



# Promoting Adolescents' Comprehension of Text (PACT)

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# Outline

1. Purpose and Importance of the PACT project.
2. Word reading and comprehension in 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students who fail and pass TAKS.
3. Good and poor comprehenders
4. The importance of motivation for adolescents' reading comprehension.

# Reading for Understanding

- Reading For Understanding (RFU) Research Initiative, funded by the Institute of Education Sciences of the US Dpt. of Education
- Improvement of reading comprehension in Pre-K through Grade 12
- A comprehensive approach to tackling the problem of improving reading comprehension
- Over \$100 million over 5-years

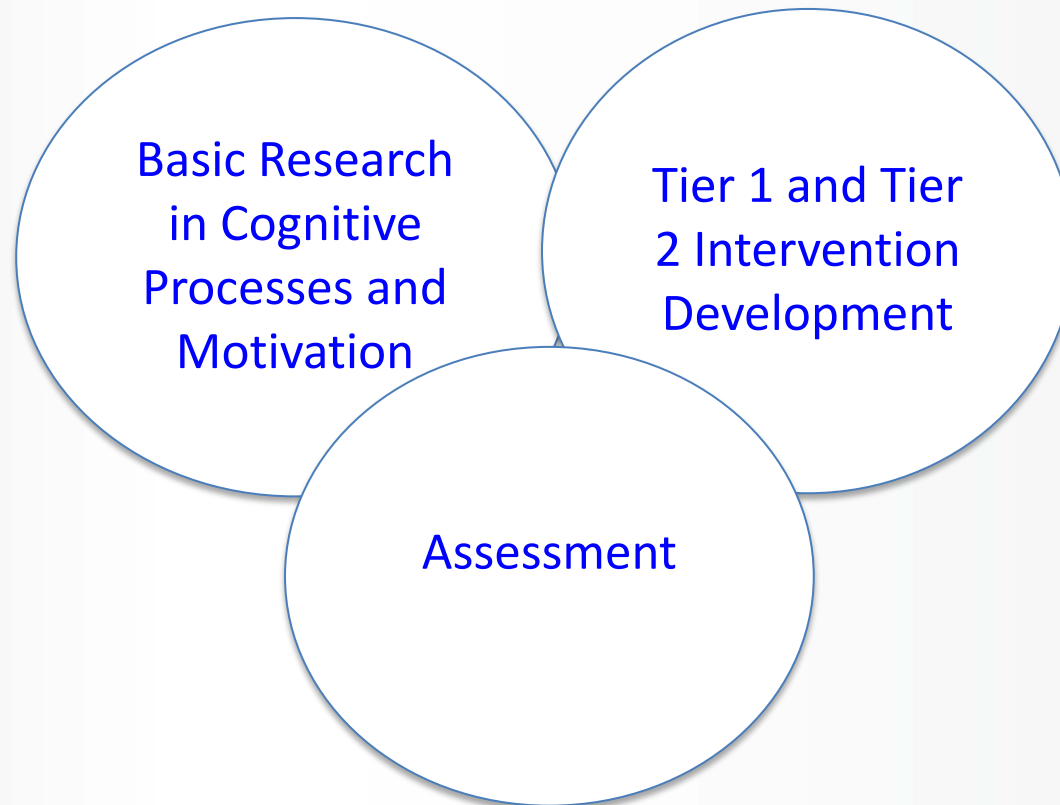


PROMOTING ADOLESCENTS'  
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# The PACT Project

- The **University of Texas at Austin – PACT** is one of six teams nationwide involved in RFU.
- PACT is one of two teams trying to understand comprehension in older students and create Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions to improve comprehension.
- Focus on grades 7-12
- Collaboration between UT Austin, UT Health Science Center Houston, University of Houston, Texas A&M, and Florida State University

# PACT Project - An Integrated Approach to Improving Reading Comprehension in Adolescence





# Years 1 and 2: Experimental Cognitive Studies

- What text and cognitive processes impact comprehension skills in older students?
- Which of these are malleable?
- How can this information be used to design innovative, effective, feasible interventions for middle and high school students?

# Years 1 and 2: Motivation and Engagement Studies

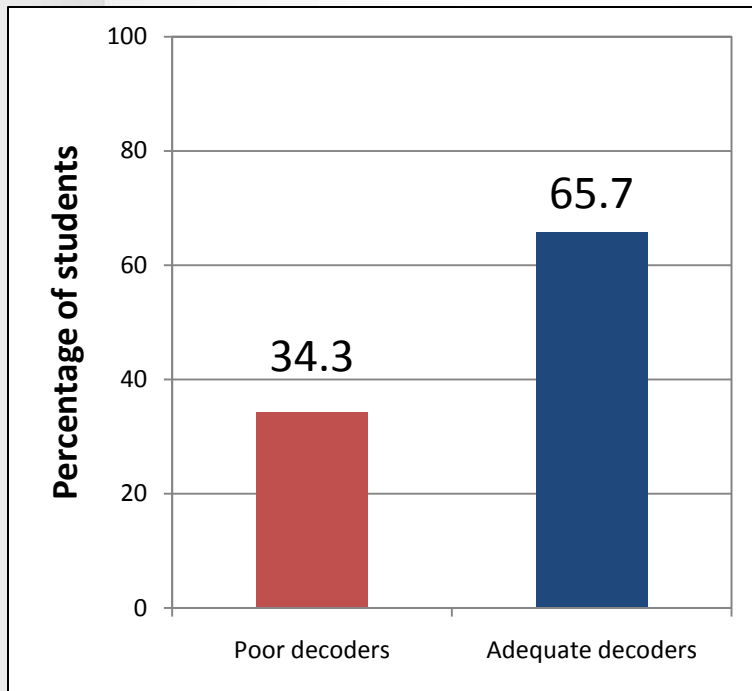
- What aspects of motivation and engagement with text impact comprehension skills in older students?
- Which of these are malleable?
- How can this information be used to design innovative, effective, feasible interventions for middle and high school students?

# Years 3-5: Intervention Development and Piloting

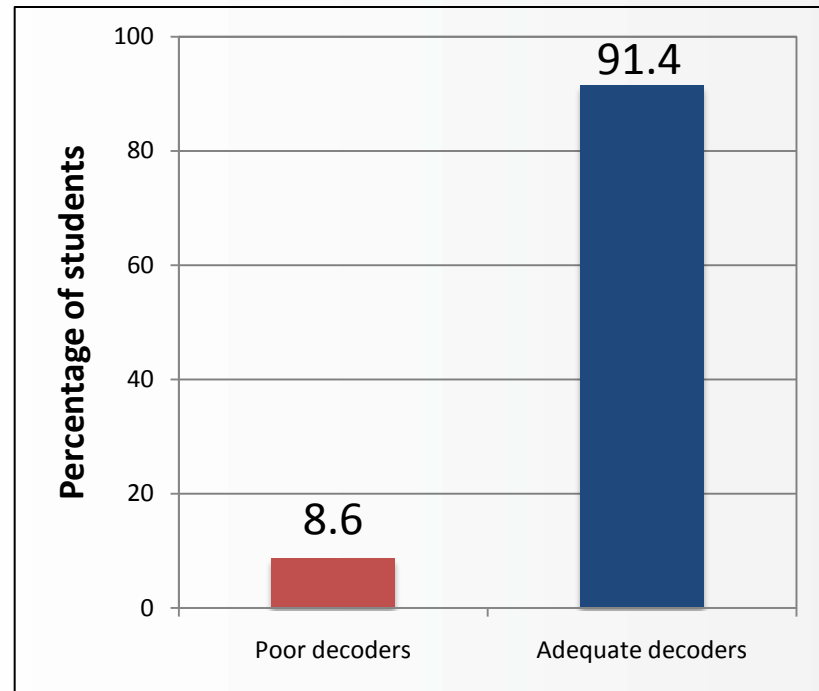
- Development of a Tier 2/Tier 3 Intervention incorporating what we learn about
  - Processes used to understand text by good and poor comprehenders
  - Motivation and engagement with text
  - The existing research base on decoding and comprehension instruction



# Percentage of Adolescents who Fail and Pass TAKS who are Adequate Decoders

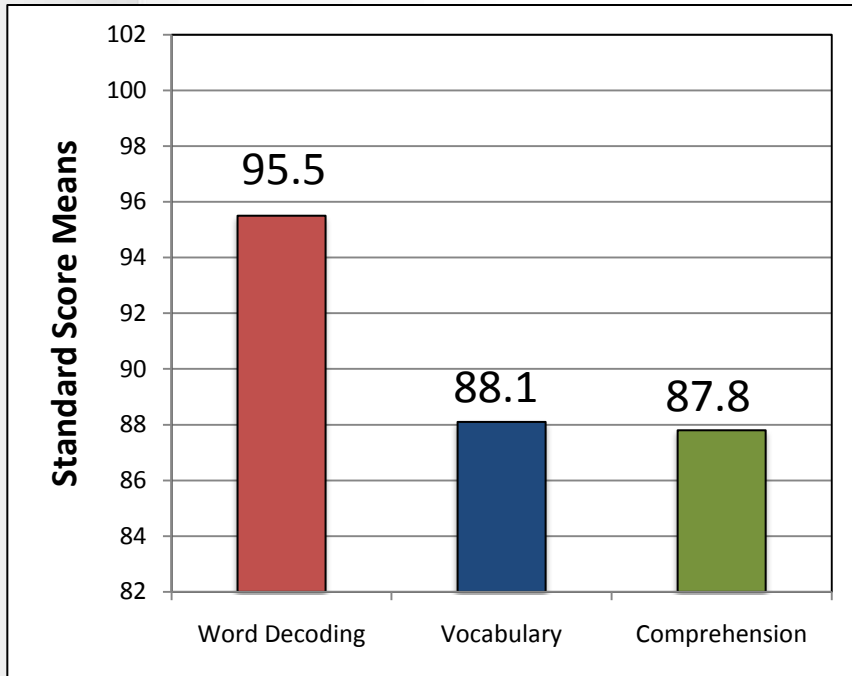


**Poor  
Comprehenders**

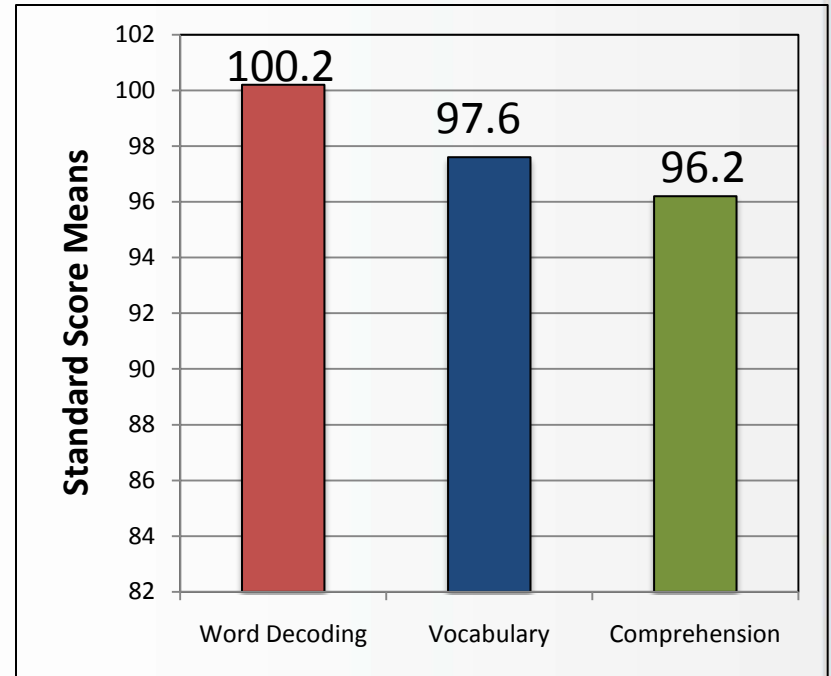


**Adequate  
Comprehenders**

# Word Reading, Reading Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension in Poor and Adequate Comprehenders (Based on TAKS)



**Poor  
Comprehenders**



**Adequate  
Comprehenders**

# From Think-Aloud Research: Kinds of Poor Comprehenders

- **The “Plodders”**: Respond to each sentence in the text individually; do not integrate information from the current sentence with other text information or background knowledge (van den Broek et al., 2009, p. 117)
- **The “Explorers”**: Connect extensively to personal experiences or background knowledge that is irrelevant or incorrect (van den Broek et al., 2009, p. 117)
- **The “Clingers”**: Cling to their misconceptions no matter what the text says; try to fit the text into their preconceived “box”.

# Nature of Academic Motivation

1. Theoretical Grounding
  - Social cognitive emphasis on beliefs and attitudes
  - Function of individual and contextual factors
  - Multi-dimensional
2. Value Related Facets
  - Interest, utility value, achievement goals
3. Competence Related Facets
  - Self-efficacy, perceived control, task difficulty and anxiety

# Importance of Studying Motivation

1. Motivation Influences reading
  - engagement, learning and performance
2. Motivation declines during adolescence
  - Nature of decline
  - Explanations of decline
3. Academic motivation can be improved through instructional interventions





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# Motivation in the PACT Project

Key question or issues we are investigating:

- How is motivation related to cognitive skills that underlie reading comprehension?
- Can students' motivation help to explain some of their difficulties with reading comprehension?
- How can motivation be incorporated into interventions designed to improve reading comprehension in adolescence?

# For More Information

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[www.meadowscenter.org/projects/pact.asp](http://www.meadowscenter.org/projects/pact.asp)

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