

eSpark

Summer Learning Study Brief

Product Description

Source of third-party apps, videos, and quizzes curated to help students learn and practice skills in math and reading.

Learning Focus: Reading and Math

Student Usage Minimum: 30 minutes a day

Device Specifications: web-enabled iPads provided by school

District Context

District demographics: 2,400 students served; 40% Free/Reduced Lunch suburban Pittsburgh; 1:1 computing since 2013

Pilot demographics: 7 rising 3rd grade students, 1 teacher, 1 school

Pilot Goal

Ease transition from 2nd to 3rd grade for students at risk of summer learning loss in reading.

Implementation Plan

Duration: July 11-August 18, 2016

Quality of Support: The educator leading the implementation was familiar with eSpark after using it during the school year. She felt ready to implement it, supported by administration, and excited to take on this summer program responsibility.

Implementation Model: Students were assigned to use eSpark for reading 30 minutes per day throughout the summer.

Data collected: Student pre-post online surveys, teacher interview, pre-post benchmark student learning scores, and product usage data.

Findings

Actual implementation: Students did not meet the minimum usage threshold. They were not able to collaborate with others or share their learning synthesis directly with an instructor.

Educator engagement: The educator monitored student use and sent reminders to

parents if students were not using the tool for the recommended amount of time but it was difficult to monitor quest completions virtually.

Educator satisfaction: The educator was satisfied with the tool, but found it challenging to implement virtually because it was new to students. Additionally, while exposing students

to a program they will use throughout the school year might be beneficial, the educator worried that students might be bored with the tool by the time school started.

Student engagement: Students did not use the tool as much as expected, but

evidence suggest this was not because of the tool, but rather the lack of in-person contact with peers and an educator during the summer months. However, parents did report that students were more prepared for the beginning of the school year after using eSpark over the summer.

Outcome

Student learning: While student learning increased over the summer, the change was not statistically significant. eSpark may have contributed to student learning, but because of the small number of participants, limited usage, and lack of a comparison group, it is difficult to draw a link between the tool and student outcomes.

For more information, see:

<http://digitalpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/dp-rcp-summerprograms.pdf>



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