

Westminster Avenue Elementary School
Westminster Computer Science and Math Magnet School

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ROY ROMER
Superintendent of SchoolsMS. BETTY COLEMAN
Principal

January 10, 2004

Dear Sir or Madam:

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I am writing to endorse Steven Angel's "Drumming" program for reading. I am a third grade teacher at Westminster Elementary School, and this past September I was assigned a student that I noticed was new to our school. As I typically do at the beginning of each year, I assessed each student in reading to establish a benchmark score and to plan my upcoming lessons based on their skill levels. I assessed each student in the areas of reading fluency, comprehension, spelling and vocabulary. When I tested my new student, Gabriel, I was quite surprised at his results.

While most of the class was performing at or near a beginning third grade level, Gabriel was performing at a low first grade level. His average reading fluency was 38 words per minute and he had trouble decoding even the simplest text. I knew he needed intensive and immediate intervention.

One day I asked a fellow teacher if she knew of any programs that could help Gabriel improve his reading skills quickly. She recommended the "Drumming" program with Steven Angel. I knew of Steven Angel's excellent reputation and results working with behavior management in classrooms, so I hoped he could provide similar successes with students in reading.

Gabriel participated in the "Drumming" program after school, two days per week for six weeks. Before Gabriel started the program he refused to read-silently, out loud, it didn't matter. He hated to read and he would not participate during reading at all; however, after the first week in the program he slowly started reading silently and participating in class. By the end of the third week he started borrowing books from our class library every night, and by the end of the sixth week he was actively participating in class story discussions, reading every day, and even **asked** to read aloud during our story time.

As Gabriel read aloud for the first time since the first week of school, almost every student in the class lifted their eyes from their books and gazed at Gabriel in utter amazement. I have to admit-so did I! When he finished the paragraph and looked up one of his peers said, "Hey Gabriel, great job!" Then another commented, "Wow, that was great!" And then the entire class started clapping. A couple of students even reached over to Gabriel and patted him on the back to show how proud they were of his progress.

Not only has Gabriel's reading level increased from a low, first grade level to a beginning third grade level in a very short time, but his reading comprehension has skyrocketed, and his spelling and vocabulary skills have also greatly improved. His fluency went from 38 words per minute to 88 words per minute. The biggest improvement, however, is in Gabriel's self-esteem and enthusiasm. He exhibits more self-confidence, not only in reading, but in all academic areas. Gabriel is now reading chapter books and giving oral "critiques" to the class during our weekly "show-and-tell" times.

It is my hope that our community will recognize the incredible value that Steven Angel brings to our youth with his program so that we can reach and teach **all** of the "Gabriels" in schools everywhere that so desperately need his help. I am so very grateful for this program.

Please feel free to contact me by phone at (310) 392-3041, or via e-mail at slb9335@lausd.k12.ca.us if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sheila Bouffard". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Sheila L. Bouffard
Teacher, Grade 3

cc: Mr. Steven Angel