

**KWENA BASIN PROJECT (2014-2018)**

A Basic Concepts Project for Foundation Phase Teachers in Three Schools

Word Test Results: 2014 - 2019

The Word Test was administered to Grade 3 and Grade 4 learners at the project schools as well as learners from a control school in the area towards the end of the year in 2019. The Word Test has been administered since the start of the project in 2014 when the baseline data was gathered. The test has also been administered to learners from a control school since 2017.

The Word Test assesses the number of words a learner can write (in English in the current project) within 15 minutes. (See previous reports for a more detailed explanation.)

The project data was only gathered from three schools in 2019 as the remaining school was closed. The project data is therefore not comparable to previous years, which has led to a change in the method of presentation of the results. It should be noted that the data set has not been complete since the baseline was collected in 2014 as we were not able to gather data at one of the schools (Phakama). We also had problems with the collection of data at Klispspruit in 2015.

The test was administered to learners in the project (Grade 3) as well as learners who had transitioned from the project to the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4) where the language of instruction was English and not their mother tongue. An important focus of the current project has been the development of learners’ ability to be instructed and to learn in English.

**Grade 3**

Klipspruit

There has been an overall increase in word scores at this school since the baseline data was collected. The mean scores have improved by **104%** since the start of the project.

Umthombophile

There has been a small decline in the word scores at this school since the baseline data was collected. The mean score has declined by **9%** since the start of the project.

Phakama

Although baseline data was not gathered at this school in 2014 we have used the data gathered in 2015 (one year into the project) in order to compare the project results. The mean score on the test has improved by **24%**.

The project schools have performed significantly better than the control school over the last three years. The gains in the the project schools were **138%** greater than the control school in 2017, **99%** greater in 2018 and **420%** greater than the control school in 2019.

**Grade 4**

Klipspruit

There has been a gradual improvement in the word scores at this school since the baseline data was collected. The mean score has improved by **102%** since the start of the project.

Umthombophile

There has been a small decline in the word scores at this school since the baseline data was collected. The mean score has declined by **10%** since the start of the project.

Phakama

Although baseline data was not gathered at this school in 2014 we have used the data gathered in 2015 (one year into the project) in order to compare the project results. The mean score on the test has declined by **12%**.

The project schools have performed significantly better than the control school over the last three years. The gains in the project schools were **154%** greater than the control school in 2017, **120%** greater in 2018 and **207%** greater than the control school in 2019.

Summary of Word Test Results: Grade 3

The learners at Klipspruit seemed to perform significantly better than the learners at Umthombophile and Phakama (by 36% and 63% respectively), while the learners at Umthombophile seemed to perform significantly better than the learners at Phakama (43%). There was a general decline in the scores at the start of the project followed by a gradual and overall improvement in the scores at two of the three schools.

Summary of Word Test Results: Grade 4

The learners at Klipspruit seemed to perform better than the learners at Umthombophile and Phakama (by 11% and 22% respectively), while the learners at Umthombophile performed significantly better than the learners at Phakama (13%). There was a general decline in the scores at the start of the project followed by a gradual improvement in the results.

**Conclusion**

While the project learners performed significantly better than their peers from a comparable school, it was perplexing that the scores seemed to decline in the initial years of the project. The results have however improved and consolidated over the last three years and in some cases have shown gains. One might infer that the word writing capacity should continue to improve in the years to come. Refer to Report 12 for additional word knowledge results (A variation of the current test was used during these assessments). It is suggested that we continue to monitor the word knowledge of the project learners. The project learners from Umthombophile and Phakama have been transferred to Klipspruit which should make this reassessment easier. It is important to note that Klipspruit was the only project school which made positive gains on the word test in Grade 3 and Grade 4 and attained the highest word scores.

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