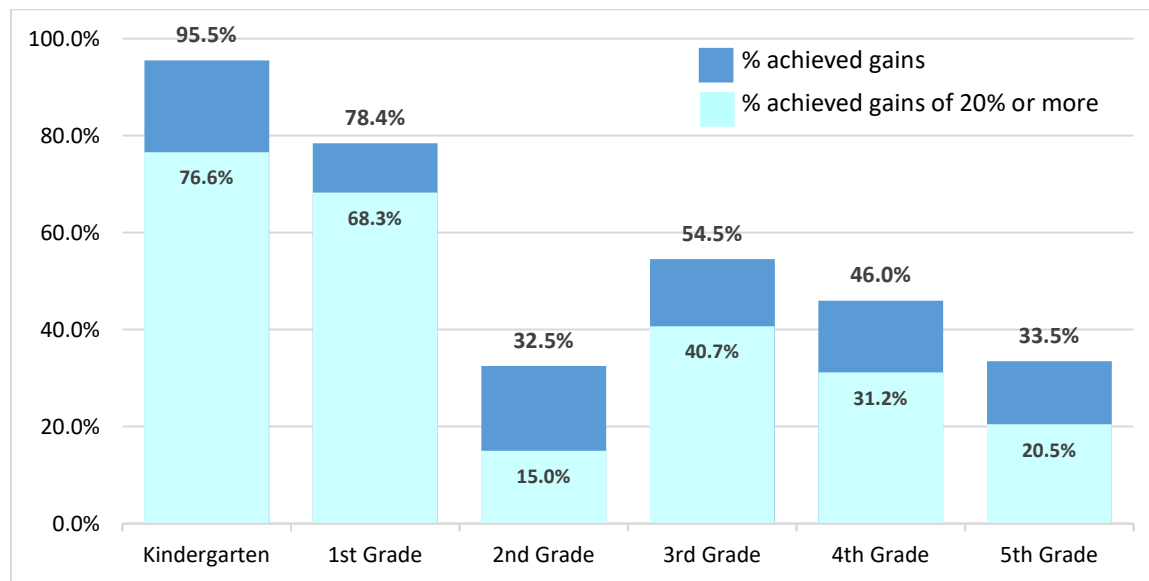


Summer Programs Evaluation–BookNook

During the summer of 2021, students in kindergarten through fifth grade were provided with the opportunity to participate in a program to improve their reading literacy. In this program, students would utilize the virtual platform, BookNook. Working within the platform, students were assigned to a trained tutor and a tutoring schedule. Students were to participate in three half-hour sessions per week for six weeks. During each session, students would read a story, participate in fun activities and answer questions related to the story to gauge their understanding of what they had read.

At the start of the program, students were assessed to determine their current grade equivalency reading level. They were assessed again at the end of the program to determine how much their literacy skills had improved. Eight-thousand, eighty students were enrolled in the program, but only slightly more than half (4,100) participated in even one session. Overall, 57% of participants realized improvements in reading, including 38% whose growth was at least 20%. The graph below shows the percentage of students who achieved gains in grade equivalency reading skill among students who attended at least one session. The lighter color columns represent the percentage of students whose grade equivalency reading skill improved by 20% or more over the course of the program. (See Figure 1.)

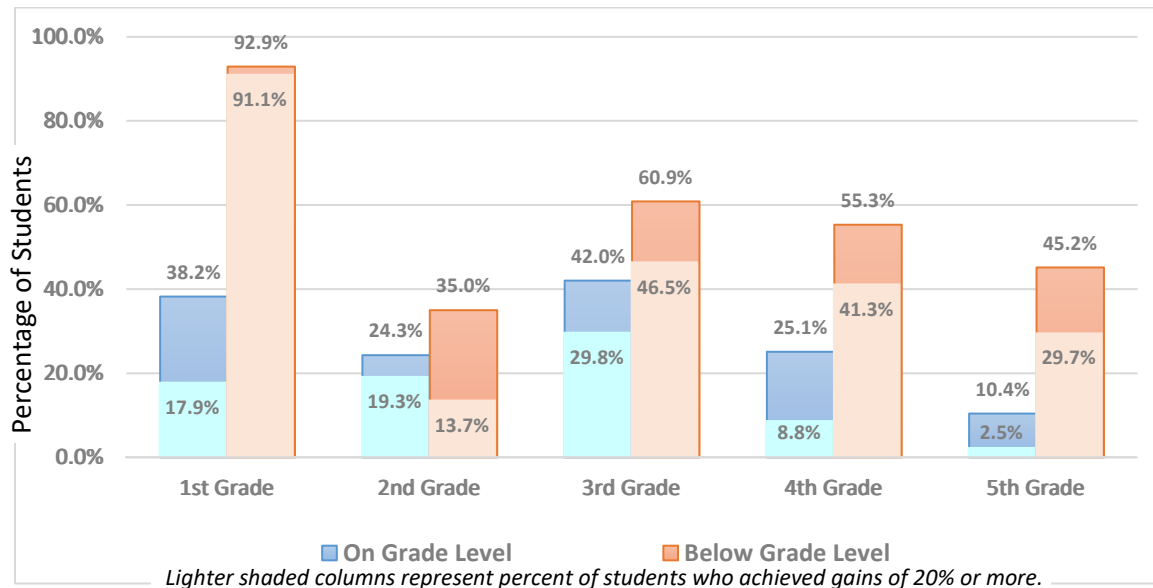
Figure 1: Percentage of students who achieved gains by grade



Kindergarten and first grade students achieved gains more frequently, on average, than students in other grade levels, with more than 95% of kindergarteners experiencing gains along with 78% of first graders. As the grade level increased, the percentage of students achieving gains trended downward, with a sharp decrease in students achieving gains at second grade compared with students in younger grades.

Among the 4,100 who participated in the program, 2,553 (62.2%) were reading below their grade level at the start of the program. Overall, 60.7% of this group of students made gains in their reading skills, while 50.7% of students who were already reading on grade level achieved improvements. Figure 2 shows a comparison of both groups by grade. The lighter shaded columns represent growth of at least 20%.

Figure 2: Percentage of students who achieved gains by beginning reading level and grade



That students who were reading below grade level at the start of the program made gains at higher rates than other students is progress in the right direction, but the goal is to get students up to level so they do not fall further behind as they move to higher grades. In analyzing data among only the group of students who started out below grade level, of which there were 2,553, we found that 821 or about one-third, were reading at or above grade level by the end of the program.

Figure 3 disaggregates the data by grade level. First grade students who were reading below grade level at the start of the program achieved gains that brought them up to grade level at far higher rates than any other grade. The reason is likely that while these first-graders may have been below level, they did not have as far to gain to reach a first grade reading level. As students move to higher grades, they can be multiple reading levels below grade, and larger deficits are more difficult and take more time to overcome.

Figure 3: Percentage of students who started the program reading below level and completed the program reading at or above grade level by grade

