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# Movement in the Classroom to Practice Sight Words

Galina Vander Meer

Western Michigan University, dancergalina@gmail.com

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Galina Vander Meer

Lee Honors College

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## Abstract

This project encompassed the development and implementation of a unit plan that proved beneficial for first grade students in learning and practicing their sight words. Sight words are words that students are expected to read and write by the end of the school year. Every student learns differently, and using movement to enhance students' learning can give kinesthetic learners a chance to grow. There were four lessons in the unit plan that incorporated different modes of learning, including movement and technology, and correlated to the first grade curriculum. By the end of the four lessons, the students collaboratively created a learning tool through an iPad app called Educreation that they used to practice reading and write their sight words. Students who struggled with certain sight words used this tool to help them practice during the project. This tool can also be used throughout the school year. It is a great way to get students to learn how their bodies move and how to express themselves, while learning the first grade curriculum. It can also be modified by other educators for use in different elementary grade levels.

## Project Proposal

Research shows that it is becoming more and more evident how movement in the classroom is benefiting students. Every student learns differently, and by using movement to enhance students' learning will give a chance for those kinesthetic learners to grow as students. For my Senior Capstone Project I will create a unit plan with lessons for first graders that incorporates movement and technology, which correlates to the first grade curriculum that I can use in my future classroom. To do research for this project I will speak with Deb Norton, who is a dance educator at Woods Lake Elementary School, about what resources she uses for her creative movement lesson plans and Sojn Boothroyd, who is a creativity in the classroom teacher at Western Michigan University. After collecting my research I will create a unit plan that will be beneficial for the first grade students. The lessons will allow the students to move kinesthetically to learn their sight words they are expected to read and write by the end of the school year. I will also be working with Laura Ballard, who integrates technology into her first grade classroom at Mattawan Early Elementary School. I will work with Mrs. Ballard's students for four 45 minute sessions. We will begin by having the students explore how their bodies move. We will then use an iPad app to take pictures of the students forming the letters of their sight words with their bodies. The students can view the photos of the words they create and trace over the letters with their finger. By the end of the four lessons, the students will collaboratively create a learning tool that they can use to practice reading and writing their sight words. Students who are struggling with certain words can use this tool to help them practice for the duration of the school year. This unit plan will be a great way to get the students to learn about how their bodies move and how to express themselves, while in connection to the first grade curriculum.

# Movement in the Classroom to Practice Sight Words

By Galina Vander Meer

Topic: Sight Words

Grade Level: 1st

Overview Statement:

This unit plan consists of four lessons that integrate movement and language arts. The lessons gradually introduce students to the end project of creating alphabet letters with their bodies to make a learning tool.

Learning Environment:

The classroom has been set up to produce a friendly and supportive learning environment. Students should feel comfortable to take risks in order to grow as learners. The teacher is in charge of making students feel comfortable by letting students know it is okay to make mistakes.

Goals of the Lessons:

The main goal for the lesson is to have the students create a learning tool using an iPad app that will help aid them in their progress towards learning their sight words.

Specific Objectives:

- Have students experience learning through movement
- Not just moving to move like a brain break, but truly integrating movement into the lesson to enhance students' learning
- Utilize technology to draw students into the lesson
- Have Students learn the three levels of space: high, medium, and low

- Teach students to work in their own personal space
- Teach the students three types of lines: straight, curved, and zig zag
- Teach students to use the three types of lines to create alphabet letters with their bodies

## **Lesson 1**

### **Common Core Standards:**

- M.MC.01.09 Demonstrate selected elements of relationship movement concepts of body parts (i.e., round, narrow, wide, twisted, symmetrical, and nonsymmetrical) in isolated settings.
- DA:Cr2.1.1b. Choose movements that express an idea or emotion, or follow a musical phrase.
- DA:Pr5.1.1a. Demonstrate a range of locomotor and non-locomotor movements, body patterning, body shapes, and directionality.
- DA:Pr5.1.1b. Move safely in general space through a range of activities and group formations while maintaining personal space.

### **Objectives:**

The teaching points will be:

I can move safely around the room in my own personal space. (DA:Pr5.1.1b and M.MC.01.09)

I can sculpt my partner into different shapes. (DA:Pr5.1.1a)

**Time:** 55 min.

### **Materials:**

- Whiteboard/ whiteboard markers

- Music
- Projector/speakers
- PowerPoint with pictures

### **Anticipatory Set:**

Show pictures of different shapes. Ask students what they notice about this picture and tell their partner (see if they have vocabulary, if not, introduce straight, curved, and zigzag lines).

### **Direct Instruction/Guided Practice:**

1. Students will sit in a circle on the dot rug to play the name game. This game is a way for students to introduce themselves and learn about keeping a beat. The students will do a 4/4 timing, with the beats being created by clapping the hands on the legs twice and clapping the hands together twice. When the students clap their hands together is when they will say their name. If their name has one syllable they will use the first clap to say their name. If their name has two syllables they will use both claps to say their name. If their name has three or more syllables they will have to start saying the first syllable of their name before they start their first clap. The student will say their name using four beats and then the class will repeat the name using the next four beats. Go around the circle keeping the beat until every student has had a chance to say his or her name.
2. Create a class agreement with the students. Write this down so it can be referred to later. Talk to the students about how they should move their bodies (in control or out of control), personal space, keeping their feet on the ground (unless they

are carefully bringing them off the ground) watching out for the friends around them, being kind and respectful friends, level 1 (whisper voice) or 0 (no voice), etc. The students will create this agreement, but the teacher can guide to make sure everything is included. These will be the agreed upon behaviors (students will be at the dot rug).

3. Warm up and stretch with the students to get their bodies ready to move (jumping jacks, downward dog, quad stretch, pliés-standing on two feet and bending the knees, and sideways stretch) (students will be in their own personal space).
4. Introduce levels: high, medium, and low. Use the image of splitting the body into three sections. A line would go horizontally across the shoulders and the knees, creating the three sections. If students were in the high level they would have a body part in the section above their shoulders. If they were in the middle level they would be in the section between their shoulders and knees. If they were at the low level they would be in the section below their knees (students will be in their own personal space).
5. Sculpting game: Students will be paired up and create “sculptures” with each others’ bodies. One partner will verbally tell the other partner, without touching them, how they would like them to look. Have students close their eyes and visualize what they want their “sculpture” to look like before they start giving their partner directions. Remind students that they need to be kind to their partner and put them in positions that are safe for their body, they can balance in, and that do not hurt them (partners will be in their own personal space).



## **Follow-Up/ Summary**

Turn and Talk:

- Students will turn to their partner (shoulder buddy) and share the teaching point.

## **Assessment**

Freeze game:

- Students will spread out in the room in their own personal space. Music will be played and students can dance around the room safely however they choose. Each time the music stops they will need to freeze in a shape or line at a certain level (high, medium, or low level) that has been called out by the teacher. The teacher will assess by watching students during the freeze game to see if they create the correct shape or line with their body. The teacher will help students who are not proficient and may be confused.

## **Accommodations:**

- If a student is not able to participate with their body they can do the activities from a chair.

## **Lesson 2**

### **Common Core Standards:**

- M.MC.01.04 Demonstrate selected elements of space awareness movement concepts for pathways (i.e., straight, curved, and zigzag) in isolated settings.
- M.MC.01.05 Demonstrate selected elements of space awareness movement concepts for extensions (i.e., large/small and far/near) in isolated settings.

- M.MC.01.09 Demonstrate selected elements of relationship movement concepts of body parts (i.e., round, narrow, wide, twisted, symmetrical, and nonsymmetrical) in isolated settings.
- DA:Pr5.1.1a. Demonstrate a range of locomotor and non-locomotor movements, body patterning, body shapes, and directionality.
- DA:Cr2.1.1b. Choose movements that express an idea or emotion, or follow a musical phrase.
- DA:Pr5.1.1b. Move safely in general space through a range of activities and group formations while maintaining personal space.

**Objectives:**

The teaching points will be:

I can write and identify the different kinds of lines in the alphabet letters. (Straight, curved, zigzag) (M.MC.01.04)

I can make small and large letters with my body. (M.MC.01.05)

I can move my body in different pathways (straight, zigzag, and curved). (M.MC.01.04)

**Time:** 55 min.

**Materials:**

- Alphabet cards
- Whiteboards
- Whiteboard markers
- Music
- Projector/speakers
- Class agreement

**Anticipatory Set:**

To review from the last lesson have students show different shapes (straight, zigzag, and curved) at different levels (high, medium, and low). Ex: curved shape at middle level, straight shape at a high level, a zigzag shape at low level

**Direct Instruction/Guided Practice:**

1. Students will sit in a circle on the dot rug to play the name game. This game is a way for students to introduce themselves and learn about keeping a beat. The students will do a 4/4 timing, with the beats being created by clapping the hands on the legs twice and clapping the hands together twice. When the students clap their hands together is when they will say their name. If their name has one syllable they will use the first clap to say their name. If their name has two syllables they will use both claps to say their name. If their name has three or more syllables they will have to start saying the first syllable of their name before they start their first clap. The student will say their name using four beats and then the class will repeat the name using the next four beats. Go around the circle keeping the beat until every student has had a chance to say his or her name.
2. Go over the class agreement that was created on the first day and safety rules (have students sit at their carpet spots).
3. Warm up and stretch with the students to get their bodies ready to move (jumping jacks, downward dog, quad stretch, pliés-standing on two feet and bending the knees, and sideways stretch) (students will be in their own personal space).

4. Ask students to look at the lowercase letter “a” and see what kinds of lines they see (curved and straight). Repeat this with the lowercase letter “b” (straight and curved). Next have students look at the alphabet and volunteer to choose a letter and say what lines they see that that letter is made up of. Each time a letter is discussed write it on the board, pointing out the lines, and also have the students air draw the letters with their finger (have students sit at their carpet spots).
5. Have students move back to sitting in a circle at a level zero voice. Ask the students to create the letter “c” with their hands, then their arms, then their legs, and then their whole body. Remind the students to stay in their own space, so no one around them gets hurt. Then have volunteers choose a letter to practice creating with their hands, arms, legs, and then whole body (do 3 to 4 more letters).
6. Introduce different pathways (straight, curved, and zigzag). Use the image of dipping their feet in paint or pretending they are a piece of chalk and that they will use their feet to draw on the ground. Have the students find their own personal space in the room. Remind them that personal space is a place where they are not touching anybody or anything. Using their feet, the students will create a curved, straight, and zigzag pathways (have students move back to their carpet spots).

**Follow-Up/ Summary:**

Turn and Talk

- Students will turn to their partner (shoulder buddy) and share the teaching point.

**Assessment:**

## Freeze game

- Students will spread out in the room in their own personal space (where they are not touching anyone or anything). While the music is playing they will move in a certain pathway that is called out by the teacher. Each time the music stops they will need to freeze in a shape or line that is in place of their choosing. The teacher will assess by watching students during the freeze game to see if they create the correct shape or line with their body. The teacher will help students who are not proficient and may be confused (students will be moving around in their own personal space).

### **Accommodations:**

- Have whiteboards ready to write letters for students who may need it, or flash cards of the letters.
- If a student is not able to participate with their body they can do the activities from a chair

## **Lesson 3**

### **Common Core Standards:**

- M.MC.01.04 Demonstrate selected elements of space awareness movement concepts for pathways (i.e., straight, curved, and zigzag) in isolated settings.
- M.MC.01.05 Demonstrate selected elements of space awareness movement concepts for extensions (i.e., large/small and far/near) in isolated settings.
- M.MC.01.09 Demonstrate selected elements of relationship movement concepts of body parts (i.e., round, narrow, wide, twisted, symmetrical, and nonsymmetrical) in isolated settings.

- DA:Pr5.1.1a. Demonstrate a range of locomotor and non-locomotor movements, body patterning, body shapes, and directionality.
- DA:Cr2.1.1b. Choose movements that express an idea or emotion, or follow a musical phrase.
- DA:Pr5.1.1b. Move safely in general space through a range of activities and group formations while maintaining personal space.
- DA:Pr4.1.1c. Demonstrate movement characteristics along with movement vocabulary (for example, use adverbs and adjectives that apply to movement such as a bouncy leap, a floppy fall, a jolly jump, and joyful spin).

**Objectives:**

The teaching points will be:

I can use my body to make different shapes and letters. (Straight, curved, zigzag)

(M.MC.01.04)

I can make small and large shapes with my body. (M.MC.01.05)

**Time:** 55 min.

**Materials:**

- Alphabet cards
- Music
- Projector/speakers
- Shape pictures
- Jump ropes
- Class agreement

- Notecards with letters of the alphabet that will be needed to make the sight word tool
- iPad

**Anticipatory Set:**

To review from the last lesson have students show different shapes (straight, zigzag, and curved) at different levels (high, medium, and low). Ex: curved shape at middle level, straight shape at a high level, a zigzag shape at low level

**Direct Instruction/Guided Practice:**

1. Students will sit in a circle on the dot rug to play the name game. This game is a way for students to introduce themselves and learn about keeping a beat. Then the students will do a 4/4 timing, with the beats being created by clapping the hands on the legs twice and clapping the hands together twice. When the students clap their hands together is when they will say their name. If their name has one syllable they will use the first clap to say their name. If their name has two syllables they will use both claps to say their name. If their name has three or more syllables they will have to start saying the first syllable of their name before they start their first clap. The student will say their name using four beats and then the class will repeat the name using the next four beats. Go around the circle keeping the beat until every student has had a chance to say his or her name.
2. Go over the class agreement that was created on the first day and safety rules.  
(have students sit at their carpet spot)

3. Stretch with the students to get their bodies ready to move. Downward dog, quad stretch, pliés-standing on two feet and bending your knees, sideways stretch (have students in their own personal space).
4. Movement Story: *The Alphabet Adventures of Little Letter O* by Helen Landalf inspired by an idea by Anne Green Gilbert. Students will find their own personal space (not touching anybody or anything). The teacher will read the story and as the story progresses the students will follow the directives given with teacher support. Students will be at a level 0 voice (students will be moving around the room in their own personal space).
5. Review the different lines the students can make with their bodies. Ask students to show the lines that make up different lowercase letters (have students stay in their own personal space).
6. Show students how to use the jump ropes to create the lower case letters of the alphabet. Then show them how they will lie down on top of the jump ropes to make their letters with their bodies (have students sit in a circle).
7. Split the students up into 6 groups and give them their notecards with the letters they will be creating (the groups will be spread out in designated spots throughout the classroom). Below are the groups:

Group 1

t (3 students)

o (3 students)

v (3 students)

Group 2



i (3 students)

n (3 students)

c (3 students)

### Group 3

h (4 students)

e (4 students)

r (3 students)

### Group 4

u (4 students)

w (4 students)

a (4 students)

### Group 5

m (4 students)

g (4 students)

f (4 students)

### Group 6

s (4 students)

y (4 students)

8. As the students are creating the letters with the jump ropes and then their bodies, the teacher will be walking around and assisting and also taking pictures of the students from a bird's eye view with an iPad. This will be done by standing safely on a chair or desk. The teacher will need to remind students that they may not do this, because of safety reasons, and only the teacher or other adults can stand on the furniture.

## **Follow-Up/ Summary:**

### Turn and Talk

- Students will turn to their partner (shoulder buddy) and share the teaching point.

## **Assessment:**

### Freeze game

- Students will spread out in the room in their own personal space (where they are not touching anyone or anything). While the music is playing they will move in a certain pathway that is called out by the teacher. Each time the music stops they will need to freeze in a shape or line that is in place of their choosing. The teacher will assess by watching students during the freeze game to see if they create the correct shape or line with their body. The teacher will help students who are not proficient and may be confused.

## **Accommodations:**

- Have whiteboards ready to write letters for students who may need it, or flash cards of the letters.
- If a student is not able to participate with their body they can do the activities from a chair.

## **Lesson 4**

### **Common Core Standards:**

- M.MC.01.04 Demonstrate selected elements of space awareness movement concepts for pathways (i.e., straight, curved, and zigzag) in isolated settings.
- M.MC.01.05 Demonstrate selected elements of space awareness movement concepts for extensions (i.e., large/small and far/near) in isolated settings.

- M.MC.01.09 Demonstrate selected elements of relationship movement concepts of body parts (i.e., round, narrow, wide, twisted, symmetrical, and nonsymmetrical) in isolated settings.
- DA:Pr5.1.1a. Demonstrate a range of locomotor and non-locomotor movements, body patterning, body shapes, and directionality.
- DA:Cr2.1.1b. Choose movements that express an idea or emotion, or follow a musical phrase.
- DA:Pr4.1.1c. Demonstrate movement characteristics along with movement vocabulary (for example, use adverbs and adjectives that apply to movement such as a bouncy leap, a floppy fall, a jolly jump, and joyful spin).
- DA:Pr5.1.1b. Move safely in general space through a range of activities and group formations while maintaining personal space.

**Objectives:**

The teaching points will be:

I can use my body to make different shapes. (Straight, curved, zigzag) (M.MC.01.04)

I can make small and large shapes with my body. (M.MC.01.05)

**Time:** 55 min.

**Materials:**

- Alphabet cards
- Music
- Projector/speakers
- Shape pictures
- Jump ropes

- Class agreement
- iPad

### **Anticipatory Set:**

To review from the last lesson have students show different shapes (straight, zigzag, and curved) at different levels (high, medium, and low). Ex: curved shape at middle level, straight shape at a high level, a zigzag shape at low level

### **Direct Instruction/Guided Practice:**

1. Students will sit in a circle on the dot rug to play the name game. This game is a way for students to introduce themselves and learn about keeping a beat. Then the students will do a 4/4 timing, with the beats being created by clapping the hands on the legs twice and clapping the hands together twice. When the students clap their hands together is when they will say their name. If their name has one syllable they will use the first clap to say their name. If their name has two syllables they will use both claps to say their name. If their name has three or more syllables they will have to start saying the first syllable of their name before they start their first clap. The student will say their name using four beats and then the class will repeat the name using the next four beats. Go around the circle keeping the beat until every student has had a chance to say his or her name.
2. Go over the class agreement that was created on the first day and safety rules (have students sit at their carpet spot).
3. Stretch with the students to get their bodies ready to move. Downward dog, quad stretch, pliés-standing on two feet and bending your knees, sideways stretch.

4. Movement Story: *The Alphabet Adventures of Little Letter O* by Helen Landalf inspired by an idea by Anne Green Gilbert. Students will find their own personal space (not touching anybody or anything). The teacher will read the story and as the story progresses the students will follow the directives given with teacher support. Students will be at a level 0 voice.
5. Review the different lines we can make with our bodies. Ask students to show the lines that make up different lowercase letters.
6. Show students the Educreations app and how to navigate it. Explain to the students that they will be using the pictures that we took last time of their alphabet letters to practice their Red Words in the app.

The steps to use the Educreations app:

1. Find or search for the app and open it.
2. Click on the + sign in the top left corner to open a new page.
3. Think of/pick a Red Word to practice.
4. Once the new page is opened, click on the + sign and the picture of the photograph in the top right corner to add a photo.
5. Click on the "Red Words" album (the teacher will have already created the "Red Words" album in the iCloud prior to this lesson).
6. Choose the picture of the letter that is needed.
7. Once the picture appears on the blank page, pinch it and drag it to make it the right size and make room for the other letters in the word.

8. Repeat steps 3-6 until all of the letters needed for the Red Word are on the page.
9. Once the word is spelled out on the new page, then click on the pencil icon and choose a color to use.
10. Click the red microphone button at the top left to record.
11. While tracing over the letters to spell the word, also say the letters out loud and then say what the word says while underlining the word. For example, the student would say, “give, g-i-v-e spells give.”
12. Press the pause icon to stop recording.
13. Then the page needs to be saved. Click on the icon that looks like a paper with the arrow pointing to the side and click on “Save Finished Video.”
14. A page will pop up asking for a lesson title and some other options. Save the page as the name of the word. For the example used above, the page would be saved as “give.”
15. After the page has been saved, click on it and it can be played at this time.
16. Once the recording has been played, click the “Done” icon in the top right corner to go back to the opening page to create a new word.

### **Follow-Up/ Summary:**

Turn and Talk

- Students will turn to their partner (shoulder buddy) and share the teaching point.
- Show the students all of the pictures that have been taken of their bodies.

**Assessment:**

Freeze game

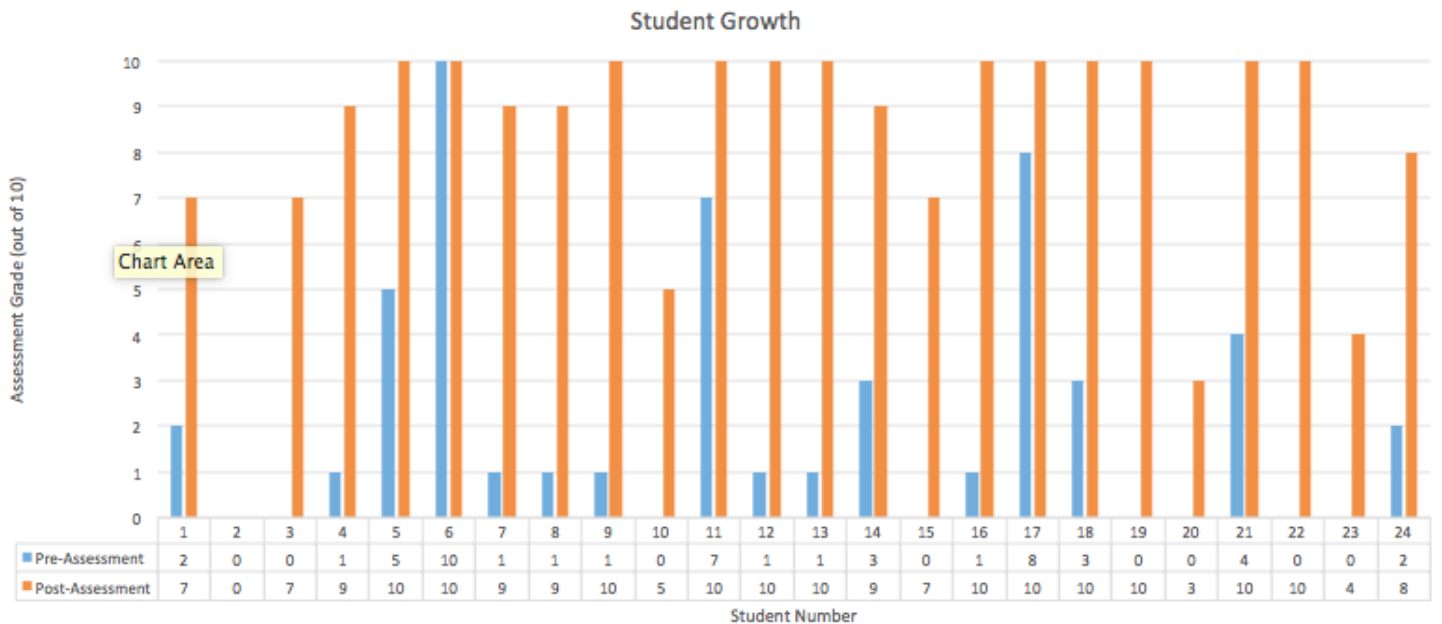
- Let the students know that they will be working with partners for the freeze game. Remind them that they need to be gentle and respectful of their partner. They will be traveling in different pathways with their partner while the music plays and creating the shapes with their partner when the music stops and they freeze
- Students will spread out in the room in their own personal space with their partner (where they are not touching anyone or anything). While the music is playing they will move in a certain pathway with their partner that is called out by the teacher. Each time the music stops they will need to freeze in a shape or line with their partner that is in place of their choosing. Teacher will assess by watching students during the freeze game to see if they create the correct shape or line with their body. The teacher will help students who are not proficient and may be confused.

**Accommodations:**

- Have whiteboards ready to write letters for students who may need it, or flash cards of the letters.
- If a student is not able to participate with their body they can do the activities from a chair.

## Results and Data Analysis

Below are the graphs and pie charts showing student growth after I taught the four movement lessons. The students were assessed on the last ten words that they need to know by the end of the school year.



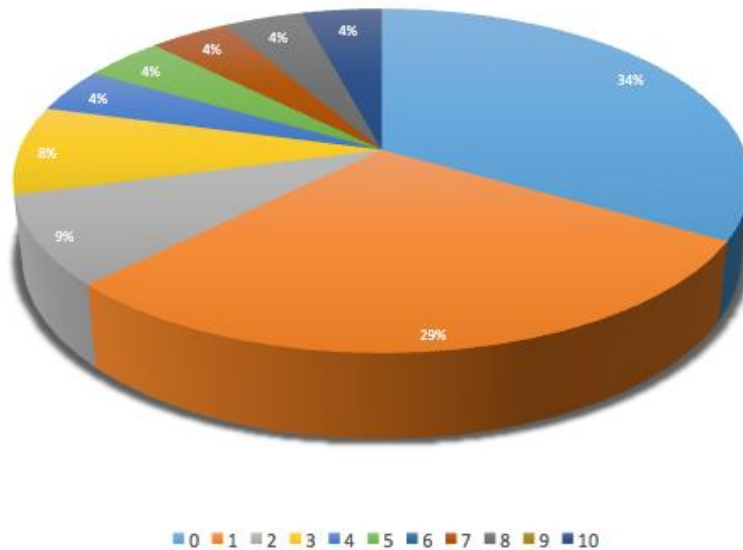
The bar graph shows each student's pre-assessment (blue) score and his or her post-assessment (orange) score on a scale of zero to ten. If there is no bar for the pre-assessment, post-assessment, or both it means the student received a zero. The graph shows that every student but one increased their score. Some students already had a ten out of ten and received the same score when taking the post-assessment. Others went from having a score of zero to knowing all of the sight words, receiving a ten out of ten. The rest of the students exhibited growth somewhere between this range.

The pie charts show the percentage of how many students received a score from zero to ten on their pre-assessment and post-assessment. The first chart, the pre-



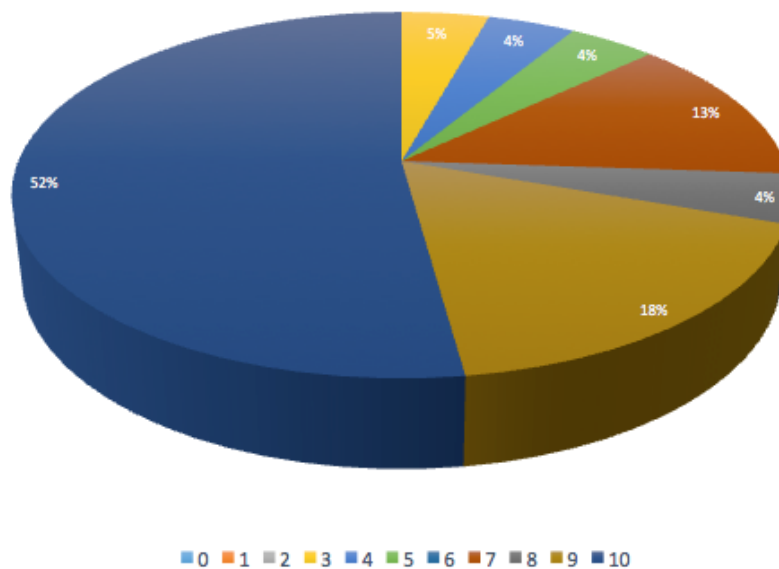
assessment, shows that 63% of the students had earned a zero or one. This means that they had spelled none or only one of the sight words correctly.

**Pre-Assessment Scores by Percentage**



The second chart, the post-assessment, shows the growth that occurred, in that 70% of the students earned a nine or ten. This means they spelled nine or ten of the sight words correctly.

**Post-Assessment Scores by Percentage**



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