Istation

Supporting Educators. Empowering Kids.
Changing Lives.

8 Great Ways to Close the Achievement Gap

A Guide By Georgia Thompson, Ed. D.,
Jane Moore, Ed. D., and Sabrina Jones

8 GREAT WAYS TO CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

A Guide By: Georgia Thompson, Ed.D., Jane Moore, Ed.D., and Sabrina Jones

The achievement gap may be defined as a substantive performance difference on each of the tested areas by grade level on state assessments between the various groups of students in diverse schools, including urban, rural, suburban, affluent, middle-class, and high-poverty demographics.

The guide 8 Great Ways to Close the Achievement Gap offers an overview of viable options for districts or schools to consider in taking steps to address

the achievement gaps between different groups of students.

1. Evidence-Based Instruction

One of the keys to helping students who are struggling, or not making consistent progress, is the use of a supplemental, evidenced-based intervention program to aid learning. The cycle from assessment to instruction enables the teacher to observe students' responses to targeted interventions and to proceed with instruction supported by ongoing performance data. Based on recent data, the teacher can then plan interventions to meet student needs

2. Provide a Rigorous Curriculum

Students need access to an aligned, standards-based, rigorous curriculum and the necessary support to be successful. The curriculum should feature balanced instruction, emphasizing basic skills for increasing reading comprehension. Acceleration of struggling readers' learning is the goal. These students need to make larger gains each month in order to catch up to their peers. Ample evidence shows that almost all students can achieve at high levels if they are taught at high levels.

3. Increased Instructional Time

Struggling students often need more instructional time coupled with an increased intensity of instruction in small groups and more repetitions or doses of instruction. Instruction offered to struggling readers needs to be clear and explicit, provide scaffolding, and be targeted at their individual needs.

4. Supplemental Instruction

Supplemental instruction is intended to fill in students' learning gaps as quickly as possible and return them to core literacy instruction. Instruction is typically delivered at least three times per week in small-group settings in addition to regular classroom instruction.

5. Progress Monitoring

Frequent and regular progress monitoring assessments identify the success of students. Teachers need to know exactly what students are doing well and precisely where they need to focus their attention. School-wide assessment and reading instruction that is consistent across and within grades helps struggling readers. Using assessments,

teachers can pinpoint where students have gaps in the five essential components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

6. Motivation and Engagement

Reading comprehension is positively affected when students are motivated, engaged, and interested in the reading materials. When tasks are not matched to students and they are asked to perform skills they do not have, their motivation and engagement decrease. Engaged reading and time on task are strongly associated with reading achievement. Students who read actively and frequently improve their comprehension of text. Use of theme, technology, choice, and differentiation enhances motivation and engagement.

7. Deepen Professional Development

A well-designed and clearly communicated teacher development process is essential for driving measurable and lasting learning for students. Key elements for establishing a sustainable model for teacher development include: a shared understanding of effective teaching for struggling readers and solid information about what to do; an aligned, rigorous, and common student assessment system; essential common strategies to improve teacher practice; high-quality coaching; and a professional development plan.

8. Linking School and Home

Close cooperation between schools, parents, and the community is one of the keys to closing achievement gaps. Parent involvement has a strong, direct impact on student achievement. Educating parents on student progress and how they can help at home improves student learning.
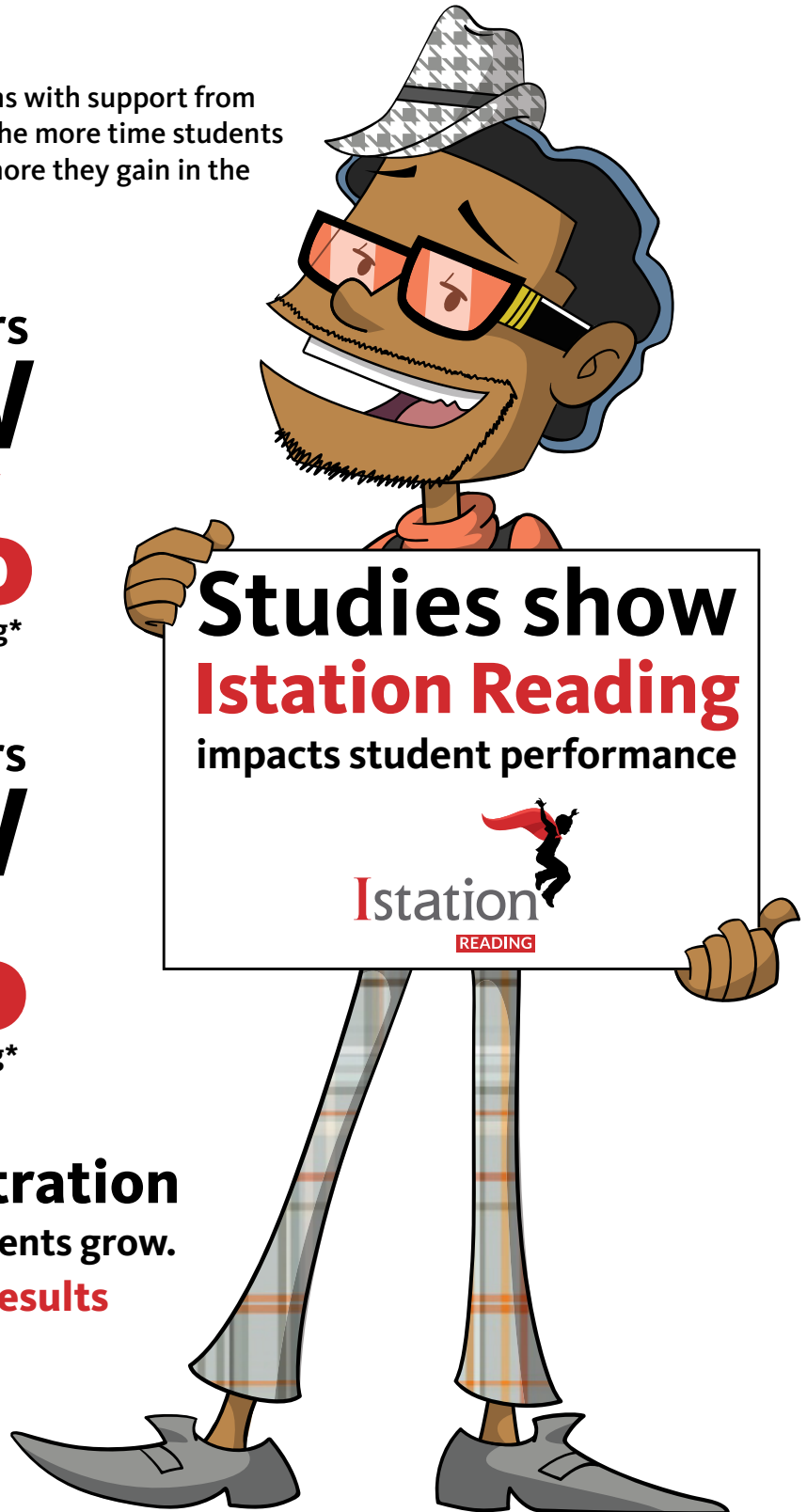
Proven results
speak for themselves!

Students grow faster and make greater gains with support from Istation Reading's interactive curriculum. The more time students spend learning with Istation Reading, the more they gain in the skills predictive of future reading success.

1st - 5th Graders
GROW
84%
More with Istation Reading*

6th - 8th Graders
GROW
67%
More with Istation Reading*

Get a FREE demonstration
and see how Istation helps students grow.
Visit info.istation.com/Results

Studies show
Istation Reading
impacts student performance

Istation
READING

Patarapichayatham, C. (2014). Istation Reading Growth Study Grades 1-8. Dallas, TX: Istation.

Patarapichayatham, C., and T.R. Roden. (2014). ISIP Español Growth Study: Prekindergarten to Third Grade. Dallas, TX: Istation.

* Beyond students who did not use Istation Reading.

8 GREAT WAYS
ISTATION HELPS

Using the same eight great ways, Istation delivers student-friendly instruction to effectively bridge the achievement differences.

1. Evidence-Based Instruction

Istation's reading instruction and assessments are based on data from scientific and independent research studies. These studies have proven Istation's effectiveness in increasing reading fluency and its impact in the classroom.

Visit www.istation.com/About/Studies to view these studies, including:

ISIP Concurrent and Predictive Validity Study (2007)

- ISIP Early Reading Reliability and Validity Evidence (2009)

- ISIP Validity and Reliability Research Report for Pre-K (2010)

- Report of Istation 2009 Second Grade - 2010 Third Grade Users (2011)

- ISIP Reading versus STAAR Reading: The Predictability Study (2014)

2. Provide a Rigorous Curriculum

Istation offers rigorous reading instruction correlated to state standards as well as Common Core. It integrates explicit, direct, and systematic instruction into subject-area content, with strategic reading skills in the five key reading areas threaded carefully throughout the program. Students are directed to an individualized, needs-based path of instruction in prekindergarten through high school.
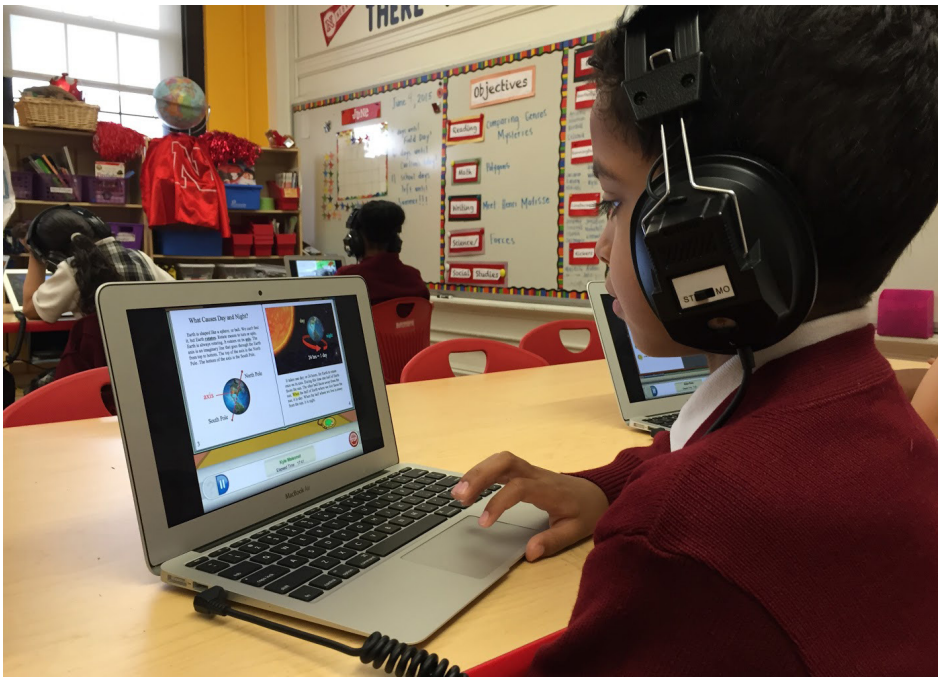
3. Increased Instructional Time

Istation incorporates numerous skill review and practice lessons with multiple opportunities to read hundreds of books and passages. More than two thousand fully scripted teacher-directed lessons are available for targeted instruction. In addition to core instructional time, students can access the program before and after school, during computer lab time, in the classroom, and at home. Through technology, Istation delivers!

4. Supplemental Instruction

In the Istation program, assessments identify students' areas of need, and students are automatically placed at their appropriate instructional level. Istation is designed to be a supplement to core literacy instruction by reinforcing classroom content and enhancing teacher lesson plans.

5. Progress Monitoring

Istation provides a systematic method for gathering and collecting various assessment information to pinpoint strategic areas of necessary instruction. Driven by automated monthly progress monitoring, Istation places students seamlessly into high-interest, interactive online instruction. The use of the Priority Report and targeted instruction ensures that each student's needs are met.

6. Motivation and Engagement

Frequent student interaction and engaging multimedia teaching techniques maximize opportunities to learn and practice skills. Istation's top-notch team of artists, designers, animators, and programmers is led by Emmy Award-winning Executive Vice President of Creative Services Dan Kuenster. Dan earned his stripes working at some of the world's top animation studios. Together, they surround each lesson with rich, flawless animation that draws kids in, keeps them interested, and garners more accolades with every passing year.

7. Deepen Professional Development

Istation provides training on implementation as a Response to Intervention solution, a complement to balanced literacy, a supplement to dual language, bilingual, and special education programs, and more. Real-time data helps teachers reflect, analyze, and plan instruction. Professional development communicates concrete action steps and strategies for immediate delivery. Support Webinars, video clips, on-site face-to-face training, customized sessions, and live technical support are available. Being hands-on and interactive is key!

8. Linking School and Home

Parents are informed through easy-to-read Web-based reports. Schools can set parents up with access to the Parent Portal to view specific reports and print letters to provide information on Istation Home. Reports summarize student growth throughout the school year and allow parents to watch their children's progress. Parents and students alike have access to a variety of support materials and activities to reinforce learning at home.

Resources

Cooter, R.B. & Reutzel, R.D. (2015). Teaching children to read. Boston: Pearson.

Fisher, D. & Frey, N. (2010). Enhancing RTI: How to ensure success with effective classroom instruction and intervention. Virginia: ASCD.
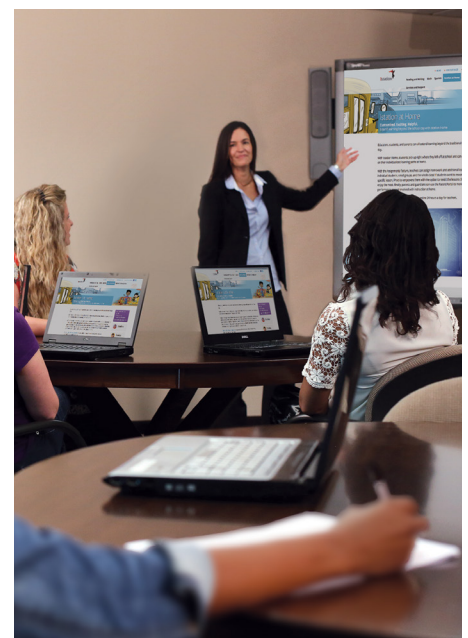
Fountas, I. C. & Pinnell, G. S. (2009). When readers struggle: Teaching that works. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Haycock, K. (2001). Closing the Achievement Gap. Educational Leadership. 58, 6. 6-11.

Irvin, J.L., Meltzer, J. & Dukes, M. S. (2007). Taking action on adolescent literacy. Virginia: ASCD.

Sims, B. (2011). Teacher development is key to closing the achievement gap. Retrieved April 9, 2014, from www.edutopia.org/blog/digital-divide-achievement-gap-teacher-development.

Tomlinson, C. (2003). Fulfilling the promise of the differentiated classroom: Strategies and tools for responsive teaching. Virginia: ASCD
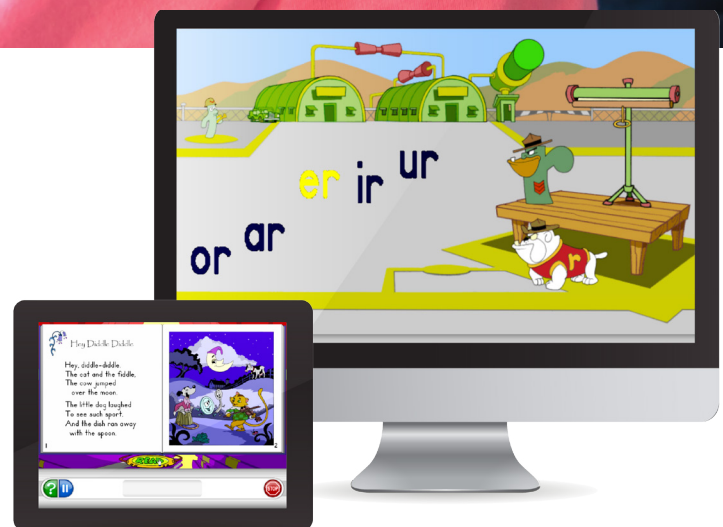
Digital learning with proven results!

Helping over 4 million students grow

From reading and writing to reading en Español and math, Istation's interactive instruction offers assessments, curriculum, and more.

Get **PROVEN RESULTS** from Istation with:

- Game-like Assessments
- Adaptive Curriculum
- Teacher-led Lessons
- Personalized Insights
- Dedicated Coaching
- Engaged Community

Get a FREE demonstration and see how Istation helps students grow.
Visit info.istation.com/Results

Istation

Supporting Educators. Empowering Kids.
Changing Lives.

866.883.7323
www.istation.com

Istation

Supporting Educators. Empowering Kids.
Changing Lives.

www.istation.com

8150 North Central Expressway
Suite 2000
Dallas, TX 75206

1-866-883-READ (7323)