

Focus to Flourish

Five Actions to Accelerate Progress in Learning

There has been tremendous progress toward ensuring that every child has access to school —and now that most children are in school, the focus must shift to ensuring universal learning, which requires fundamental changes.

Align

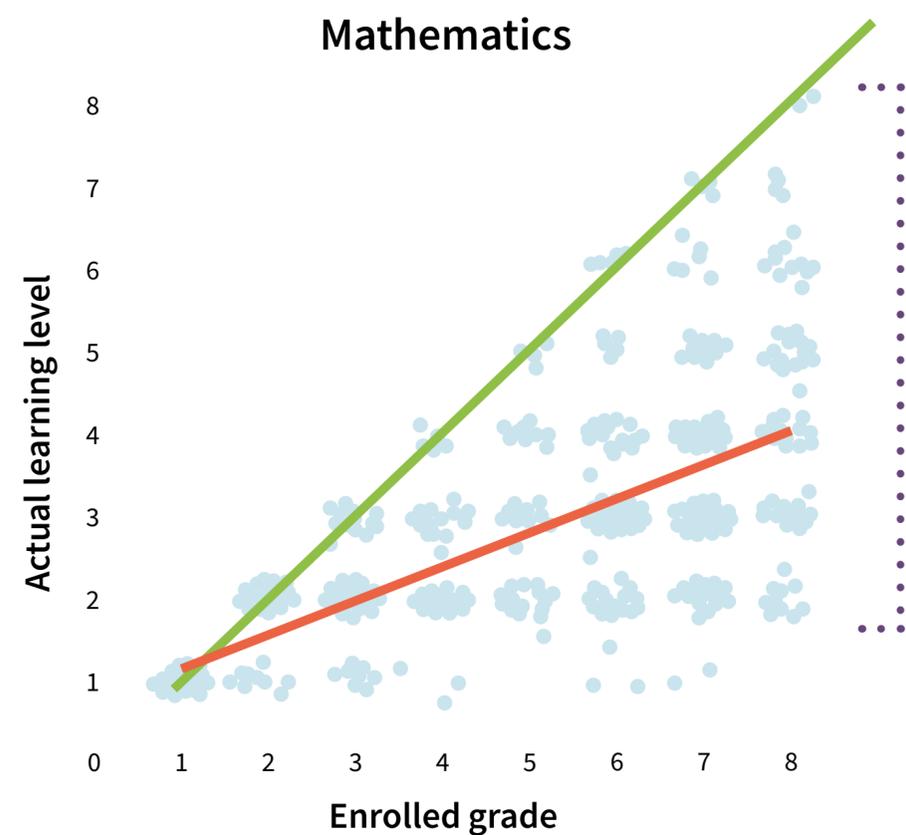
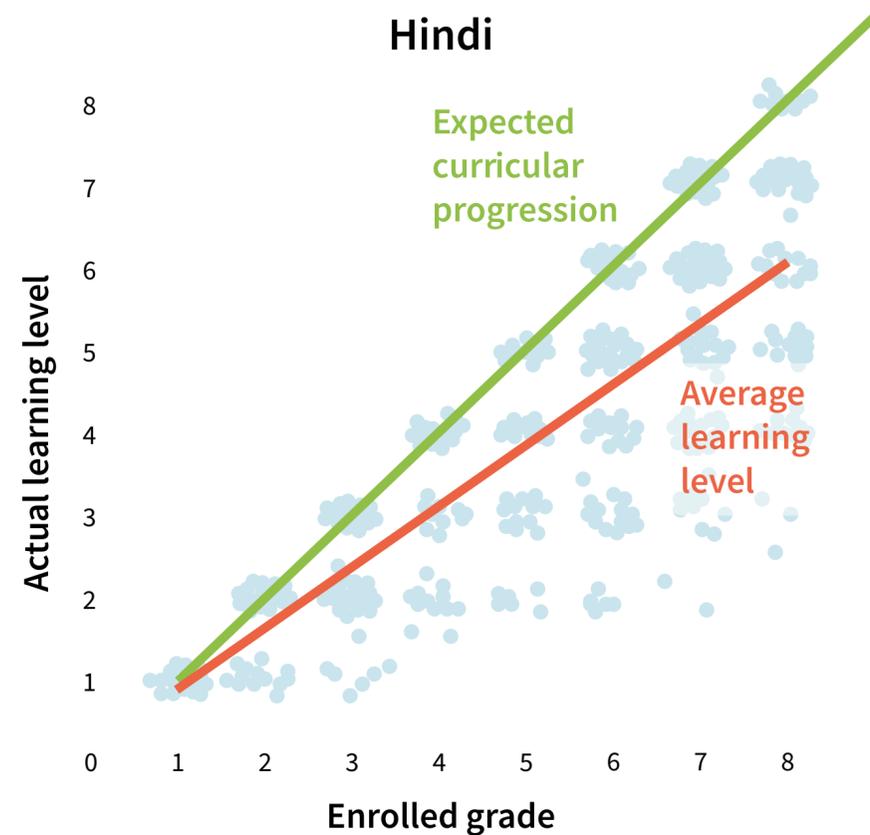
systems around learning commitments



Align Measure
Commit Support
Adapt

In many contexts, the curriculum does not match children's learning levels—and better aligning instruction with children's needs can substantially improve outcomes

In Rajasthan, India, an evaluation of a computer-aided personalised instruction programme found that the curriculum was misaligned with the learning levels of all except the most advantaged children ...

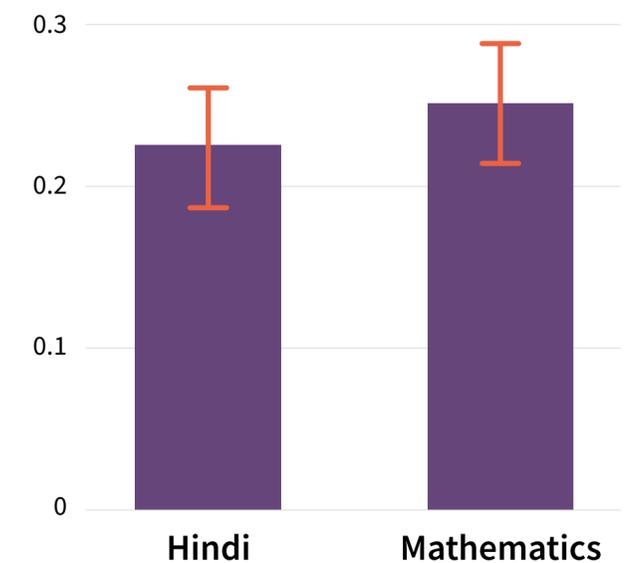


In a typical Grade 8 classroom, there is massive variation in children's learning levels, spanning 5–6 grade levels.

The typical child in Grade 8 is 4 years behind the mathematics curriculum.

... but, by aligning instruction with children's needs, the programme improved learning outcomes.

Impact on student learning (SD) after 2.5 years of exposure to the personalised instruction programme



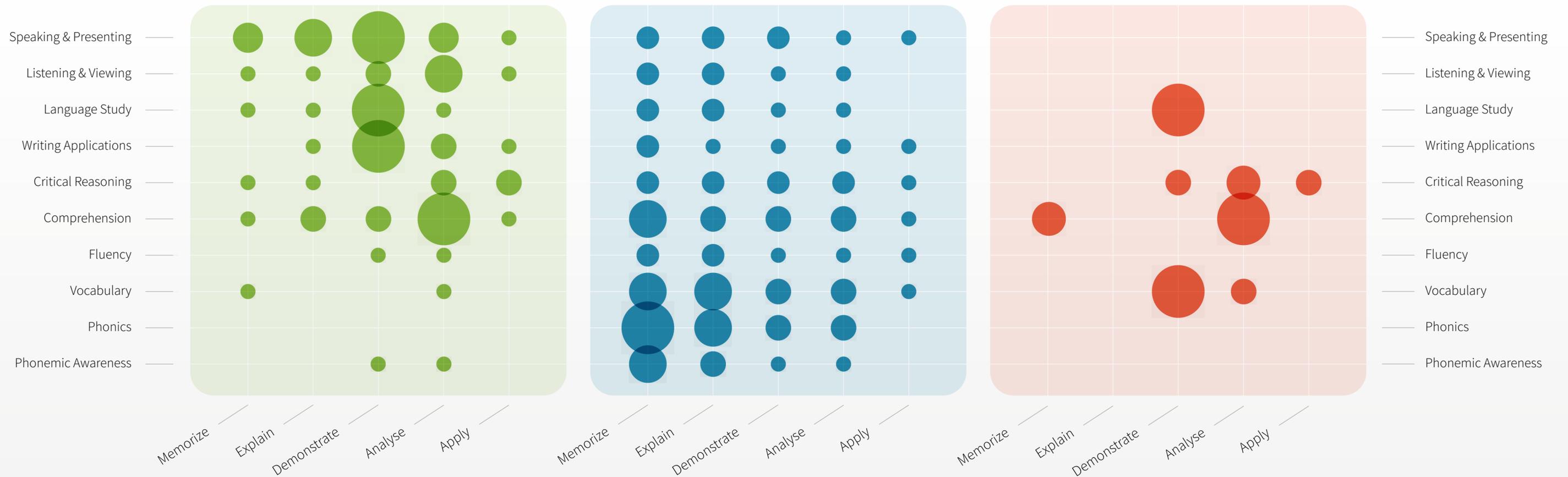
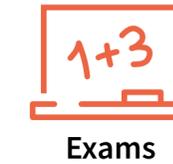
Source: Muralidharan & Singh, 2019, using Mindspark mathematics data from Rajasthan. In the scatterplots, each dot represents 10 students. See also Rodriguez-Segura & Mbiti, 2022.

Curricula, classroom teaching, and exams are often poorly aligned

In Uganda, the **national curriculum**, **classroom teaching**, and **exams** cover vastly different topics and depths of cognitive demand in primary school English.

Topics

What children should know



Depth

What children should be able to do

Source: Adapted from Figure 5 in [Atuhurra & Kaffenberger, 2022](#).
See also [Burdett, 2017](#).

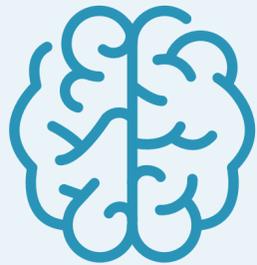
There are four principles underlying efforts for better Aligning Levels of Instruction with Goals and the Needs of Students (ALIGNS)

1



Set clear goals for children's learning progress in line with current learning levels.

2



Align instruction to be coherent with both current learning levels and targeted learning progress.

3



Provide effective and coherent support to teachers and instructors.

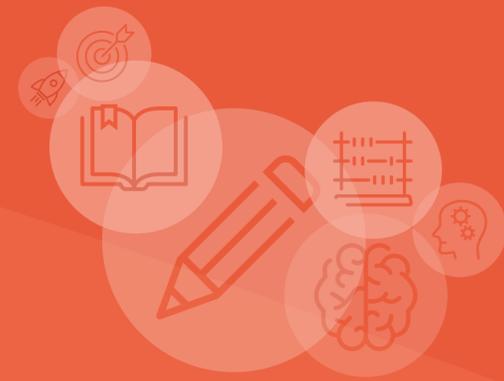
4



Tailor implementation to the opportunities and constraints of the context.

Align Measure Commit Support Adapt





Align Measure
Commit Support
Adapt

Commit to universal, early foundational learning
Measure learning regularly, reliably, and relevantly
Align systems around learning commitments
Support teaching
Adapt what you adopt as you implement