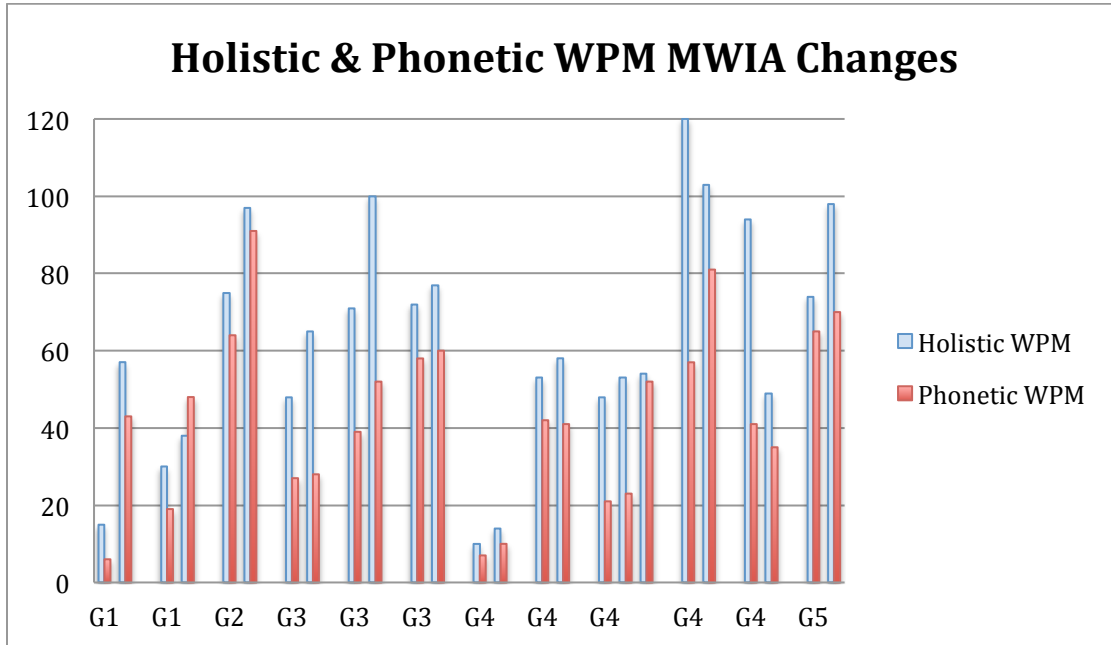


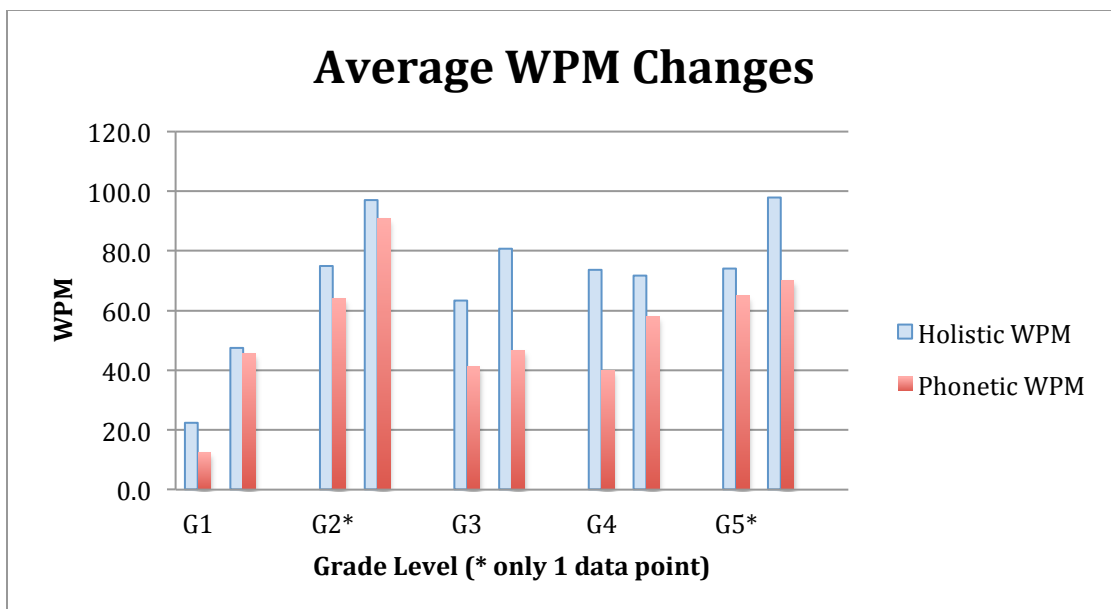
Understanding and Using MWIA Scores

The MWIA is a very powerful tool that packs a lot of useful information into one short test.

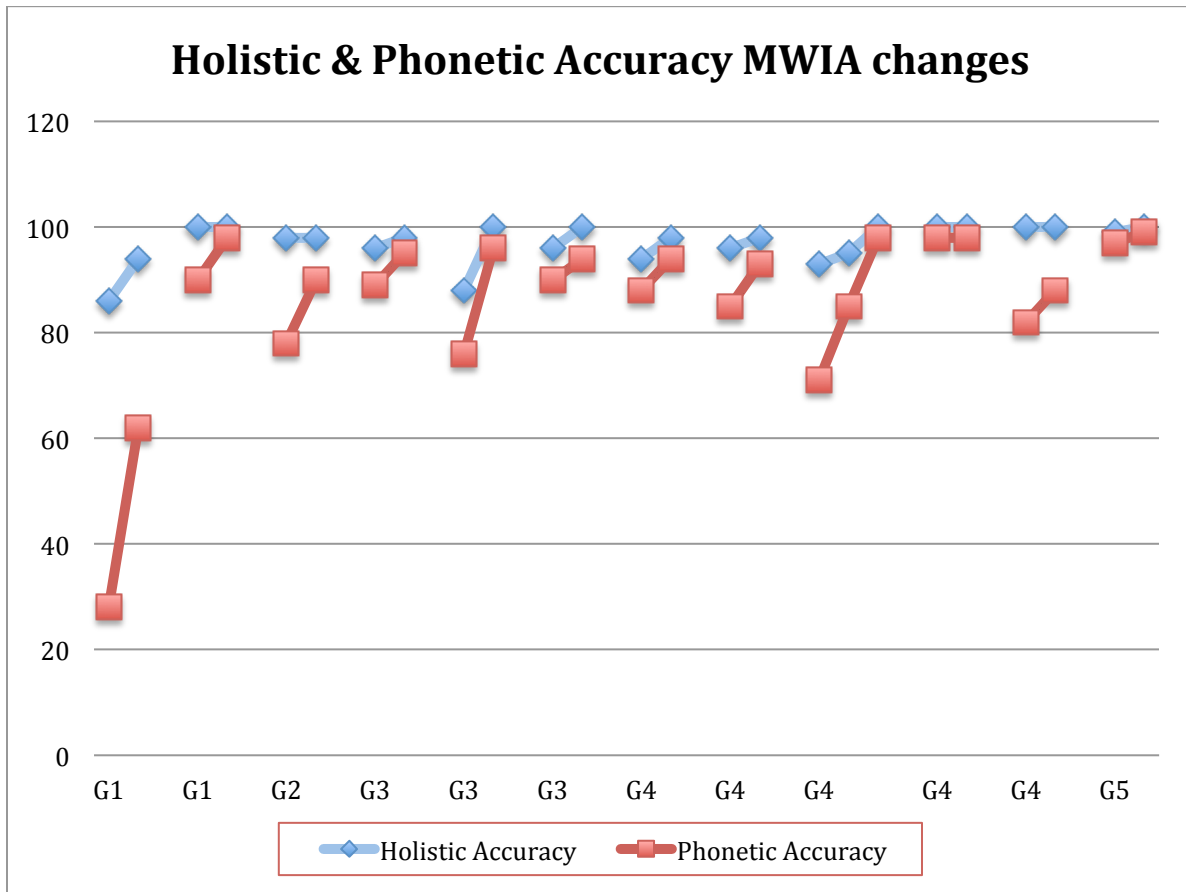
Here is an overview of the type of information you get from comparing Phonetic and Holistic Word Per Minute (WPM) rates before and after phonics remediation:



And an average by grade level of the above, with the one data point of a dyslexic student (the 4th grade student reading below 20 WPM) removed:



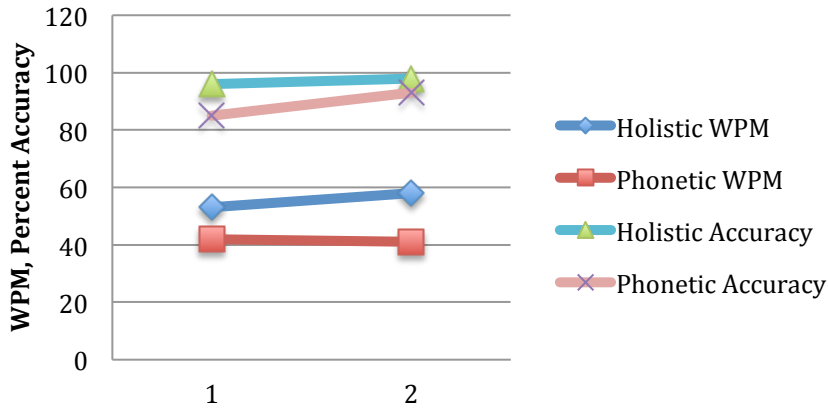
The test also shows accuracy for each type of word, here are before and after scores:



Next, we will look at some individual tests. The first few are average tests; the median improvement is about one reading grade level after completing the group Syllables Spell Success course.

Holistic words are high frequency words from the Dolch sight word list and Fry instant word list that are commonly taught as wholes by sight. The phonetic words are less frequent but phonetically regular words. Percent accuracy is the percentage of words read correctly of each type. Slowdown compares the students' own reading rate between reading holistic and phonetic words. For example, a student that reads the holistic words at 100 Words Per Minute (WPM) and the phonetic words at 90 WPM would have a 10% slowdown.

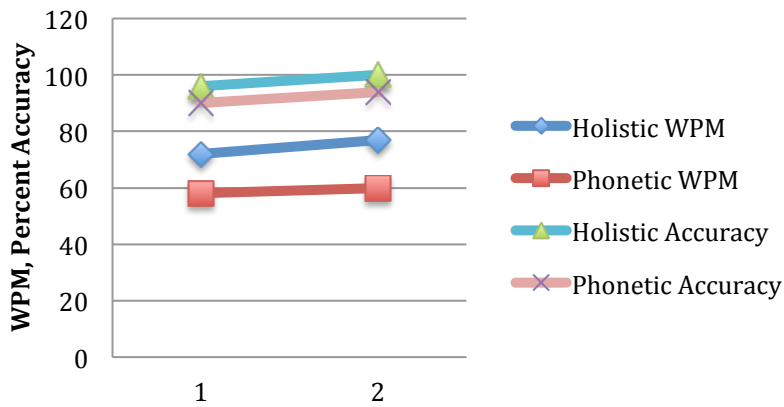
4th Grade Girl, +1 Grade Level



Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
53	42	96	85	21%
58	41	98	93	29%

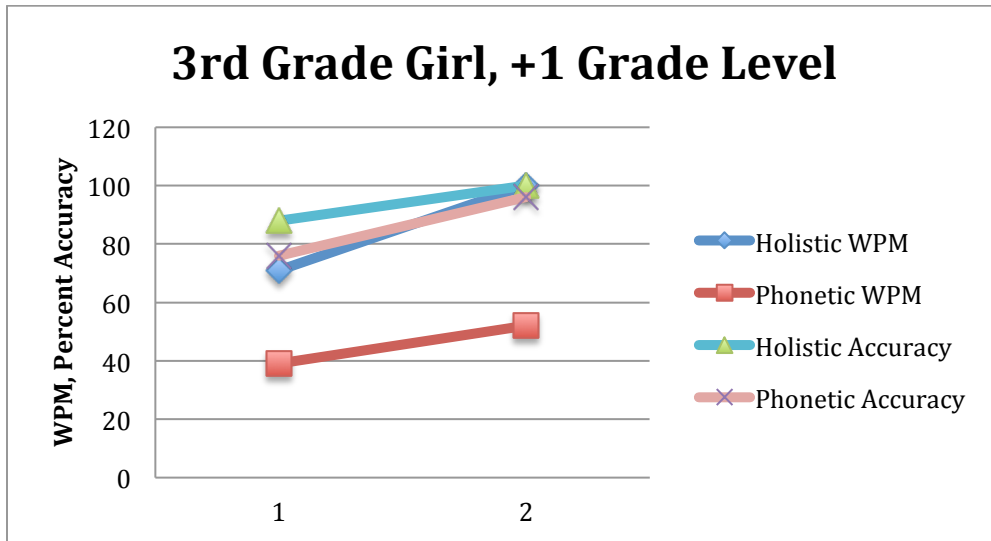
This student had a slight increase in her slowdown while improving her accuracy. An initial increase in slowdown is normal after tutoring, the students slow down as they gain new accurate reading habits. This was after 18 hours of group class work over two months. The student below attended the same class and had a similar slight slowdown increase while improving overall reading speed and accuracy:

3rd Grade Boy, +1 Grade Level



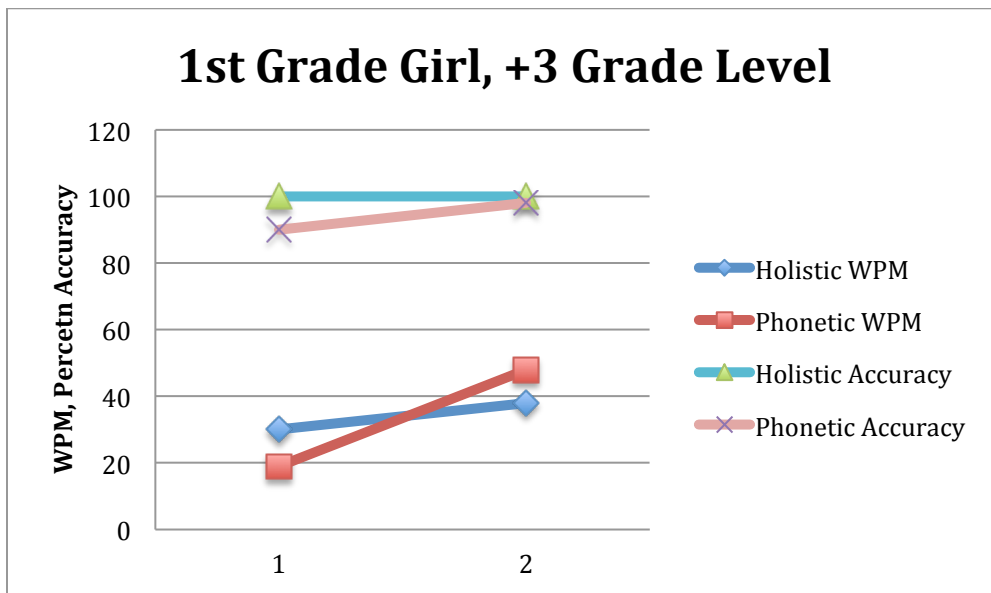
Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
72	58	96	90	19%
77	60	100	94	22%

This student also showed the median improvement of one reading grade level, but she attended a 7 hour group class over a period of 6 weeks. She also had a slight slowdown increase while improving overall reading speed and accuracy.



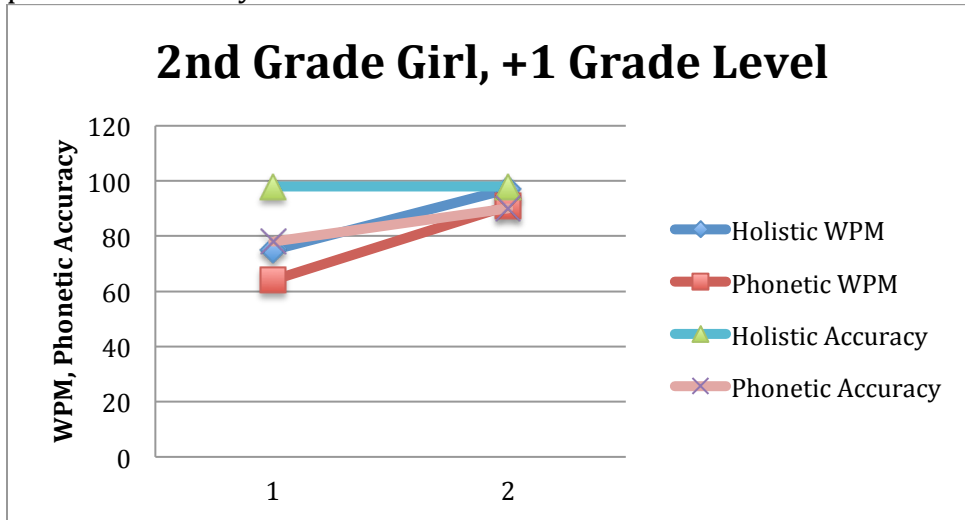
Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
71	39	88	76	45%
100	52	100	96	48%

Younger students often have an easier time retraining their brain with new habits, here is one who greatly improved her slowdown while gaining 3 reading grade levels and improving overall reading speed in only 18 hours over 2 months:



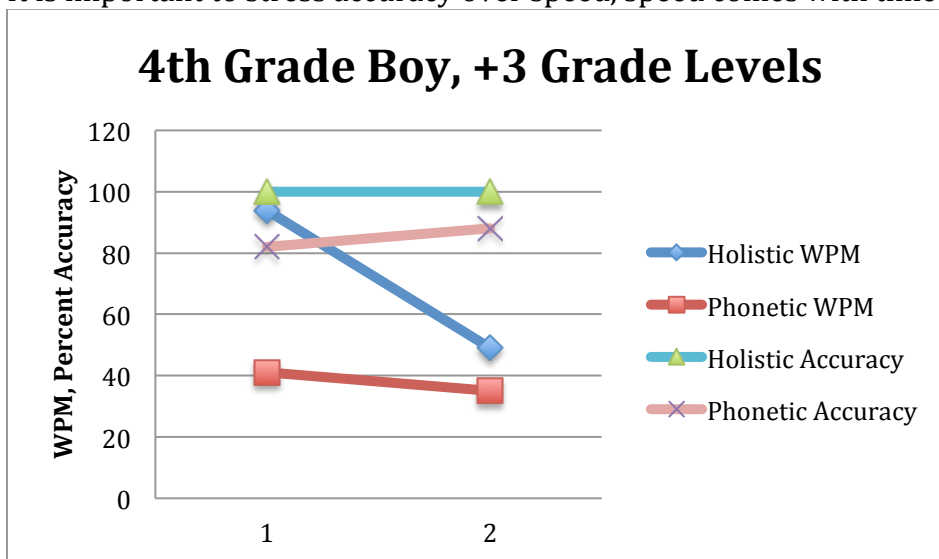
Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
30	19	100	90	37%
38	48	100	98	-26%

A 2nd grade student also improved her slowdown during the same 18 hour, 2 month group class while improving one grade level and increasing her overall reading speed and her phonetic accuracy:



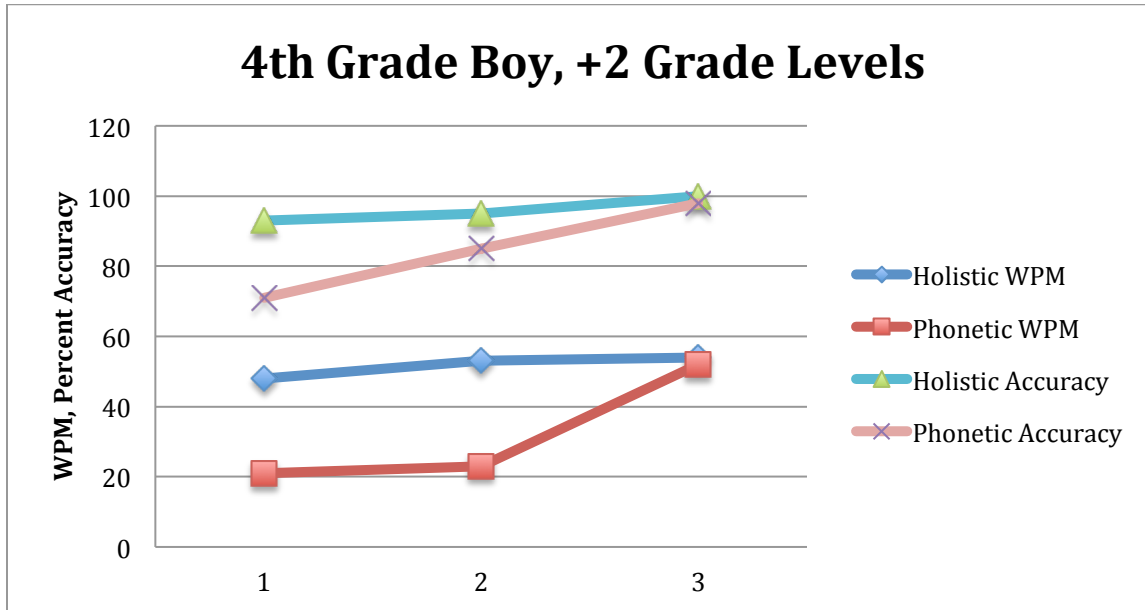
Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
75	64	98	78	15%
97	91	98	90	6%

While it is harder for an older student to decrease their slowdown and it usually takes a few classes, this 4th grade boy in the same class did a lot of nonsense word homework at home and improved his reading grade level by 3 grades while improving his phonetic accuracy. He slowed down his reading speed to increase his accuracy. Over time, new habits generally become increasingly automated and reading speed should improve as well. It is important to stress accuracy over speed, speed comes with time and accurate practice.



Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
94	41	100	82	56%
49	35	100	88	29%

The following 4th grade student had profound guessing habits and required a lot of sounding out every word one sound at a time and a lot of nonsense words to overcome his habit patterns. He completed one 18 hour class over a two month period and then began a second class. Approximately halfway through the second class he and his family moved and had to leave the class. His last test showing an improved slowdown was taken during the middle of the 2nd class.

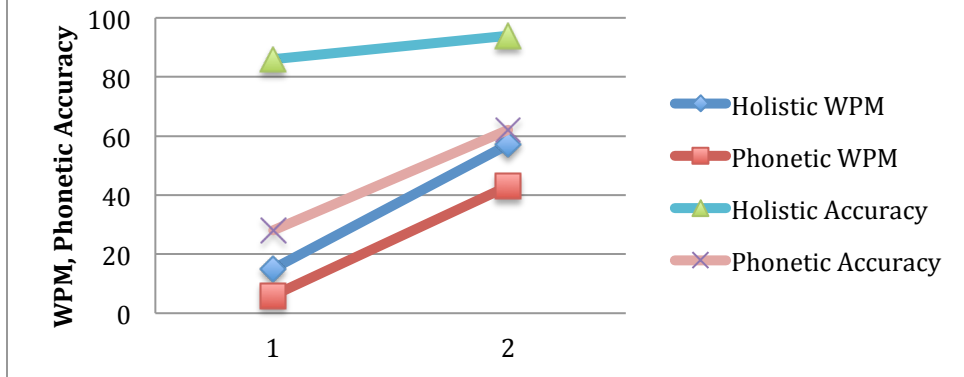


Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
48	21	93	71	56%
53	23	95	85	57%
54	52	100	98	4%

While he improved two reading grade levels, he was still reading below grade level at the time of his move. His mom attended the last few classes to learn how to help him and he was also provided with instructional DVDs. He and his mom were both excited about his progress and said they planned to continue working on his phonics lessons in their new location. The initial slight slowdown increase is typical, and was followed by an improvement as he learned to sound out words fluently, improving his phonetic reading speed and accuracy. There was a break of a month or two between the classes.

Next, we will look at a few students who do not follow these patterns. Very young students who have not learned all their phonics may have very slow reading Word Per Minute (WPM) rates and may not improve measurable on the test I was using at the time, the National Right to Read Foundation (NRRF) reading grade level test. It tests only in whole grade increments. I have since started using the 40L quick screen reading grade level test, a test which takes less time to give and measures incremental improvement.

1st Grade Boy, No Gain on NRRF test

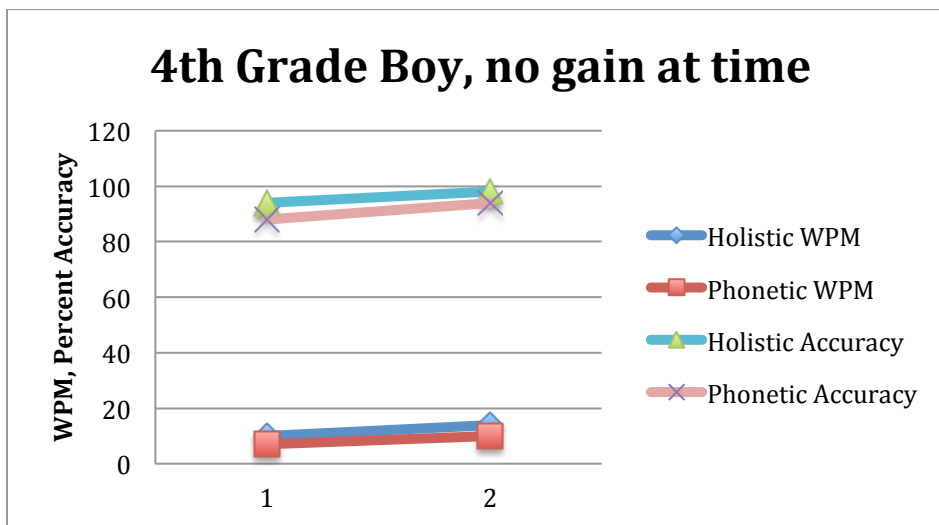


Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
15	6	86	28	60%
57	43	94	62	25%

This student improved, but his improvement was not captured on the NRRF test. He greatly improved his reading speed and accuracy while decreasing his slowdown.

This next student has a family history of dyslexia. He slow WPM rate for his age is a sign of his dyslexia. While he did not improve a grade level after this first class, he attended a 2nd 18 hour class and watched the 40L's online phonics lessons several times, improving 3 grade levels and finally getting to grade level. A final MWIA was not done. A shorter version of the MWIA has since been developed, see footnote 7 on the next page for a link.

4th Grade Boy, no gain at time



Holistic WPM	Phonetic WPM	Holistic Accuracy	Phonetic Accuracy	Slowdown
10	7	94	88	30%
14	10	98	94	29%

Students with dyslexia need a lot more repetition and nonsense words to make progress. They also seem to be especially helped by syllabic phonics with Webster's Speller. Some dyslexic students may also benefit from phonemic awareness training and an Orton-Gillingham (OG) reading program. See 40L's dyslexia page for more information.¹

A student who is reading well will have an MWIA score with no slowdown or a negative slowdown, and 98 to 100% reading accuracy. A student who is in 4th grade or older should have 100% accuracy on both phonetic and holistic word lists. Students should be reading at least 30 Word Per Minute (WPM) by the end of 2nd grade and should be reading at least 60 WPM by the end of 6th grade, with good accuracy.

The MWIA can show signs of dyslexia and can show how sight word teaching contributes to reading problems. It is best not to teach sight words as wholes. To find out more about how and why to teach sight words with phonics, see 40L's sight word page² and 40L's sight word movies.³

To learn more about the MWIA, you can see 40L's videos.⁴ Don Potter has a copy of the original MWIA⁵ and some documents with more explanation about the MWIA.⁶ A shorter version of the MWIA is also available from 40L.⁷

¹ 40L's dyslexia page:
<http://www.thephonicspage.org/On%20Reading/dyslexia.html>

² 40L's sight word page:
<http://www.thephonicspage.org/On%20Reading/sightwords.html>

³ 40L's sight word playlist on YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJLxBWdK_5I2AdSYtPS1d426P8rIv66eT

⁴ 40L's MWIA video playlist on YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJLxBWdK_5I1hszDT4DBohbex3S332Xap

⁵ The original MWIA, available from Don Potter:
<http://www.donpotter.net/pdf/mwia.pdf>

⁶ Documents with more about the MWIA from Don Potter:
<http://www.donpotter.net/pdf/miller-ftc-update.pdf>

http://www.donpotter.net/pdf/richardson_shaywitz.pdf

⁷ The MWIA Version 3 short, available from 40L:
<http://www.thephonicspage.org/On%20Reading/Resources/The%20MWIA%20Version%203%20new.pdf>