

## Valencia Community College Orlando, Florida

**INSTRUCTOR** Professor Corinne Fennessy

**COURSES** Reading 1 and Reading 2

**LEVEL** 6th-9th grade and 8th-10th grade

**TEXT** The Skilled Reader, 2/e, with MyReadingLab by D. J. Henry  
Reading Across the Disciplines, 2/e, with MyReadingLab by Kathleen T. McWhorter  
The Master Reader, 2/e, with MyReadingLab by D. J. Henry (for online sections)

**TERMS COVERED** Fall 2008-Spring 2009

**CONTRIBUTION OF MYREADINGLAB TO FINAL GRADE** 20%

**TYPES OF DATA REPORTED** Lexile scores

**COURSE STRUCTURE** Hybrid: Part lecture/part lab  
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VALENCIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE possesses four campuses enrolling over 42,000 students.

Students at Valencia are placed into one of two preparatory reading courses based on the results of a mandated statewide placement test. Campus wide, 50% of incoming freshmen take a developmental reading course. On West Campus, where Professor Corinne Fennessy teaches, approximately 30 sections (of 25 students each), take either Reading 1 or 2. Three full-time instructors and approximately 15 adjuncts teach the two courses, and all instructors use MyReadingLab.

Class format is part lecture, part lab. In Reading 2 each term, 1-2 sections are taught entirely online, depending on student demand. To pass either course, students must pass the lab with a grade of 70 or more (based on the MyReadingLab diagnostic), must complete all course assignments, and must pass the state reading exam. Successful course completion allows students to progress on to Comp 1. MyReadingLab comprises 20% of students' final grade; other components are course assignments, unit tests, and class participation.

### CHOOSING MYREADINGLAB

Professor Fennessy says, "We chose MyReadingLab to give our students anytime access to instruction. We wanted a resource available to students 24/7 and indeed, many students use MyReadingLab in the middle of the night. MyReadingLab was an experiment, really, but the results have been impressive and I will continue to use it as long as I'm teaching."

### USING MYREADINGLAB

**AUTHENTIC PRACTICE:** Professor Fennessy has used MyReadingLab and its Reading Road Trip predecessor for more than 5 years and believes that it provides the strongest practice of any online program available. "I think that without the authentic practice that MyReadingLab provides, students would not benefit from doing practices—and therefore would not succeed in our preparatory reading courses," asserts Professor Fennessy.

One of the most ringing endorsements Professor Fennessy has received came from a student who remarked, "I don't like MyReadingLab." When asked why she didn't like

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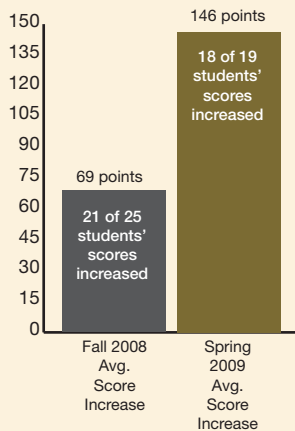
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A note on Lexile scores: The Lexile framework is a scientific approach to reading measurement that matches readers to text. Both reader ability and text difficulty are quantified on the same Lexile scale. The Lexile scale is both an assessment tool for measuring increasing reading comprehension and a motivational index to encourage students' progress.

## Average Lexile Score Increase



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—**PROFESSOR FENNESSY**

MyReadingLab, the student said, “Because you have to really read to answer the questions correctly.”

The student’s feedback underscores a core strength of MyReadingLab, according to Professor Fennessy. “Prior to the availability of MyReadingLab, we taught with workbooks and it was very difficult to tell if students were doing the work. With workbook practice, most students look up the answers and don’t bother to read the passages. In MyReadingLab, they can’t do that and get passing scores. My students work harder using MyReadingLab and their scores improve accordingly.”

### ENRICHED TEACHING

Professor Fennessy feels that MyReadingLab has strengthened and enriched her teaching approach. “With MyReadingLab, I can assess my students’ progress at any point, instantly. Scores are online, accessible anytime,” she says “With MyReadingLab pinpointing a student’s areas of difficulty, I can step in to provide live teaching assistance that is customized to the student’s immediate learning needs.”

### RESULTS

**LEXILE SCORES:** Students’ Lexile scores were calculated at the beginning and end of the course. In a representative section of Reading 1 from fall 2008, 21 out of 25 students increased their Lexile scores an average of 69 points. In spring 2009, 18 out of 19 Reading 1 students increased their Lexile scores an average of 146 points—a gain that Professor Fennessy attributes to students’ work with MyReadingLab.

**ONLINE-ONLY SECTIONS:** Responding to students’ needs, the English department offers one or two sections per term of Reading 1 and 2 as online-only courses. Professor Fennessy notes that her online-only sections are populated by a majority of students who are single mothers and that these students typically score at least as well or even better on the state reading exam than the students who attend lectures. Says Professor Fennessy, “This is a testament to the strength and advantages of MyReadingLab; students who don’t see an instructor face-to-face are scoring as well or better than students with a live teacher.”

### CONCLUSIONS: A STUDENT-FOCUSED RESOURCE

MyReadingLab is meeting Valencia Community College students’ needs for flexible, immersive, anytime instruction.

“MyReadingLab is a great resource because it enables students to self-direct their practice and learning. This self-directed aspect of MyReadingLab provides tremendous motivation, something that is essential in a remedial course,” insists Professor Fennessy. “Also, MyReadingLab provides immediate feedback to students’ work; MyReadingLab scores what’s wrong and then tells students *why*. For all these reasons, MyReadingLab is my best resource for student learning!”

### FUTURE

Every Reading instructor on West Campus now makes MyReadingLab available to students either as an optional or a required resource. Professor Fennessy requires her students to use MyReadingLab and reports that a second instructor will mandate MyReadingLab for the coming term.

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For a product tour or to find out more, please visit [www.myreadinglab.com](http://www.myreadinglab.com)