

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT

JOURNEYS

2012

**Gold Standard
RCT Report—Year One**



JOURNEYS

In the fall of 2011, **Houghton Mifflin Harcourt** Market Intelligence commissioned independent evaluation firm PRES Associates to conduct a two-year, randomized control trial (RCT) study of *Journeys* © 2012 at Grades K–3.

An RCT, considered a gold standard study, is the only research design that meets the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards for demonstrating program effectiveness. Here, we've summarized the findings from the first year of the study, which showed significant student gains in reading comprehension, vocabulary, word analysis, spelling, and language.

"Developing reading and writing skills at an early age is absolutely critical for future success—both academically and professionally," said Linda K. Zecher, President and CEO, **Houghton Mifflin Harcourt**. "*Journeys* is one of HMH's core reading programs and supports our mission of fostering passionate, curious learners."

The report is based on results from 1,046 students, 541 of whom were placed in a *Journeys* classroom, and 44 teachers, 23 of whom used *Journeys*, across six schools from four geographically dispersed locations: Arizona; Washington, D.C.; Louisiana; and Rhode Island. *Journeys* classrooms were compared with various control groups implementing programs that differed by site.

Student performance was measured by administering a comprehensive skills assessment prior to the start of the study (fall 2011) and again at the end of the school year (spring 2012) (Figures 1–6). Several increases in average test scores for *Journeys* classrooms were recorded, including significant gains in word recognition (15 percentiles), reading comprehension (8 percentiles), spelling (6 percentiles), and vocabulary (6 percentiles) as compared to control groups. In all analyses, *Journeys* students out-performed control-group students.

Further, when examining different subgroups (i.e., race/ethnicity, gender, ELP status, special education status, and free/reduced-price lunch status), researchers found that all students made significant progress from pretest to posttest, with only two exceptions for Special Education students (pp. 36–42). Continued analysis indicated that students using *Journeys* had significantly greater achievement at the end of the school year than control-group students had on four outcomes: Reading Words (K), Reading Comprehension (K–2), Vocabulary (K–2), and Spelling (1–2). Given the short duration of the study and consistency of the findings, these results provide strong evidence that *Journeys* is more effective than other programs for improving students' reading skills and strategies.

The RCT also included teacher surveys, teacher logs, classroom observations, and teacher interviews (pp. 55–72). Preliminary results indicate *Journeys* offered perceived benefits that were just as strong as analyzed results. For example, teachers using *Journeys* believed that the program was so effective for teaching vocabulary that their reports revealed a significantly greater perceived impact than those of control-group teachers (p. 57). Teachers using *Journeys* also reported a greater ability to meet certain Common Core State Standards than control-group teachers did (p. 61).

"Considering the importance of building strong reading and writing skills, educators are left wondering which program will suit their students best and adequately prepare them for the Common Core," said Miriam Resendez, Senior Researcher, PRES Associates, Inc. "The results from this study really highlight the effectiveness of *Journeys* at the K–2 grade level!"

The research study is scheduled to expand to Grade 3 classrooms for the 2012–2013 academic year.

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In addition to bringing reading, writing, and vocabulary to life for thousands of students, *Journeys* also employs leading technology, such as interactive whiteboard lessons, the *HMH Readers* App for leveled readers, tablet-ready student magazines, and online editions of all print components, making it not only a highly effective, but also a highly versatile reading and literacy program for any classroom.

Figure 1. Pre-Post Performance on ITBS **Reading Comprehension** Subtest of *Journeys* and Control Students

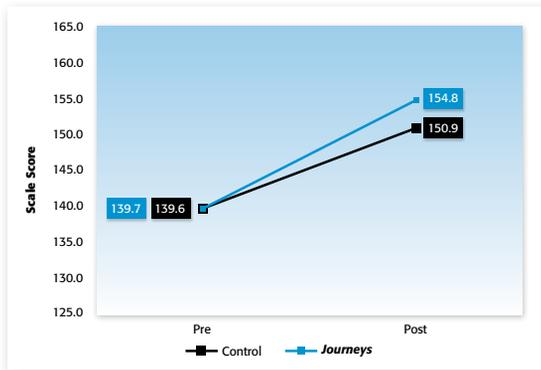


Figure 4. Pre-Post Performance on ITBS **Reading Words** Subtest of *Journeys* and Control Students

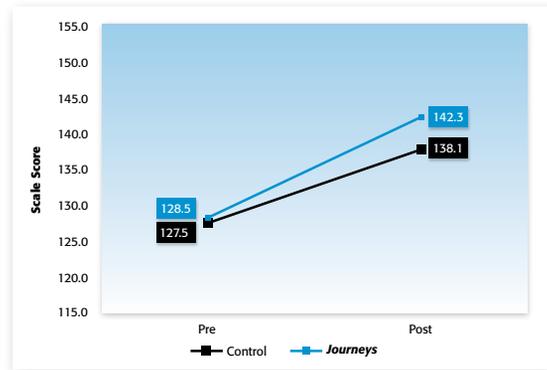


Figure 2. Pre-Post Performance on ITBS **Vocabulary** Subtest of *Journeys* and Control Students

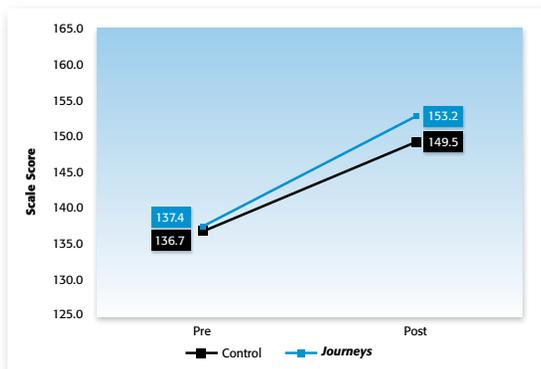


Figure 5. Pre-Post Performance on ITBS **Word Analysis** Subtest of *Journeys* and Control Students

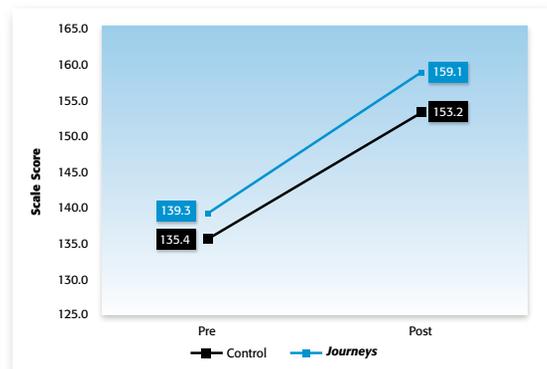


Figure 3. Pre-Post Performance on ITBS **Spelling** Subtest of *Journeys* and Control Students

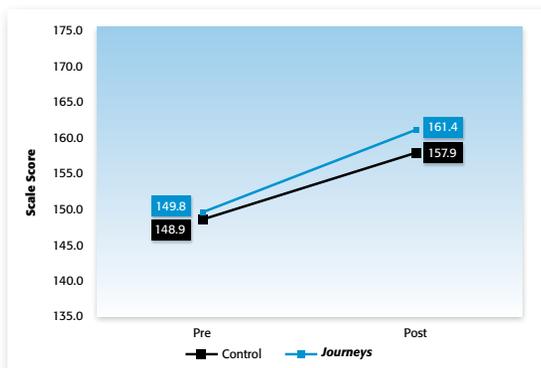
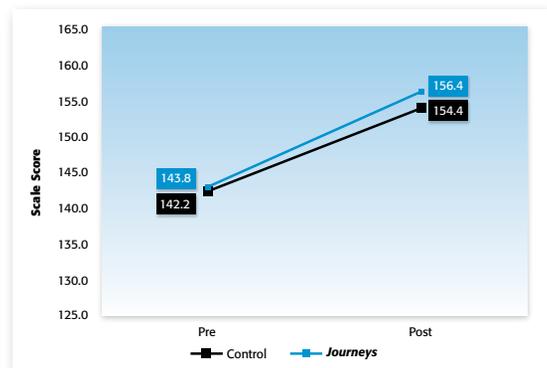


Figure 6. Pre-Post Performance on ITBS **Language** Subtest of *Journeys* and Control Students



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See the full first-year report for *Journeys* on hnhcentral.com/sales
(Sales Central) on the Effectiveness Research page.

For more information on *Journeys*, please visit
hmheducation.com/journeys



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