

# REAdy for the Grade 2020 – Manchester Report

Evaluator: Anita M. Baker, Ed.D.

Evaluation Services, Lambertville, NJ

## **Manchester**

REAdy for the Grade Manchester was made available through distribution of weekly literacy kits for 7 weeks to 17 families. No in-person instruction or family events were held, though family games were included in materials and parents/guardians both picked up the packages and provided some feedback regarding the resources. The program was designed and overseen by Norma Nevers of the Manchester Public Library who worked with Shonda McLennon the new community liaison at Squire Village to ensure participants received their weekly packages. The literacy kits were curated with weekly, theme-based, selected content customized by age and available throughout most of the summer. The program enrolled 25 children (a substantial increase from summer 2019) and family access was very consistent. As there was no direct instruction, per restrictions at Squire Village<sup>1</sup> no achievement tests were administered, however parents/guardians were surveyed regarding their children's additional needs, use of the materials and accomplishments, and their feedback helped to verify the benefits of participation. Details about the program follow.

## **Program Implementation**

**Literacy Kits.** The literacy kits were designed like Amazon subscription boxes with selected books, games and other supplementary materials such as art supplies and small white boards. The focus throughout the summer was on the alphabet, writing, sight words and reading of sight word books and easy readers, with the goal being to encourage exploration of fundamental literacy skills which will help the children to maintain or improve their reading. Each kit included a week's worth of materials including easy readers and activities that children could do alone or that parents/guardians could easily use with their children (see examples of kit contents in the table on the following page and in pictures in the appendix) along with a parent/guardian tip sheet and survey. As described by the RfG program director, these materials were selected to enrich the children's home environments with literacy learning materials. Especially in the early part of the summer (July), families were locked down and indoors, the playground was closed and there was no summer school programming. The RfG kits made it easy for children to play educational games with their siblings and each kit also included books, with a focus on non-fiction, activity sheets and craft activities. The final kits included pre-loaded Launchpad mini tablets with 10 age-appropriate educational Apps (and a charger) for them to keep and use for the rest of the summer and beyond.

**Parent Engagement and Incentives.** As stated above, there were no formal activities for parents, but each weekly kit included basic suggestions for use of the materials and a survey so parents could provide feedback on use of the materials and could make other comments or requests. The surveys also asked parents/guardians how often their children were reading which helped to remind them to read regularly. Parents were eligible for weekly \$25 Shop Rite gift cards for working with their children and completing the surveys.

---

<sup>1</sup> Before the summer, the Manchester site had hoped to potentially work with children directly either one-on-one or in small groups outside on the Squire Village property. However, Squire Village later decided there would be no suitable locations for any in-person instruction. No contact between library personnel and the families was permitted. Ms. Nevers dropped materials off at the community center and Ms. McLennon called for families to pick up the materials.

# **READy for the Grade 2020 – Manchester Report**

Evaluator: Anita M. Baker, Ed.D.

Evaluation Services, Lambertville, NJ

## **Examples of Weekly Literacy Kit Contents**

### **Kindergarten (rising 1<sup>st</sup> graders) Week 1**

- Magnetic White board with 99 magnetic alphabets (upper and lower case) & numbers including math symbols
- 3 books I Spy Beginning Reader Level 1 which have a rebus element
- Craft activity and Motivational stickers
- Information about the library summer reading program
- Tip sheet and Family Check-In Survey (every week)

### **Grade 1 (rising 2<sup>nd</sup> graders) Week 1**

- Workbook and 24 crayons
- 3 books
- Craft activity and Motivational stickers
- Information about the library summer reading program
- Tip sheet and survey

### **Grade 2 (rising 3<sup>rd</sup> graders) Week 1**

- Literacy activity sheets (11) which encourage child to cut out the words and paste the words into a sentence, read the sentence, write the sentence and then draw a picture based on the sentence.
- Crayons, glue stick, Sill Scent markers, scissors
- Boxed set of Level D Non-fiction sight word readers \includes 25 titles each targeting key sight words with workbook correlated to content
- Motivational stickers and Craft activity
- A reading log for the Manchester Public Library summer reading program.
- Tip sheet and survey.

## **READy for the Grade 2020 – Manchester Report**

Evaluator: Anita M. Baker, Ed.D.

Evaluation Services, Lambertville, NJ

### **Week 3 Features**

Workbooks with dot markers. Everyone got at least one of each type of dot marker workbooks geared toward their age level. Puzzles went to children in grades 1 & 2. The older children also received a daily workbook which focused throughout the week on very specific sight words and writing activities. Everyone received the Tower of Sight Words game.

### **Week 4 Features**

Grades 1 and 2, Sight word Shell game, weekly workbooks and fun crayons.

### **Week 5 Features**

Everyone got the Roller Coaster Craze word blending game. This was selected because it is simple and fun and would definitely encourage the children to give it a try.

### **Week 6 Features**

Word builder was selected because it is a fun way to practice spelling and learning words. Children also received a copy of the LeBron James book, *I Promise*, which has a great message from a good role model.

### **Week 7 Features**

Customized launchpad mini-tablets.

### **Enrollment**

As shown in table 5, the Manchester READy for the Grade program served 25 children summer 2020. The program was available to any family that enrolled and many did, based on word of mouth via other families, and/or in response to encouragement from Squire Village to register. The table shows that a diverse group of children received the literacy kits and that the group that participated summer 2020 was substantially larger than the summer 2019 group. RfG this year helped to inspire literacy involvement at home and served as an outreach strategy for future RfG programming. See Table 5 for Manchester's enrollment details.

- The program served students who participated in/completed: K 2020 (rising 1<sup>st</sup> graders 48%) 1<sup>st</sup> grade 2020 (rising 2<sup>nd</sup> graders 12%) & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (rising 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, 36%). 44% were females, 56% were males.

## REAdy for the Grade 2020 – Manchester Report

Evaluator: Anita M. Baker, Ed.D.

Evaluation Services, Lambertville, NJ

- The student group was somewhat less diverse in terms of race/ethnicity than it had been in 2019; 36% identified as Black/African-American, 40% of participants identified as Hispanic/Latinx, 20%, identified as biracial, and the racial/ethnic background of one child was identified as other.

<b>Table 5 Enrollment Details</b>	<b>2020</b>	2019
	<b>N=25</b>	N=9
<b>Grade in Fall</b>		
PK/Kindergarten*	<b>4%</b>	0
First Grade	<b>48%</b>	2
Second Grade	<b>12%</b>	3
Third Grade	<b>36%</b>	2
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	<b>44%</b>	5
Male	<b>56%</b>	3
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
Asian	<b>0</b>	0
Black/African American	<b>36%</b>	5
Hispanic/Latinx	<b>40%</b>	1
Native American	<b>0</b>	0
White	<b>0</b>	0
Biracial	<b>20%</b>	1

\* 1 child was identified as pre-kindergarten aged.

### **Parent/Guardian Feedback**

A total of 8 Family Check-In Surveys were completed and returned about the REAdy for the Grade (Ready Readers) summer program in Manchester, 2020. While the total number of surveys is limited, responses were very consistent: all families rated the materials in the kits from the various week as *excellent* and they verified that their children were reading the books included and that they were at the right reading level. Parents also reported that children were playing the games and completing the literacy activities and crafts.

# READY for the Grade 2020 – Manchester Report

Evaluator: Anita M. Baker, Ed.D.

Evaluation Services, Lambertville, NJ



Week 3



Week 4



Week 5

