



The Efficacy of **The Lab School Approach** for Improving Academic Skills in Children with Learning Disabilities

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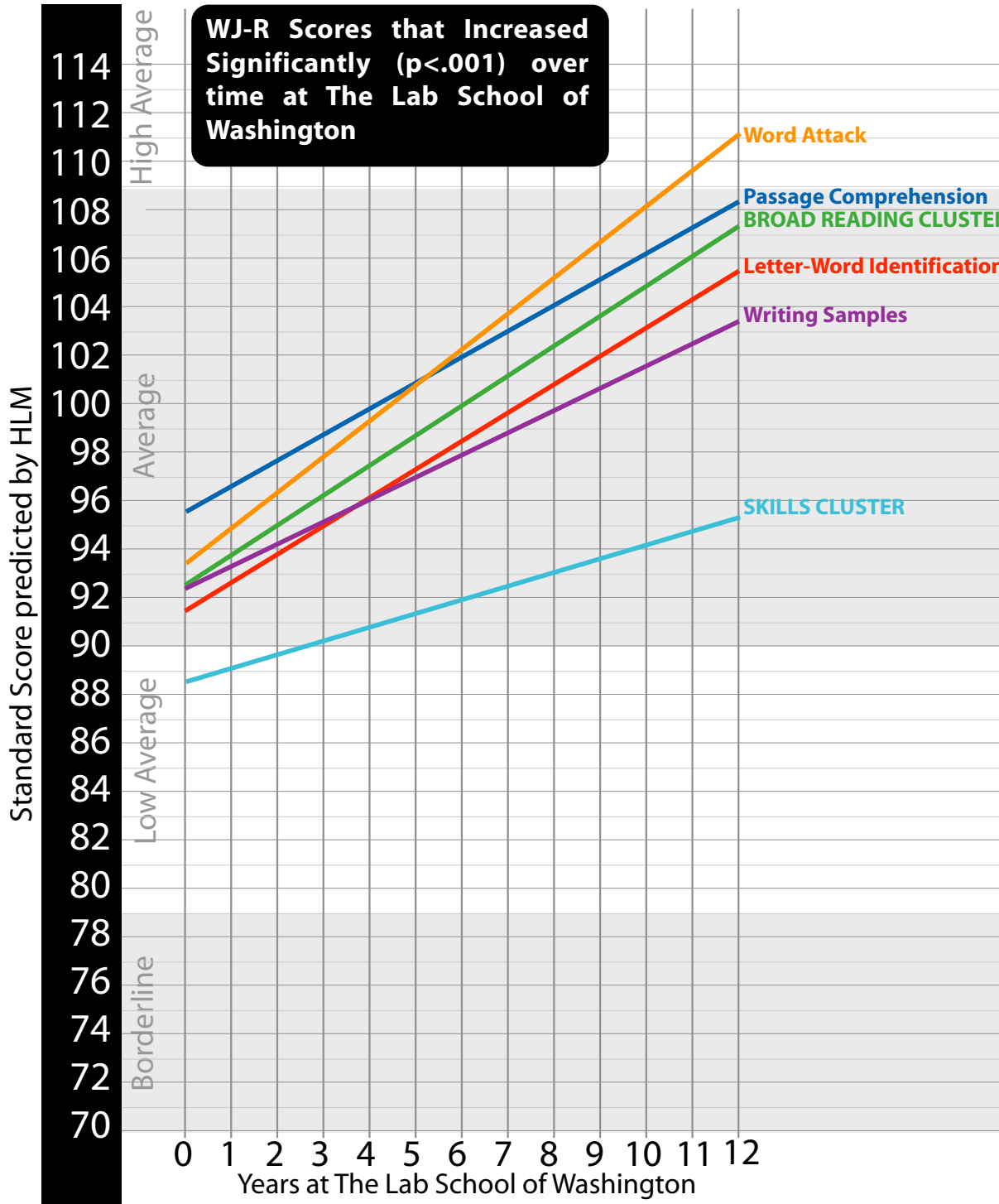
Founder/Director Sally L. Smith

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Study 1:



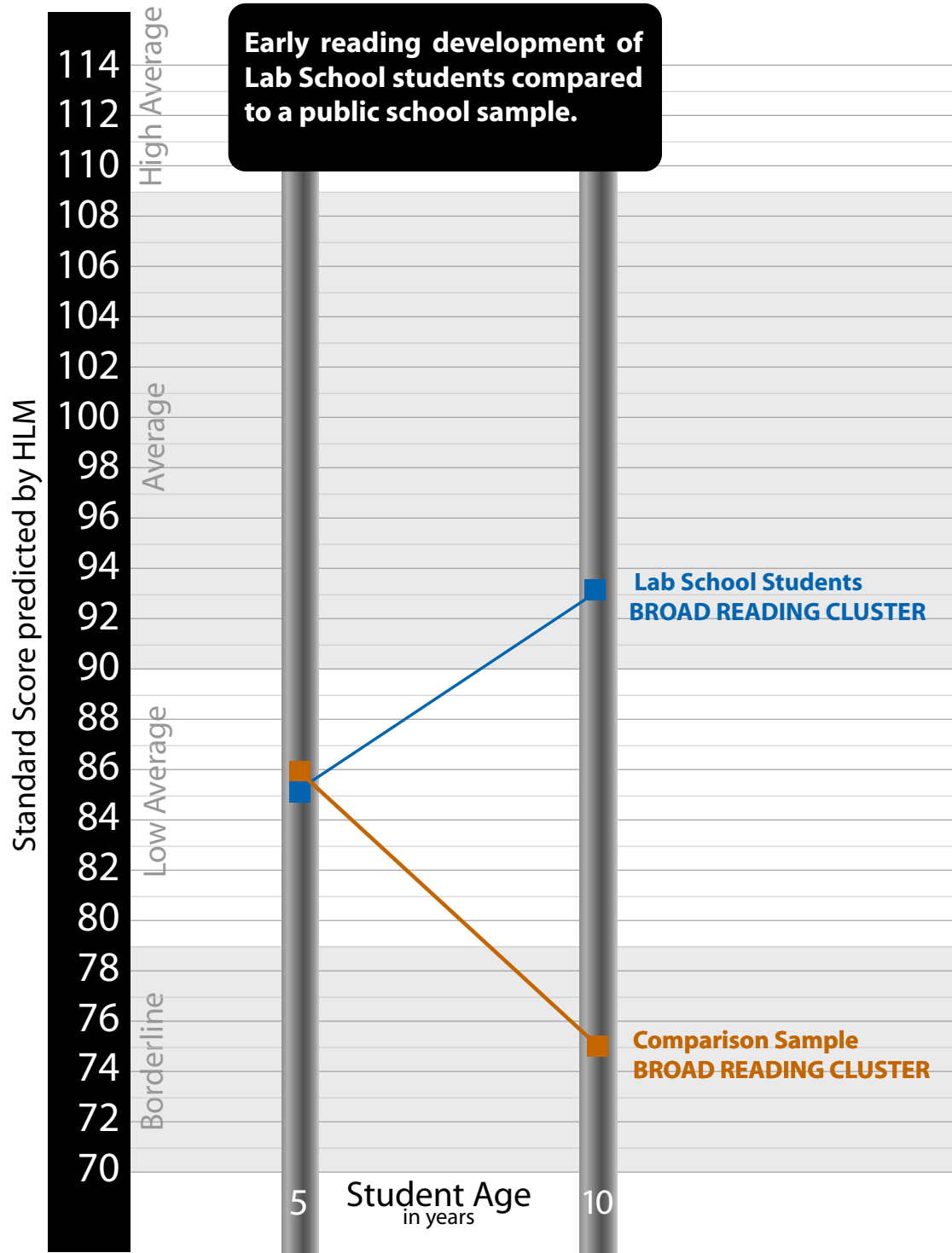
The purpose of this longitudinal study was to examine the academic progress of students with learning disabilities over a five-year period. This study analyzed Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery - Revised (WJ-R) Tests of Achievement scores of students assessed annually at The Lab School of Washington, a full-time special educational program for students with average to superior intelligence and moderate to severe learning disabilities ($N = 514$). Hierarchical linear modeling revealed that students improved significantly on the reading measures (Letter-Word Identification, Passage Comprehension, and Word Attack, as well as the composite Broad Reading Cluster score) and on the Writing Samples test that assesses writing skills at the sentence level.

Question: Do the academic skills of students attending The Lab School improve over time?

Answer: Lab School students showed significant increases in their standardized test scores on reading and writing tests over time.

Statistical evidence: Hierarchical Linear Modeling of WJ-R Scores.

Study 2:



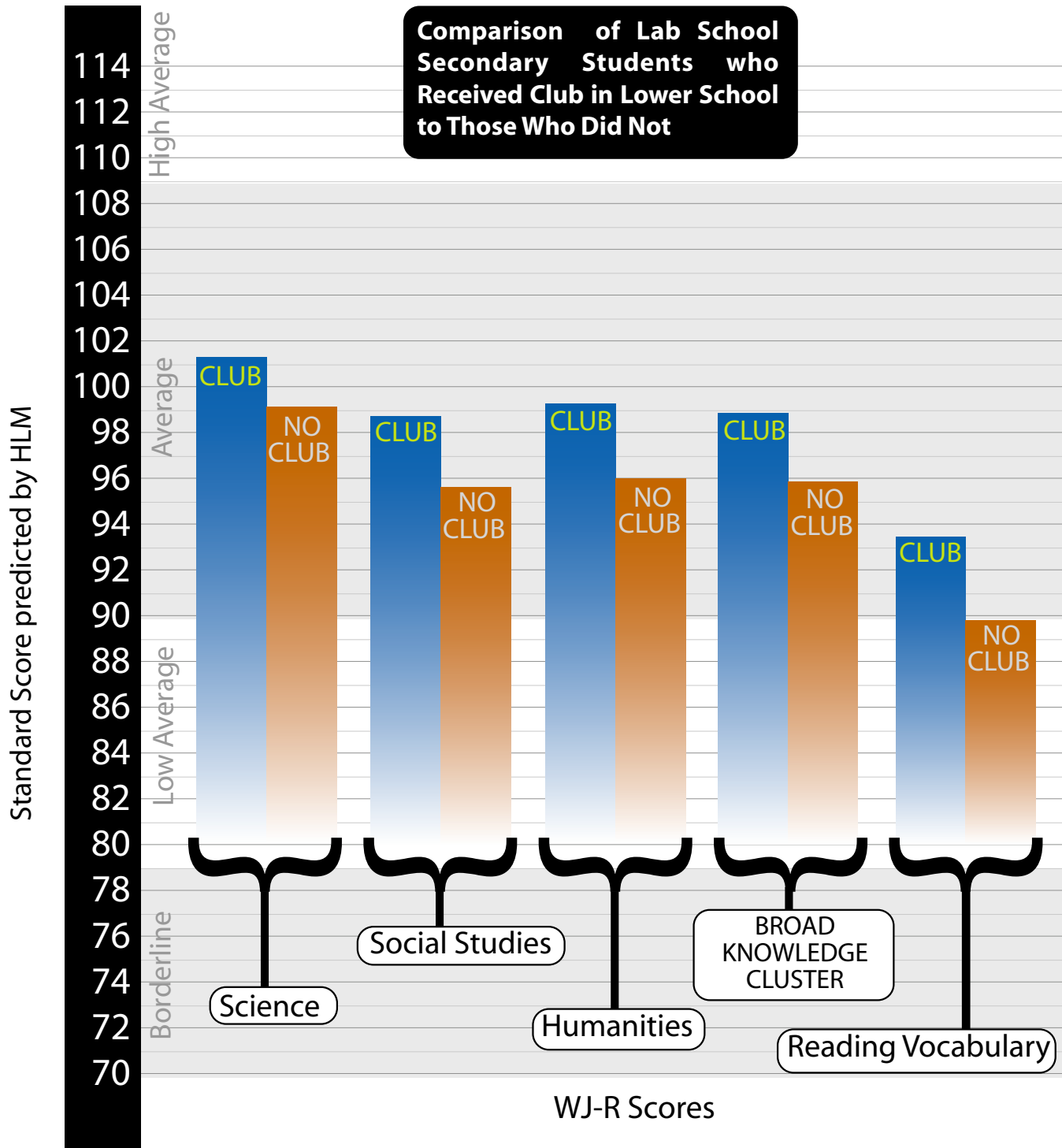
The effectiveness of The Lab School was also evaluated in comparison with typical public school interventions for learning disabled children in the primary grades. Growth curve analyses showed that, while WJ-R reading scores were similar at five years of age for both groups, reading outcomes improved significantly for children in The Lab School and declined for children in public school by 10 years of age. WJ-R math scores improved significantly in both groups between five and ten years of age, with no significant interaction. The results of the current study show preliminary evidence of the effectiveness of The Lab School intervention for learning disabled children as compared with typical public school interventions for a similar population.

Question: How does the early reading development of students in Grades K – 3 compare between Lab School students and a sample of students in Public School identified as having Learning Disabilities?

Answer: The Lab School Students make significantly better progress.

Statistical Evidence: Hierarchical Linear Modeling of WJ-R BROAD READING CLUSTER Scores over 5 years.

Comparison of Lab School Secondary Students who Received Club in Lower School to Those Who Did Not



Study 3:

The next study compared two groups of students in the secondary program, those who attended The Lab School during the lower school years (Grades K through 6) with classmates who entered The Lab School at the secondary level (Grades 7 through 12). The students who attended The Lab School's lower school demonstrated higher achievement in Science, Social Studies, Humanities, Broad Knowledge, and Reading Vocabulary than students who did not attend The Lab School's lower school. This suggests that Sally Smith's **Academic Club Methodology**® of teaching, used to teach these subjects during the lower school years, provided a superior early education in the academic content areas. The **Academic Club Methodology** appears to assist students in accumulating and storing long-term knowledge in the areas of Science, Social Studies, and Humanities.















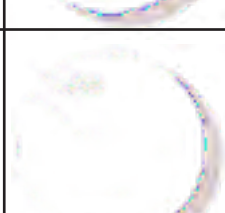
Question: Does participating in Academic Clubs during lower school enhance a student's storehouse of information in secondary school?

Answer: Yes, students who attended The Lab School during lower school and were taught with the Academic Club Method had significantly higher scores on tests of knowledge of academic content in secondary school.

Statistical Evidence: T-tests comparing WJ-R scores of secondary students.

Percentage of students making a year's progress in a year's time.

Study 4:

Division	WJ-R Test		
	Passage Comprehension	Applied Problems	Writing Samples
Elementary			
Intermediate			
Junior High			
High School			
All			

Finally, the question was asked as to what percentage of The Lab School's student body makes a year's progress in a year's time on a standardized achievement test. Students attending The Lab School in both the 2002/03 and 2003/04 school years were individually assessed with the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement. Their age-based standard scores on the applications subtests: Passage Comprehension, Applied Problems and Writing Samples, were compared. A student was deemed to have made a year's progress for the year if their relative standing, within the standard error of measurement, in their age-mate peer group had been maintained or improved during the school year. An average of 78% of students met this criteria.

Question: What percentage of The Lab School's student body makes a year's progress in a year's time on standardized achievement tests?

Answer: 78% of students made a year's progress in a year's time.

Statistical Evidence: Pie charts for the percentages.