

For Immediate Release

HARCOURT ACHIEVE'S RIGBY LITERACY SHOWN TO BE EFFECTIVE IN RECENT STUDY OF TWO URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Rigby Literacy Comprehensive Reading Program Evaluated by McREL

AUSTIN, TX – June 1, 2005— An independent research report released today by Harcourt Achieve, Inc. indicates that second- and fourth-grade students using *Rigby Literacy* for the first time showed strong gains in their reading performance. The independent study was conducted by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) to evaluate the instructional effectiveness of the *Rigby Literacy* program on student performance in reading during the 2003-2004 school year.

In an effort to meet the criteria put forth by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) for investigating education programs within a scientific research paradigm, the McREL evaluation was carried out through a large-scale, multi-site research study that was carefully and rigorously designed to result in the best possible evidence regarding program effectiveness.

McREL's Vice President of Research and Evaluation Zoe Barley said, "the choice of urban schools presented a real test as the schools had at least 80 % of students on free and reduced price lunch and were made up of 85% minority students. Teachers who participated had not previously used the *Rigby Literacy* program, another relevant characteristic for the study. Teachers appreciated the concrete, coherent, and integrated foundation *Rigby Literacy* provided for implementing a balanced approach to literacy instruction." Control teachers used their familiar and usual reading approach and were able to use whatever amount of time they chose while *Rigby Literacy* teachers were held to a set period of time.

The McREL report documents the impact the *Rigby Literacy* program had on reading achievement scores for second- and fourth-grade students who took the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT-4) after the yearlong implementation of *Rigby Literacy*.

Additionally, when compared to the national normative samples, the treatment group scored much higher on the GMRT-4 posttest than would have been expected. Together these findings indicate that *Rigby Literacy* was effective at increasing student achievement in reading. The overall results of this study indicate that *Rigby Literacy* students in their first year of the program did as well as students in the control group that used reading programs that were mature in terms of their implementation.

“When we created *Rigby Literacy* we listened to educators who told us they wanted effective alternatives to basal reading programs that addressed the comprehensive nature of successful reading programs and motivated students to develop a love of reading,” said Tim McEwen, President of Harcourt Achieve. “The McREL study has confirmed that we have given teachers the powerful reading program they asked us to create.”

Copies of the McREL report are available at:

www.harcourtachieve.com/Pages/articles/RL_summary_research_web.pdf

For more information on *Rigby Literacy* please visit www.harcourtachieve.com

About Harcourt Achieve

Harcourt Achieve produces learning solutions and content that fundamentally and positively change the lives of young and adult learners. Published under the Rigby, Saxon and Steck-Vaughn imprints, its products are based on a developmental philosophy that assesses learners’ skills, matches them to appropriate content and accelerates them to meet and exceed expectations. The Rigby imprint offers progressive learning solutions for core reading and English language learner instruction that provide differentiated instruction to match each student’s instructional level. The Saxon imprint offers the nation’s best selling and most thoroughly researched skills-based mathematics program for grades K-12, as well as popular phonics, K-3 spelling, and early learning programs. The Steck-Vaughn imprint offers easy-to-use, innovative learning solutions that accelerate content-area knowledge, reading skills, and preparation for standards-based tests, allowing learners to meet and exceed expectations. For more information, please visit www.HarcourtAchieve.com.

Harcourt Achieve is part of Harcourt Education, a global education provider serving students and teachers in Pre-K through grade 12, adult learners and readers of all ages. The Harcourt Education companies are Harcourt School Publishers; Holt, Rinehart and Winston; Harcourt Achieve; Harcourt Assessment; Classroom Connect; Harcourt Religion Publishers; Harcourt Trade Publishers; Greenwood/Heinemann and Heinemann Global Library. For more information, please visit www.harcourt.com.

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