

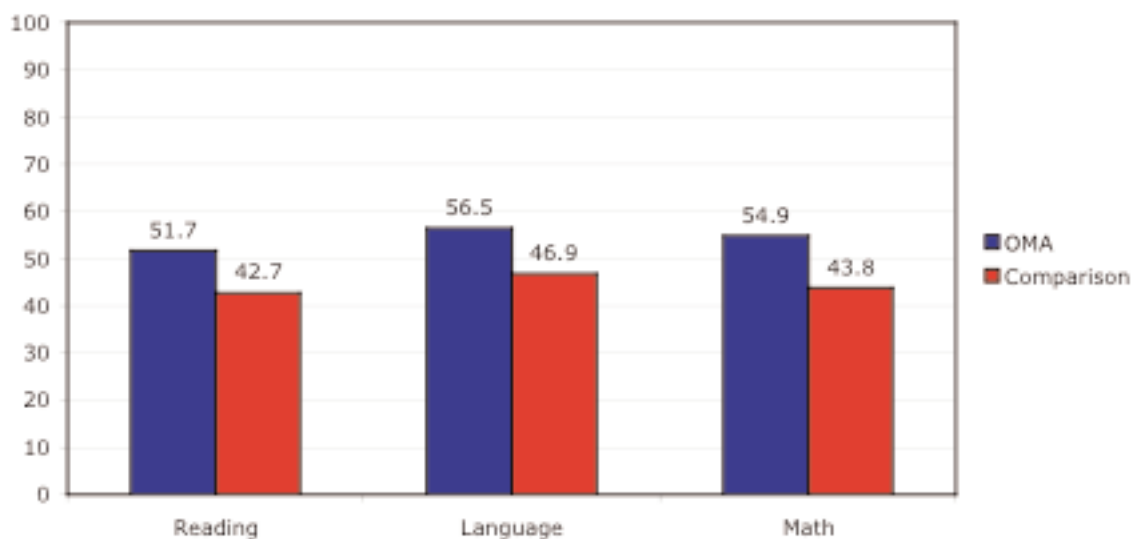
Student Achievement

One of the primary goals of the OMA program was to enhance student achievement as measured by standardized tests. To better understand the impact of OMA on student achievement, WestEd compared OMA and comparison school students within the second and third grades using individual student achievement data collected by the school district. Only students who participated in the OMA project for three years were included in the analyses.

After three years of participation in the OMA program, third-grade students scored significantly higher than their counterparts in comparison schools on all Stanford 9 tests; reading, language, and mathematics (see Figure 5). OMA showed a pattern of robust, positive effects.

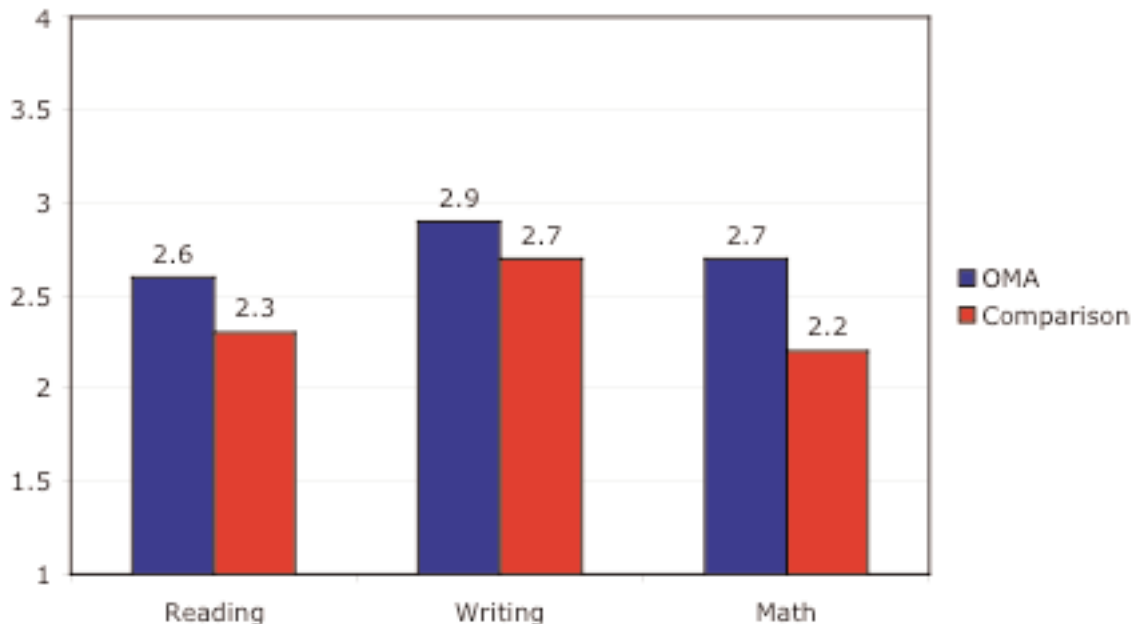
Figure 5
Differences between OMA and Comparison Students on the Stanford 9 Reading, Language and Math Tests: 3rd Grade Students

The Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) produced a similar, consistent pattern of findings for third-grade students. Figure 6 illustrates the differences between OMA and comparison school third-grade students on AIMS reading, writing, and math assessments. The mean AIMS scores of OMA students



were higher across all assessments, with the difference on the AIMS math assessment reaching statistical significance.

Figure 6
Differences between OMA and Comparison Students on AIMS Reading, Writing, and Math Assessments: 3rd Grade



Regardless of ethnic group membership, all students benefited from OMA participation. None of the treatment by ethnicity interactions tested was statistically significant or reliable. A similar pattern of findings was not evident for second-grade students in OMA for three years. This may be attributable to teacher turnover in the third project year at two OMA schools.

Conclusions

During its three-year implementation, the OMA program made significant progress helping students who are at academic risk to succeed: teacher effectiveness was enhanced, arts instruction strengthened, and gains made in student academic achievement.