

Florida Center for Reading Research

KidBiz3000 and TeenBiz3000

What are KidBiz3000 and TeenBiz3000?

KidBiz3000 and *TeenBiz3000*, combined, form a supplemental, web-based literacy program in vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and writing for students in grades 2-12. *KidBiz3000* is for students in grades 2-5 and *TeenBiz3000* is for students in grades 6-12. The programs provide practice reading nonfiction text and include extension activities designed to address vocabulary, reading comprehension, a relevant math problem, and written output. The goal of this program is to supply students with independent practice reading and writing for a minimum of 40 minutes twice a week at their appropriate reading level. Because it is web-based, students are able to log-in and complete tasks or games and other motivational activities outside of the school day.



KidBiz3000 and *TeenBiz3000* are designed with a five step process for students to complete during each session: Step 1- Set a schema, Step 2- Read for information, Step 3- Demonstrate mastery, Step 4- Construct meaning, and Step 5- Form an opinion. These five steps are completed without teacher support or input; however, it is recommended the teacher provide feedback at least once a week on the students' written product completed in Step 4. *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000* were created for minimal teacher involvement; however, comprehension strategy lesson plans, content area linked curriculum keys, and additional writing activities are provided if the district or school decides to use this practice program for instructional purposes. *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000* automatically send daily news articles in an account email to program users, but teachers have the option to search for news articles by category, assign particular articles to students, and create units of articles for topical study. Teachers can also preset the number of emails students receive per week.

At the initial log-in for each student he or she automatically takes a pre-test called LevelSet. LevelSet is an assessment unique to this program. It requires students to read text, answer comprehension questions and then it calculates the Lexile reading level. After the placement test, students begin the five step process of the 40 minute session. In Step 1 (set a schema) an email is sent to the students' program account that includes a nonfiction article adjusted for each student's Lexile reading level. Each email contains a question designed to get students thinking about the topic and activate background knowledge. Students email their response to the question directly to *KidBiz3000* or *TeenBiz3000* depending on their grade level. Step 2 (read for information) occurs when students read the news article contained in the email. All students in the same grade receive the same news article to read, but the Lexile level of the article has been adjusted for successful independent reading by each student. For students who read below a 4th grade reading level there is an option of having their version of the article read to them. Step 3 (demonstrate mastery) consists of a multiple choice activity, typically about 8 questions, designed to tap into students' comprehension of what was read and identify key vocabulary terms. Step 4 (construct meaning) requires students to generate a written response to an open-ended question regarding some aspect of the text read. During this step students have the option of using the graphic organizer selected for this writing assignment. A spell checker is

available and students can save their work, write drafts, and submit the final copy at a later date. Step 5 (form an opinion) asks students to answer a poll question related to the article content. Results are calculated for all program users across the country and presented in graph form once the student has responded.

Because this is a web-based program there are minimal printed materials. With their subscription to the program each teacher receives an implementation planner, an implementation handbook, a quick start guide to the program, a poster of the five steps to literacy achievement, and a poster to chart student use and progress through the program. These printed materials, with the exception of posters, are also available on the web site. There are no printed student materials. Currently, *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000* are available in English and Spanish versions. The website is well-organized and easy to navigate. The LevelSet assessment component of the program is a Lexile placement test designed especially for *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000*. Pre-testing and post-testing, using LevelSet, occurs at the beginning and ending of every school year and once mid-year. Teachers can run reports to review classroom and individual student scores on comprehension activities and self-administered fluency checks. Teachers can also view student mastery based on the curriculum strands of the Sunshine State Standards.

How are KidBiz3000 and TeenBiz3000 aligned with Current Research?

KidBiz3000 and *TeenBiz3000* are designed to be supplemental practice to accompany an existing core reading program. The goal is to provide differentiated readings to all students in the classroom. The degree of implementation at the school level will impact the overall amount of practice versus teacher instruction students receive using *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000*. The program approaches differentiation with the work of Carol Anne Tomlinson as its theoretical framework. *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000* are unique in that teachers don't provide the differentiation, but rather the software program is designed to use previous student performance to select the appropriate reading level and as a result, the vocabulary and comprehension questions that follow for each student. All the students in a grade level are reading the same news content so each student can fully participate in classroom discussions. Biweekly reading of nonfiction text provides students with repetitive practice to build fluency with this text structure. Vocabulary words selected for each article are designed to match text readability and be academically important. This aligns with Beck, McKeown, and Kucan's Tier II vocabulary words (2002). Key words are provided in the curriculum key for teachers to extend student knowledge and exposure to key concepts and words which they may or may not have encountered in their version of the text. The multiple choice questions encountered during step 2 of the 40 minute session are arranged to assess comprehension, vocabulary knowledge, and higher-order thinking skills within the framework of Bloom's taxonomy. These content specific questions range in type from knowledge to evaluation.

Achieve3000 offers three levels of professional development for districts implementing *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000*. Level 1 is the initial workshop; it is two full days with one day for all faculty users focusing on getting started and set up of the program. Day two is specifically classroom support using *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000*. It highlights the data management and reporting features of the program. Level 2 offers two workshops: the first full day training focuses on how best to integrate *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000* into the home and school settings based on what is currently occurring in the district or school; the second full day training option is

classroom modeling of the features of the program and how they can be integrated in the school's classrooms. Level 3 is a full day training designed for those who would like to extend their use of *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000* into a reading comprehension and writing program. The focus here is on lesson planning and full integration into the language arts curriculum. At the conclusion of each professional development session the trainer will send a report of his or her observations and suggestions to the principal. School-wide implementation is not a requirement of this program.

Research Support for KidBiz3000 and TeenBiz3000

KidBiz3000 was first made available to the public in 2000 and *TeenBiz3000* in 2001. During the 2003-2004 school year research was conducted using *KidBiz3000* with fifth graders in a small northeast city (Tracey & Young, 2004). This school district



was selected by the researchers and *KidBiz3000* staff based on leadership cooperation and motivation and their strong commitment to student computer access and the assessment requirements. The district demographics include 33% free and reduced lunch, 70% Caucasian, 18% Hispanic, 6% black, 8% other race. Eleven classrooms from five schools were selected; however the selection process is unclear. These 11 classrooms were divided into four classrooms in the differentiated *KidBiz3000* condition (N=84), three classrooms in the non-differentiated *KidBiz3000* condition (N=51), and four control classrooms (N=84). The differentiated condition adhered to recommended implementation of *KidBiz3000* with students reading text that has been differentiated according to their Lexile level. The non-differentiated condition used all the same features of *KidBiz3000* with the exception of differentiated text. All students in this condition were provided with grade level text. The control condition did not utilize *KidBiz3000*, but engaged in other computer lab activities once a week for 40 minutes as was typical of the district. Both treatment conditions used *KidBiz3000* for the recommended 40 minutes twice a week.

All three groups were pretested using the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), the TerraNova, 2nd Ed., The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, and The Southeast and Islands Regional Technology in Education Consortium Student Survey with no significant group differences. The SRI was administered quarterly as a progress monitoring tool and again with the TerraNova and student surveys in June as post-tests. Results indicate that in terms of gain scores the differentiated group performed significantly better ($p < .01$) than the control group, but not the non-differentiated group on the SRI which measures vocabulary and reading comprehension. Similar results were found on the TerraNova: the differentiated group performed significantly better on the Language Composite score ($p < .01$), Language subscore ($p < .02$), and the Language Mechanics subscore ($p < .05$) than the control group, but not the non-differentiated group. There were no statistically significant differences among the three groups on the Reading section of the TerraNova. There were no significant differences among the three groups on the reading attitude survey. The differentiated group demonstrated significant gains compared to the control group ($p \leq .05$) on the technology use survey on seven of the measures. These findings should be reviewed with caution as not all data were reported, results of the non-differentiated group on the technology survey were not reported, and the differentiated condition received twice the amount of computer time as the control group during this study.

In conclusion, there is a beginning level of research support for the effectiveness of *KidBiz3000* for fifth graders with similar demographics as the students

in this study. Future studies that employ random assignment to groups of different grade levels and socioeconomic status are desirable to further establish the evidence base for this program.

Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths of *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000*:

- Program is web-based for easy access by teachers and students.
- Students are provided practice reading the same nonfiction content articles as their peers with adjustment for their appropriate Lexile reading level.
- All articles are linked to the Sunshine State Standards for Language Arts and content areas.
- Games and other motivational activities are included for students to play; there are settings to block usage during school hours.
- Assessment windows are set by the program and thus do not require teacher set-up.

Weaknesses of *KidBiz3000* and *TeenBiz3000*:

- None were noted.

Which Florida districts have schools that implement KidBiz3000 and TeenBiz3000?

Alachua	352-955-7880	Madison	850-973-5022
Broward	754-321-2600	Marion	352-671-7702
Charlotte	941-255-0808	Miami-Dade	305-995-1430
Collier	239-377-0212	Orange	407-317-3202
Dixie	352-498-6131	Osceola	407-870-4008
Escambia	850-469-6130	Palm Beach	561-434-8200
Flagler	386-437-7526	Pinellas	727-588-6011
Gulf	850-229-8256	Polk	863-534-0521
Hendry	863-674-4642	Seminole	407-320-0006
Hillsborough	813-272-4050	St. Johns	904-819-7502
Levy	352-486-5231	Volusia	386-734-7190

For More Information

<http://www.achieve3000.com/>

References

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford.

Tracey, D. H. & Young, J. W. (2004). *Evaluation of KidBiz3000: Bayonne study final report*. Unpublished manuscript.



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Important Note: FCRR Reports are prepared in response to requests from Florida school districts for review of specific reading programs. The reports are intended to be a source of information about programs that will help teachers, principals, and district personnel in their choice of materials that can be used by skilled teachers to provide effective instruction. Whether or not a program has been reviewed does **not** constitute endorsement or lack of endorsement by the FCRR.

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