



### Marcus' Story Reading with Confidence



#### *Marcus*

Age: 8

Location: BC

Diagnosis: Dyslexia



#### **Protocol**

Marcus worked for 50 minutes per day, 5 days per week, for 3 months. He completed Fast ForWord Language, and part of Language to Reading over the summer months.



#### **Results**

Marcus was losing academic confidence. He knew he was not working on the same level as his peers. Today he is approaching reading confidently, making gains, and working hard to achieve his goals.

Marcus was very aware of his inability to read. He was unable to learn letter sounds and spelling patterns like his peers. He would guess at words and memorize books to try and keep up. He could recognize some sight words when shown a list, but still had difficulty if they were presented later in a different context. He had speech delays as well, so his family sought out appropriate interventions. The first program they tried seemed too advanced for Marcus' needs. A promising alternative at a local university ended after only a few sessions, when the instructor fell ill. Marcus' mother then came across an article about Gemm Learning and thought it might be something to explore. She kept it in the back of her mind, feeling like the traditional approaches weren't working and her son's challenges were getting harder on him emotionally.

They eventually decided to give Fast ForWord a try at the end of Marcus' second grade year. He adapted to the routine easily, working regularly on the exercises and viewing it as special time spent with mom. Phonemic awareness was the biggest challenge. Marcus had difficulty with some of the initial exercises that focused on discriminating between similar sounds. They contacted Gemm's staff and scheduled a few remote sessions. A staff member worked with Marcus on the exercises and offered strategies and encouragement that helped him move forward.

*"We've definitely seen that the way he approaches a book, he's more confident. He understands it!" –  
Marcus' Mother*

A few days into the new school year, Marcus' resource teacher pulled him aside to read with him. He approached her with confidence, then dove into the book. This was such a substantial change, that the teacher emailed Marcus' parents afterwards. They hadn't told the school about working on Fast ForWord. However, the teacher observed that whatever they did with Marcus over the summer *seemed to make more difference than the six months of instruction he received at the end of the previous school year.* Marcus' mother was thrilled. She knew her son needed something different and felt the teacher's words affirmed how effective the software had been.

"You have to be willing to commit to it." She advises other parents. "It is a time investment. If the traditional approach to reading hasn't worked, then this might be something worth considering." She plans to have Marcus resume his program this summer and is looking forward to seeing his reading improve further.