# Results Confirming Effectiveness of Our Approaches to Teaching Academic Reading Strategies

**COLLEGE COURSES:**

Virtually all students taking the reading courses made significant progress in reading comprehension, reading rate, metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, and attitudes toward academic reading. These were measured on pre/post tests and qualitative measures. This data was gathered across four semesters from students who took the Advanced Reading for College Success courses. 417 students were randomly selected to have their data analyzed for this study.

*Pretest-Posttest Differences for Eight Measures of Effects of the Advanced Reading Course*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Measure | *n* | Pretest | Posttest | M Difference | t | p | d |
| *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* |
| NDRT Comp | 417 | 228.51  | 16.19  | 231.74  | 11.81  | 03.23  | 04.82  | .000 | 0.23 |
| NDRT Rate | 417 | 208.37  | 24.71  | 275.88  | 32.28  | 67.51  | 42.70  | .000 | 1.52 |
| MARSI GLOB | 417 | 2.86  | .58  | 3.96  |  .52  | 01.10  | 34.98  | .000 | 1.41 |
| MARSI PROB | 417 | 3.44  | .59  | 4.02  | .49  | 00.58  | 19.07  | .000 | 0.95 |
| MARSI SUP | 417 | 2.39  | .60  | 3.34  | .60 | 00.95  | 30.07  | .000 | 1.24 |
| MARSI TOTAL | 417 | 2.89  | .53  | 3.80  | .45  | 09.91  | 33.84  | .000 | 1.35 |
| LLR | 400 | 25.44  | 10.20 | 55.52  | 20.78  | 30.09  | 31.82  | .000 | 1.35 |
| ATTITUDE  | 417 | 29.98  | 5.63  | 39.01  | 5.39 | 09.03  | 28.36  | .000 | 1.27 |

*Note:* NDRT Comp = Nelson-Denny Reading Test, comprehension subtest; NDRT Rate = Nelson-Denny Reading Test, reading rate subtest; MARSI = Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory; GLOB = global strategies; PROB = problem-solving strategies; SUP = support-reading strategies, TOTAL= overall MARSI score; LRR for Narrative = informal assessment of line read rate for two passages from the same narrative text; ATTITUDE= College Student Attitudes toward Reading survey.

**EFFECTS SURVEY RESULTS:**

Our chief aim in designing and teaching the advanced reading course was to improve college student reading and to have a positive impact on their studies. The Effects Survey provides evidence that we achieved this goal. An overwhelming majority of our students agree that they are using the reading strategies they learned in the course and that they are more effective because of it. They are not just being aware and using the strategies but are seeing beneficial effects in their reading for other classes.

85% of the students agree or strongly agree that they nearly always or often are able to adapt the strategies they learned in the course to the reading situations they encounter in their other courses.

83% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they are better able to keep up with and complete the reading assignments in their other classes as a result of what they learned in our course.  They tend to get the reading done, monitor their understanding and use strategies to facilitate their comprehension.

75% attest to improved comprehension

70% express that they have seen improved retention of what they read.

83% feel their attitudes toward college reading are improving.

68% express that they are enjoying their college studies more because of the course.

Finally, we hoped to help some who take our class move from being merely students toward becoming scholars.  We realize this is a stretch because not all students may be interested in becoming scholars in a discipline.

Nevertheless, 65% of the respondents expressed that they are taking their college coursework more seriously, to really learn rather than just work for a grade.

81% of the students in the course see themselves as more engaged in their learning and are thinking more deeply about ideas and concepts in their classes.

Thus, the advanced reading course appears to help students move toward becoming scholars.

**FOLLOW-UP SURVEY RESULTS:**

Below are the results of an anonymous survey sent to students one to four semesters after they had completed the course. We note that the course is seen generally as a positive experience.

92% of the former students responded that the course had had a positive effect on their approaches to reading,

90% were glad they had taken the course,

76% had recommended it to others.  Many current students in the course are telling us they heard about it from someone who had taken it and recommended it to them.

84% agreed that their attitude toward reading has improved because of the course;

75% now feel more confident that they can read just about any text, no matter how difficult. This is a big shift from what students often express in their initial interview for the course where they tell us that they often give up on reading assignments because they are not understanding what they are reading;

90% apply the strategies they learned when they encounter a challenging text. This suggests that they have developed their metacognitive awareness to be able to see the need for more support or problem-solving as they read and then are able to select one or more strategies to help them meet the demands of the text.

80% of the respondents feel they have maintained or increased their comprehension of academic texts;

68% have maintained or increased their reading speed of academic texts;

The Follow-Up Survey provides a useful picture of what students think of our advanced reading course and what they are using from it one to four semesters after completing the course.  We see, generally, that the students are satisfied with having invested in a course to improve their college reading. The former students have, for the most part, maintained gains they made during the course or have continued to improve their comprehension and reading rate of college texts. A positive attitude toward reading and confidence in ability to read college texts persists in these former students. This finding is an important outcome of the course. If our students feel they can tackle any college text because of what they learned, we feel that something very useful has been acquired by the students. In general, the results of the Follow-Up Survey give evidence that our students appear to be improved college readers as a result of the course and the diligent effort they put into applying what they were taught.