

Lessons Learned from Research on Adolescents with Disabilities

The slide features several decorative circles. There are two solid light blue circles in the lower-left quadrant. In the upper-right quadrant, there are two overlapping circles: one is a solid light blue circle, and the other is a white circle with a light blue outline. The title text is overlaid on these circles.

Don Deshler

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Historical Highlights



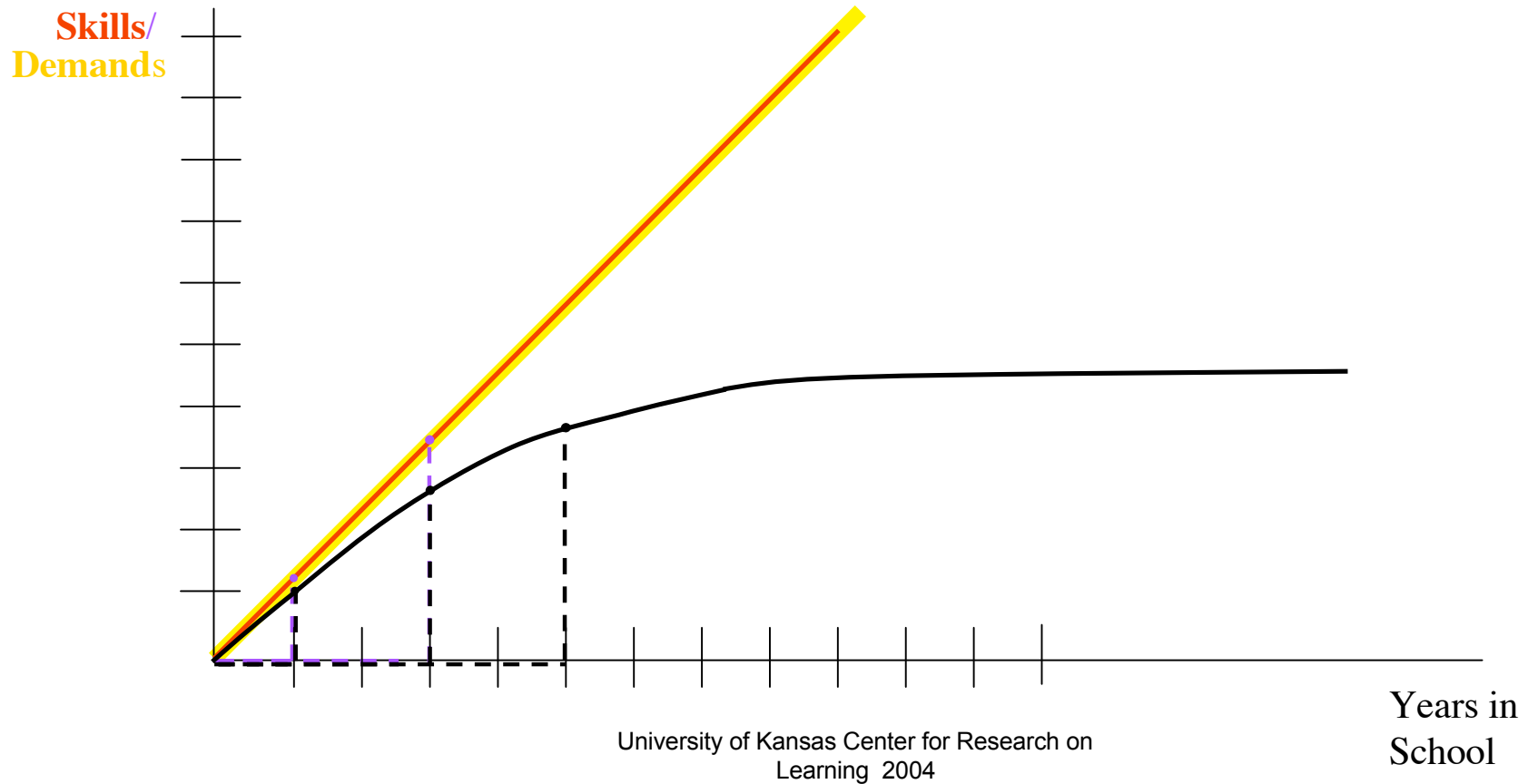
- Let's get to them early -- we'll "fix" the problem
- Child Service Demonstration Centers
- Institutes for Research in Learning Disabilities
- Target issues in late 1980s-much of 1990s
- Impact of "access to general education curriculum"
- Recent attention to adolescent literacy



Lessons Learned (Learners)

- Acquisition of basic skills/strategies plateaus at 5-6th grade level
- Less fluent readers with much smaller sight vocabularies
- Understanding of word and multiple word meanings is limited
- Limited background and conceptual knowledge
- Less skillful in using strategies that enhance understanding and remembering of oral and written language
- Disconnected from fabric of school...sense of hopelessness

The Performance Gap





Lessons Learned (Learners)

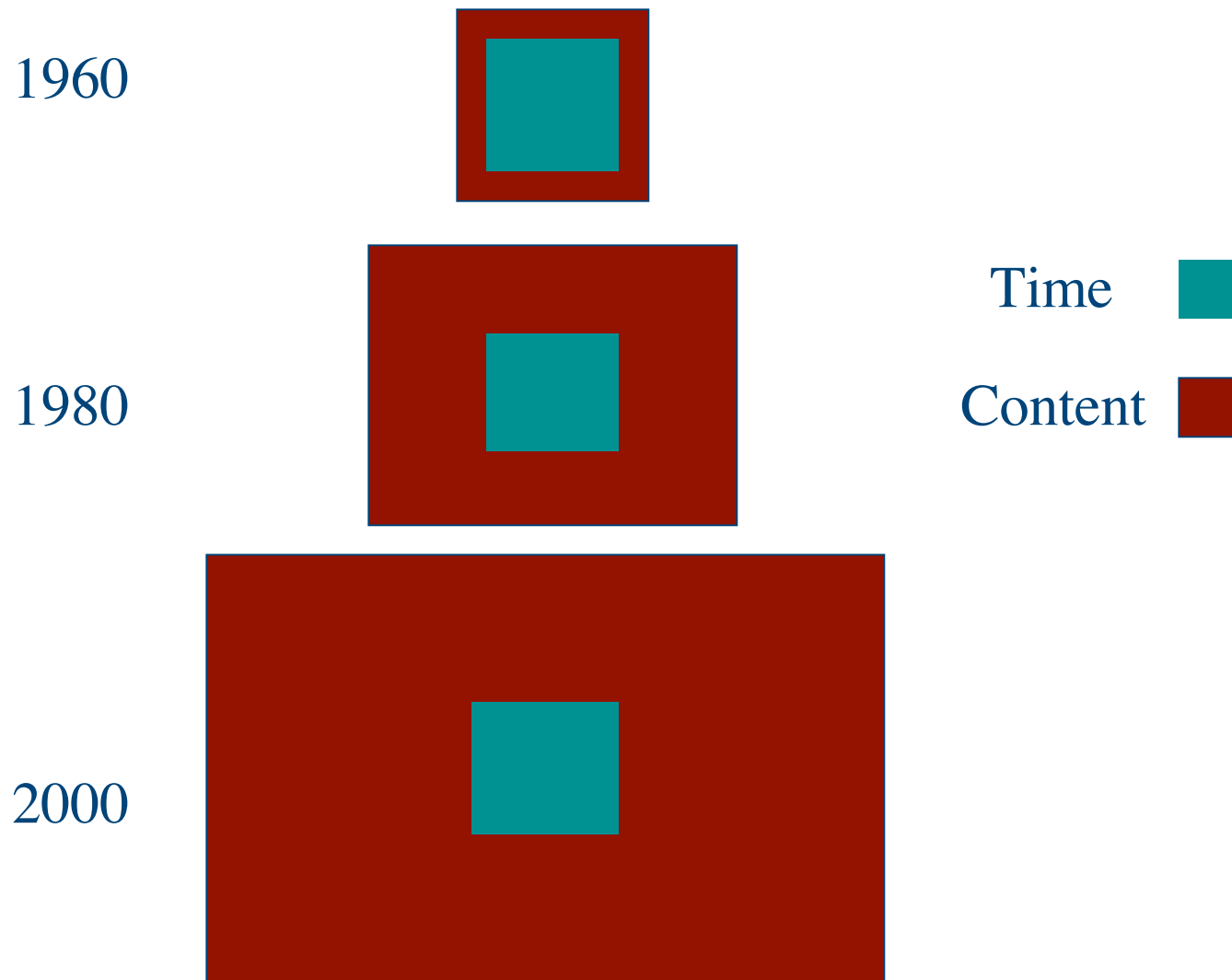
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Lessons Learned (Curriculum demands)

- Curriculum demands are becoming more rigorous in light of raised assessment standards (+ more content, more diversity)
- Must master 1000s of sight words to read text fluently
- Must develop understanding of many new words
- Must expand knowledge of world & how it works
- Must develop and refine thinking skills
- Must expand repertoire of strategies for coping with complex secondary texts & varying text structures

Information Explosion/ Instructional Time Dilemma



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Lessons Learned (Settings/Conditions)

- Large numbers of SWDs are not included in rigorous GE classes
- GE teachers don't have a clear understanding how many (and who) SWDs are in their classes and attribute their failure to poor attitudes and poor skills (not ineffective instruction)
- Instructional practices in GE do not reflect what is known about best practice for SWDs
- Mechanisms for improving learning processes are “disappearing” or are used ineffectively

Course Options

SWDs

Type A
Courses taught by
SPED teachers for
SPED students

Type B
Courses for low
achievers and
at-risk students

Type C
Rigorous courses
with heterogeneous
groups of students

Type D
Advanced Placement
courses

Type E
Other courses
(e.g., vo tech electives)

Taught
by general
education
teachers

Rigorous general education enrollments for students with disabilities

Rigorous general education enrollments for students with disabilities.

	<u>Rural Schools</u>			<u>Suburban Schools</u>			<u>Urban Schools</u>		
	1R	2R	3R	1S	2S	3S	1U	2U	3U
Total number of special education students	48	14	50	62	76	67	89	180	219
Total possible core class enrollments ¹	192	56	200	248	304	268	356	720	876
Actual number of rigorous general education enrollments	15	49	6	35	304	67	4	166	36
Estimated number of students with disabilities by general education teachers	55	24	N/A ²	24	17	21	13	51	N/A

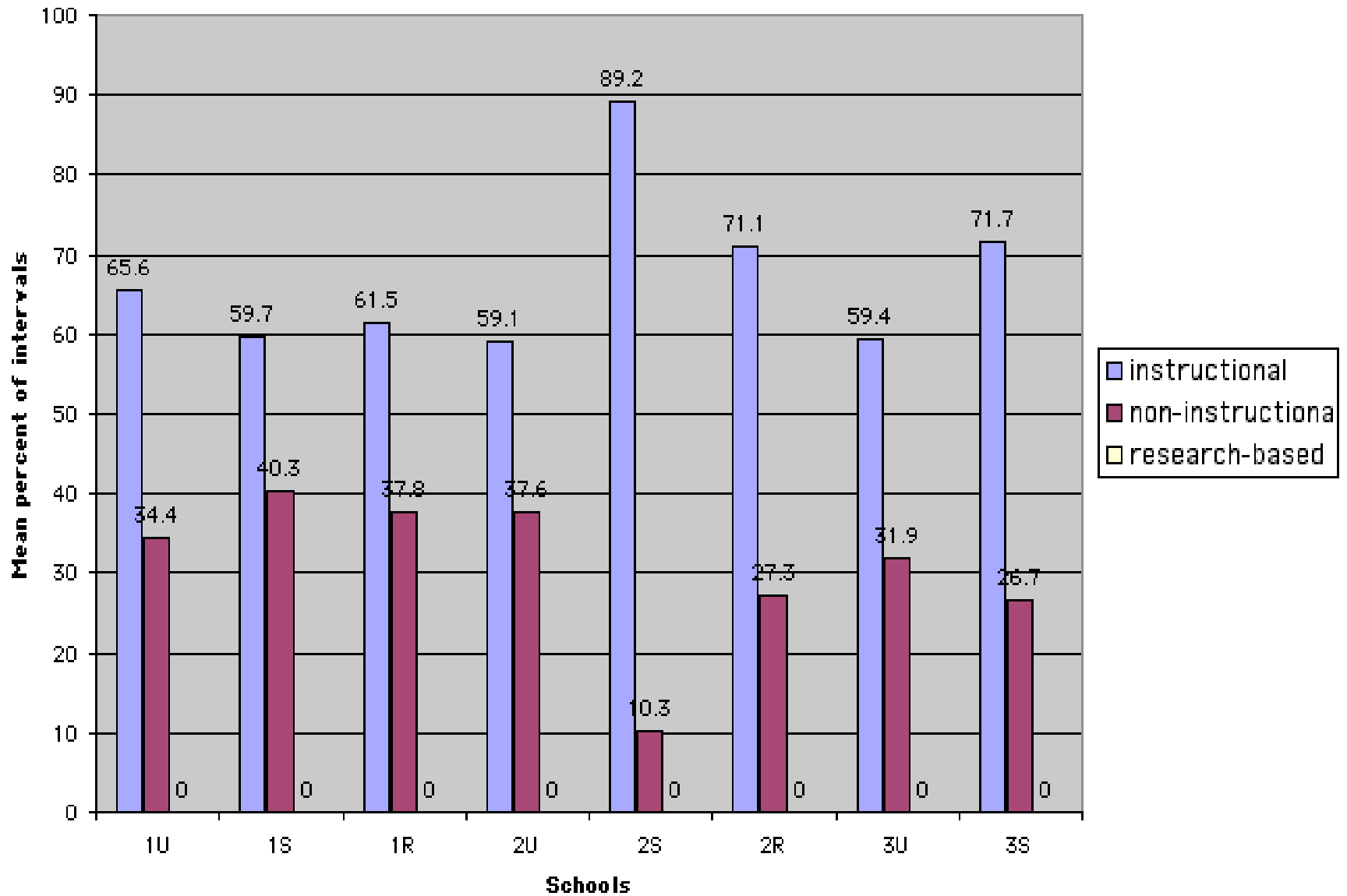
¹ This number reflects the number of enrollments possible if every student with a disability were enrolled in a rigorous general education class each class period of the day

² N/A=not available.

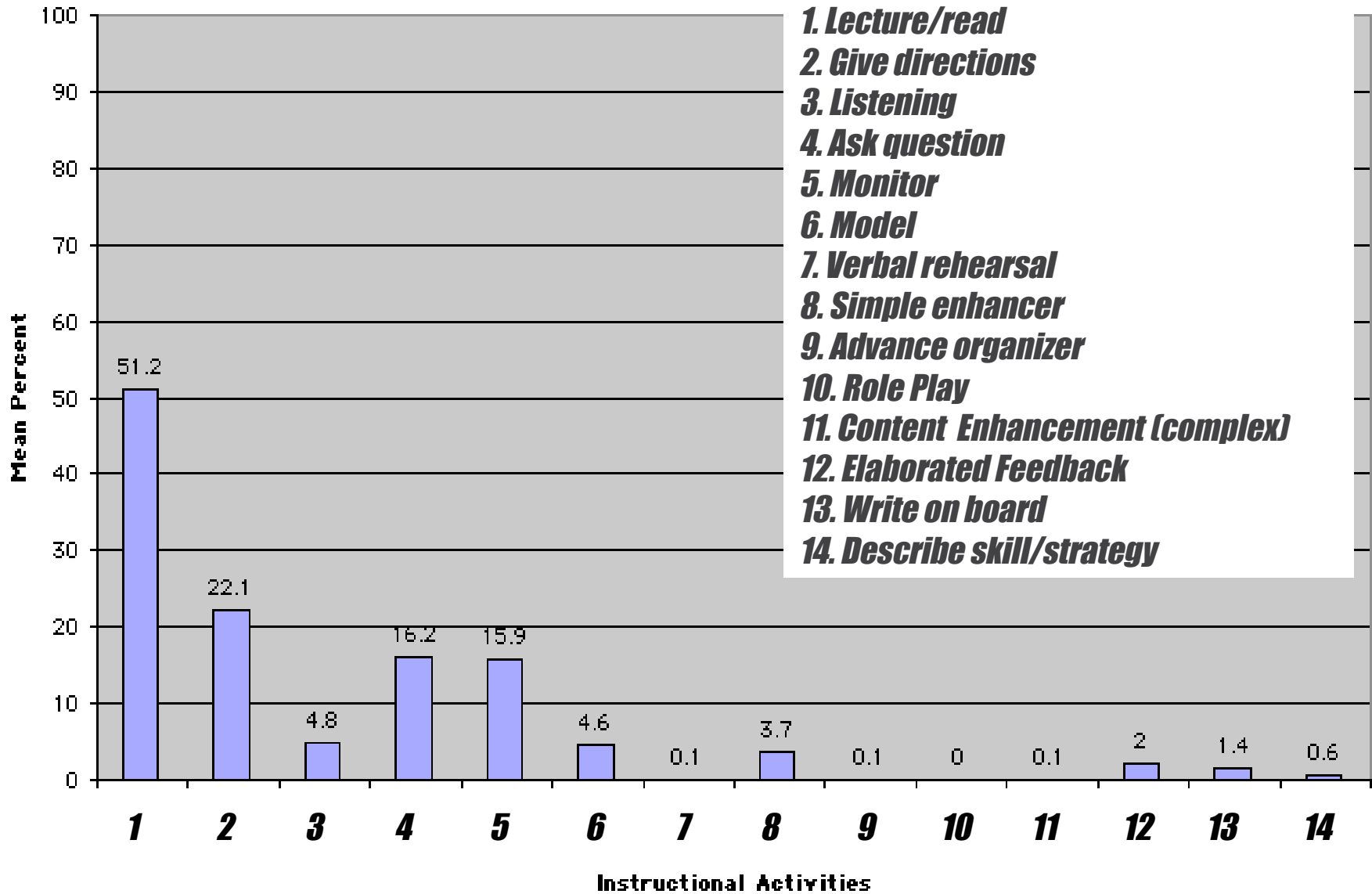
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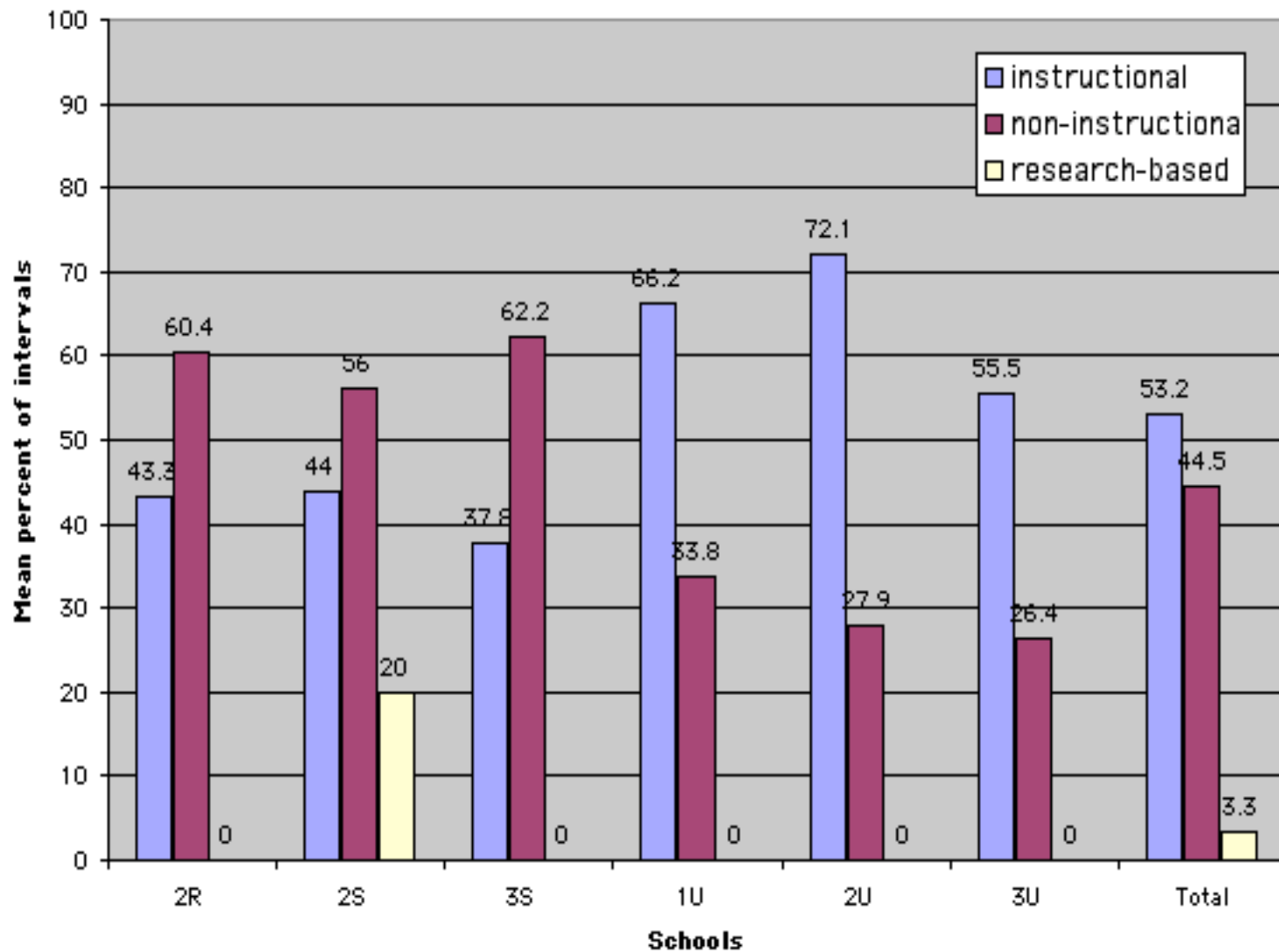
General Education Teacher Observation Interval Type



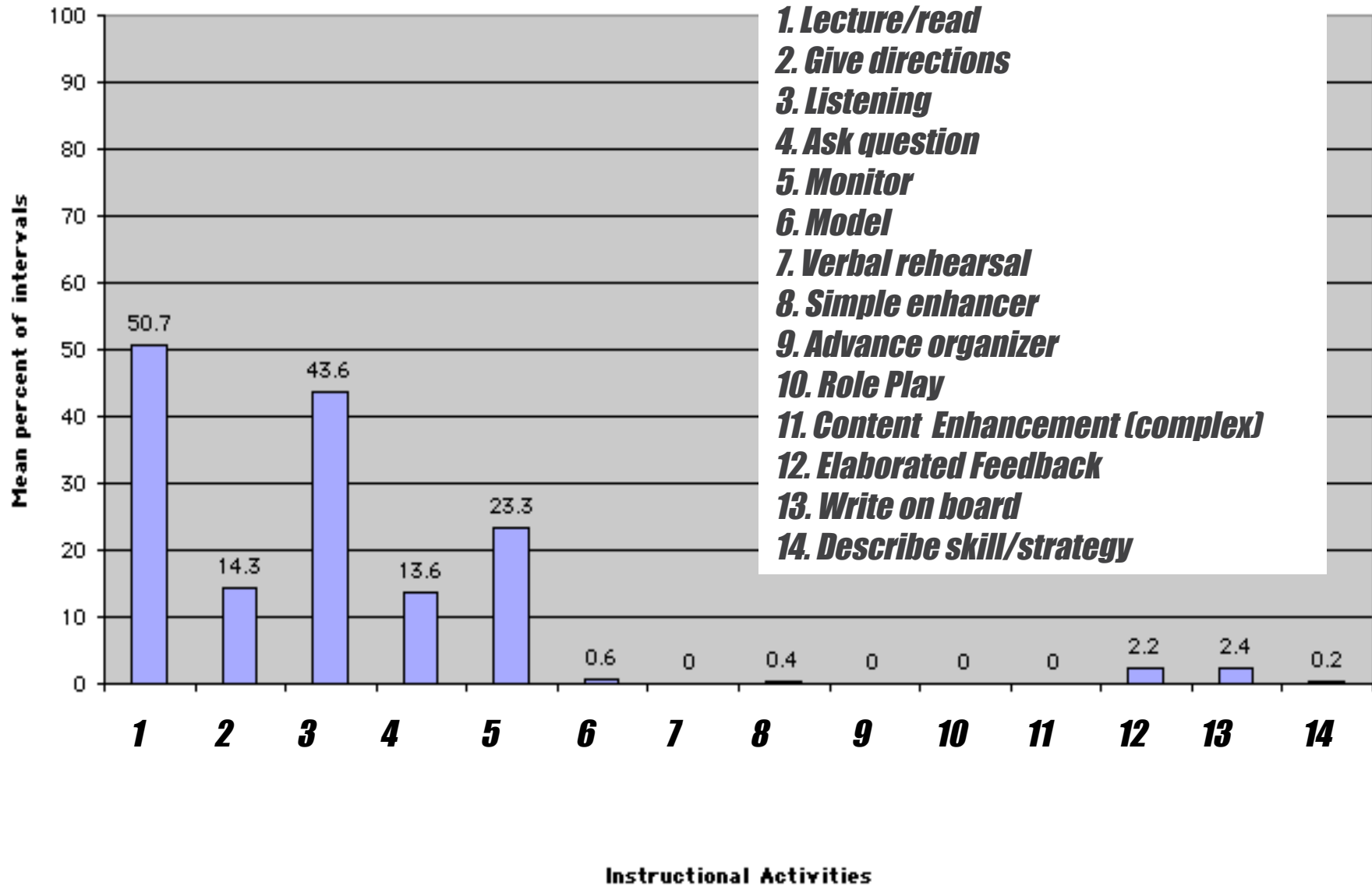
General Education Teacher Observation



Mean percentage of intervals special education teachers were observed in various activities for each school.



Special Education Teacher Observations



Lessons Learned (Interventions)



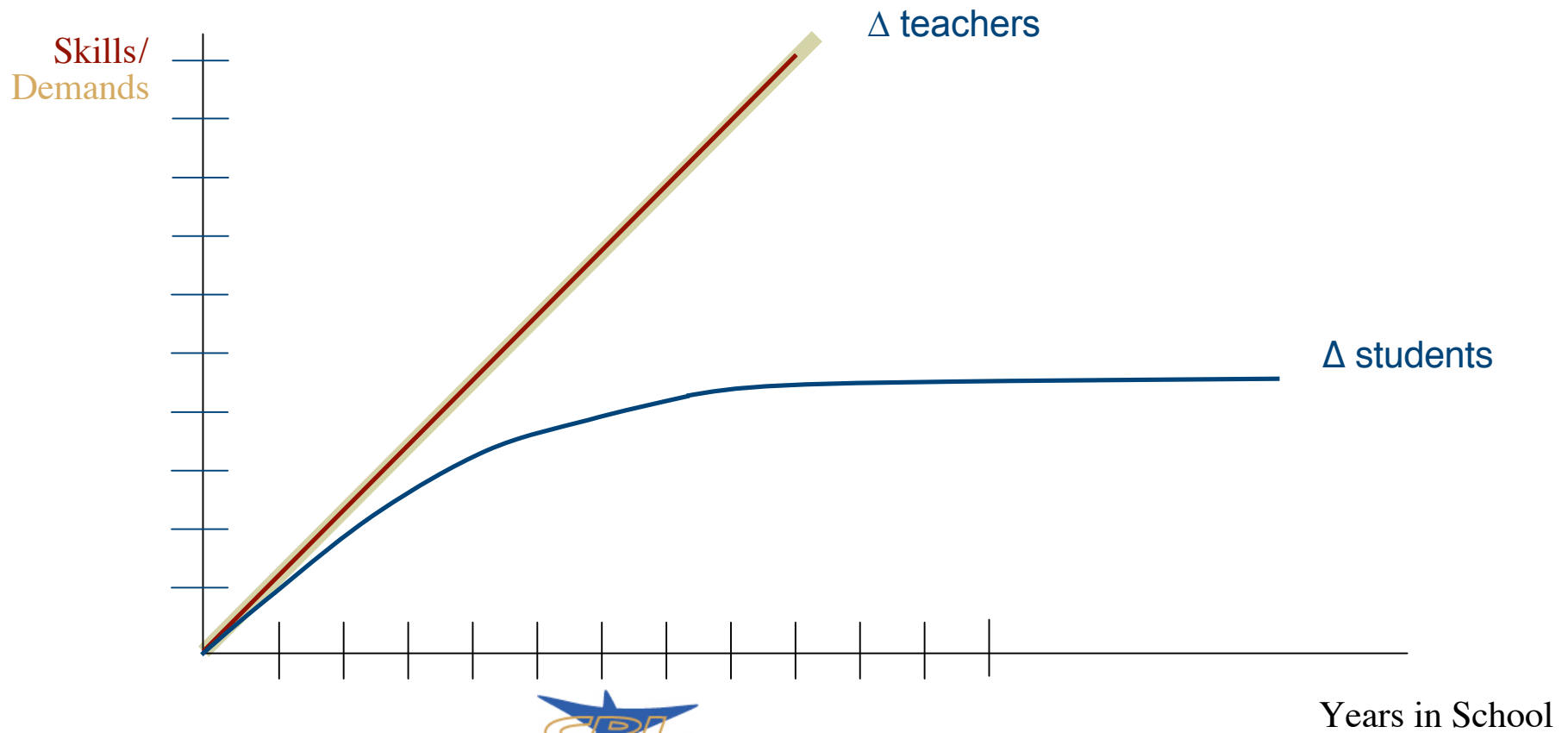
- SWDs can master and apply well designed learning strategies to apply to grade-level curriculum demands through systematic, intensive, explicit instruction
- SWDs can effectively learn rigorous subject matter content when general education teachers select, enhance, and explicitly teach critical content in a partnership with students
- Using multiple interventions across multiple teachers using varying amounts of intensity improves content literacy outcomes for SWDs
- Ongoing communications between GE teachers and SWDS through journaling can enhance individualization and a sense of being known by SWDs



Lessons Learned (Interventions)

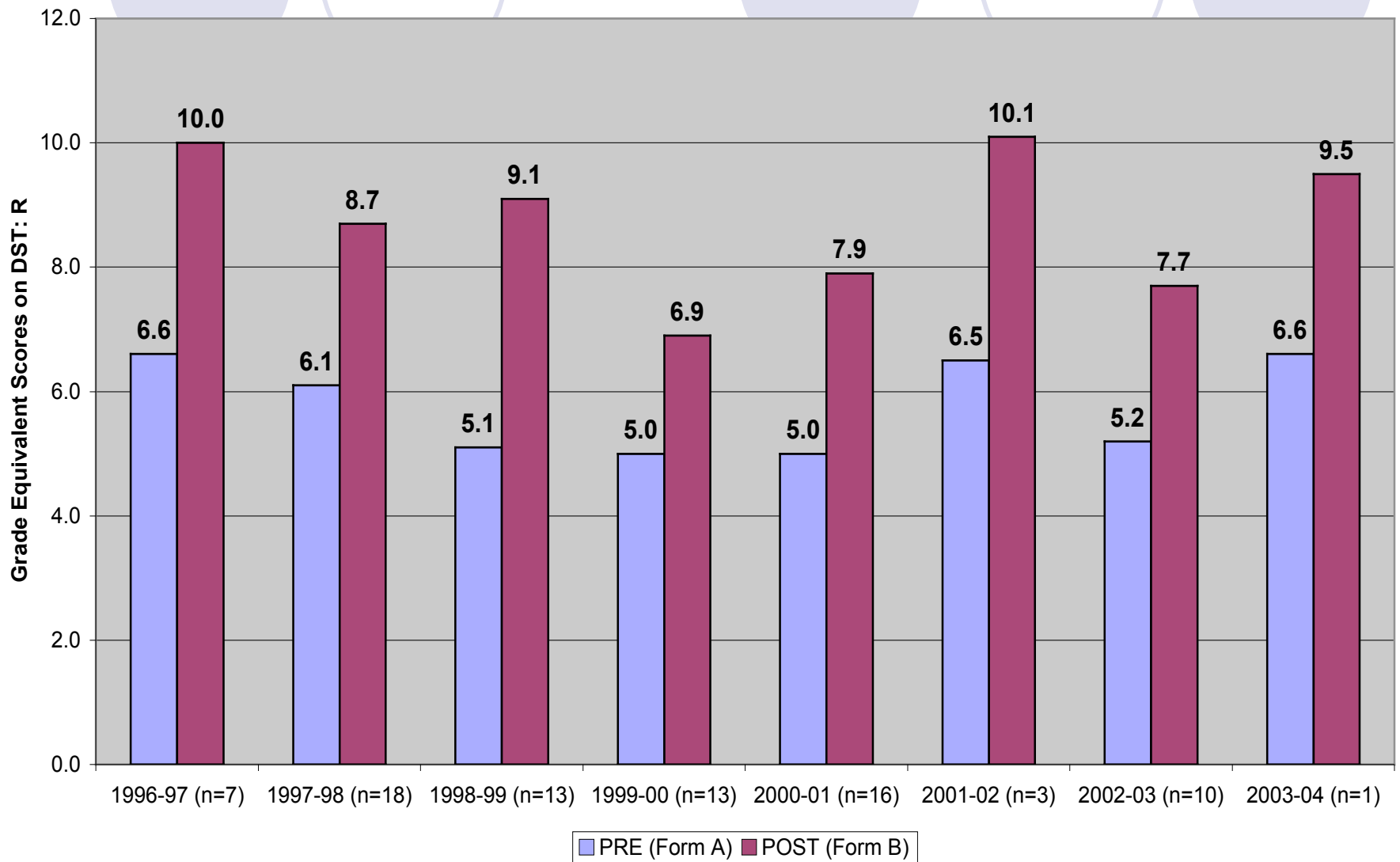
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LD Subgroups in Word Identification Intervention at Muskegon High School LONGITUDINAL DATA



Systematic, Explicit Intensive Instruction

LEVEL 1

- Cue
- Do
- Review

LEVEL 2

- *“I do it!” (Learn by watching)*
- *“We do it!” (Learn by sharing)*
- *“You do it! (Learn by practicing)*

LEVEL 3

- Pretest
- Describe
 - Commitment (student & teacher)
 - Goals
 - High expectations
- Model
- Practice and quality feedback
 - Controlled and advanced
- Posttest & reflect
- Generalize, transfer, apply



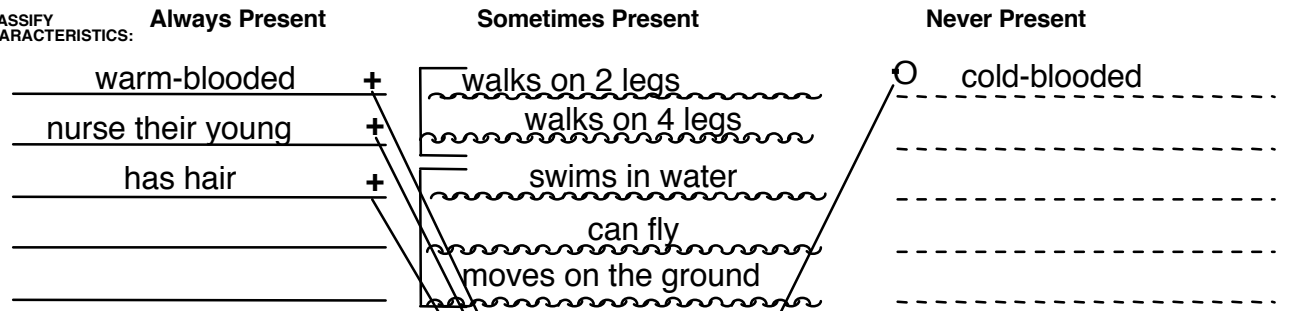
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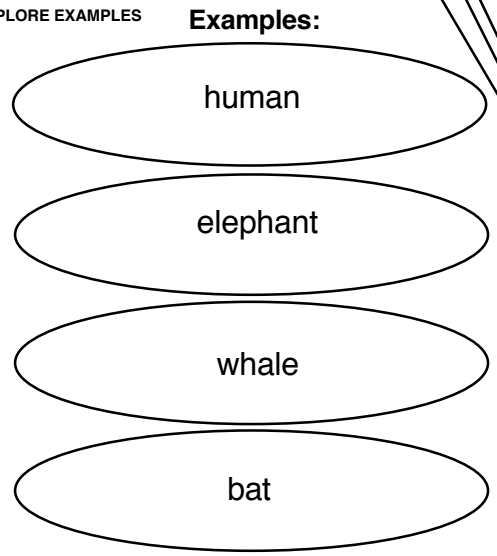
CONCEPT DIAGRAM

- ③ Key Words
- elephant
 - human
 - warm-blooded
 - nurse their young
 - whale
 - bird
 - shark
 - walks on 4 legs
 - can fly
 - cold-blooded

- ① CONVEY CONCEPT
 ② OFFER OVERALL CONCEPT
 ③ NOTE KEY WORDS
 ④ CLASSIFY CHARACTERISTICS:



- ⑤ EXPLORE EXAMPLES



Nonexamples:

- snake
- alligator
- shark
- bird

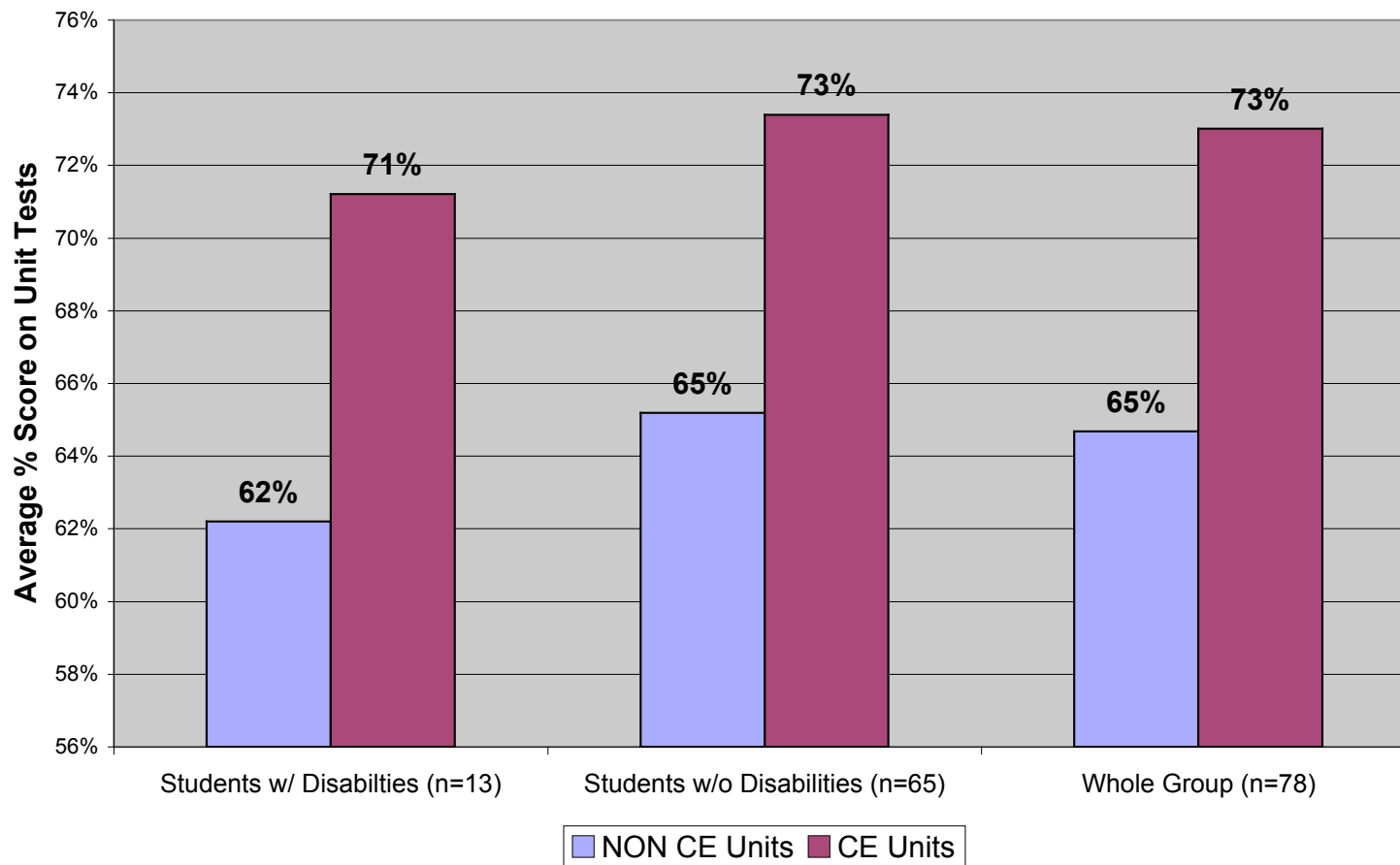
duckbill platypus

- ⑥ PRACTICE WITH NEW EXAMPLE

- ⑦ TIE DOWN A DEFINITION

A mammal is a warm-blooded vertebrate that has hair and nurses its young.

9th Grade Physical Science (n=78)





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Lessons Learned (Professional Development)

- Opportunities to see models, engage in practice activities, receive feedback and on-going instructional coaching (through teacher learning teams and in-class coaching) enhances the quantity and quality of implementation of innovations
- Interviewing teachers & administrators prior to professional development can be a powerful strategy for tailoring instruction to respond to teacher and site needs

Effectiveness of Staff Development Activities

	Knowledge	Skill Acquisition	Classroom Application
Present Information	40-80%	10%	5%
Present + Model	80-85%	10-40%	5-10%
Present + Model + Practice + Feedback	80-85%	80%	10-15%
Present + Model + Practice + Feedback + Coaching	90%	90%	80-90%

National Staff Development Council, 1995; Fullan, 1991; Joyce & Showers, 1988; Mehring, 1999.



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Lessons Learned (School Change)

- Instituting school-wide changes that benefit SWDs can best be accomplished within a framework that changes instructional practices for *all* students.
- The framework for driving school change for improving literacy outcomes should define specific roles for each staff member and provide varying levels of instructional intensity
- Secondary school change for improving literacy outcomes can be facilitated by mechanisms that enable staff to make data-based decisions relative to their instructional practices
- The amount of time required to achieve improved outcome goals can be condensed
- Both instructional and structural factors should be considered to optimize outcomes for struggling adolescent learners



A Continuum of Literacy Instruction

- Level 1:** **Enhance content instruction** (mastery of critical content for *all* regardless of literacy levels)
- Level 2:** **Embedded strategy instruction** (routinely weave strategies within *and* across classes using large group instructional methods)
- Level 3:** **Intensive strategy instruction** (mastery of specific strategies using intensive-explicit instructional sequences)
- Level 4:** **Intensive basic skill instruction** (mastery of entry level literacy skills at the 4th grade level)
- Level 5:** **Therapeutic intervention** (mastery of language underpinnings of curriculum content and learning strategies)
- Tutoring:** **Strategic Tutoring** (extending instructional time through before or after school tutoring)



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Improving Outcomes for Struggling Adolescent Learners

Instructional Core
(Quality teaching)

+

Infrastructure Support
(administrative leadership)

=

Improved Outcomes

- Motivation/Behavior supports
- Engaging/Diverse materials
- Continuum of literacy instruction
- Intense-Explicit instruction
- Formative/Summative assessments

+

- Professional development
- Teacher materials/resources
- Instructional coherence
- Extended time

=

- Learning Proficiency
- Improved attendance
- Persistence in school
- Challenging courses
- Graduation



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