



**Early Literacy and Oral Language: Using Talk, Play, and Storytelling to
Close Language Gaps**

Medina City Schools

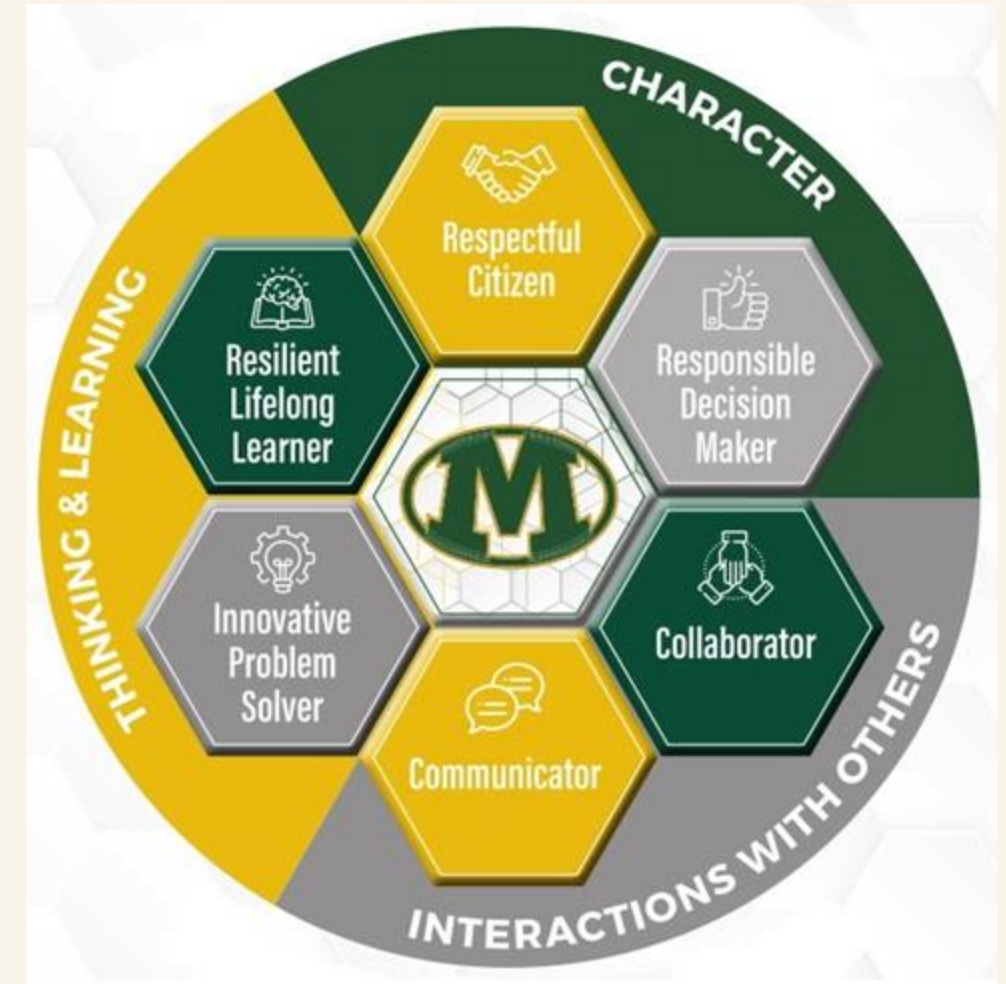
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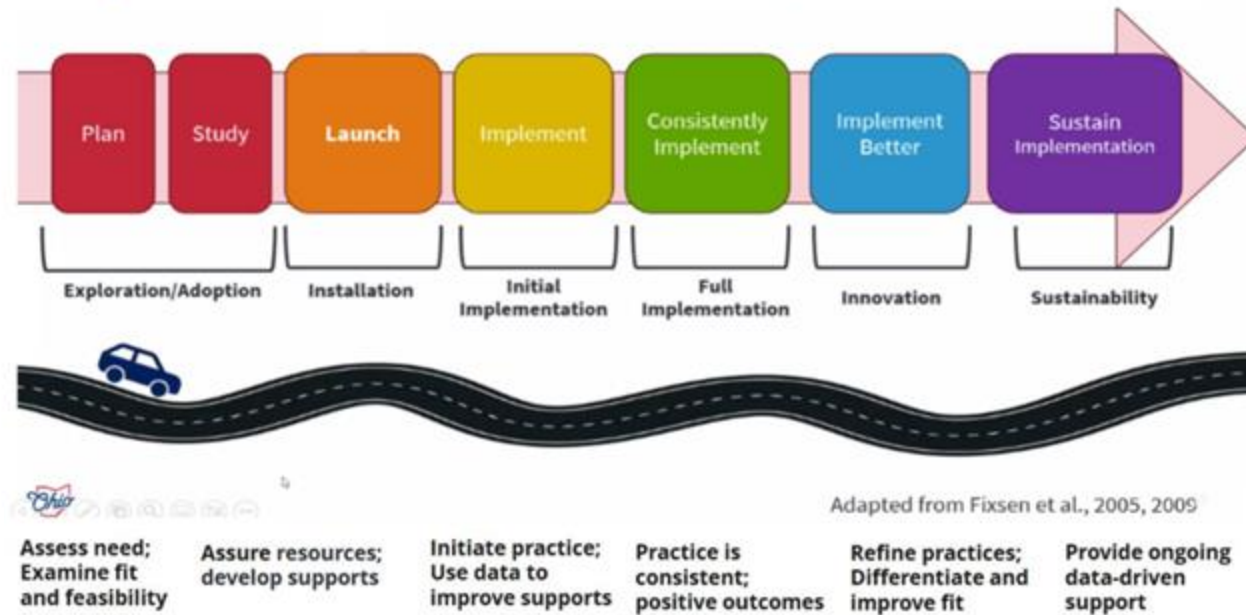
Medina City Schools is a suburban district covering approximately 52 square miles, including the City of Medina, Medina Township, Montville Township, and a portion of Lafayette Township, and is home to a diverse population of over 6,000 students. Our PK-12 school system includes a preschool center, five elementary buildings, two middle schools, one high school, and an alternative school.



Medina City Schools Journey into Science of Reading

Implementation Stages to IMTSS

Implementation is a *Process*, Not an Event



Key Steps for Success

Investment in professional development at all levels and targeted plan developed every year

Aligned practices across tiers to ensure continuity within the systems of support

Data guided all decision to maximize student progress

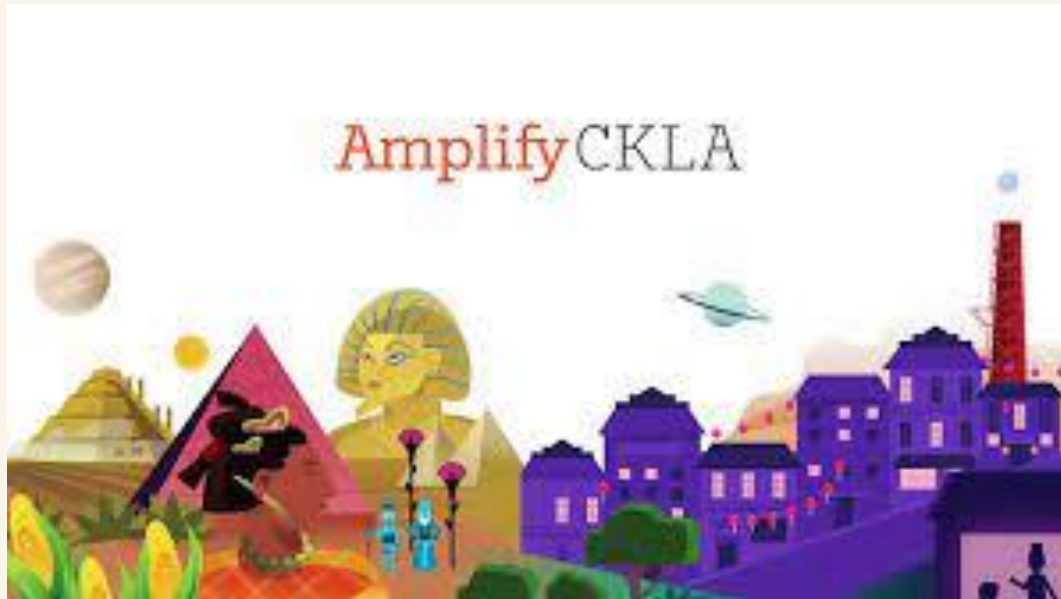
Clear core instructional scope and sequence across all grade levels

We stayed the course to bring our vision forward



Medina City Schools' K-5 ELA Curriculum (2024)

Amplify CKLA

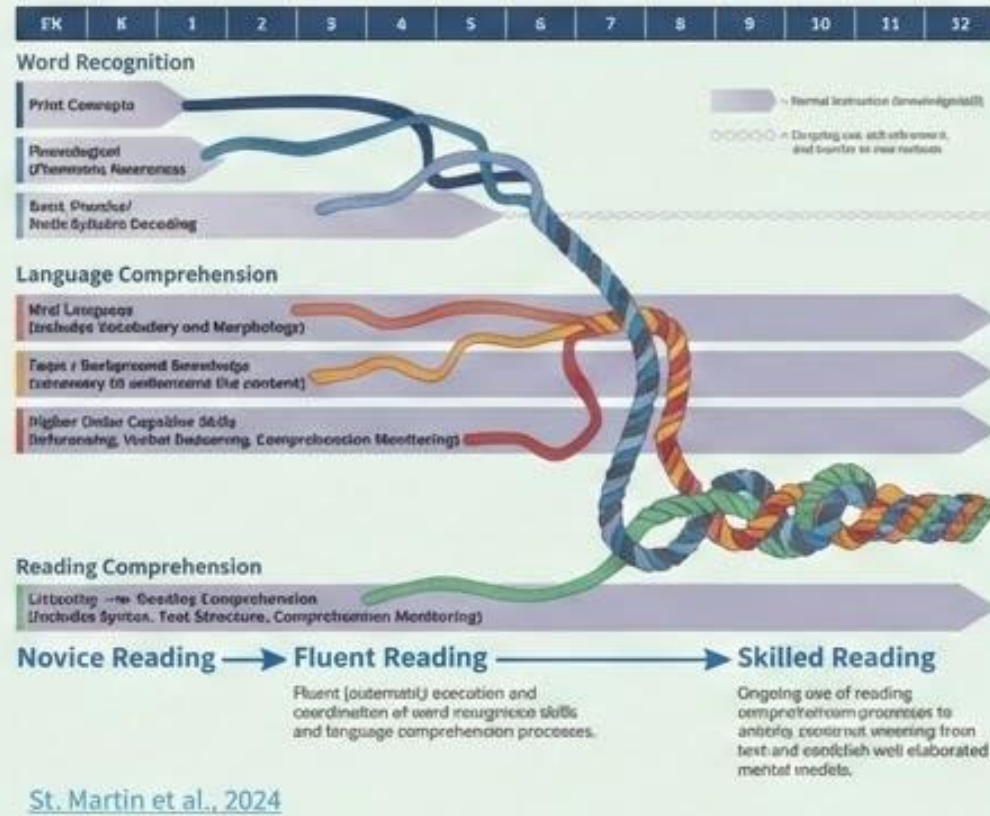


Heggerty (K-1)



Priority for 2025–2026 School Year

LEARNING PROGRESSION FOR DEVELOPING SKILLED READERS



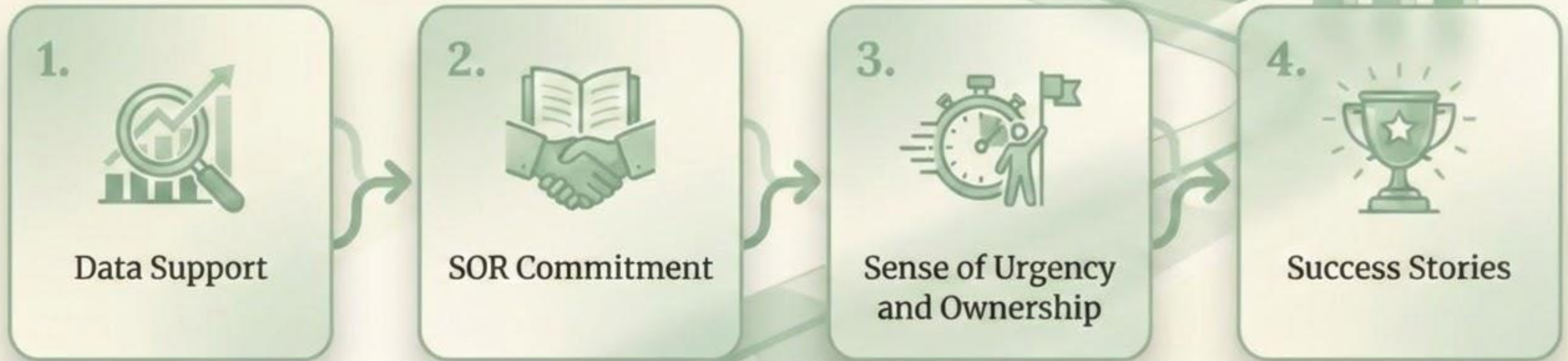
Understanding the importance of oral language development



Maximize the read aloud structures within our district curriculum



Building Journey



Understanding Our Current Classes

Enrollment Profile



This group of students have experienced unique circumstances during critical early language development years.

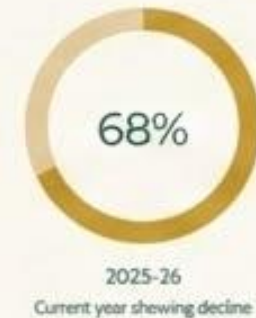
- a. disrupted social interactions
- b. varied early learning environments



Speech screener showed significant challenges with language concepts and indicated a significant need for remediation. *In addition to this we had several new EL students with very little English proficiency.

82%
Preschool Attendance

2019-2020
Current kindergarten class was born during the pandemic



Our District's Speech Screener

8 categories



Concepts (same/different , biggest, NOT a , another word for..., opposite of)



Divergent / convergent naming
(Receptive/Expressive)



Prepositions



Sentence Repetition



Following Directions (point to the, up to 3 items)



WH questions from a short story



WH questions



Sentence Formulation from detailed pictures



Why Language Concepts Are Important?

Foundational Language Skills are critical building blocks for future academic success.

These include:

-  Vocabulary
-  Sentence structure and formulation
-  Comprehension and answering WH questions
-  Verbal expression

Gaps in these language skills affect students ability to:

-  follow multi-step directions
-  express their needs clearly
-  engage fully in classroom activities

Without targeted intervention these language deficits can cascade into:

-  reading difficulties
-  social challenges
-  academic struggles throughout school



Essential Language Strategies We Implemented:



Rich Conversations

We engaged students in meaningful dialogue throughout the day. Modeled asking and answering questions daily in a morning meeting setting. Eventually a shift of teacher led questions became student led questions.



Interactive Read-Alouds

Whole class engaging texts were read with opportunities for prediction, discussion, and vocabulary exploration that was then focused on each classrooms individual needs.



Purposeful Play

Rich play environments were created so children could practice language in authentic contexts, from stores to farming scenarios.



● Essential Language Strategies We Implemented

We want to HIGHLIGHT two of our strategies where there was the greatest growth



Deeper Learning Project focused on literacy & language building

Students built their speaking fluency and comprehension skills as they created engaging productions of their favorite stories.



Reading Intervention teachers pulled students to work on targeted skills

Specific students were identifying as needing more intensive small group work. This was done during WIN time. Collaborative efforts were made between the schools SLP and Reading Intervention teachers to learn how to implement specific language lessons to these students.

Made with Gamma



A Deeper Learning Project

Stories Come Alive

Step 1:

- As part of the Deeper Learning Design Guide
- we launched our project with the Medina
- County District Library posing a problem.



We wanted to build background knowledge so our 5th grade students acted out some of our CKLA nursery rhymes and fable stories.



A Deeper Learning Project

Stories Come Alive

- **Step 2:** Students had to discuss and share their ideas on how to solve the library's problem and how they could make stories come alive.
- They began retelling the many stories they were hearing in CKLA's unit 1 Knowledge - Nursery Rhymes and Fables.
- **How it guided language support:**
- Students were repeatedly using language skills to retell stories.



A Deeper Learning Project

Stories Come Alive

Step 3: Students were given voice and choice in :

- How they wanted to make their story come alive (Ideas generated in discussion included puppets, acting out, and game boards)
- Which story they wanted to present.

How it guided language support:

students were able to fully engage with language in these activities, follow multi-step directions while it promoted the use of vocabulary, sentence formulation and structure.



A Deeper Learning Project

Stories Come Alive

- **Step 4:** As the students began working in groups, they collaborated and communicated with each other.
- Their projects were **more than** just a “dessert” at the end of the unit, but rather one which they worked on and revisited throughout instruction.

How it guided language support:

- Provided feedback to one another's work
- Expanded their sentences and vocabulary with each retell the students gave



A Deeper Learning Project

Stories Come Alive

Step 5: Presenting their project to the community by making videos for the library using QR codes.

How it guided language support:

- Students practiced all oral language skills as they recorded videos.



WIN

Kindergarten used their first 6 week cycle of WIN to address these language deficits.



W.I.N.
WHAT I NEED

...the what, when, why, how

...the what, when, why, how



W I N at Canavan

K- 1:30

1- 11:15

2- 10:30

3- 12:10

4- 10:00

5- 9:15



WIN groups use a walk-to-intervention model

Students Move Across Grade Level

The Walk-to-Intervention model, has students grouped across the entire grade level and moving to the location where their group is meeting, which may be outside their homeroom.



Instructor-led group

Students are all placed in an instructor-led group and thus each teacher has more time to meet the needs of each student.



Flexible Group Sizes

Group sizes vary, so students who are furthest behind are placed in the smallest groups.



Collaborative Teaching

Teachers have to collaborate, and often a shift occurs as teachers begin to refer to 'our students' across the grade level rather than 'my students' in 'my homeroom.'



More about our small group language instruction

Sentence Formulation

Walking the baby

Them are swinging

Her is running

A Mom is walking with a baby in a stroller.

They are swinging on the swings at the park.

A girl is running on the street.

Prepositions



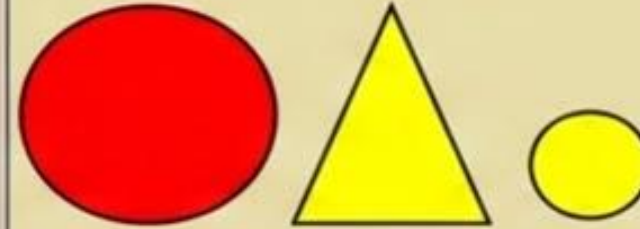
More about our small group language instruction

Sentence Repetition



Receptive/Expressive conversations

Tell how things are alike
and different



Building Categories

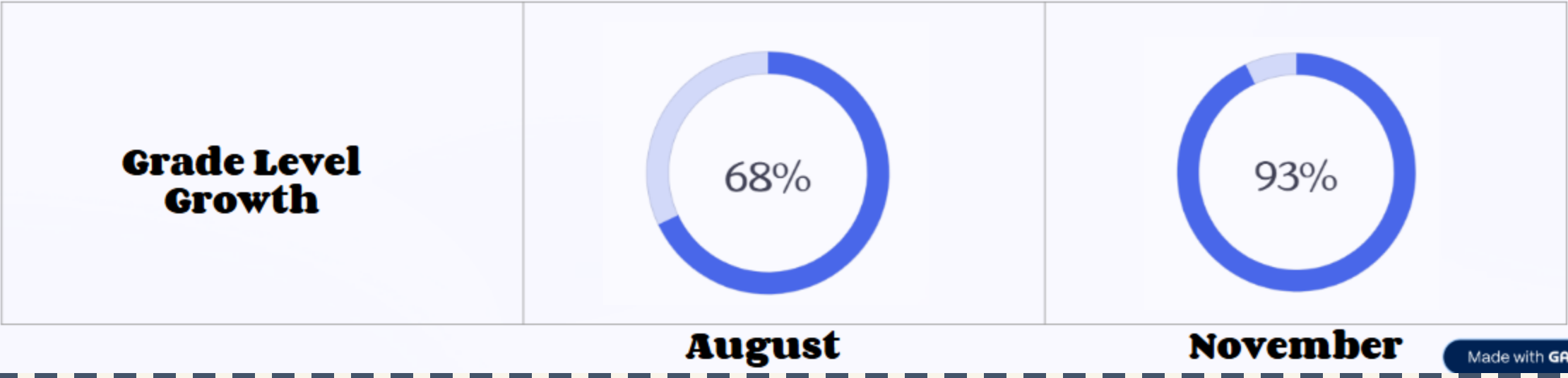


Story Telling



Our end RESULTS

	Class A	Class B	Class C
August Proficiency	80%	65%	59%
November Proficiency	95%	90%	95%



Thank you for joining us today!

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