

School Name Ozarks Technical Community College, Springfield, MO

Course Name Introduction to College Reading

Course Format Blended (2/3 lecture, 1/3 lab)

- **Key Results** Better scores by students on MyReadingLab assessments consistently correlate with higher point increases when retaking the Compass exam, and more students are now passing the Compass and taking credit-bearing courses earlier.

#### Submitted by

Tammy Collins, Adjunct Instructor

#### Course materials

*Bridging the Gap* eText, Smith and Morris; MyReadingLab bundled with a novel

#### About the Course

Students scoring from 61–80 points on the Compass reading exam must take and pass Introduction to College Reading, a non-credit course, before enrolling in credit-bearing Composition I. We offer 12–20 sections of this introductory course each semester, so a large number of students are taking developmental courses before proceeding on to their regular coursework.

#### Challenges and Goals

We felt that having a self-paced, personalized digital program supplement our textbook and lectures could help students move forward more expeditiously. With so many students to serve, we decided to implement a blended learning classroom format that involved the use of computer-based instructional tools, so all instructors adopted MyReadingLab with a common eText.

#### Assessments

35 percent	Compass retest (81+ score needed to receive full credit)
20 percent	MyReadingLab module posttests (26), Lexile Locator, text chapter exercises
20 percent	Unit tests (4)
15 percent	Reader's workshop (response journal, activities, papers, visual projects)
10 percent	Vocabulary

#### Implementation

Our first class meeting each week consists of a traditional lecture complemented by a mini-lesson from our textbook. This is followed by a dedicated computer lab day where students spend 50 minutes working through their MyReadingLab modules. I believe that having built-in lab time with an instructor present is vital to our students' success, so I float around the room and help individual students as needed. For our third class meeting, we read and discuss a novel in depth to give students a well-rounded reading experience that includes longer and more sophisticated texts. During this meeting, I connect specific lessons in the textbook and in MyReadingLab to the novel.

In the lab meeting students take the Path Builder diagnostic and work intensively on their areas of weakness, according to their individualized Learning Path. They also work through all 26 MyReadingLab modules during the semester. However, even if students master a module on the Path Builder, they must still take the module posttest to demonstrate that they truly understand the content. For content not mastered on the Path Builder, students must work through the module's Overview, Model, Animation, and Recall. If they achieve 100 percent on the Recall, they may then skip the practices and go directly to the posttest. We set mastery on the posttest at 80 percent and give the students three attempts to pass it.

MyReadingLab's Item Analysis component in the Gradebook provides me with a good overview of students' strengths and weaknesses. If I see that the class is not doing well on a certain topic, I will provide additional instructional support. We spend the final week of the semester prepping for the Compass retest, and I use MyReadingLab diagnostically at this time to guide my instructional decisions. Because we're using the *Bridging the Gap* text-specific version of MyReadingLab, I assign many of the text exercises in MyReadingLab for homework; we also sometimes do them in class. The reading selection component encourages students to write more than ever.

*“We have seen evidence that, if students faithfully complete their MyReadingLab work, they are more likely to pass both the course and the Compass exam and be able to move ahead to credit-bearing courses.”*

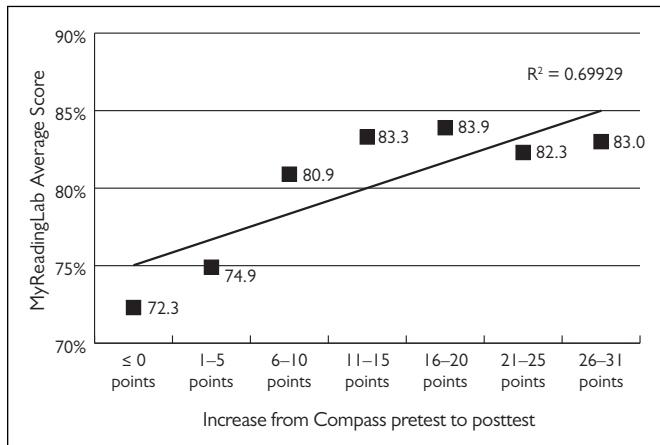


Figure 1. Average Scores in MyReadingLab as Compared to Point Increase from Compass Pretest to Posttest: Fall 2012, Spring 2013, Fall 2013 Combined (n = 122)

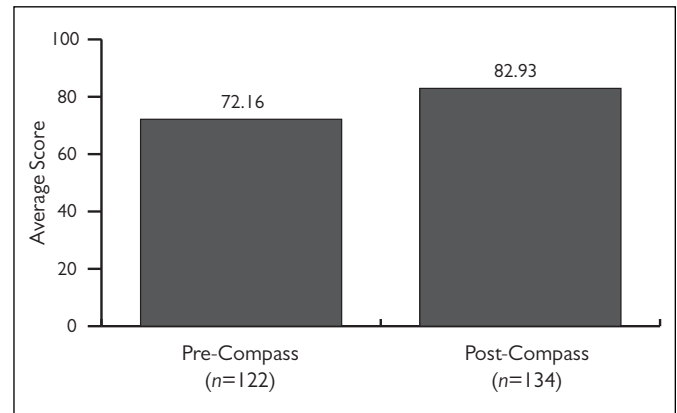


Figure 2. Average Pre- and Post-Course Compass Scores: Fall 2012, Spring 2013, Fall 2013 Combined

As part of assigned MyReadingLab work, students take the Lexile Locator and do at least nine readings by the end of the semester. I give extra credit to students who do more than nine readings. Although this does not tip the scales on their final grade, it is a good incentive to read and will undoubtedly help improve their Compass posttest score. Finally, we have four unit tests that include Compass-style questions and passages, as well as skills learned in MyReadingLab. Students quickly come to see the relationship between doing their MyReadingLab work and succeeding on the Compass retest.

## Results and Data

- Students who score well in MyReadingLab are more likely to have a larger increase on their Compass posttest (Figure 1).
- Students' scores on the Compass test after the course increased by an average of 11 points (Figure 2).
- Over 73 percent of the students passed the Compass exam after taking this course with MyReadingLab.

## The Student Experience

I have high expectations for my students because I'm trying to help them improve four to six years in reading skill level in a single semester, so I demand a lot from them. After completing this rigorous course, many students tell me that MyReadingLab was the most important thing helping them successfully retake the Compass exam.

## Conclusion

As a department, we feel MyReadingLab is a success. We have seen evidence that, if students faithfully complete their MyReadingLab work, they are more likely to pass both the course and the Compass exam and be able to move ahead to credit-bearing courses.