. The data indicates that there were significant gains in the number of students who scored *proficient* from 2007-2009.

Grade 6

- 55% scored *proficient* or *very proficient* in 2007
- 63% scored *proficient* or *very proficient* in 2009
- **16% improvement** from 2007 to 2009

Grade 7

- 59% scored *proficient* or *very proficient* in 2007
- 72% scored *proficient* or *very proficient* in 2009
- **21% improvement** from 2007 to 2009

Grade 8

- 65% scored *proficient* or *very proficient* in 2007
- 72% scored *proficient* or *very proficient* in 2009
- **10% improvement** from 2007 to 2009

During the 2009-2010 school year, a group of 19 sixth and seventh grade students at the Higgins Middle School in Peabody, MA participated in afterschool instruction in an effort to improve their overall MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) scores. All of the selected students had MCAS scores the previous year that were in the *needs improvement* or *warning* ranges. Students participated in ten 45-minute instructional sessions after school and were taught the Keys to Literacy open response test taking routine, *The ANSWER Key to Open Response*, which provides instruction in the following strategies:

- Understand what a question is asking
- Identify main ideas while reading
- Differentiate between relevant and irrelevant details while reading
- Pull main ideas and details that must be included in the open response into formatted notes
- Organize information from the notes into a structured response
- Apply good sentence and paragraph writing skills

After multiple exposures to the *ANSWER* strategies, 18 of the students improved their MCAS scores from an average score of 221 to 231, an increase of 5%. A subset of IEP students demonstrated an average score increase of 4%, and non-IEP students had an average score increase of 6%.

Karen McGovern, Housemaster at Higgins Middle School, attributes the rise in scores to the *ANSWER Key* instructional strategies: "We believe that the *ANSWER Key* strategies were the variable that improved MCAS scores among these students."

Strong Student Use of Strategies

In the winter of 2011, Lowell Public Schools (Lowell, MA) conducted a Frequency of Use Survey with students who had been taught the Keys to Literacy comprehension strategies. 2,181 students in grades 6-9 participated in the survey, which asked frequency of use questions related to the seven comprehension strategies that were integrated into their content instruction.

The results of the survey were very positive: **91%** of students surveyed said they used at least one of the strategies. Among those students who said they used the strategies, they indicated the following specific use.

STRATEGY	% of students surveyed who use this specific strategy	<i>Of students using this strategy, % who use it more than 3 times per month</i>
I put words into categories to learn vocabulary.	68%	48%
I identify main ideas to help me better understand what I read.	89%	67%
I use top-down topic webs to organize my thinking.	77%	52%
I create two-column notes to better understand main ideas and details.	91%	78%
I create questions before or during reading to help me better understand what I am reading.	72%	51%
I create questions at different levels to develop my thinking skills.	65%	48%
I use summarizing to better understand what I read and to improve my writing.	86%	63%

In another survey of student use in June 2012, 218 grade 7-9 students in Southbridge MA were surveyed to determine their frequency of use of the strategies in the *Key Comprehension Routine* during the initial year of implementation.

The survey showed that 87% of students used at least one of the strategies. Among the Southbridge students using the strategies, they indicated the following use

STRATEGY	% of students surveyed who use this specific strategy	<i>Of students using this strategy, % who use it more than 3 times per month</i>
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I identify main ideas to help me better understand what I read.	87%	48%
I use top-down topic webs to organize my thinking.	70%	26%
I create two-column notes to better understand main ideas and details.	79%	52%
I create questions before or during reading to help me better understand what I am reading.	49%	21%
I create questions at different levels to develop my thinking skills.	57%	23%
I use summarizing to better understand what I read and to improve my writing.	84%	53%

RESEARCH-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Because our professional development is based on the most current research about teaching literacy and learning, the kind of results noted above are to be expected. We take care to stay informed about the current research on effective literacy instruction and – more importantly – to translate that knowledge into practical use for teachers. We continually revise and modify our training content to incorporate current research. This reflects our commitment not only to providing the highest quality teacher training available, but also our deep belief in evidence-based professional development. A review of the research supporting our programs is available on our website, www.keystoliteracy.com.

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