



WestEd

# Reading Apprenticeship

Improving College Students' Academic Literacy Through  
Inquiry-Based Professional Learning



## Empowering students for academic success

Across the country, students struggle in their transition to college, in part because of the more intense reading demands of college-level texts. Many require support from their instructors in order to do the discipline-specific reading, thinking, and problem-solving required to complete a degree.

But many college faculty members feel it is beyond their scope of work or expertise to help students develop the skills needed to understand and work with complex disciplinary texts.

Reading Apprenticeship is an accessible research-based teaching framework that helps college faculty boost students' critical literacy skills and confidence while teaching course content. It does so by building on strengths that faculty and students already possess.

# Boosting Student Performance

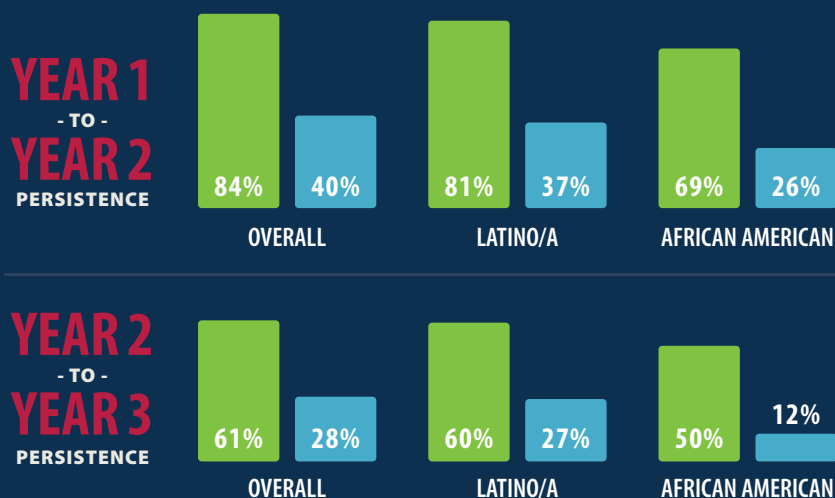
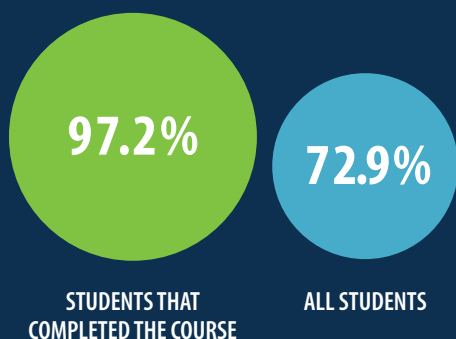
## ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES

### Guided Pathways and Reading Apprenticeship

Colleges that have implemented Reading Apprenticeship as part of their pathway programs have seen increases in student persistence, particularly among minority students.

At Northern Essex Community College in Massachusetts, Reading Apprenticeship routines were infused into the First Year Seminar course, resulting in a greater percentage of students remaining in school after year one.

At Pasadena City College in California, where Reading Apprenticeship is integrated into the First Year Pathways program, a study by the UCLA Social Research Methodology Group in 2015 found that **Pathways students** (■) who started in school year 2012/13 were much more likely than their **non-Pathways peers** (■) to persist from year 1 of college to year 2, and from year 2 to year 3.



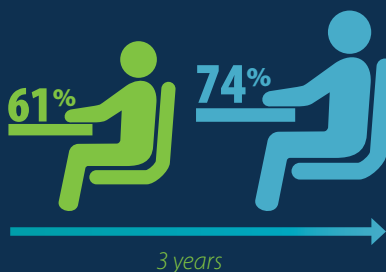
“When I was in the classroom, the Reading Apprenticeship framework completely transformed my approach to teaching and what I could expect from students. I tell my faculty: Invest in this professional learning. I have seen this framework work wonders in courses throughout our curriculum, from arithmetic to calculus.”

— Carrie Starbird, dean of Math and Computer Science, Pasadena City College, CA

### Campus-wide Persistence and Reading Apprenticeship

When more educators are trained in Reading Apprenticeship, student success increases campus-wide.

At Renton Technical College in Washington, where college leaders and faculty decided to commit to campus-wide implementation of Reading Apprenticeship, more than 100 educators participated in the program’s 30-hour online professional learning course. The year prior to implementation of Reading Apprenticeship, the percentage of Renton students either earning a degree or remaining enrolled was 61; by the fourth year of implementation, that percentage had risen to 74.



# Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Reading Apprenticeship

Reading Apprenticeship can reduce time needed in remedial courses.

National data show that between pre- and post-testing on the Life and Work Skills Reading and Math Assessment, ABE students make an average gain of 5 points for every 100 instructional hours. Renton Technical College students taking an ABE course that incorporates Reading Apprenticeship made comparable gains in roughly half the time, with data from three classes showing an average gain of 4 points after 45 hours of instruction.



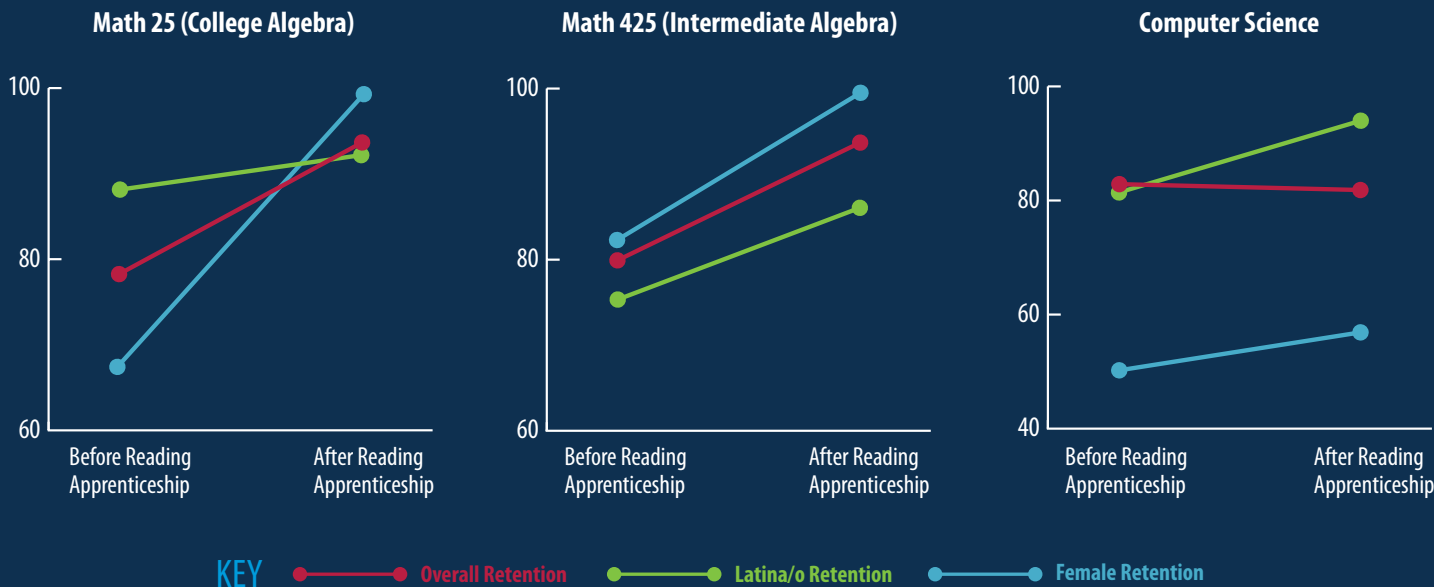
“Because of Reading Apprenticeship, I have not only become a more effective teacher, but I am also learning how to make a difference as a leader. I am learning how to help my colleagues think about and implement evidence-based methodologies and habits of mind that will increase student success.”

– Shawn Frederking, English professor, Yuba College, CA

## STEM and Reading Apprenticeship

Using Reading Apprenticeship in STEM courses lends itself to student success.

When Reading Apprenticeship was implemented in STEM courses at Chaffey College in California, course retention rates rose in both College and Intermediate Algebra, especially among female and Latina/o students; for these two groups, it also rose in Computer Science.





# Who We Help and How

College faculty from any discipline can apply the Reading Apprenticeship approach in their classes. In addition, counselors, tutors, and other educators outside the classroom can integrate Reading Apprenticeship into their work with students. Here are some of the educators with whom we work at this level and the professional learning options available to them.

**“It’s honestly been the best professional development I have ever participated in. It’s caused me to truly revise my teaching in the sciences.”**

— Sarah Courchesne, science professor,  
Northern Essex Community College, MA

## EDUCATOR ROLES

- Faculty across the disciplines, including a robust emphasis on STEM
- Those working in Learning Assistance Programs, including directors, tutors, and supplemental instructors
- Counselors and other educators in Student Affairs
- Those working in First Year Experience programs, including orientation, summer bridge, first year seminar, etc.
- Educators developing Guided Pathways programs

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING – ONLINE & IN-PERSON

- Reading Apprenticeship Essentials
- Reading Apprenticeship 101 Course
- Reading Apprenticeship for First Year Experience
- STEM Faculty Seminar
- Leadership Community of Practice
- Cross-Discipline Faculty Seminar

*Face-to-face workshops on your campus or at WestEd meeting spaces in California are also available.*



## Professional Learning Services

Contact us to find services that support your faculty and student learning goals.

**Nika Hogan**  
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**Long-term partnerships** are the way to make lasting instructional and learning shifts for faculty and students. We provide consultation services and can help develop a multi-year plan to fit your goals.

Visit **[ReadingApprenticeship.org](https://ReadingApprenticeship.org)** for details on our professional learning, free resources, and videos of teacher practice.

**WestEd**

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