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ABSTRACT

This final report describes the objectives, activities and outcomes of a federally funded project designed to develop a model for fostering emerging literacy and language skills in young children with disabilities. The model promotes the belief that literacy is one of the primary avenues by which an individual gains access to full community participation and attainment of personal potential. The foundation for the model builds partnerships between families, schools, and community members through which children and families receive developmentally appropriate language and early literacy services that are family centered as well as individually and culturally sensitive. Additionally, the model provides teaching and staff support with the knowledge and assistance necessary to implement these comprehensive services. The model was developed over the first 3 years of the project at 2 demonstration sites, both of which serve children 3 to 5 years of age who have identified disabilities, children who are risk, and children who are typically developing in inclusive settings. The remaining years of the project included replicating the model in additional settings, developing materials, and evaluating the impact of the project on children's learning. Appended are: (1)CO-TEACH Case Studies and Cherry Valley Reports; (2) Presentation Information; (3) MELP Brochure, MELP Website, Reports and Newsletters describing MELP, and Articles related to MELP; and (4) MELP Child Impact Study, NAEYC Documentation, and MELP Conference Information. Also included are: MELP Manual; The Very Hungary Caterpillar Literacy Booklet; "Promoting the Gift of Literacy"; and "Building Early Literacy and Language Skills." (Author/SG)

The Montana Early Literacy Project

Building Language and Literacy Skills During the Early Childhood Years: Preparing Children with Disabilities for Success in Early Elementary School

Final Report

A Model Demonstration Project for Young Children with Disabilities
(84.024B)

Submitted by:

The University of Montana

Early Education Program for Children with Disabilities
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services/GCST
U.S. Department of Education

January 23, 2003

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January 24, 2003

Dr. Gail Houle
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Via Express Mail

Re: Montana Early Literacy Grant (H024B960034-99)

Dear Dr. Houle:

It is my pleasure to submit the enclosed Final Grant Performance Report for the Montana Early Literacy Project: Building Early Language and Literacy Skills During the Early Childhood Years, a Model Demonstration Project for Young Children with Disabilities (84.024B). Enclosed please find the project summary as well as supporting documentation, a child impact study, and several publications.

This final report includes the goals of the project and a discussion of the corresponding accomplishments. We are pleased by the progress made on the Montana Early Literacy Project and continue to sustain what we fondly refer to as "MELP" disseminating it across the state of Montana.

We thank you for your assistance and guidance over the past six years, and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

Richard A. van den Pol, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

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The Montana Early Literacy Project

Project Summary

"Books tell the stories of human events and the human condition and not simply the facts . . . Literature does more than change minds. It changes people's hearts. And people with changed hearts are people who can move the world."
(Gillespie, Powell, Clements, & Swearingen, 1994)

The Montana Early Literacy Project (MELP) developed a Model for fostering emerging literacy and language skills in young children with disabilities. The Model promotes the belief that literacy is one of the primary avenues by which an individual gains access to full community participation and attainment of personal potential. The foundation for the Model builds partnerships between families, schools, and community members through which children and families receive developmentally appropriate language and early literacy services that are family centered as well as individually and culturally sensitive. Additionally, the Model provides teaching and staff support with the knowledge and assistance necessary to implement these comprehensive services.

The Model was developed over the first three years of the grant at two demonstration sites, the CO-TEACH Preschool Program at The University of Montana and the Special Education Preschool at the Cherry Valley Elementary School in Polson, Montana on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Each program serves young children 3 to 5 years of age who have identified disabilities, children who are at risk of developing social and academic challenges, and children who are typically developing in inclusive settings.

The remaining years of the project included replicating the Model into settings that serve children with disabilities and have risk factors related to poverty, developing materials describing the Model, and evaluating the impact of the project on children's learning. The

replication sites were the Missoula Head Start and the Missoula County Special Education Preschool program both in Missoula, Montana and the Awesome Discoveries Day Care and Smart Start Preschool program both in Polson, Montana. One classroom in the Missoula Head Start participated in the total replication of the Project and demonstrated high fidelity to the Model. The other sites participated in partial replication and demonstrated low to medium fidelity to the Model.

The goals of the project were to:

1. Build partnerships between families, schools, and community members through which children and families receive family-centered, culturally sensitive, and developmentally appropriate early language and literacy services.

2. Provide teaching and support staff the knowledge and assistance necessary to complement family-centered, culturally sensitive, developmentally appropriate early language and literacy activities with young children with disabilities and their families.

3. Develop written, audio, and visual materials that describe the procedures used to establish the model practices of the proposed project.

4. Disseminate the findings of the proposed project to appropriate professional, paraprofessional, parent, and community groups, and to agencies that serve young children with disabilities and their families.

5. Evaluate the management model, use of the project resources and project results on an ongoing basis.

The following provides an overview of the accomplishments made on each goal. Documents that are described in each goal are included in the appendices.

Goal 1: Build partnerships between families, schools, and community members through which children and families receive family-centered, culturally sensitive, and developmentally appropriate early language and literacy services.

Many partnerships were made over the course of the project between families, schools, and community members through which children and families received family-centered, culturally sensitive, and developmentally appropriate early language and literacy services. The

two demonstration sites facilitated relationships with the families served in each setting. Site visits and numerous contacts via telephone and e-mail were made by many other educators interested in the project. The CO-TEACH Preschool Program staff provided the support to extend the project to Head Start in Missoula and to the Missoula County Special Education Preschool Program. The project staff at Cherry Valley Special Education Preschool extended the project into Awesome Discoveries Day Care, a program that provided childcare to children from low-income families and for many of the preschool students who participated in the school's program. A second replication site was in the Smart Start Preschool Program in Polson, which serves as a private preschool for children with and without disabilities in Polson.

Initially, the staff at the tribal Head Starts in Arlee and Summers, Montana were interested in participating in the project. Several tribal issues on the Flathead Reservation, which were not able to be resolved, impacted their ability to work with grant personnel. Initial training for project replication has begun in the Northern Cheyenne Head Start in Lame Deer, Montana.

The impacts of child learning from participating in the model were quite rewarding. Appendix 1 includes case studies from the CO-TEACH Preschool Program illustrating the kinds of change and the types of progress made by children with disabilities. Also included are the reports from the Special Education Preschool program at Cherry Valley Elementary School.

Goal 2: Provide teaching and support staff the knowledge and assistance necessary to complement family-centered, culturally sensitive, developmentally appropriate early language and literacy activities with young children with disabilities and their families.

Teaching and support staff were provided with the knowledge and assistance necessary to implement family-centered, culturally sensitive, developmentally appropriate early language and literacy activities with young children with disabilities and their families. Evaluative feedback

from teachers using the Model indicated that, during the first year of implementation, site visits to the demonstration programs and visits from project staff were most supportive. During the second year of implementation, the MELP manual provided the foundational information of the project, explaining why activities were done, and describing how to make adaptations and accommodations in individual settings. On-site visits by project staff were not as critical. The third year of implementation, not surprisingly, was reportedly the easiest. Teachers were able to expand the activities and incorporate more ideas. Additionally, they could focus on the children specific needs and aspects of certain skills.

Information describing the foundation of the project were described for numerous local, regional, state, national, and international audiences which were comprised of early childhood educators, paraprofessionals, administrators, care providers, and families. The presentation information is included in Appendix 2. Additionally, approximately 200 university students participated in a practicum experience at the CO-TEACH Preschool Program during the course of the project. Part of their learning opportunities included learning about language and literacy development and using strategies and activities included in the project with the children attending the CO-TEACH program.

Goal 3: Develop written, audio, and visual materials that describe the procedures used to establish the model practices of the proposed project.

A variety of written, audio, and visual materials that describe the procedures used to establish the model practices of the project were developed. The Montana Early Literacy Project Manual is the focal piece of the project. The comprehensive manual describes MELP Model, its components, and the replication in a variety of early childhood settings such as: special and

general education preschool classrooms; Head Start classrooms; and specialized childcare centers. Each component is described in detail in the manual.

The MELP Manual describes the use of existing classroom and home routines to build literacy directly into children's ongoing experiences rather than designing activities that would be added onto their classroom programs and home schedules. The Model incorporates five key components: 1) Literacy activities are embedded throughout young children's daily preschool routines; 2) Preschoolers with disabilities have developmentally appropriate emerging literacy goals specified in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); 3) Home/School partnerships are nurtured by providing opportunities to share early literacy activities, strategies, techniques, and information; 4) Preschool literacy themes and activities are sensitive to and celebrate individual differences and cultures; and 5) Teaching and support staff along with families are provided with the knowledge to develop and support the skills and abilities necessary to implement the model. The manual is included in the Final Report Packet. It is also available on the MELP website at www.umt.edu/ders/MELP.

Thematic units were developed that provide the "vehicle" for the project implementation. Each unit includes a written booklet that provides a description and rational of the activities within the unit, the expected outcomes, the materials included, and an example of a parent newsletter. The thematic tubs that were developed included (by tub title – brief thematic description): 1) The Wheels on the Bus - transportation; 2) Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes – All About Me; 3) Itsy Bitsy Spider - Spiders; 4) Rainbow Fish – Caring, Sharing, & Friendship; 5) The Very Hungry Caterpillar – Spring & Butterfly Life Cycle; 6) Alike and Different – appreciation of diversity and tolerance; and 7) Native American Stories – Native American

Indians & Oral Traditions. The booklet for "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" Literacy Tub is included in the Final Report Packet.

As an extension of the original tubs, a series of traveling tubs were developed to be "checked out" and implemented by other early childhood educators, childcare providers, and families across the state and broaden the scope of the MELP project. The traveling tubs include the seven original MELP tubs as well as the following thirteen additional tubs: 1) Dinosaur Roar - Dinosaurs; 2) Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star - Astronomy; 3) We're Going on a Bear Hunt - Bears; 4) Barn Dance – Fall Harvest & Farming; 5) Growing Vegetable Soup – Health, Spring, & Gardening; 6) The Mitten – Winter & Forest Animals; 7) The Very Grouchy Ladybug – Friendship & Bully Prevention; 8) Peanut Butter and Jelly – Food & Cooking; 9) Is Your Mama a Llama? – Baby Animals; 10) Eggs - Hatching; 11) Chicka Chicka Boom Boom – Alphabet, Numbers, Shapes, & Colors; 12) Snowballs – Family & Winter; and 13) My Five Senses – Seeing, Hearing, Touching, Tasting, & Smelling. Seven original MELP tubs plus thirteen additional traveling tubs equals a total of 20 literacy tubs available for use among special educators, speech and language pathologists, preschool teachers, childcare providers and families across the state of Montana. To date, MELP literacy tubs have been implemented in the following Montana communities: Butte, Dillon, Eureka, Frenchtown, Heart Butte, Kalispell, Lame Deer, Laurel, Libby, Missoula, Ronan, and Thompson Falls.

Materials were developed for promotional activities including a brochure and a web site. Each describes the project and has been used for promotional, informational, and dissemination purposes. Additionally, the project was described in the Early Childhood Report and the University of Montana's School of Education Newsletter. These documents are included in Appendix 3.

Other written materials included published manuscripts authored by project personnel. *Promoting the Gift of Literacy: 101 Literacy Lessons* was written by Dr. Rhea Ashmore (2001), a literacy professor in the School of Education who consulted on the project. This book is a resource providing a series of activities and strategies to develop literacy skills in children. Another manuscript entitled *Building Early Literacy and Language Skills* written by Paulson, Noble, Jepson, and van den Pol (2001) describes early literacy development along with strategies and activities that facilitate the development of skills that lead to reading and writing. A copy of these publications are included in this report.

Several articles were produced during the project. One article written for the project by Ashmore is entitled "Phonological Awareness in Children: A Review of the Literature" and provides a literature review of phonological and phonemic awareness. Improving the phonological awareness skills in young children is an important component of the Project. The MELP manual specifically describes how to create developmentally appropriate activities that focus on improving children's phonological awareness skills.

Another article, "The Effects of Phonemic Awareness Drills on Phonological Awareness and Word Reading Performance in a Later Learned Alphabetic Script" by Ashmore, Farrier, Paulson, and Chu (in press) describes the effect of a phonemic awareness skills training program on reading development of Chinese children learning to speak English. The results describe the positive impact of providing phonological awareness instruction for children learning English as a second language and whose language skills are underdeveloped. Both of these articles are included in Appendix 3.

A video tape was produced that describes literacy at school, at home, and in the community. This tape is a great resource for families and care providers and how they can

promote early literacy skills in all settings. Other professional development materials include a series of power point presentations that describe early literacy and language development, social communication skill development, strategies and activities to facilitate the development of these skills, techniques that promote positive behavioral supports and strategies that address challenging behavior; and issues addressing cultural responsiveness especially with Native Americans.

Goal 4: Disseminate the findings of the proposed project to appropriate professional, paraprofessional, parent, and community groups, and to agencies that serve young children with disabilities and their families.

Project findings were disseminated to professional, paraprofessional, parent, and community groups, and to agencies that serve young children with disabilities and their families. One of the most important findings includes the results of a study that was conducted of a group of children in Head Start that participated in the MELP project and a group of children in Head Start that participated in the standard Head Start curriculum. The results identified a significant increase in the language and literacy skills of children participating in the MELP project over those who did not.

The study compared pre- and post-test results of children's language and literacy development in the Head Start classroom serving as the primary replication site with a similar group of children attending Head Start who did not participate in the project. The results describe significant gains in the early literacy and language skills in children participating in a classroom using the MELP model. This particular Head Start classroom was noted to have "exemplary literacy practices" by an accreditation team for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

An article, "The Effects of and Early Reading Curriculum on Language and Literacy Development of Head Start Children" by Paulson, Kelly, Jepson, van den Pol, Farrier, and Ashmore (in preparation for submittal) has been written which describes the effect of the MELP curriculum on language and literacy development of child in Head Start. This article and the NAEYC documentation are included in Appendix 4.

Two showcase project conferences were organized for families, childcare providers, and educators. The Cherry Valley Early Literacy Conference was held on October 16, 1999. The presentation topics included: Literacy Through Play, Tools for Early Reading Assessment, Storytelling, The Early Literacy Project, Improving Communication: How to Encourage Language Development, Using Assessment to Plan for Reading Instruction, Writing in the Early Years, Extending the Story, Selecting Resources for Reading Instruction, Literacy From Birth, Phonological Awareness: A Link to Literacy, Browsing Children's Literature and Storybook Weaving. The conference was well attended. Conference and evaluation information are included in Appendix 4.

Another conference was held on February 10, 2001at Cherry Valley Elementary School. This conference focused on literacy in the classroom, literacy at home, and literacy in the community. Many families participated in this interactive conference. Conference and evaluation information is included in Appendix 4.

Goal 5: Evaluate the management model, use of the project resources and project results on an ongoing basis.

The model management, use of the project resources, and project results were evaluated on an ongoing basis. The primary challenge in project management was operating two demonstrations sites, 70 miles distant, with one located on the Flathead Indian Reservation.

Attention to model fidelity after the demonstration phase required close communication, and was aided by conducting a number of joint activities. These included co-sponsored Parent-Child Reading Conferences, Literacy Workshops for Child Care Providers, Project Summer Institutes, and National Conference Presentations (e.g., DEC). Nevertheless, the advantages of this collective approach greatly outweighed the weaknesses. Project products reflect responsiveness to tribal cultural issues including the value of native language, avoidance of print or videotaping of stories that traditionally have been shared through oral traditions, and strategies for encouraging developmentally appropriate language and literacy experiences for culturally diverse young children with disabilities.

The Montana Early Literacy Project Model identifies an effective process to facilitate the development of vital language and emerging literacy skills in young children with disabilities, those at risk of developing challenges learning to read and write, and those who are typically developing across a variety of settings. By providing young children with developmentally appropriate activities and including their families in culturally and individually sensitive manners, the Model helps to build important foundations in language and literacy development, so children all can reach their fullest potential.

Case Study One

CO-TEACH Preschool, a model demonstration site for the Montana Early Literacy Project (MELP), is an inclusive preschool program designed for children ages 3 to 5. The following case study describes how an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team developed an IEP for a child with a speech and language delay using Component 2: IEP Connections and Component 3: Family Connections of the MELP model.

Courtney came to CO-TEACH as a 4-year-old with an IEP in place September of 2001. According to her parents and previous service providers, the goals and objectives on her current IEP had not been met and were deemed appropriate for continuation. Courtney was receiving speech and language, physical therapy, and self-help/independence services as per her Child Study Team Report.

The Early Literacy Screening, a tool used in Component 2 of the MELP model which provides critical information to identify children's emerging literacy strengths, was administered to Courtney in November 2001 and April 2002. Courtney's initial Early Literacy Screening in November 2001 showed low results with a screening total of 42%. She received a score of 53% for Print Awareness, 47% for Language Use, and 28% for Phonological Awareness. During the screening, Courtney was visibly frustrated and tried to manipulate the screener by using avoidance behaviors.

As the school year continued, Courtney showed little, if any, progress towards her IEP goals and objectives. By April, she was unable to sing her ABC's, count to 5 consistently, expressively identify the letters in her name, and re-tell a story with three main events from a storybook. Courtney's classroom/special education teacher was concerned that she may be struggling with more than a speech and language delay. A second Early Literacy Screening was

administered in April 2002, which suggested that although she had made considerable progress in Language Use, Courtney was definitely not making progress comparable to that of her peers in Phonological Awareness and Print Awareness. Courtney's screening total was 48%. She received a score of 47% for Print Awareness, 73% for Language Use, and 28% for Phonological Awareness. A delicate conversation between Courtney's special education teacher and her parents concerning her progress resulted in her parents wanting to do some further testing to determine if Courtney had additional needs that needed to be met. On the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, Courtney obtained an overall composite sore of 96, which fell within the average range. Results suggested that Courtney's strengths were in visual memory and visual learning. A significant weakness was demonstrated in auditory memory. Overall, the results on the Stanford-Binet and other assessments ruled out Courtney possibly being cognitively delayed.

As a result of further testing and the IEP team's concern for Courtney's academic success, we wrote another IEP addressing specific foundational skills that would positively impact Courtney's later reading and writing acquisition. New IEP goals and objectives targeting emerging literacy skills described in the MELP manual and coupled with parent training (Component 3: Family Connections) in the areas of print and phonological awareness, and language use, Courtney demonstrated marked success. By October 2002, Courtney increased her overall score on the Emerging Literacy Checklist by 25 points with 60% compared to that of 35% in May of 2002. It is very likely that Courtney's progress on current IEP goals and objectives can be attributed to the IEP team's focus on Component 2: IEP Connections and Component 3: Family Connections of the MELP model.

Case Study Two

I work as an Early Childhood Special Education Teacher at CO-TEACH Preschool at the University of Montana. CO-TEACH is an inclusive preschool program that serves children ages 3 to 5 with and without disabilities. CO-TEACH is also a model demonstration site for the Montana Early Literacy Project (MELP).

The following case study describes the progress made by a young preschool student at CO-TEACH who was diagnosed with autism at the age of 4. Cody came to CO-TEACH shortly after this diagnosis with some challenging behaviors typical of a child who falls on the autism spectrum. During the course of six months, Cody made significant gains in the areas of behavior, engagement and participation, communication, and social interaction. The implementation of the MELP literacy tubs played an integral role in Cody's progress. In the following study I would like to first describe some of Cody's initial behaviors, then some aspects of the literacy tubs that helped engage him, and finally some of the specific gains made by Cody in his first 6 months at CO-TEACH.

When Cody first came to CO-TEACH, he had a difficult time separating from his family. He expressed his dislike of separation from family and for new and unfamiliar places through aggressive/disruptive behaviors. He would spend most of the day tantrumming, screaming, spitting, and throwing himself on the floor. He did not want to be left at school, take off his jacket, or participate in any activities. It took approximately two weeks before his tantrums started to decrease and before some sign of interest in classroom activities began.

With the reduction of tantrums, Cody started to exhibit an excessive preoccupation with particular routines. After taking off his coat, Cody insisted on going up to the bathroom, using the toilet to urinate or to just look at it if he didn't have to urinate, and then flushing both the

toilet he used and the toilet adjacent to it. He would then wash his hands in the sink on his right and then in the sink on his left. This ritual seemed to alleviate feelings of anxiety and allowed him to proceed with preschool activities.

In these first weeks of preschool, Cody rarely communicated verbally and did not display an interest in any kind of social interaction. The number of verbal words spoken was minimal and when he did speak, he often used echolalic speech. He would usually repeat words and two to three word phrases that he had heard in other settings.

At CO-TEACH we implement literacy tubs as described in the MELP manual. Cody did not engage in any of these activities in the first two weeks of school, but he was exposed to the songs, stories, activities, and conversations that revolved around a single theme and repeated throughout the day; day after day. We did not realize it at the time, but he had been listening to and memorizing these songs and stories even though he did not appear to be engaged. His parents reported later that he had been singing and reciting them at home.

Over the course of the next few months, Cody began participating in learning center activities, attending to whole group activities that included repeated readings and repeated song and finger plays, using words related to literacy tub themes, and showing an interest in using these words to communicate with others. The repetitive nature of the literacy tubs appealed to Cody's desire for sameness in routine. He learned this routine very quickly after the reduction of his anxiety and tantrums. He began to look forward to activities throughout the day that included his new favorite songs and stories.

By the end of his fourth month at CO-TEACH, Cody was attending to whole group activities 88% of given opportunities; participating to whole group activities 50% of given opportunities; following one-step instructions 59% of given opportunities; using words to request

desired activities or items 54% of given opportunities; and playing interactively with others 22% of given opportunities. By the end of the school year, two months later, Cody made significant progress in each of these areas. He was attending to whole group activities 93% of given opportunities; participating to whole group activities 63% of given opportunities; following one-step instructions 79% of given opportunities; using words to request desired activities or items 100% of given opportunities; and playing interactively with others 55% of given opportunities.

The implementation of the MELP literacy tubs provided us with a tool to help engage a child with significant needs and challenging behaviors. The repetitive nature of the tubs appealed to this child and helped engage him in the literacy activities that he grew to expect and enjoy. Engagement in these activities initiated progress in multiple areas of development.

Case Study Three

The Montana Early Literacy Project has had a powerful impact on helping children with disabilities develop the foundation skills needed for learning to read and write. The following case study documents the growth of a young child who during his preschool years displayed many of the predictive characteristics related to later difficulty in learning to read and write.

Matthew began his educational career as a young three-year-old by attending a private preschool program known for its high quality. At the end of the school year his mother expressed concern that Matthew was not learning at the same rate as other children his age. A referral to special education was completed resulting in a comprehensive evaluation when Matthew was 3 years, 10 months. The Child Study Team Report indicated that Matthew qualified for special education services as a child with a disability including preschool special education, speech/language therapy, and occupational therapy.

Matthew's initial Individual Education Program (IEP) included goals addressing fine motor skills (copying shapes, cutting), pre-academic skills (rote counting, color identification, name recognition, letter identification, and matching), speech intelligibility and sentence structure, and phonological awareness (rhyming, blending, and segmenting). The educational setting chosen to provide the special educational services was the CO-TEACH Preschool Program at The University of Montana. The related services were provided by the Missoula Area Education Cooperative. Matthew and his family also received language and literacy services through the Western Montana RiteCare Language and Literacy Clinic.

The results of his initial Emerging Literacy Screening showed a low level of early and emerging literacy skill development receiving a score of 13% for Print Development, 33% for Language Use, 0% for Phonological Awareness with a screening total of 15% correct. Matthew

was 4 years, 2 months at the time of this assessment. He did not distinguish the difference between words and pictures on storybook pages, did not recognize his name or know any letters within his name, could recognize one shape, and could sing less than a quarter of the alphabet song. His speech was difficult to understand and his sentence structure contained many grammatical and syntactical errors. He was able to identify only a few basic concepts and did not convey a narrative with more that one related event. His phonological awareness skills were essentially nonexistent.

After 8 months of preschool using the MELP model and coordinated speech/language services through the language and literacy clinic, Matthew showed substantial progress increasing his early and emerging literacy skills. On his second Emerging Literacy Screening conducted in April, he received scores of 53% for Print Development, 60% for Language Use, 50% for Phonological Awareness with a screening total of 54% correct.

Matthew returned to the CO-TEACH Preschool Program for a second year of preschool services as a five-year-old. The Child Study Team determined that another year of preschool services would allow him to continue to build his foundation skills for early literacy before going to kindergarten. The results of the Emerging Literacy Screening at the beginning of his second year of preschool were similar to the results obtained at the end of the previous school year. Over the summer with continued stimulation at home, but with no direct intervention, Matthew maintained his skills and showed minimal growth. The results of the third screening given in October were scores of 53% for Print Development, 73% for Language Use, 50% for Phonological Awareness with a screening total of 58% correct. At this time Matthew was beginning to use his finger in a left to right sweep as he "read" words from a familiar book. He could identify shapes, print symbols, and his name. He was not able to write his name or identify

any letter names and he could sing about half of the alphabet song. His speech was becoming easier to understand but still contained several sound pattern errors. His sentences were longer and more grammatically correct. He understood many basic concepts and could tell a narrative with three related events. As with the alphabet song, he was only able to sing about half of another familiar song in a rhythmic fashion. His phonological awareness skills were developing with some concept of rhyming, and blending and segmenting of words from syllable units.

Screening Date	Chronological Age	Print Development	Language Use	Phonological Awareness	Screening Total
9-99	4-2	13%	33%	0%	15%
4-00	4-8	53%	60%	50%	54%
10-00	5-3	53%	73%	58%	58%
10-01	6-3	100%	87%	90%	92%

During Matthew's second year of special education preschool services, the Child Study Team determined that he needed additional intensive intervention with letter knowledge and phonological awareness. This service was provided at his elementary school on an individual basis helping him learn the letter names and begin developing an understanding of the alphabetic principle.

By the time Matthew entered kindergarten, he knew most of the upper and lower case letter names, several letter/sound associations, and could sing the entire alphabet song. He could write using mock and random letters. His speech was understandable to the average listener and his sentences were more grammatically correct. He could match words that rhymed, produce

words that rhymed, blend words from syllables and sounds, and segment words in to syllables and beginning sounds.

When Matthew turned six years of age, another Child Study Team meeting was held to determine eligibility for continued special education services and a more specific category of disability. It was determined that Matthew had a documented learning disability. The intensive services he had received during preschool had been very effective in helping Matthew develop the foundation skills needed to learn to read and write. It was also evident that he needed direct instruction and intervention to help him continue to learn. The CST meeting at his elementary school decided to continue the intensive special education services in helping Matthew progress with his reading and writing instead of determining that his skills were age and grade appropriate, discontinuing services, and wait to see what happened.

At the end of his kindergarten year, Matthew had a sight vocabulary of over a hundred words, he could sound out words using phonetic skills, and he would write sentences and short stories in a semi-phonetic and phonetic manner. He could produce strings of rhyming words, blend words from sounds, and segment words into sounds. His speech was clear, his sentences were correct and he could relate long stories in sequence.

Matthew made wonderful progress during his years attending the CO-TEACH Preschool Program. He made considerable growth in developing his early literacy skills by participating in a preschool program that embedded literacy throughout the day, focused early literacy outcomes in his IEP, worked closely with his family, and recognized his individual strengths and needs with teaching staff who had acquired the skills to help him develop age level competencies in early literacy. The early intervention services that Matthew received did not eliminate his learning disability. However, he was able to start school with emerging literacy skills that

outpaced many of his classmates. MELP was an important part of Matthew's early intervention program.

August 30, 2000

Dr. Rick van den Pol
University of Montana
Department of Educational Research and Service
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

Dear Dr. van den Pol,

This is a final report regarding the individual contract work for the Montana Early Literacy Model completed by Elaine Meeks and Debra Hogenson from July 1, 2000 to August 15, 2000. During this period we were not under contract with the Polson School District, allowing us to engage in intensive work with the replication site in the Polson community.

Replication work included becoming familiar with all components of a literacy tub and the design of daily lesson plans. We drafted a letter to parents explaining the upcoming tub implementation as well as collaboration with the University of Montana. We purchased all necessary materials and the food for snacks. We met with staff from the replication site on several occasions and provided staff development on the activities in the tub.

We implemented the model at the replication site with their staff observing and working alongside us in a supportive role. Each day, we conducted an evaluation session with the staff to discuss the perceived successes and challenges of the day's activities.

Even with this intensive level of support, we discovered limitations to successful replication of the Montana Early Literacy Model:

* There is a requisite level of knowledge that is necessary for successful replication of the model.

  LEARNING THEORY:
  Brian Cambourne's model of the Conditions for Literacy Learning, emergent literacy perspective, language - literacy link, the role of the teacher and the role of the student ; a constructivist approach, the teaching - learning cycle, etc.

  DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES:
  Adequate amount available literacy materials, positive interaction with children, modeling as an instructional strategy, creating a stimulating, language rich environment that addresses all early childhood domains, etc..

* There needs to be a greater emphasis on student outcomes. Activities and materials should be selected based on student learning needs as determined by assessment. The literacy tubs serve as the means by which literacy is integrated throughout the day. The use of the tubs alone do not necessarily result in student language and literacy learning.

* There are specific personal qualities of staff working with young children that promote positive learning experiences. This includes verbal and non-verbal behaviors.

* Cultural and diversity components need to be relevant to the child and their community.

In addition, as part of our independent contract work, we have written outlines and drafts for sections of the manual being collaboratively developed with University personnel. We have attended and participated in two working team meetings. We are in the process of creating a tub relevant to the Salish-Kootenai culture.

Please contact us if you need further information.

Sincerely,

Elaine Meeks
Elaine Meeks

Debra Hogenson
Debra Hogenson

Report of Independent Contractor Services
Montana Early Literacy Model
7-1-00 to 8-15-00

As independent contractors, we engaged in replication efforts with a local private day care facility in Polson during the summer of 2000. We provided professional development to the staff and director of the facility. This included demonstration teaching as well as evening workshops. We found that this was a necessary step for implementation of the tubs. Using the environmental scan instrument, we found that the site lacked many of the basic materials required for literacy activities to take place throughout the day. We met with the staff and selected and ordered appropriate materials to set up the environment for literacy learning. Professional development also centered around the role of the staff members in promoting oral language development through developmentally appropriate activities.

The *Rainbow Fish* , *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes,* and *Wheels on the Bus* literacy tubs were implemented in the day care facility. The first two tubs were implemented with considerable support from us. This included helping to write the lesson plans, gathering materials, and modeling the teaching. The staff of the day care implemented the third tub with much less support, indicating an increase in knowledge and skills. In the fall, they also implemented *Itsy Bitsy Spider*. Appropriate evaluation forms were submitted to the University.

We also met several times with University personnel and assisted in the development of the training manual for the project. Ms. Meeks drafted a section on family involvement for the manual and Ms. Hogenson drafted a section on cultural diversity. We also worked with Cherry Valley staff to provide a family take home bag development process as well as descriptions of specific bags. Sample IEP objectives were also provided.

Elaine Meeks
2280 Baypoint Road
Polson, MT 59860

Debra Hogenson
113 Jim's Dr.
Polson, MT 59860

CHERRY VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

February 15, 2001

Dr. Rick van den Pol
Division of Educational Research and Service
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

Dear Rick,

Please find enclosed the Year 4 deliverables report and the report of our summer independent contractor work. Thank you for taking the time to answer my questions today. I decided to stay and finish this before heading home to the couch and the cat. I hope the reports are adequate. Please let me know if you need further information.

I look forward to seeing you in Washington D.C at the NECTAS conference.

Sincerely,

Elaine

Elaine Meeks

111 4th Avenue East, Polson, Montana 59860 -2181 Ph. (406) 883-6333
Fax. (406) 883-6332 Internet Site: www.polson.k12.mt.us

Montana Early Literacy Model
Cherry Valley Elementary School Demonstration Site
Scope of Work Services / Deliverables
Year 4 - September 1, 1999 - August 30, 2000

1. Three Early Literacy Model thematic kits were implemented in the Cherry Valley preschool classroom during Year 4:

Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes
Wheels on the Bus
Rainbow Fish

The fourth kit, Itsy Bitsy Spider, will be implemented in the fall of 2001. All appropriate forms have been submitted to the University.

2. A number of visitors from the area visited our preschool during the school year. Several of these visitors are parents of the preschool children who attend the Cherry Valley preschool. Others are parents who weekly attend "Little Cherries", the parent-child literacy time in our school library. The other visitors are early childhood educators from the region. A list of the visitors is attached.

3. A half day early literacy conference for early childhood educators and child care providers in the Mission and Flathead valleys was held at Cherry Valley school in October of 1999. It was attended by 103 participants. Evaluative data was summarized and shared with the University within one month of the conference.

4. Site Coordinator, Elaine Meeks and Curriculum Specialist, Debra Hogenson, attended a one day summer work session in June 2000. We met with University personnel and shared a case study type summary during the session. We discussed challenges to the replication work that was scheduled to begin in late June or early July at the child care facility in Polson.

CHERRY VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

March 10, 2001

Dr. Rick van den Pol
Division of Educational Research and Service
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59801

Dear Rick,

Enclosed please find a summary of the evaluations by participants of the Early Literacy conference at Cherry Valley School on February 10, 2001. This completes #3 deliverable of the year 5 subcontract. Please contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,

Elaine

Elaine Meeks

111 4th Avenue East, Polson, Montana 59860 -2181 Ph. (406) 883-6333
Fax. (406) 883-6332 Internet Site: www.polson.k12.mt.us

October 31, 2002
Montana Early Literacy Project
End of Year Report
Submitted by Debbie Hogenson
Cherry Valley School
Polson School District
111 East Fourth St.
Polson, Montana 59860

The following is a report documenting information from three sources, Cherry Valley Pre-school, Smart Start, and Awesome Discoveries Daycare/Pre-school. Cherry Valley Pre-school serves special needs students aged three and four, Smart Start is a privately owned pre-school that serves students aged four and five, and Awesome Discoveries is a state funded special needs pre-school/daycare that serves infants through grade school children.

Tubs implemented and time of implementation during the school year 2002-2003: Cherry Valley implemented all six tubs in the school year, each for a period of one month. Smart Start implemented four tubs (Rainbow Fish, We are all Alike/Different, The Hungry Caterpillar, and Heads, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes), each for a period of two weeks. Awesome Discoveries implemented all six tubs, each for a period of one month.

Student responses/likes: Cherry Valley students didn't seem to be engaged in the books, were not interested in books, and didn't choose to read books at free time. Note: in addition, this group of children showed little or no interest in library time. Smart Start students loved the art projects and the activities, and seemed to enjoy the repeated readings. Awesome Discoveries' students liked the stories, chose to read the books at free time, the older students enjoyed reading the books to the younger ones, the students liked the visuals that were displayed on the walls.

Teacher satisfaction: Cherry Valley's teacher enhanced the tubs with various other materials in efforts to engage the students, given their age and ability. Many of the centers were difficult for the students as they needed adult supervision. The behavior of the students interfered with real learning. The time for centers was limited as time for classroom instruction and circle time was a priority. Smart Start's teacher commented that the physical environment of the pre-school did not have enough room for all the centers, also said students could not manage many of the centers on their own. Awesome

Discoveries' teacher said the thematic approach of the centers "helped to get everyone thinking the same", the staff and the students. The teacher noted she is working on incorporating math into the tubs. She is currently enrolled in a math course and now has a "whole new look" and is "looking at the tubs mathematically". She is supplementing the literacy tubs with math manipulatives, math books and math concepts and language. She commented that "Literacy is the base for everything."

Support needed: Cherry Valley's teacher said monetary resources were needed to replenish the tubs and buy additional books to accompany the tubs, perhaps with more appeal for young learners. Smart Start's teacher said more personnel was necessary to fully implement the learning centers effectively. Awesome Discoveries' teacher said supplies to replenish the tub were needed.

Student learning outcomes: Cherry Valley's teacher commented that the tubs taught the goals of the students' IEPs. Academic objectives were evident in the implementation of the tubs. Language usage and vocabulary development were not assessed. Smart Start's teacher observed the students' knowledge of the large concept within the context of the stories. The students' literacy acquisition was enhanced and highlighted with the implementation of the tubs. Awesome Discoveries' teacher noticed an increased attention span of her students. Long term memory was improved due to the repeated phrases in the selected stories, rhymes, poems and songs.

Visitor log: Cherry Valley loaned a tub to the America Reads coordinator to present to colleagues for a state-wide workshop. A local Lutheran Pre-school teacher borrowed a few of the tubs and incorporated them into her program. Smart Start did not lend out the tubs. Awesome Discoveries loaned parts of the tubs (activities, games) to families of long-time enrolled students. The teacher shared the tubs with colleagues and math professor.

Appendix 2

The following presentations were given by project staff:

Jepson, S., & Guilfoyle, S. (October, 2001). *On Track Curriculum and Assessment* and Addressing Challenging Behavior in-service. San Juan School District, San Juan, Utah.

Jepson, S., Foster, A., Guilfoyle, S., Paulson, L., & Scoles, G. (March, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L., van den Pol, R., & Jepson, S. (December, 2002). Building Early Literacy and Language Skills: favorite strategies and activities. National Division of Early Childhood Conference, San Diego, California.

Jepson, S. (November, 2002). Inclusion, Collaboration, and Communication. Head Start In-Service, Butte, Montana.

Kelly, K., Jepson, S., Guilfoyle, S., & Bunce, M. (August, 2002). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Region V - Montana Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD) Conference, The University of Montana, Missoula, Montana.

Jepson, S., Guilfoyle, S., & Wolferman, A. (June, 2002). Storytelling: We Learned it All in Preschool. Montana TALES Fourth Annual Conference, The University of Montana, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L., Noble, L., & Jepson, S. (April, 2002). Building Early Literacy and Language Skills. Montana 2002 CEC Conference on disABILITIES, Missoula, Montana.

Jepson, S. (March, 2002). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Essential Connections Grant, Nurturing Center/Summit, Flathead Association for the Education of Young Children, Kalispell, Montana.

Paulson, L., Jepson, S. & van den Pol, R. (December, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. National Division of Early Childhood Conference, Boston, Massachusetts.

Jepson, S., Scoles, G., & Kuehn, J. (October, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Montana Association for the Education of Young Children (MtAEYC) Early Childhood Conference, Kalispell, Montana.

Jepson, S. (September, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Cherry Valley Elementary School, Polson, Montana.

Jepson, S. (August, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project: Making books with young children. Region V Montana Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD) Conference, The University of Montana, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. (January, 1998). Using *Good Talking Words* at Home, Head Start Parent Training, Helena, Montana.

van den Pol, R., Paulson, L., & Jepson, S. (February, 1998). Best inclusive practices in early childhood education: *On Track Curriculum and Assessment*, behavior management and social skills training, language/literacy connections, and family/school partnerships. United States Department of Defense Dependent Schools, Yokosuka, Misawa, and Okinawa, Japan and Seoul, Korea.

van den Pol, R., Paulson, L., & Butterfield, S. (February, 1998, December, 1997). Best Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood Education: Behavior Management and Social Skills Training, Language/Literacy Connections, *On Track* Curriculum/Assessment, and Family/School Partnerships, United States Department of Defense Dependent Schools, Seoul, Korea, Yokosuka, Misawa, and Okinawa, Japan, and Kaiserslautern, Wuertsburg, and Frankfurt, Germany.

Paulson, L., van den Pol, R., Vincent, L., Jepson, S., Whedbee, L., Efinger, B., & Hould, T. (April, 1998). The language literacy connection: phonological awareness and developmentally appropriate activities to enhance emerging literacy skills. Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. & van den Pol, R. (April, 1998). Prosocial Communication Skills: A Program to Develop Social Communication Skills for Young Children, Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Missoula, Montana.

Butterfield, S., Efinger, B., Hould, T., Paulson, L., van den Pol, R., & Whidbee, L. (April, 1998). The Language Literacy Connection: Phonological Awareness and Developmentally Appropriate Activities to Enhance Emerging Literacy Skills, Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. & van den Pol, R. (July, 1998). The Literacy Connection: Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills, Sopris West Summer Institute, Snowmass, Colorado.

Paulson, L. & van den Pol, R. (July, 1998). *Good Talking Words*: A Social Communication Skills Program for Preschool and Kindergarten Children, Sopris West Summer Institute, Snowmass, Colorado.

Paulson, L., Jepson, S., & Daday, C. (September, 1998). Training on *Good Talking Words* and *On Track,* B.E.S.T. Project, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Paulson, L. (September, 1998). The Language Literacy Connection: Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills, Southern Alberta Professional Development Consortium, Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

Paulson, L., van den Pol, R., & Hould, T. (October, 1998). The Language Literacy Connection; Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills through Phonological Awareness, Montana Speech-Language and Hearing Association Convention, Helena, Montana.

Jepson, S., Daday, C., Paulson, L., & Bruce, C. (January, 1999). *On Track* and Family Participation, Lame Deer Head Start, Lame Deer, Montana.

Paulson, L., Jepson, S., Daday, C., & Bruce, C. (January, 1999). Language Literacy Connections and Prosocial Skills, Region I CSPD, Mile City, Montana.

Paulson, L., Daday, C., Bruce, C., & Jepson, S. (January, 1999). Language and literacy connections and prosocial skills. Region I CSPD Conference, Miles City, Montana.

Paulson, L., Noble, L., & Spiegle, D., (February, 1999). Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills, Interactive Teaching Network Teleconference, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

van den Pol, R. & Paulson, L., (February, 1999). *Good Talking Words* and *On Track,* Louisiana Federation Council for Exceptional Children 19th Annual Super Conference on Special Education, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Grosfield, J. & Paulson, L. (March, 1999). To Hear – To Speak – To Understand: All You Wanted to Know About the Scottish Rite Childhood Language Disorders Clinics, Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference on Disabilities, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. & Bruce, C., (March, 1999). The AAC's of Literacy, Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference on Disabilities, Missoula, Montana.

Hart, J., Paulson, L., & Hart, J., (March, 1999). The Sibling Support Project, Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference on Disabilities, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L., (March, 1999). *Good Talking Words,* DSQIC Head Start Disabilities Training Day, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L., (July, 1999). Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills in Young Children, Reaching the Tough to Teach, The Island Institute, Jekyll Island, Georgia.

Paulson, L., (July, 1999). Developing Social Communication Skills in Young Children, Reaching the Tough to Teach, The Island Institute, Jekyll Island, Georgia.

Paulson, L., (July, 1999). Extending Observation and Participation for Early Childhood Settings, ABCDS: Activity-Based Curriculum for Developmental Sequences, 1999 Alabama Summer Mega Conference, Mobile, Alabama

Vincent, L., Jepson, S., & Park, L. (August, 1999). Montana Early Literacy Project. Head Start, Missoula, Montana.

Jepson, S. (August, 1999). Montana Early Literacy Project. Head Start, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L., (August, 1999). Keynote: ABCs to Ponder, Montana Region I CSPD Conference, Glendive, Montana.

Paulson, L., (August, 1999). Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills in Young Children, Montana Region I CSPD Conference, Glendive, Montana.

Paulson, L., (August, 1999). Developing Social Communication Skills in Young Children, Montana Region I CSPD Conference, Glendive, Montana.

Paulson, L., (September, 1999). *Good Talking Words* in the Head Start Classroom, HRDC Head Start, Bozeman, Montana.

Paulson, L., (October, 1999). Facilitating Pro-Social Communication Skills in Children, Montana State Foster/Adoptive Parent Conference, Butte, Montana.

Paulson, L., (October, 1999). Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills in Young Children, Rocky Mountain Development Council/Head Start, Helena, Montana.

Paulson, L., (October, 1999). *Good Talking Words* in the Head Start Classroom, Rocky Mountain Development Council/Head Start, Helena, Montana.

van den Pol, R. & Paulson, L., (October, 1999). How Safe Is Your School?, Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders Conference, Ogden, Utah.

Jepson, S. & Paulson, L., (October, 1999). *On Track*, Utah's BEST Project, Ogden, Utah.

Paulson, L. H., Jepson, S. & Daday, C., (October, 1999). ABCDs: Activity-Based Curriculum For Developmental Sequences, Montana Early Childhood Conference, Bozeman, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. & van den Pol, R., (October, 1999). Developing Social Skills in Young Children, Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders Conference, Ogden, Utah.

Paulson, L., (October, 1999). Language Literacy Connections: Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills in Young Children, Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders Conference, Ogden, Utah.

Paulson, L. H. & Guilfoyle, S., (January, 2000). Prosocial Communication Skills: Developing Social Communication Skills in Young Children. 10th Annual Mid-Winter Early Childhood Conference "Preparing Educators for the Millenium," Wolf Point, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. & Guilfoyle, S, (January, 2000). Language Literacy Connections: Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills In Young Children. 10th Annual Mid-Winter Early Childhood Conference "Preparing Educators for the Millenium," Wolf Point, Montana.

Paulson, L. H., (January, 2000). Keynote: ABCs to Ponder, 10th Annual Mid-Winter Early Childhood Conference "Preparing Educators for the Millenium," Wolf Point, Montana.

Paulson, L., & Guilfoyle, S. (January, 2000). *Good Talking Words* and behavior management. 10th Annual Mid-Winter Early Childhood Conference, Wolf Point, Montana.

van den Pol, R. & Paulson, L. H., (February, 2000). Identification and Prevention Strategies for Serious Behavior Problems in Young Children. Northwest Educational Service District 189, Mount Vernon, Washington.

Paulson, L. H. & Johns, R., (March, 2000). *Good Talking Words*: Developing Social Communication Skills in Young Children, Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference of disABILITIES, Billings, Montana.

Johns, R. & Paulson, L. H., (March, 2000). Good Talking with You: Language Acquisition through Conversation, Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference of disABILITIES, Billings, Montana.

Paulson, L. H., (March, 2000). How Language and Literacy Are Connected; Keys to Unlock the Connection; Language/Literacy Skills at Home; and *Using Good Talking Words* at Home and at School. Regional Preschool Conference, Roosevelt, Utah.

Paulson, L. H. & van den Pol, R., (April, 2000). Developing Social Communication Skills in Young Children, Comprehensive System of Professional Development, Great Falls, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. & van den Pol, R., & Jepson, S., (May, 2000). Social Communication Skills: What to Teach and How to Teach It, Northwest Educational Service District 189, Mount Vernon, Washington.

Paulson, L. H. (June, 2000). *Good Talking Words*, 2000 MBI/Big Sky Summer Institute, Bozeman , Montana.

Paulson, L., & Guilfoyle, S. (June, 2000). *Good Talking Words*. Montana Behavioral Initiative Annual Summer Conference, Bozeman, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. & van den Pol, R. (July, 2000). How Safe Is Your School?, Smoky Mountain Institute, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

Paulson, L. H. & Noble, L. (July, 2000). Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills, Rocky Mountain Institute 2000, Breckenridge, Colorado.

Paulson, L. H. & Jepson, S. (August, 2000). Emerging Literacy, Comprehensive System of Professional Development, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. (September, 2000). Prosocial Communication Skills: Developing Social Communication Skills in Young Children, Early Childhood Special Education Conference 2000, Logan, Utah.

Paulson, L. H. (September, 2000). Language Literacy Connections: Enhancing Emerging Literacy Skills in Young Children, Early Childhood Special Education Conference 2000, Logan, Utah.

Johns, R. & Paulson, L. H. (October, 2000). Challenging Behaviors in Early Childhood Settings/ Teaching Social Communication Skills. Head Start Generation 2000 Preconference Training, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Paulson, L., Guilfoyle, S., & Jepson, S. (November, 2000). *Good Talking Words* and challenging behavior. Butte Head Start, Butte, Montana.

Paulson, L. H., Jepson, S. & Guilfoyle, S. (November, 2000). Social Communication Skills: What to Teach and How to Teach It, Head Start, Butte, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. & van den Pol, R. (December, 2000). Social Communication Skills: What to Teach and How to Teach It, Poster Session, DEC International Early Childhood Conference on Children with Special Needs, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Van den Pol, R.A. (December, 2000). *School violence: What do the data say?* Monthly Meeting of the Rotary Club, Missoula, MT.

Guilfoyle, S., & Paulson, L. (February, 2001). Learning at school and how it connects at home. Celebrating the First Five Years, Cherry Valley Elementary, Polson, Montana.

Guilfoyle, S. & Paulson, L. H. (February, 2001). Literacy Learning at School, Early Literacy Family Conference, Polson, Montana.

Jepson, S., Foster, A., Guilfoyle, S., Paulson, L., & Scoles, G. (March, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L., Jepson, S., Guilfoyle, S., Scoles, G., Wolferman, A. (March 2001). Montana Early Literacy Project. Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Missoula, Montana.

Jepson, S., Paulson, L., & Noble, L. (March, 2001). Language Connections to Early Literacy. Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Missoula, Montana.

Jepson, S., Foster, A., Guilfoyle, S., Paulson, L., & Scoles, G. (March, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. H., Noble, L, & Jepson, S. (March, 2001). Language Connections to Literacy, Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference of disABILITIES, Missoula, Montana.

Jepson, S., Guilfoyle, S., Paulson, L. H., Scoles, G., & Wolferman, A. (March, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project, Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference of disABILITIES, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. (March, 2001). The Language : Literacy Connection: Facilitating the Development of Emerging Literacy in Young Children, The BEST Project, Ogden Utah.

Paulson, L. H., van den Pol, R., & Connell, N. (March, 2001). Using *Good Talking Words,* Head Start, Missoula, Montana.

Van den Pol, R.A. (March 2001). *Project RIDE: Responding to Individual Differences in Education.* Annual Conference of the Montana Council for Exceptional Children, Missoula, MT.

Paulson, L. H. (August, 2001). Phonological Awareness: Issues Relating to Assessment and Treatment, Missoula Area Special Education Cooperative, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. & Noble, L. H. (August, 2001). Phonological Awareness for Beginning Readers: Facilitating the Development of Early Literacy in Young Children, Helena School District, Helena, Montana.

Jepson, S. (August, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project: Making books with young children. Region V Montana Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD) Conference, The University of Montana, Missoula, Montana

Johns, R. & Paulson, L. H. (September, 2001). Increasing Language and Literacy Skills; and Reducing Challenging Behaviors in Early Childhood, Region III Comprehensive System of Professional Development (CSPD), Billings, Montana

Johns, R. & Paulson, L. H. (September, 2001). Increasing Language and Literacy Skills; and Reducing Challenging Behaviors in Early Childhood, Region III Comprehensive System of Professional Development (CSPD), Lewistown, Montana

Jepson, S. (September, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Cherry Valley Elementary School, Polson, Montana.

Jepson, S., & Guilfoyle, S. (October, 2001). *On Track Curriculum and Assessment* and Addressing Challenging Behavior in-service. San Juan School District, San Juan, Utah.

Paulson, L. H. (October, 2001). Good Talking Words, Montana Early Childhood Conference, Kalispell, Montana

Van den Pol, R.A. (October, 2001). *A personal tale of disrespect: Terrorism and positive behavioral supports.* Invited Keynote Address, Beach Transportation Company Annual Meeting, Missoula, MT.

Ashmore, R., & Evans, R. (October 11-13, 2001). A two-stage analysis of the effects of phoneme awareness drill on phonological awareness and word recognition of at-risk primary grade level students. Northern Rocky Mountain Education Research Association 19th Annual Conference, Jackson, WY.

Jepson, S., Scoles, G., & Kuehn, J. (October, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Montana Association for the Education of Young Children (MtAEYC) Early Childhood Conference, Kalispell, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. & van den Pol, R. (November, 2001). Building Early Literacy Skills in Young Children, National Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference, Anaheim, California

Paulson, L. H., & van den Pol, R.A. (2001, November). *Building early literacy skills in young children.* Annual Conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Anaheim, CA.

Paulson, L., Jepson, S. & van den Pol, R. (December, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project. National Division of Early Childhood Conference, Boston, Massachusetts.

Jepson, S., Paulson, L. H., & van den Pol, R. (December, 2001). The Montana Early Literacy Project: Building Early Literacy Skills in Young Children, The Division of Early Childhood Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families

Paulson, L. H. & Noble, L. (January, 2002). Facilitating the Development of Early Literacy in Young Children, Helena Public Schools, Helena Montana

Paulson, L. H. (January, 2002). Good Talking Words, Missoula Association for the Education of Young Children, Missoula, Montana

Paulson, L. H. (February, 2002). Building Early Literacy and Language Skills, Colorado Council International Reading Association Conference on Reading, Denver, Colorado

Paulson, L. H. (February, 2002). Good Talking Words: Developing Social Communication Skills in Young Children, SW Regional Special Education Conference, Boise, Idaho

Paulson, L. H. (March, 2002). Early Literacy Strategies and Activities, Early Learning Center, Head Start, Helena, Montana

Paulson, L. H. (March, 2002). Early Literacy Strategies and Activities, Missoula Association for the Education of Young Children, Missoula, Montana

Jepson, S. (March, 2002). The Montana Early Literacy Project. Essential Connections Grant, Nurturing Center/Summit, Flathead Association for the Education of Young Children, Kalispell, Montana.

Paulson, L. H., Noble, L, & Jepson, S. (April, 2002). Building Early Literacy and Language Skills, Montana Council for Exceptional Children Conference on disABILITIES, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L., Noble, L., & Jepson, S. (April, 2002). Building Early Literacy and Language Skills. Montana 2002 CEC Conference on disABILITIES, Missoula, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. (May, 2002). Language Development and Issues Relating to Early Literacy, Head Start, Missoula, Montana

Wolferman, A.F., (May 2002). Montana Early Literacy Project. Lame Deer Head Start, Lame Deer, Montana.

Van den Pol, R.A., Henthorn, R.L., & Carter, C.N. (June, 2002). *Repeated measures from the Montana School Safety Inventory: A two year progress report on the Missoula County Public Schools,* Annual Conference on Tough to Teach Students, Breckenridge, CO.

Paulson, L. H. (June, 2002). Building Early Literacy and Language Skills, Rocky Mountain Institute 2002, Colorado Department of Education, Special Education Unit and Sopris West Educational Services, Breckenridge, Colorado.

Jepson, S., Guilfoyle, S., & Wolferman, A. (June, 2002). Storytelling: We Learned it All in Preschool. Montana TALES Fourth Annual Conference, The University of Montana, Missoula, Montana.

Wolferman, A.F., (June, 2002). Choice Book: Encouraging Prosocial Behavior Through Problem Solving and the Montana Early Literacy Project. The Nurturing Center, Kalipsell, Montana.

Paulson, L. H. (July, 2002). Recommended Practice in Early Childhood Education, Teton Institute 2002, Wyoming Department of Education, Special Programs Unit and Sopris West Educational Services, Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Paulson, L. H. (July, 2002). Who Has Good Talking Words?, Teton Institute 2002, Wyoming Department of Education, Special Programs Unit and Sopris West Educational Services, Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Paulson, L. H. (July, 2002). Building Early Literacy and Language Skills, Teton Institute 2002, Wyoming Department of Education, Special Programs Unit and Sopris West Educational Services, Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

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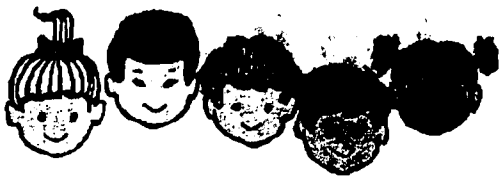

DISSEMINATION SERVICES

Technical Assistance

Project staff is available to provide consultation services and workshop presentations.

Literacy Tubs

The Literacy Tubs are available to be checked out and used in schools, homes, and childcare programs.

For further information, please contact:

Montana Early Literacy Project
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School of Education
The University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812
(406) 243-4280
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Place Stamp Here

Montana Early Literacy Project
Division of Educational Research and Service
School of Education, The University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

Montana Early Literacy Project

Building language and literacy skills during the early childhood years: Preparing children with disabilities for success in elementary school

Funding for this project is provided by Grant #H024B60034, OSEP/OSERS of the U. S. Department of Education

The Montana Early Literacy Project developed a Model that fosters early literacy and language skills in young children with and without disabilities. The Model builds partnerships between families, schools, and community members using developmentally appropriate language and early literacy services that are individually and culturally sensitive. Teaching and staff support are provided with the knowledge and assistance necessary to implement the comprehensive services within the Model.

DEMONSTRATION SITES

CO-TEACH Preschool Program
The University of Montana
Missoula, Montana

Cherry Valley Elementary School
Flathead Indian Reservation
Polson, Montana

REPLICATION SITES

Awesome Discoveries Daycare
Polson, Montana

Head Start
Missoula, Montana

Missoula County Public School
Special Education Preschool
Missoula, Montana

Smart Start Preschool
Polson, Montana

MODEL COMPONENTS

1. Literacy Throughout the Day using Literacy Tub thematic units in existing classroom routines
2. IEP Connections targeting early literacy goals and objectives
3. Family Connections enhancing literacy opportunities in homes and communities
4. Diversity Connections celebrating cultural and individual differences
5. Professional Development developing and supporting skills to implement the Model

THEMATIC TUB UNITS

The Wheels on the Bus

Heads, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes

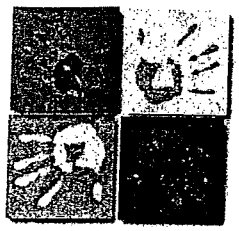
Itsy Bitsy Spider

Rainbow Fish

The Very Hungry Caterpillar

Alike and Different

Native American Stories



Montana Early Literacy Project

"Books tell the stories of human events and the human condition and not simply the facts . . . Literature does more than change minds. It changes people's hearts. And people with changed hearts are people who can move the world."
(Gillespie, Powell, Clements, & Swearingen, 1994)

Division of Educational Research Services

School of Education

@Principle Investigator
Rick van den Pol

Demonstration Sites:

@Project Director
Lucy Hart Paulson

@ Cherry Valley Elementary School

@Project Coordinator
Stacia Jepson

@ CO-TEACH Preschool

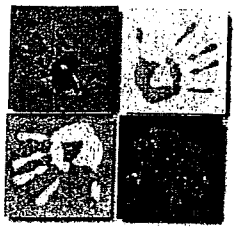
Montana Early Literacy Project

Model Description:

The Montana Early Literacy Project is a Model that fosters early literacy and language skills in young children with disabilities. The Model builds partnerships between families, schools, and community members with developmentally appropriate language and early literacy services that are individually and culturally sensitive and provides teaching and staff support with the knowledge and assistance necessary to implement these comprehensive services.

Model Settings:

The model was developed at the CO-TEACH Preschool Program at The University of Montana and the special education preschool program at Cherry Valley Elementary School on the Flathead Indian Reservation. Replication can be achieved in a variety of early childhood settings such as: special and general education preschool classrooms; Head Start classrooms; and specialized childcare centers.



Montana Early Literacy Project

MELP Components:

Overview

Components

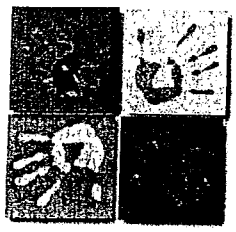
MELP Manual

Phonological Awareness

Appendicies & Resources

There are five components to the Montana Early Literacy Project: Literacy Throughout the Day, IEP Connections, Family Connections, Diversity Connections, Professional Development. Each of these components play an important role in the success of the project.

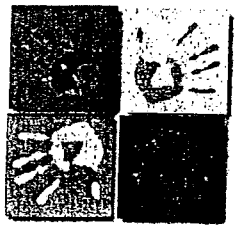
Component 1 | Component 2 | Component 3 | Component 4 | Component 5



Montana Early Literacy Project

MELP Manual:

The MELP Manual will be online soon!



Montana Early Literacy Project

Description of Phonological Awareness

(from Building Early Literacy and Language Skills)

Phonological awareness is the explicit awareness of the sound structure of language and the ability to reflect on and consciously manipulate the syllables and sounds of speech. An awareness of the sound structure of language develops when children realize that the words they say are separate from the things they represent and that the words are comprised of sound segments that can be rhymed, pulled apart, and put back together. Phonological awareness consists of a wide range of sound play that includes rhyming, isolating the first or last sound in words, and detecting or substituting syllables and sounds. It also includes blending and segmenting words by syllables and sounds. When children develop an awareness that our language has a meaning as well as a structure, they develop a sense of phonological awareness.

Three Important Phonological Awareness Skills:

Rhyming - focuses on sound correspondence of the endings of words written or spoken and is the first phonological awareness skill to develop. When young children participate in saying rhymes, finger plays, and songs, they are developing a sense of the phonological structure of language. By saying these rhyming patterns over and over, children develop the ability to recognize, identify, and then produce rhymes

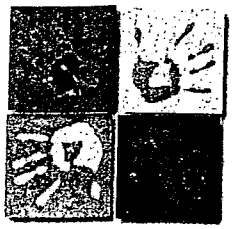
Blending is the ability to combine a sequence of isolated syllables or sounds together to produce a recognizable word. Blending is an important skill needed later when children are learning to decode or sound out printed words phonetically. Preschool children, as young as age three, demonstrate the ability to blend syllables into words.

Segmenting is the identification of individual syllables and sounds within words. When children acquire this skill, they are able to hear a word, analyze the components, and pull it apart into syllables and then individual sounds. It appears that once children are able to recognize that speech can be segmented and that these segmented units are represented by letters, the systematic relationships between letters and sounds are easier to grasp and use in both reading and writing.

Phonological Awareness Development
Ages Skills Begin to Develop

1. Rhyming	
- produce rhymes, finger plays, and songs	2-3 years
- match and produce rhymes	3-4 years
2. Alliteration	
- recognize and produce words with common initial sounds	3-4 years

3. Blending	
- combine a sequence of isolated syllables to produce words	3-4 years
- combine a sequence of isolated sounds to produce words	4 years
4. Segmenting	
- identify syllables in words	3-4 years
- identify sounds in words	5-6 years
5. Manipulation	
- change words by deleting, adding and switching sounds	6-7 years



Montana Early Literacy Project

Overview

Components

MELP Manual

Phonological Awareness

Appendicies & Resources

Appendicies:

The Appendices contain all the forms and protocols used in the Early Literacy Project and include:

- Literacy Acquisition Perception Profile
- Emerging Literacy Screening
- Book Analysis
- Safety hierarchy
- Classroom Literacy Checklist
- Literacy Lesson Plan Format
- Weekly Planning Form
- Tub Example

Resources Include:

- ***Building Early Literacy and Language Skills*** by Paulson, Noble, Jepson, and van den Pol (in print) Sopris West
- ***On Track*** by Neilson, S., van den Pol, R., Guidry, J., Keeley, E., and Honzel, R.
- ***Promoting the Gift of Literacy: 101 Lesson Plans for Oral and Written Language*** by Ashmore

Fall 1998

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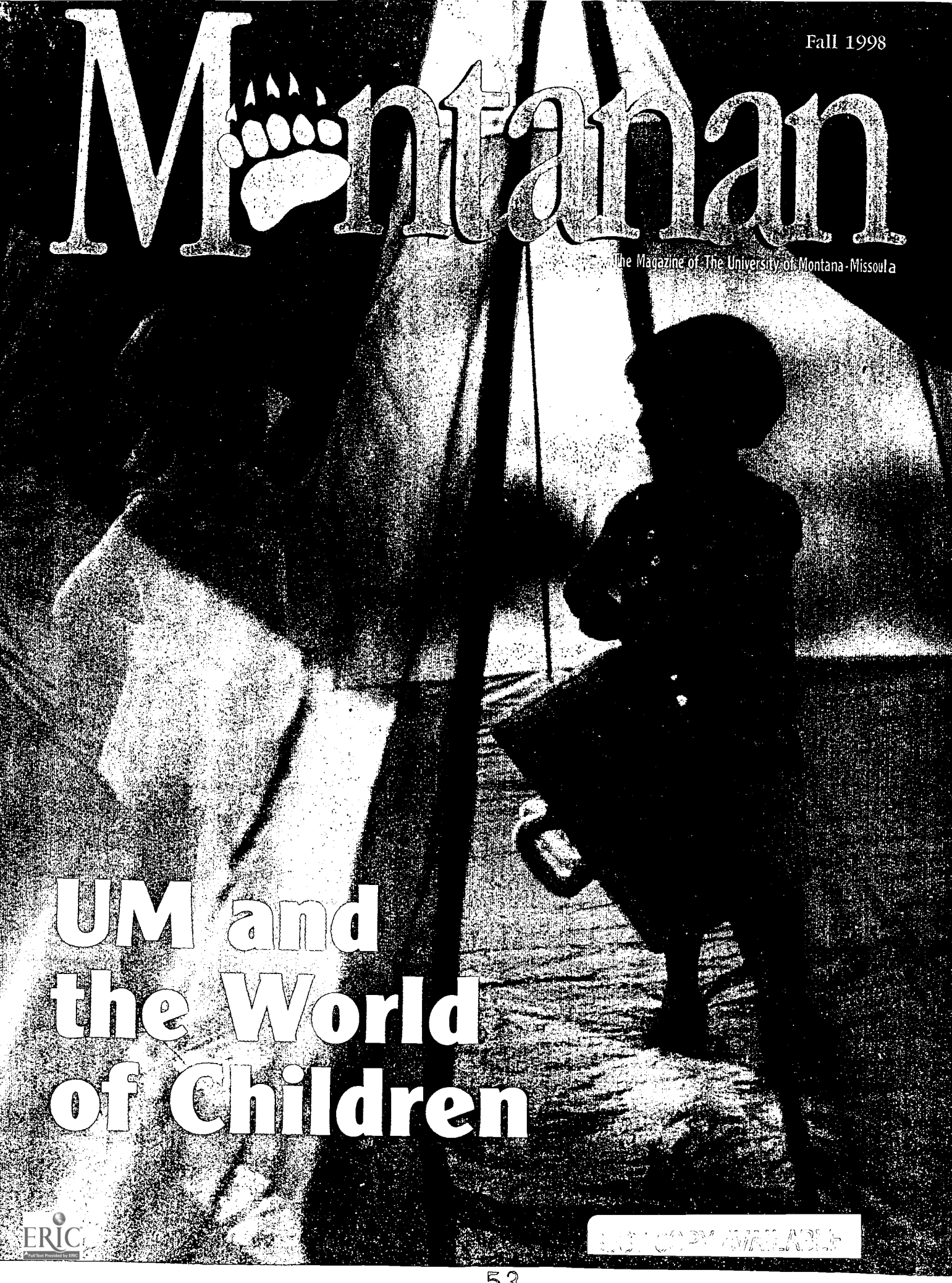
The Magazine of The University of Montana · Missoula



UM and the World of Children

EIGHT AND A HALF WAYS TO SKIN A HI

The debate about teaching reading

by Patrick Hutchins

Rhea Ashmore and Rick van den Pol, who study how to best teach reading, indulge in some Dr. Suess.

At Mabel B. Wesley Elementary School in Houston, Texas, the debate about the best way to teach children to read is over. A recent Associated Press story in the *Missoulian* described a typical classroom in the poor, mostly black school: Students sit alertly, "hands on the table, feet on the floor, eyes on the teacher or board" and recite in unison—vowel sounds, prepositions, sentences. This direct instruction, as it is known, has brought the barbed-wire-encircled school to national prominence because of its efficacy in raising test scores. First graders at Mabel B. Wesley ranked in the top thirteen of Houston's 182 schools in reading; the other twelve schools were all from the well-heeled parts of town.

This would seem to be irrefutable proof of the superiority of "skills-based" reading techniques and a call to arms for the "Readin', 'Ritin' and 'Rithmetic" crowd. On the flipside are the "whole language" advocates who argue that only a reading curriculum based in literature can teach children the love for learning necessary for a well-rounded education. According to two University of Montana literacy specialists, both sides have it wrong. And right.

Learning to Read from a Hippopotamus

Rhea Ashmore and Rick van den Pol are professors in the School of Education—Ashmore in literacy studies and van den Pol in special education. Van den Pol also directs UM's CO-TEACH/Division of Educational Research and Service, which assists children with disabilities. Under a grant from the federal Office of Special Education Programs, they have been working with four other university professors and six public school teachers to discover how best to teach reading. Their research has given them insights into the skills-based versus whole language debate.

On one side are the worksheets and drills that use repetition to ingrain grammar, syntax and rules: *i before e except after c* or *when sounding like a as in neighbor or weigh*. We've all used these easy-to-remember references that we learned by rote as kids. That's skills-based literacy, and it's a highly effective way to learn for most people some of the time, and some people most of the time.

On the whole language side of the debate are all the books that were read to us as children. Beloved books like *The Cat in the Hat* and *Good Night Moon* were teaching us about language at the same time they were delighting us. Just as listening to music is a good way to start thinking about notes, keys and chords, so hearing a story that uses grammar, syntax and other language components imaginatively is a good way to begin understanding how language works. Ashmore says this is the beauty of using literature to teach reading: "Say you're reading a book about a hippopotamus. Hippopotamus. What a great word to let you talk about syllables, nouns and vowels. It doesn't come from a worksheet; it comes from reading. And it's fun."

Lessons from China

To see how an eclectic philosophy—which combines skills-based and whole language approaches to reading—works in practice, Ashmore and van den Pol have turned to China, Korea and Japan, where early literacy can mean the difference between a good job or a lifetime of drudgery. Van den Pol points to an openness in Asian educators: "They aren't hung up on one way being better than another. They use a holistic approach that lets kids know there's something fun about this stuff." Ashmore concurs. "Play is considered the basic method for achieving curricular content."

Chinese education policy favors using literature in teaching language. "According to the Chinese, if a child can memorize 300 poems from the Tang Dynasty, she or he is considered very clever," Ashmore observes. "One of my Chinese graduate students testified that, indeed, many children between the ages of three and ten can perform this feat." Yet children also are drilled in vocabulary and other "skills-based"

POPOTAMUS

modalities. In other words, for the Chinese there is no debate about which way is superior; both have their applications.

Children in Asian countries also tend to start school two to three years earlier than in the United States. Due to the fierce competition for prized spots in the higher education system, children are ushered into school programs at age three by parents who look upon them as a kind of social security: The more successful the kids are, the more comfortable the parents' retirement will be. Although less-than-altruistic, this motivation gives children exposure to education at a time when they are naturally open to receiving it. Physiologically, socially and developmentally, children from three to six years are like thirsty sponges ready and eager to learn. Ironically, these are precisely the years when many American kids are home in front of the television.

The Trouble with TV

Television, even quality children's programs, is worrisome for educators like Ashmore and van den Pol because television is essentially a passive process, denying children the opportunity to test, experiment and make connections on their own. "Television," Ashmore says, "is essentially brainwashing." Moreover it fails to provide kids with crucial skills—such as the coordination between hand, eye and brain needed for writing. Reading to children, on the other hand, stimulates their imaginations while allowing them to ask questions and relate the story to their own experience.

Eight and a Half Kinds of Intelligence

Another reason Ashmore and van den Pol favor an eclectic approach to literacy is because, as any parent of more than one child knows, what works for one often doesn't work for another. Ashmore cites the work of Howard Gardner, an educational psychologist who spoke at UM's 1996 Genesis Conference. Gardner has identified eight-and-a-half different kinds of intelligence, each occupying its own separate niche in the spectrum from left to right brain. Each kind of intelligence responds to its own particular teaching method—some children respond more to verbal stimuli, others to visual, for example. Given this diversity of children in the same classroom, a wide range of teaching techniques would seem to make sense.

How then does one explain the startling results from Mabel B. Wesley Elementary School? Obviously skills-based techniques work, but the final results of a program relying solely on them may still be unclear. One study found increased behavioral problems later on in children who have taken part in similar programs. Ashmore also suspects that this direct instruction is not as one-sided as it appears in the news clips. Books and literature, she notes, are probably still part of the curriculum, even if they don't receive the press attention.

Reading Begins in the Womb

For parents trying to make sense of the literacy debate, Ashmore offers this advice: "Start reading to them in the womb, and don't stop." She says evidence suggests that children who have been read to before they could speak or understand the language had an easier time learning it later on. Another piece of advice: Limit children's exposure to television; it robs them of time better spent exploring the real world that surrounds them. Preschools and other settings where three-, four- and five-year-olds are exposed to quality books and appropriate language skills also will give them a valuable head start.

What kids will experience in the classroom will depend on the approach that is favored by their school. For the most part, though, as teachers return to UM to renew their certificates and get exposed to the latest thinking in literacy studies, Montana's schools have adopted an eclectic philosophy toward teaching reading. According to Ashmore and van den Pol, that's all to the good. Because, from spelling drills to story time, there's more than one way to skin a hippopotamus. **M**

Patrick Hutchins '87 is a free-lance writer in Missoula.

Inside this Issue:

In the summer of 1996, the School of Education moved into the building which previously housed Business Administration.

SCHOOL OF **Education**
at The University of Montana, Missoula

Spring, 2002 Newsletter

Department of Health and Human Performance Looks to the Future

Front: Gene Burns, Laura Dybdal, Sharon Dinkel Uhlig, Dennis Murphy; Back: Tucker Miller, Annie Sondag, Lew Curry, Scott Richter, Brent Ruby. Not pictured: Tom Whiddon, Blakely Brown, Steve Gaskill

Article by Gene Burns
Chair, Health and Human Performance

Within the liberal arts tradition of The University of Montana and the mission of the School of Education, the Department of Health and Human Performance engages in professional education, scholarly activity, and meaningful public service. The department emphasizes all dimensions of health and human movement to enhance the longevity and quality of life.

The undergraduate curriculum in Health and Human Performance prepares graduates to be competent entry-level professionals in health and human performance-related occupations or candidates for advanced study in related disciplines. Undergraduate options include Athletic Training, Exercise Science – Applied and Graduate Preparation emphases, and Health Studies – Health Enhancement and Health Promotion emphases.

The graduate curriculum in Health and Human Performance prepares post-graduates to become effective professionals and/or competitive candidates of advanced study in related disciplines through a comprehensive program of study and guided research. Graduate options include Exercise Science, Health Promotion, or Exercise and Performance Psychology.

Continued on page 10

M.E.L.P. "Tubs" Help Clean-up Illiteracy

rticle by Amy Foster Wolferman

With policy makers from Presi-
at Bush on down advocating that
leave no child behind, particu-
y in the area of literacy and
eloping reading skills, it is
portant for educators and fami-
to understand the impact that
eloping early literacy skills has
future reading success. The
ntana Early Literacy Project
E.L.P.) has developed a model
fosters early literacy and
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nections that enhance literacy
portunities in homes and com-
ities. The fourth component is
ing Diversity Connections that
rate cultural and individual
rences. The fifth component is
iding Professional Develop-
ment, which supports the development of skills that are necessary to implement the Model.

There are two demonstration sites for the Montana Early Literacy Project: the CO-TEACH Preschool Program at the University of Montana in Missoula, Montana, and Cherry Valley Elementary School on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Polson, Montana. Demonstration sites are currently practicing the project model. There are several replication sites that are learning to implement the Model which include Awesome Discoveries Daycare and Smart Start Preschool in Polson, Montana, and Head Start and Missoula County Public School's Special Education Preschool in Missoula, Montana.

The Montana Early Literacy Project staff is available to provide consultation services and workshop presentations. Literacy Tubs are available to be checked out and used in schools, homes, and childcare programs.

Montana Safe Schools Survey: http://www.mtsafeschools.com

The Montana Safe Schools Inventory is an on-line research-based survey and resource system that can be used to help school personnel make informed decisions regarding school safety improvements. The survey is designed to be taken by students, teachers, parents, administrators, and professional and classified staff to obtain various perspectives within a school community. What makes a school safe? There are 32 questions identified through research that address characteristics related to a safe school climate. How do bullying, mentoring, social skills, bus safety issues, bomb threats, gang activity, hostile visitors, conflict resolution, academic engagement, crisis planning, and community involvement affect school safety?

After a school has taken the survey, data are gathered on-line, analyzed, and then given to school administrators. The results of the survey allow administrators to view their areas of strength and areas that might need improvement. Resources addressing each of the school safety characteristics are provided along with the results of the survey. For example, a school may discover by looking at survey results that one area needing improvement is bullying. No-cost Internet resources as well as commercial programs are provided to assist the school administration in coming up with strategies to reduce bullying in their school. The survey can be taken year after year in order to help benchmark improvements over time.

The survey is available at no cost to all Montana schools and is made possible by the Division of Educational Research and Service's Safer Schools and Communities Project at The University of Montana. Funding for this project is provided by grants from the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Early CHILDHOOD Report

Children With Special Needs & Their Families

Volume 13, Issue 1 January 2002

In This Issue

Support group aids parents of preemies

Program allows families to meet, share experiences, fears

When **Lois Johnson** gave birth to premature twin boys about five years ago, she found it difficult to find the support she needed to get through the days of doctors visits, medicine and oxygen machines.

INSIDE
Consider a transition group for families. **Page 8.**
Survey questions to ask parents to uncover what supports they need. **Page 9.**

"It can be traumatizing, not knowing if a child is going to live," Johnson said. "One day you'll go to the [neonatal intensive care unit] and things are fine. The next day, the baby next to your baby has passed away. It's very painful and very hard to deal with."

As the family support coordinator at the **Baltimore Infants & Toddlers Program**, she helped found the program's first support group for parents of preemies to assist those experiencing the same difficulties she faced and to educate them on problems that can arise from premature births.

Johnson urges any organization catering to infants and toddlers with disabilities to consider forming a similar group to provide the much needed, yet hard-to-find support these parents require. ■

Don't punish children; teach positive behavioral supports instead

Address negative actions of young children in IEP

BOSTON — Many educators treat challenging behaviors of young children the wrong way, says **Melissa Olive** of the **University of Texas at Austin**.

INSIDE
Learn different ways to collect data to ensure each child's positive behavioral supports are effective. **Page 6.**

Rather than punishing children, your teachers should instruct preschool children in correct behaviors and provide supports in the Individualized Education Program, Olive told attendants of the **Council for Exceptional Children**'s Division of Early Childhood convention.

"We need to teach, not punish," she said. "We need to do positive behavioral supports ... I like to think of problem behavior as a skill — a skill we want to decrease."

But positive behavioral supports need to be practical, teach independence or improve communication, be monitored and analyzed and based

(See **BEHAVE** on page 6)

Briefs

Early Childhood Report

Children With Special Needs & Their Families

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2. All letters received by the editors are considered for publication. All letters are subject to review, acceptance and editing, according to space limitations, clarity, relevance and style.
3. Only letters selected for publication will be answered.
4. Personal attacks and unsubstantiated claims will not be published.
5. Product complaints will not be published.

Early childhood programs get $33 million increase

Under the new FY 2002 compromise education spending bill, Part C, grants to infants and toddlers, will receive a total of $7.6 billion, a $33 million increase over current levels.

The compromise spending bill, H.R. 3061, will boost special education by approximately $1.2 billion next year. It was signed by **President Bush** this month.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act programs would receive a total of $7.6 billion next year.

Lawmakers compromised on H.R. 3061 to a halfway increase — $1.2 billion over current spending levels — that fell between the **House**'s proposed $1.4 billion hike and the **Senate**'s $1 billion boost.

Bush, too, had proposed a $1 billion increase for IDEA. ■

No Child Left Behind bill becomes law

President Bush signed into law the **No Child Left Behind** education reform bill, successor to the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act**, which provides more spending flexibility to districts but holds them accountable for results.

The reauthorization package, signed at an event in Hamilton, Ohio, aims to narrow the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their more affluent peers. Proposals to provide mandatory **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** funding to schools and alter IDEA discipline policies were not included in the final bill. ■

ED agrees to hold off on Part C language reform

If you've been anticipating the pending **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** Part C regulations from the **Department of Education** on how to interpret "natural environment" language, you will have to wait until after reauthorization.

The **IDEA Infant and Toddler Coordinators Association** urged the department's top special education official, **Assistant Secretary Robert Pasternack**, to hold off until after the upcoming special ed law reauthorization.

Pasternack had asked the group's preference.

In a letter to Pasternack, association president **Linda Goodman** wrote, "There was general consensus that waiting until after the reauthorization would be less chaotic, in terms of changing state policy and procedures to comply with new regulations and then changing them again for any new statutory requirements."

An ED spokesman would not indicate whether a final decision had been reached on the regulations, only remarking that the department was "still working on them." In the meantime, some states have put their own policies in place to ensure the natural environment provision is being properly implemented.

Goodman said many state coordinators felt the unreleased federal regulations, which in part attempted to clarify the meaning of "natural environments" and how those provisions are to be implemented, were not thorough enough. States responded with their own specific wording and guidance, "going a step beyond natural environments as a location," observed Goodman, who is Connecticut's Part C coordinator. ■

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Preliminary study results: Early inclusion has positive impact

What are the benefits of inclusive education at the preschool setting?

Educators often ask experts that question, advocating inclusion at an early age.

Through the **Office of Special Education Programs**-funded Project Spiral, researchers have been following a group of students for eight years, studying the impact of preschool inclusion on their transition to primary grades, as well as studying other impacts that affect the child's success.

"We're looking at children who had been in inclusive preschool settings and [then] looking at them years later," **Eva Horn**, one of the principal investigators, explained at the **Council of Exceptional Children**'s **Division of Early Childhood** convention. "We're trying to understand how things change across time for individual children. How the child progresses is not just a matter of classroom."

For years researchers followed **Grant**, a teenager with Down syndrome. He plays drums in his high school band, participates in school-sponsored events and has formed friendships with many classmates.

Without the early intervention services in inclusive settings he received as a child, he might not have achieved the same success, the researchers say.

Investigators are looking back between five and eight years, studying students originally involved with another federally funded project, Circle of Inclusion, an ongoing model demonstration project providing the support for setting up inclusive preschool options in the Lawrence, Kan., area.

Right now, information is available on only some of the students they intend to study. By next year, the group plans to have data on more than 20 students.

At age 2, Grant moved into his first preschool program. But it wasn't until he began an inclusive preschool program that he really began to thrive. The doors to inclusion opened as he entered Montessori school in Lawrence, Kan. His parents' described preschool inclusion as "the dramatic turning point for us" as they watched peers include him in classroom activities.

Researchers for Project Spiral hope all children have opportunities like Grant's to thrive in an inclusive environment.

Horn said the study also examined societal influences, community factors, school policies and programs and children in their classrooms and with their families.

"If we understand what the future might hold for the children we serve, it may help us better focus our interventions," Horn said. "It will enhance the likelihood that they will be successful in future placements."

For **Sheronda**, a child with autism, moving from a self-contained environment at age 3 to an inclusive preschool brought her closer to peers and allowed them to help the teachers monitor and help her, said **Susan Palmer**, research assistant professor at the **Beach Center on Disability** at the **University of Kansas**.

Sheronda had the habit of running away. When researchers visited her in her inclusive classroom during elementary school, students would casually put their arms around her shoulders while walking down the hallway, which included her as a peer and prevented her from running away from the class.

"Her peers took responsibility," Palmer said. Older students in her multi-age kindergarten through grade three classroom often read to her or worked on tasks, taking the place of paraprofessionals, creating a natural network of supports, she said.

Horn said the supports — from teachers, families and the community — have made the most difference, for Grant in particular as he transitioned from preschool to primary school to his current place in high school.

"The number one thing [for educators] is supporting the family and being the child's best advocate," she said. ■

Ways to help a child succeed

Eva Horn, a principal investigator for Project Spiral, says she has learned that several factors consistently contribute to the successes of young children in inclusive environments. The students that later showed success had the following in place:

- Dedicated teachers and open-minded staff members who were willing to try new ideas to help the child succeed.
- Clear and concise information about the child recorded and passed on year to year. Staff members should record honest and concise information about the child's abilities and needs to help teachers down the road.
- A strong support network that provided a wealth of information to the family, acted as an advocate for the child and provided assistance to help the child succeed.

Providing supports to include children with disabilities is worth it. Circle of Inclusion lists many reasons why children with disabilities should enter inclusive settings very early on and how it can benefit everyone.

Children with disabilities in inclusive settings are:

- Spared the effects of separate, segregated education, including the negative effects of labeling and lack of contact with typically developing children.
- Provided with models that allow them to learn new adaptive skills and use their existing skills through imitation.
- Provided with realistic life experiences that prepare them to live in the community and opportunities to develop friendships with typically developing peers.

Source: www.circleofinclusion.org. ■

Program assumes all children can learn to read

Project uses 'literacy tubs' to teach language, reading fundamentals

Prekindergarten teachers at **Cherry Valley Elementary School** on the **Flathead Indian Reservation** in Montana spend several weeks at a time reading to children from similar books, completing activities and sending home information on one common theme.

Borrow a tub

Several months ago, the **Montana Early Literacy Project** began making its "literacy tubs" available for schools around the country to check out free of charge (except the cost of shipping) for a month at a time.

"Each time we go and present the information, we get a lot of people who want to check them out and not enough tubs," she says. Although there is a waiting list, **Stacia Jepson** encourages teachers or parents to try the activities out in their classrooms.

To find out how you can get a literacy tub, contact Jepson at jepson@selway.umt.edu. ■

These children, both with and without disabilities, are exposed to early literacy and language opportunities as part of the **Montana Early Literacy Project**. Now in its sixth year, the proect has a unique way of focusing on Individualized Education Program connections and developing necessary skills for reading.

Funded through a grant from the **U.S. Department of Education**, the literacy project attempts to expose children with disabilities to early literacy and language opportunities.

"The philosophy is with the notion that children with disabilities are able to learn to read and they have a much better chance of learning how to read if they are exposed to literacy and language activities as early as possible," says **Stacia Jepson**, project coordinator. Early doesn't mean age 3, she says, but exposing children to literacy and language opportunities at birth.

When team members developed the structure of the program, they identified three critical areas of focus for both teachers and parents to use:

- Print awareness.
- Phonological awareness.
- Language use.

They worked to find curricula appropriate for prekindergarten students with and without disabilities and addressed the three areas of focus.

The result came in the form of big tubs — literacy tubs — intended to help prekindergarten programs build partnerships with families, schools and communities to infuse language and literacy in young children's daily routines.

The project enlisted two schools to act as demonstration sites — Cherry Valley Elementary and the **CO-TEACH Preschool Program** through the **University of Montana**, where Jepson serves as preschool coordinator. The program created seven tubs, each with a different focus, such as *Wheels on the Bus*, which contain teaching manuals, books, song cards, samples of classroom and family activities and other literacy-related activities focused on the theme.

"What we did was choose a children's book and then repeat the reading throughout the two weeks — reading it every day," Jepson explains. "We'd do a song and finger play to it every day."

But instructors presented that same material in different ways, such as a simple oral reading one day, and repeating the story another using a flannel board or puppets.

"By the second week, the children are very, very familiar [with the story], including the kids with disabilities," she says. "Then we support that with other theme-related books."

Elaine Meeks, principal at Cherry Valley, says the tub approach flowed well into the school's preschool program and made an impact on children with disabilities.

"What I've seen is, those children with disabilities coming out of their preschool experiences [at Cherry Valley] are much more prepared." ■

Gauging the program's success

The **Montana Early Literacy Project** is just now collecting data on the effectiveness of the early literacy project and the use of literacy tubs.

"I think that from observations, it definitely has had an impact," says **Stacia Jepson**, project coordinator. "[We've seen] very positive effects on children's acquisition of language and their literacy confidence."

Through repeatedly reading one story, children are so familiar with them they can predict what will happen.

The extended focus allows each child to be immersed in the activities, she says.

For children with Individualized Education Programs, Jepson says, including the IEP team in the understanding of early literacy objectives is important.

"Even if you're targeting a physical domain, such as for a child with cerebral palsy, you can be working on walking safely and have it written into their IEP that during recess time he will crawl through a barrel or step over a rope," she says.

"You can look at that and point out the kind of literacy concepts the child is working on as well, such as prepositional — up, over, through."

She says the use of literacy tubs in the program also has helped broaden people's understanding of what constitutes a literacy skill. ■

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Develop, implement a literacy tub in your classroom

Development

To develop a literacy tub in your preschool classrooms, take the following steps:

Step 1: Identify a theme, a selected children's book and a song. Determine the goals and objectives of the unit, including the key vocabulary and target concepts.

Step 2: Complete a book analysis on the selected story to identify relevant concepts and skills.

Step 3: Choose an additional four to eight children's books from the class, school or public library that support and relate to the selected theme. Complete the book analysis for each book to ensure a representation of concepts, vocabulary, print and cultural representations.

Step 4: Make a song card that illustrates the theme song and includes the words.

Step 5: Compile a list of an additional 20 to 30 theme-related book titles and authors.

Step 6: Develop a two-week lesson plan that infuses the literacy-related activities throughout the school day.

Step 7: Create a newsletter that briefly describes for families the daily events, key vocabulary, target concepts, extension activities and other important information such as field trips, snacks and classroom guests.

Step 8: Design a bulletin board or wall display that illustrates the selected book.

Step 9: Develop a family pack of activities that correspond to the tub theme.

Step 10: Gather the family pack, books and materials needed for the activities. Make a tub inventory list.

Implementation

To implement the tub once it's developed, the following should occur:

- Send home to families the newsletter you created.
- Read the activity descriptions and lesson plans and share with teaching team.
- Prepare the classroom for the tub activities using the materials gathered in the tub.
- Implement the tub activities along with the existing curriculum for two weeks. Be sure to read the selected book every day for two weeks.
- After completing the tub activities, evaluate the tub.

Tub theme ideas

The Montana Early Literacy Project has created seven different literacy tub units:

- The Wheels on the Bus
- Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes
- Itsy Bitsy Spider
- Rainbow Fish
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Alike and Different
- Native American Stories ■

Components draw everyone together for early literacy

Literacy tubs — a vehicle of the **Montana Early Literacy Project** — focus on five components, says project director **Stacia Jepson**, to teach early language and literacy skills to prekindergarten-aged children.

"I don't think people make the connection necessarily that we acquire language very similarly to how we acquire literacy," she says.

"There are parallel steps to take when learning how to read and walk, and I think that's something that's not necessarily known by early educators."

In the Montana literacy model, the five components for early literacy are:

1. Literacy throughout the day. "Literacy takes place throughout the day in the school setting and home setting," she says. A key area for building literacy awareness, she says, is keeping a focus on literacy throughout the day in the typical classroom curriculum. "If you're doing a cooking activity at snack time, it's taking the opportunity to [teach] literacy skills, such as having things labeled, or having kids identify symbols and pictures." Parents may want to try this at home, too.

2. IEP connections. "It's really bringing an awareness to professionals and making sure parents understand that it's important for children with diagnosed disabilities to focus on different language and literacy objectives," she says.

3. Family connections. "It's basically enhancing the literacy opportunities in the homes and communities by providing them with information, instructional materials and pointing out to them already existing materials in their own environment," she says.

One example is encouraging parents to take their children to the grocery store and asking them to point out different items on the shelves.

4. Diversity connections. Consider both cultural and individual differences, she says, and ensure children and teachers have respect for them.

For instance, read a book about a wheelchair-bound student, so he knows he's not alone.

5. Professional development. "It's basically all of those things combined," she says.

"It's really helping [teachers] to develop and support the skills to implement the entire model." ■

Collect data to monitor effectiveness of interventions

You might find **Melissa Olive** in a classroom moving pennies from one pants pocket to another. While a casual observer might consider the activity odd, a young child playing in the room is unmindful that Olive is recording the number of times the child exhibits a type of behavior.

Olive, of the **University of Texas at Austin**'s Department of Special Education, says when educators address the challenging behaviors of young children in their preschool classrooms, they often fail to collect enough data to ensure any behavioral supports implemented are effective.

When interventions are written in a child's Individualized Education Program, recording a child's progress is imperative to ensuring the correct supports have been put in place.

"You should be collecting data on every child in your class," Olive says. "I recommend [collecting data] a couple times a week so you're able to change your instruction."

Once a functional behavioral assessment is conducted and behavioral supports are put in place, teachers must decide on a system to collect data to show the child's progress. Olive recommends teachers decide what behaviors they intend to change, what the intended outcome is and then implement the easiest data collection system for that specific behavior. Educators may want to choose from the following in their classroom:

• **Frequency.** Use this to record every behavior in a certain time period. Olive suggests putting a piece of masking tape to your wrist and writing either + or - signs for the child, depending on what needs to be recorded. Another technique is putting a handful of paper clips in one pocket and moving them one at a time to the other pocket as the child exhibits the type of behavior being recorded.

• **Interval recording.** Teachers should pick a block of time, such as five-minute intervals for an hour, and watch to see if the child acts up during each interval within the time block. "If the behavior occurs during any part of an interval, mark a plus," she said. The key is always choosing the same hour, such as the hour before snack time.

• **Duration/latency.** Use a stopwatch and hit "start" when the behavior begins and "stop" when the behavior ends. For latency, the teacher should also use a stopwatch and time how long it takes for the child to listen. For example, the teacher could ask the children to line up and time how long it takes Johnny to stop resisting and get in line.

BEHAVE (continued from page 1)

on results of a functional behavioral analysis to be successful interventions, she said. But before young children's behavior issues can be addressed, you need to perform the analysis to find out where supports need to be implemented to change a child's negative behaviors.

Jennifer Wilbur, also with the UT Austin, said it's important for teachers to understand what the child receives as a result of his inappropriate behaviors. The next step is to ask: "How are you going to teach this child to ask for what [he] wants in a socially appropriate way?"

The instructor should build on that by identifying conditions to treat the disruptive behavior, including asking:

- Where are you going to teach the behavior?
- When should the behavior be demonstrated?
- Who is going to teach the skill and who is going to collect the data?
- Do we need any type of augmentative and assistive communication device?
- Do we need additional assistance?

A timeline should be completed, stating how long it takes children to reach the criterion and whether they are consistently meeting the goals. And identify the behaviors that need intervention.

Olive said educators need to be careful to identify behaviors that can be measured. Rather than describing a child's actions with terms such as "showing aggression and frustration," Olive recommends describing the actions, such as "hitting with hands, screaming and sitting down on the floor at circle time," because they are observable and measurable.

Finally, data should be collected regularly to monitor the child's progress.

Contact Olive at molive@mail.utexas.edu. ■

• **Discrete trials.** During class time, the teacher can embed these trials in activities. An example is giving the child a direction, such as "Look at me!" If the child looks, record it as a plus, give positive feedback and try the test later on. If the child does not look, record a negative sign and repeat later.

• **Task analysis.** Break tasks into parts, recording each step completed properly. An example is asking a child to dress himself for outdoors and recording a plus for the child's ability to put his right arm in, left arm in, zip up, put on hat, etc.

Once data are recorded, teachers should chart it and modify interventions accordingly. Ideally, the children should exhibit steady progress and modifications should be made to interventions whenever necessary.

"We have to make sure we're starting at point A and going to point B," she said. "If we're not checking ... and changing our interventions" it could lead to legal problems. ■

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Use FINESSE to meet ideals in your service program

Early intervention providers need to ensure that how they operate meets their ideals. Using FINESSE can help them reach their goals, said **Robin McWilliam** of the **Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center** at the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**.

By using the 17-question Families In Natural Environments Scale or Service Evaluation survey tool McWilliam developed (*see chart below*), professionals can see the discrepancies between how they want to run their programs and what is actually done, and work to improve the services provided to infants and toddlers and their families.

"[FINESSE] is really important for self evaluation," said **Melissa Raspa** of the Graham Center. The evaluation examines four content areas to improve family-centered services to children birth to 5 with special needs: first encounters, intervention planning, functionality, classroom and home. It uses two measures for each item identified — one scale for typical practices and one where the program would like to be. The evaluator rates each of the components in the content areas on two different scales of one to seven.

"The way the scale is devised — where we think programs should be — is the seven," Raspa said. However, two scales are included for each because what one program believes is ideal may vary from another.

"Very often, what we come across in programs is, there are real problems of families wanting more and more services," McWilliam said. "[Providers] often present programs in terms of, 'Here are the services' and families think the services are going to result in improvements in the children."

In this instance, the provider may not believe written program descriptions should contain too much information. McWilliam said many schools would be inclined to circle six or seven, ostensibly to do the best job possible for parents. Increased levels of parent demand, however, might make it wiser to shoot for a level of four or five, then gauge the success of those efforts.

Of the roughly 150 programs nationwide Raspa and McWilliam have collected data on, Raspa said most programs typically have the largest discrepancies in intervention philosophy, focus of intervention and written program descriptions.

Raspa and McWilliam will work with interested program providers to lessen or correct the discrepancies. In one instance, the two visited a Maryland program three times over about eight months, having providers grouped into teams to complete a FINESSE survey and other discrepancy tools to track their progress during each visit and directed two-day training sessions.

Once the evaluation is complete, directors need to look for discrepancies between ideals and typical practices to make effective change. "[Providers] can target training for those areas where they really need the help," he said.

Contact Raspa at Melissa_Raspa@unc.edu. ■

Two FINESSE survey questions to help you self-evaluate

1. Written program descriptions (brochures, flyers, etc.)

Typical practice

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Written materials describe only services for the child, such as therapy and intervention.		Written materials emphasize only services for the child, such as therapy and instruction.		Written materials mention emotional, informational and material support for families.		Written materials emphasize emotional, informational and material support for families.

Ideal practice

13. Intervention philosophy

Typical practice

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Intervention philosophy is providing education and therapy to children.		Intervention philosophy is training parents to teach their child.		Intervention philosophy is training parents to teach their child and to be advocates.		Intervention philosophy is supporting the entire family.

Ideal practice

Source: Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center. ■

Support groups answer parents' questions about their children

Many parents with children in the **Baltimore Infants & Toddlers Program** have questions they need to have answered.

Why is my child this way? Why isn't my premature baby doing what other babies do? How can I keep up this schedule of doctor's appointments and therapy sessions?

Abigail McNinch of the program, and **Brenda Hussey-Gardner** of the **University of Maryland**'s Department of Pediatrics, wanted to find ways to provide families of premature infants with desperately needed support.

"There are a lot of support groups [for parents] while their babies are in the [neonatal intensive care unit], but no support groups after the discharge," says Hussey-Gardner. So she and McNinch wrote and acquired a demonstration model grant through **Maryland's Infants & Toddlers Program** and set out to create a program to help parents of premature babies cope.

Any parents with babies born under 1,200 grams (2 pounds, 10 ounces) are eligible for intervention services through the program. A *New England Journal of Medicine* study published last year reported as many as 50 percent of premature babies will exhibit physical and mental disabilities.

The Baltimore Infants & Toddlers Program used a low-budget approach to begin the preemie support group by advertising in its own newsletter, producing its own brochures and using targeted mailings to parents of babies in the NICU. They contacted doctors, therapists and other professionals to present information to parents on everything from potty training to brain development.

McNinch brought in **Lois Johnson**, a parent of twin premature boys, for the role of family support coordinator and the two created surveys to help identify the families' needs.

They met with families on an individual basis to ask their questions, when a support group would work best and the format of the group meeting they would prefer.

"[We asked] anything we needed to consider prior to the conception of the group," McNinch said. "And the evaluation component was really instrumental in telling us what not to do."

Parents had questions, from trying to understand their child's prematurity to finding ways to help family members understand how to adjust chronological age for a premature baby.

While McNinch had all the training necessary for running a support group, Johnson had the real life experience many families found comforting, McNinch said.

"That role of having a facilitator be someone with a child born prematurely is just vital," she said.

Six families joined the program's first preemie support group. Initially, McNinch and Johnson had planned to hold two sessions of six meetings held every other week.

Johnson said families wanted to remain in the program once the session finished, which led to the birth of their Mix and Mingle program, which provides similar support for any parents with babies born prematurely or infants and toddlers exhibiting developmental delays.

A year after it started, the preemie group has dissolved and everyone now can receive support through the larger Mix and Mingle group.

"It's all about sharing and being there for one another," Johnson said. "Things can be overwhelming and [many] need the support. We have all stuck together as friends, helping each other out. It has been a wonderful experience."

For information on starting support groups, contact McNinch at amcninch@friend.ly.net *or the Baltimore Infants and Toddlers at (410) 396-1666.* ■

Starting a support group isn't an easy endeavor

Creating a support group for parents of premature babies and infants and toddlers with disabilities sounds like a simple concept, but it takes substantial time, expertise and resources, said **Brenda Hussey-Gardner**, who helped the **Baltimore Infants & Toddlers Program** acquire a grant for a preemie support group.

"It sounds so simple to have a support group, but there are a lot of expenses," she said.

Along with necessary financing, Hussey-Gardner and **Abigail McNinch** of the Baltimore program, said the right team of people, good marketing and a large group of willing participants are necessary for sustained success.

Baltimore's preemie support groups lasted only one year, but Hussey-Gardner and McNinch said others interested in starting a support group for families of any type of special needs population can learn from their experiences and make their programs a success.

- **Hire a facilitator who can relate to the families.** When the preemie support group began at the Baltimore program, McNinch brought on **Lois Johnson**, a mother of twin boys born prematurely. "She had the real life experience," McNinch said.
- **Hire someone experienced in running support groups.** "You really do need to have someone who has the professional knowledge and expertise to go out and recruit families," Hussey-Gardner said.
- **Create a transition plan for the families.** When the six-session preemie program was completed, parents still wanted a place to go, McNinch said. "We didn't have a transition plan with these families," she said. "All the families that attended kept on coming. That's in part why the Mix and Mingle [was created], to give them an opportunity to transition into our greater population." ■

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Surveying families to address needs

Lois Johnson and **Abigail McNinch** asked families in the **Baltimore Infants & Toddlers Program** different questions to find out what information is needed most from their support group.

The following survey asks parents questions about their knowledge of child development.

Knowledge of infant development

Name:

Instructions: The following questions ask you about how infants typically develop and what parents can do to help them grow. Each question describes what might be the behavior of a typical infant or what could affect a baby's growth and development. For each statement, decide whether you agree, disagree or are not sure of the answer. Please answer each item is based on your knowledge of infants in general.

1. Children often will keep using the wrong word for a while, even when they are told the right way to say it (like "feet, not footsies.")
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
2. A baby should not be held when he is crying because this will make him want to be held all the time.
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
3. If a baby (less than a year) wants a snack, give it nuts, popcorn or raisins.
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
4. Babies do some things just to make trouble for their parents, like crying a long time or pooping in their diapers.
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
5. If you punish your child for doing something naughty, it's OK to give her a piece of candy to stop the crying.
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
6. You must stay in the bathroom when your infant is in the tub.
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
7. Infants understand only words they can say.
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
8. If a child is shy or fussy in new situations, it means that he has an emotional problem.
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
9. Talking to a child about things she is doing helps her mental development.
   AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
10. The way a child is brought up has little effect on how smart he will be.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
11. All infants need the same amount of sleep.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
12. Taking care of a child can leave the parent feeling tired, frustrated or overwhelmed.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
13. Putting a soft pillow in the crib is a good, safe way to help the baby sleep better.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
14. New foods should be given to the infant one at a time, with four or five days between each one.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
15. The 2-year-old's sense of time is different from an adult's sense of time.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
16. The baby's personality or temperament is set by 6 months of age.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
17. Infants may stop paying attention to what is going on if there is too much noise or too many things to look at.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
18. The more you soothe your crying baby by holding and talking to her, the more you spoil her.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**
19. Some days you need to discipline your child; other days you can ignore the same thing. It all depends on the mood you're in that day.
    AGREE **DISAGREE** **NOT SURE**

Source: Baltimore Infants & Toddlers Program. ■

At a glance

NEW OSEP RULING

IFSP team determines frequency, intensity of intervention services

Case name: *Letter to Byrd*, 35 IDELR 217 (OSEP 2001).

Ruling: Responding to an inquiry whether an outside agency can override the individualized family service plan process to determine the frequency and intensity of early intervention services, the **Office of Special Education Programs** stated the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** requires those services to be determined solely by the IFSP team based on the results of the child's evaluation and assessments.

What it means: A child's IFSP must include a statement of the specific early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and his family to achieve certain identified results. The document must specify the frequency, intensity and method of delivering the services, the natural environments in which the services will be provided, the location of services and the payment arrangements, if any. 20 USC § 1436.

Summary: The IFSP team, which includes the parents, has the decision-making responsibility to identify early intervention services that meet the child's and family's requirements related to enhancing the child's development. The OSEP noted the services must be provided at no cost to the parent, unless a particular service is one that is subject to fees under the Part C program. It stated though Part C funds are to be used only as a "payor of last resort," circumstances may exist under which all, or a portion of the services provided to a particular child, must be paid by the lead agency. For example, if the ISFP team decides five-times-per-week services are required for a child and an outside funding source, such as Medicaid, only offers services three-times-per-week, the lead agency must assume financial responsibility for the remainder of the required services. ■

NEW OCR RULING

District will investigate reasons for preschooler's expulsion

Case name: *Shelby County (TN) Sch. Dist.*, 35 IDELR 228 (OCR 2001).

Ruling: The district resolved a complaint alleging a student with autism was expelled from an independently operated preschool program for behavior relating to his disability. The district advised the **Office for Civil Rights** if a child with a disability is about to be excluded from child-care services for misbehavior, it would participate with the provider to ascertain whether the child's disability is the cause of the misbehavior.

What it means: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requires an evaluation of the relationship between a student's disability and an act of misconduct must be undertaken in connection with disciplinary actions, such as expulsion, that constitute a significant change in placement. 34 CFR § 104.35. However, unlike the **Individuals with Disabilities Act**, the term "manifestation determination" does not appear in Section 504's regulatory language.

Summary: If it was determined the student's misbehavior that caused his dismissal from the preschool program was related to his disability (and provided his presence, with reasonable modifications in place, did not constitute a direct threat to the safety of others), the district stated it would negotiate with the care provider to furnish the parents with credit against future services for the time the child was excluded from the program. It also said it would require the current provider to agree to place the child in "readmit" status, subject to review.

For future issues of whether a child's disability affected her ability to participate fully in a child-care program, the district stated it would participate with the provider to ascertain what modifications of the provider's policies were necessary to include the student in the program. ■

Got news?

Are you aware of any best practices you believe should be featured in **Early Childhood Report**?
Please let us know! Contact Editor Angela Childers at (561) 622-6520, Ext. 8779 or *achilders@lrp.com*.

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NEW SEA DECISIONS

ILLINOIS

Preschool program is 5-year-old's stay-put placement

Case name: *Will County Sch. Dist. No. 92*, 35 IDELR 231 (SEA IL 2001).

Ruling: An impartial hearing officer determined a child's stay-put placement was her current preschool program because the district's proposed cross-categorical placement of the 5-year-old student with Williams syndrome had not yet been implemented.

What it means: The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**'s stay-put rule is codified at 20 USC § 1415(j). It provides that during the pendency of any proceedings conducted pursuant to the act, unless the state or local educational agency and the parents otherwise agree, a student with a disability shall remain in his then-current educational placement.

Summary: Although the Individualized Education Program team decided to adopt the district's recommended placement of the student in its cross-categorical program, that program had not yet commenced at the time the parents filed their due process request. According to the IHO, the operative factor was the IEP's "implementation." An unimplemented IEP does not control stay-put placement and the implementation of the IEP occurs only when it is put into effect, the IHO stated. He added to accept the district's position, "one would have to accept the proposition that an IEP is implemented by the passage of time." Therefore, the child's preschool program, operated by a special education cooperative, became the student's stay-put while DP pended. ■

MASSACHUSETTS

5-year-old doesn't need summer camp ESY program

Case name: *Northampton Pub. Schs.*, 4 ECLPR 318 (SEA MA 2001).

Ruling: An impartial hearing officer ruled that a 5-year-old student's participation in a mainstream camp program, in addition to a five-week summer preschool and daily home education program, was not necessary to prevent regression in his language and social skills. The IHO determined the summer components of the district's Individualized Education Programs offered a free appropriate public education to the child.

What it means: An important factor in any standard weighing the appropriateness of an extended school year program is a regression/recoupment analysis. Generally, that analysis entails consideration of whether the student will experience significant regression in the absence of a program and whether the time it will take to relearn those lost skills is excessive.

If the child will experience regression during the break from school that he will not be able to recoup within the required time upon return, then ESY services should be made available. ■

NEBRASKA

Child's evaluation, services meet federal, state standards

Case name: *Lincoln Pub. Schs.*, 4 ECLPR 317 (SEA NE 2001).

Ruling: The district demonstrated its evaluation report and Individualized Education Program developed for a child with a developmental delay offered a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The student, who was enrolled in early childhood special education classes, made significant progress in the program, an impartial hearing officer ruled.

What it means: Courts have interpreted the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** to require that a student make more than *de minimis* educational progress to satisfy the "basic floor of opportunity" requirement for FAPE. *Polk v. Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit 16*, 441 IDELR 130 (3rd Cir. 1988). However, the IDEA does not require public schools to "maximize" a child's potential or provide the best education possible. ■

NEW YORK

IEP lacks goals, objectives; parents reimbursed for home instruction

Case name: *Board of Educ. of the Syosset Cent. Sch. Dist.*, 4 ECLPR 312 (SEA NY 2001).

Ruling: The Individualized Education Program developed for a 5-year-old with autism did not include the annual goals and short-term objectives recommended by the district's special education committee, a state review officer found. Accordingly, the SRO ruled the parents were entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred for the home instruction they provided to their daughter.

What it means: Reimbursement for unilateral private placement or private services is warranted upon an administrative officer's finding that the district failed to demonstrate the appropriateness of its recommended program. The parents must also show the private educational services they selected were appropriate. Additionally, equitable considerations must support the parents' claim. ■

Lawsuits & Rulings

TEXAS

'Punishment' component not found in student's BIP

Case name: *North East Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 35 IDELR 229 (SEA TX 2001).

Ruling: The district's behavioral program for a student with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder did not rise to the level of "punishment" that should have warranted intervention by the state department of education, an impartial hearing officer ruled. The IHO rejected the parents' contention the ED had the obligation to take over their son's special education services. They claimed the district used punishment rather than positive behavioral interventions. The IHO found the district's disciplinary options were an acceptable part of the student's behavior improvement plan.

What it means: Under the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**, state agencies have significant responsibilities for administration and implementation of the act. A state educational agency must provide special education and related services directly to children with disabilities residing in a school district if the agency determines the district is unable to establish and maintain programs of free appropriate public education that meet IDEA requirements. 20 USC § 1413(d)(1); 34 CFR § 300.360(a)(2). ■

INDIANA

Appeals board backs district's IEPs, eligibility findings for child

Case name: *Mooresville Consolidated Sch. Corp.*, 4 ECLPR 319 (SEA IN 2001).

Ruling: A state board of appeals found no reason to disturb an impartial hearing officer's decision supporting the district's 2000-01 Individualized Education Program for a 6-year-old student. The board also upheld the IHO's determination the student did not qualify for services as with an autism spectrum disorder, but was eligible under other health impairments.

What it means: IDEA regulations at 34 CFR § 300.510 provide little instruction on the standard of review to be employed by the state educational agency on an appeal of an IHO's decision. The review officer or panel is obligated to conduct an independent review based on the entire record on appeal. However, due deference also must be given to the decision of the fact-finder below, as the review is clearly not a hearing *de novo*. A review officer must perform a careful balancing act to decide how much deference is due, while still conducting an independent review. ■

CALIFORNIA

Special day class meets needs of preschooler with Down syndrome

Case name: *Anaheim City Sch. Dist.*, 4 ECLPR 311 (SEA CA 2001).

Ruling: The placement offered by the district to a 4-year-old preschool student with Down syndrome was designed to meet his needs and provide educational benefit in the least restrictive environment, an impartial hearing officer ruled. The district offered evidence that a general education program would not provide the child with language, cognitive and self-help assistance.

What it means: Courts and administrative officers consider many factors to determine the least restrictive environment, including comparing educational benefits available in general and special education classrooms, the nonacademic benefits of interaction with nondisabled students and the effect of the student's presence on the teacher and other students. ■

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Phonological Awareness and Preschool Children: A Review of the Literature

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Phonological Awareness and Preschool Children: A Review of the Literature

This manual reviews research on phonological awareness and preschool children. "Phonological awareness...refers to the general ability to attend to the sounds of language as distinct from its meaning. Noticing similarities between words in their sounds, enjoying rhymes, counting syllables, and so forth are indications of such "metaphonological" skill (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998, p. 52). In other words the ability to blend, segment, rhyme, and in other ways manipulate the sounds in spoken language is phonological awareness.

Several terms relate to phonological awareness. The following definitions are included for clarification:

1. **Phonemes** are the speech phonological units that make a difference to meaning (e.g., the spoken word *rope* is comprised of three phonemes: /r/, /o/, and /p/.
2. **Phonemic awareness** is the insight that spoken words are composed of a sequence of sounds or phonemes. According to Fox (2000):

   > Phonemic awareness is the ability to think analytically about the word, syllable, rhyme, and sound segments of language and the ability to act on the basis of this analysis. Children...can (1) separate spoken language into words, syllables, rhymes, and sounds; and (2) blend individual sounds together to pronounce words. These children deliberately arrange, rearrange, add, and delete the sounds in words" (p. 27).

   In the literature, the terminology "phonemic awareness" and "phonological awareness" are frequently used interchangeably.

3. **Phonics** is the relationship between the letters in written words and the sounds in spoken words. Phonics refers to instructional practices that emphasize how spellings are related to speech sounds in systematic ways.
4. **Phonological decoding** or **decoding** refers to the aspect of the reading process that involves deriving a pronunciation for a printed sequence of letters based on knowledge of spelling-sound correspondences.
5. **Phonology** and **phonological** refer to the sound structure of speech and, in particular, to the perception, representation, and productions of speech sounds. As such, the phonological aspects of language include its prosodic dimensions—intonation, stress, and timing—as well as its articulatory units, including words, syllables, and phonemes.

Overall, young children are aware of the phonology of language because they can understand and use the sounds of language. In other words, they can speak and listen. But phonemic awareness and phonological awareness denote children can hold up language and its sounds to conscious observation. They can respond to rhymes or alliteration and produce these language features. They can segment and analyze words: phoneme-by-phoneme and/or by syllables.

In the absence of phonological awareness, children perceive speech as a continuous, undivided stream. Therefore, they lack insight into the basic premise of written language—that print represents speech at the sound level. If children are to learn to read English, they have to understand that our writing system connects sounds and letters (Nunes, Bryant, & Bindman, 1997).

Phonological awareness develops in a predictable sequence: Awareness of the words in everyday conversations develops first. When children explore nursery rhymes and poetry in day care, preschool, and at home, they develop awareness of rhyme in language. As children develop awareness of rhyming sounds, they become aware of the beginning sounds in words. Later, when kindergartners and first graders have opportunities to explore spoken and written language, they discover that words and rhymes are comprised of individual speech sounds.

According to the New Standards Primary Literacy Committee (1999), learning the print-sound code is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle:

> The task is difficult at first because there are so many options, but it gets easier and goes faster as the pattern becomes clearer and the options become fewer. To begin a jigsaw puzzle, it helps to put the straight-edged pieces together first; they're easy to spot and form a neat frame. This is comparable to students first learning the basic idea that letters stand for sounds and that sounds can be combined to make words, a primary task for kindergarten. Once the frame is completed, the next step is filling in the middle. This takes more time because there are more options, and it takes a while to work through the possibilities. This is comparable to students learning many new spelling-sound correspondences and, at the same time, developing the skill of recognizing the words they make, the primary work of first grade. Finally, once many pieces of the jigsaw puzzle are in place, the pattern provides more clues, and the options diminish. At this point, the puzzle practically finishes itself. Likewise, for primary school students,

> the more they learn of the print-sound code, the easier and faster it is to learn more. (p. 20)

Overview of Language Acquisition

Language acquisition entails three components. One is the language to be acquired. Another is the child and the abilities and predispositions that she brings to language acquisition. Third is the environmental setting, the language that the child hears and the speaking context (Rice, 1996). How these three elements combine affects language acquisition.

Language consists of four major dimensions: phonology or the sound system, semantics or the system of meanings, morphology or the rules of word formation, and syntax or the rules of sentence formation. In addition language has important social aspects. The social setting requires adjustment of both the topic and the style of language used, and it determines how language is interpreted. All five aspects affect language; the entire package is termed *communicative competence* (Hymes, 1972).

Knowing a language does not require a conscious awareness of the various systems involved in that language: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and vocabulary. Practically from birth, infants are able to distinguish all the sounds of any human language even though their productive repertoire is limited to nonspeech sounds and babbling for much of the first year of life (Werker & Lalonde, 1988). Rice (1996) summarizes normal language development as follows:

> There is a remarkable similarity in the general acquisition sequence for language skills across language and cultures, although there is considerable individual variability in learning strategies and rate of acquisition. Children learn language

as a means of talking about what they know so they can accomplish social goals important to them. Explicit language teaching from adults is not necessary. In fact, if adults try to structure and direct a child's language learning, the outcome may be interference with, instead of enhancement of, a child's language skill. Language emerges from a child's explorations of the world in a rich social setting. Although children's cognitive and social knowledge contributes to language mastery, they do not full account for language development. Not all aspects of language have close parallels to general cognitive or social skills. The specifics of how children manage to combine their mental resources with the environmental input to master language continue to elude scholars, but much progress has been made in terms of the empirical validity of explanatory models. (p. 9)

Chomsky (1968) describes the child's acquisition of language as theory construction:

> The child discovers the theory of his language with only small amounts of data from that language. Not only does his "theory of the language" have an enormous predictive scope, but it also enables the child to reject a great deal of the very data on which the theory has been constructed. Normal speech consists, in large part, of fragments, false starts, blends, and other distortions of the underlying idealized forms. Nevertheless, as is evident from a study of the mature use of language, what the child learns is the underlying ideal theory. This is a remarkable fact. We must also bear in mind that the child constructs this ideal theory without explicit instruction, that he acquires this knowledge at a time when he is not capable of complex intellectual achievements in many other domains, and that this

achievement is relatively independent of intelligence or the particular course of experience. (p. 26).

Language development is a key educational objective for preschoolers, and children's play is a primary source of language enrichment. Providing many and varied opportunities for a child to interact with objects and events and other children is essential.

As language proficiency grows, children also gain "metalinguistic" skills. These involve the ability not just to use language but to think about it, play with it, talk about it, analyze it componentially, and make judgments about acceptable versus incorrect forms (Pratt, Tunmer, & Bowey, 1984). Research demonstrates that some children exhibit rudimentary metalinguistic skills by age 3 or even younger and that many children acquire a considerable degree of metalinguistic insight about sentences, words, and speech sounds by age 4 to 5 years, before they enter school (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). These skills continue to improve throughout the school years.

Direct instruction in language teaching drills is usually not appropriate. Most children do not require to be taught language, but they do need opportunities to develop language. The adult's role in language facilitation is to follow the child's interests, paraphrase what the child says with simple elaborations, and interact in a conversational manner about objects and events on which the child's attention is focused.

Some children do need language instruction. A deficiency in language skill requires careful assessment of the child and the family by trained professionals to identify causal factors. Then, specialized strategies can be designed to the needs of the child.

Overall, an appropriate preschool is one designed to enhance language, in which the teacher input is adjusted to the children's comprehension levels, communication

opportunities are socially engineered in the context of meaningful play activities, and specific linguistic skills are targeted as goals for individual children (Fey, 1986). Continued language development forms and expands the foundation for children to effectively develop their abilities to decode and comprehend (Cooper, 2000).

Overview of Reading Acquisition

Reading is a language-based activity. In Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985), the Commission reported that:

> Reading must be seen as art of a child's general language development and not as a discrete skill isolated from listening, speaking, and writing. Reading instruction builds especially on oral language. If this foundation is weak, progress in reading will be slow and uncertain. (p. 30)

In order to foster emerging literacy in children six years of age and younger, extended conversations at home with parents and experiences with written language are essential. The Commission emphasized conversations that require reflection and help children to exercise their memories by giving details and telling complete stories.

Regarding experiences with written language, reading aloud to children is a priority. Also, children must acquire knowledge about written language related to both form (e.g., turning the pages from front to back) and function (e.g., reading can entertain, instruct, or direct). In addition, children need to acquire knowledge of letter names and knowledge about the relationships between letters and sounds. Learning to write and encouraging invented spellings (e.g., such as *tm* for *tame*) facilitates the acquisition of letter-sound correspondences.

What is reading? Definitions include the following:

- For me, reading is a transaction that takes place between a reader and a text in a particular situation. The reader constructs meaning by actively processing graphic, syntactic, and semantic cues representing language, and by actively using memories of past experiences to aid in building new thought and/or revising, reinforcing, or expanding current thoughts. (Gipe, 1998, p. 13)
- Reading is a social, developmental, and interactive process that involves learning. It is a process incorporating a person's linguistic knowledge that can be powerfully influenced by an insightful teacher as well as other nonlinguistic internal and external conditions. It can be developed by self-directed learning experiences as well as by direct instruction and in increasingly important in the information age in which we live. (Leu & Kinzer, 1999, p. 11)
- Reading is a complex developmental challenge that we know to be intertwined with many other developmental accomplishments: attention, memory, language, and motivation, for example. Reading is not only a cognitive psycholinguistic activity but also a social activity. (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998, p. 5)
- Reading is a complex skill that involves strategies for puzzling out meaning and gauging understanding. It requires students to recognize words on a page, comprehend what they mean and say them aloud in ways that clearly convey their meaning. The ultimate goal of reading is getting the meaning. (New Standards Primary Literacy Committee, 1999, p. 17)

The definitions support that a variety of factors are inherent in the reading process, and one of the factors is phonological awareness.

For children learning an alphabetic language, like English, research has supported the importance of phonological awareness in relation to learning to read (Ball & Blachman, 1991). The printed symbols or letters (graphemes) systematically represent the component sounds (phonemes) of the language. For example, the word **cat** has three phonemes and three graphemes. Understanding the basic alphabetic principle, the idea that each sound of the language is represented by a graphic symbol, requires an awareness that spoken language can be analyzed into strings of separable words and words, in turn, into sequences of syllables and phonemes.

The alphabetic principle is not learned naturally by most children (Eldredge, 1995). It must be explicitly taught (Adams, 1990). If children have not yet acquired phonological awareness, instruction in letter-sound associations will not be effective in helping them decode words.

Researchers (Adams, 1990; Eldredge, 1995) have identified levels of phonemic awareness. The elements commonly identified include:

- Rhyming words: being able to tell that two words rhyme (**hot-not**);
- Counting words in sentences: being able to tell that the following is a 4-word sentence, This is my mother;
- Counting syllables in words: being able to tell that **horse** has one syllable and **listen** has two syllables;
- Counting phonemes in words: knowing that **cat** has three sounds;

- Segmenting and blending syllables: hearing the word **happy** and stating the two syllables is segmenting, while hearing the two syllables and then stating the word is blending;
- Segmenting and blending onset and rime: hearing the word **brook** and identifying the onset /br/ and the rime /ook/ is segmenting, while hearing the onset /c/ and the rime /ard/ and being able to state the word **card** is blending;
- Segmenting and blending phonemes: hearing the word **hot** and stating its three phonemes is segmenting, while hearing the three separate phonemes and then saying the word is blending;
- Substitution of sounds: taking the word **hot** and substituting the sound /c/ for /h/ and saying the word **cot**.

Materials and activities for developing phonological awareness are employed in the Early Literacy Project model. Materials include the Early Childhood Top Ten list of songs, nursery rhymes, rhyming books, and word books (see Table X). Activities include the use of songs, fingerplays, rhymes, reading aloud, puppets, storytelling, memory games, and computer activities.

Helping Preschoolers Develop Phonological Awareness

Studies suggest that enhancing phonological awareness prior to kindergarten augments young children's literacy development. Research findings are summarized below.

According to MacLean, Bryant, and Bradley (1987), children as young as three years may be sensitive to rhyme, and kindergartens who have experience with poetry and rhyme are generally quite good at identifying rhyming words (Treiman & Zukowski,

1991). In addition, kindergartners who are aware of rhyme are better readers later in school than kindergartners who are not sensitive to rhyme (Bradley & Bryant, 1978).

Rhyme awareness is a link between awareness of words and awareness of individual speech sounds. It primes children to look for the letters in written words that represent the rhyme in spoken words. Also, the concept of rhyme gives writers insight into ways to spell words that rhyme and to use rhyming language (Fox, 2000). The four-year-old who says that **call** and **fall** sound alike is aware of rhyming language. The first grader who gives examples of rhyming words, such as **pay, say,** and **ray**, is paying attention to rhyming sounds. Also, children show rhyme awareness when they clap for rhyming words is poetry. .

When children increase awareness of rhyme, their reading ability also improves (Bradley & Bryant, 1983). Awareness of rhyme helps reading ability regardless of children's age, intelligence, or their mothers' education (Bradley, MacLean, Crossland, & Bryant, 1989, reported in Bradley & Bryant, 1991). As some children do not develop rhyme awareness by simply participating in normal classroom activities with the rhyme in poetry (Layton, Deeny, Tall, & Upton, 1996), explicit instruction in rhyme is necessary to develop this awareness.

Brady, Fowler, Stone, and Winbury (1994) studied 42 inner-city children aged 4 to 5 years. Initially, fewer than half could generate rhymes, and none could segment simple words into phonemes or read any words. Twenty-one children received training (experimental group) and were matched to 21 who did not (control group) on receptive vocabulary, age, and initial phonological abilities. Training took place in small groups for a total of 18 hours over four months, with three 20-minute sessions per week.

The training exercises first directed the children's attention to rhyme, segmentation of morphemes and syllables, categorization of sounds, and identification of syllables occurred. Next, exercises were devoted to illustrating phonemic contrasts, for example, /p/ vs. /b/, through relevant articulatory gestures and segmentation and identification games at the phoneme level. Finally, the phonemes in two- and three-phoneme words were segmented.

After the treatment, all but one of the experimental group could generate rhymes, and six succeeded in full phonemic segmentation. In contrast, 12 of the 21 in the control group still were unable to generate any rhymes, and only one could segment any words into phonemes.

Dorval, Joyce, and Ramey (1980) investigated the effects of phonological instruction on 4-year-olds. They selected 22 children from one cohort of the Abecedarian Project: 11 from the experimental group who received the preschool day care intervention and 11 from the control group who were matched on familial risk factors. The program's reading readiness component included individual tutoring in phonological awareness and letter-sound knowledge, in 3 to 10 minute sessions, twice per week over 45 weeks.

The training method involved several steps that were completed for a single phoneme/letter before proceeding to the next one to be learned. First, there were oral exercises in phonological awareness alone, including repeating words aloud beginning with the target phoneme, choosing which of two pictures begins with the target phoneme, and identifying if a picture begins with that phoneme. Second, the child traced and then drew the letter of the target phoneme. Third, the child matched letters to pictures or spoken words on the basis of their beginning sounds. Finally, the child attempted to

differentiate the target item from two other phoneme/letter items that were previously trained.

On the posttest, for each of five phonemes in turn, five picture pairs were shown successively. The child attempted to name the pictures and to point to the one that began with the phoneme pronounced by the examiner. Also, the child attempted to select one of three letters represented by the pronounced phoneme. On phoneme recognition the average of the experimental group far exceeded the control group (88 versus 58 percent correct). Likewise, on letter recognition, the experimental group outperformed the control group (62 versus 31 percent).

In a longitudinal study of the Abecedarian Project, Campbell and Ramey (1994) examined the long term effects of the enriched day care in which infants in the experimental group received activities that stressed language and cognitive development through age 5. At follow-up testing, the children in the experimental group demonstrated statistically significant higher reading achievement from age 8 (grade 3) through age 15 (grade 8).

Experimental studies of programs designed to teach children phonological sensitivity show positive effects on children's reading and spelling skills (Ball & Blachman, 1988; Bradley & Bryant, 1985; Lundberg, Frost, & Petersen, 1988; Torgensen, Morgan, & Davis, 1992), and programs that include letter-sound training produce larger results (Wagner, 1996). The majority of these programs teach children how to categorize objects on the basis of certain sounds (e.g., initial phonemes). Other programs explicitly teach children phonemic analysis and synthesis skills. For example, Torgesen et al. (1992) compared the effects of training synthesis skill only to training

both analysis and synthesis skills. During a 7-week program, groups of three to five kindergarten children in the combined training group worked with an adult to learn how to identify and pronounce the initial, final, or middle sounds in two- and three- phoneme words (analysis). These children were then taught how to pronounce words after hearing their phonemes in isolation. Children in the synthesis condition received only the blending training. A control group listened to stories, engaged in discussions about the stories, and answered comprehension questions. Results indicated that both training groups experienced increases in synthesis skills, whereas only the combined group increased in their analysis skills and scored higher than the other two groups on a reading analog task.

Byrne and Fielding-Barnsley (1991b) found that preschool children with the mean age of 55 months exposed to 12 weeks of their Sound Foundations program demonstrated greater increases in phonological sensitivity than a group of control children exposed to storybook reading and a semantic organization program. The intervention program consisted of teaching children six phonemes in the initial and final positions by drawing attention to the sound in words, discussing how the sound is made by the mouth, reciting rhymes with the phoneme in the appropriate position, and encouraging children to find objects in a poster that had the sound in the initial or final position. Worksheets in which children identified and colored items with the phoneme in the correct position were used, and the letter for the phoneme was displayed. A final training exercise introduced children to two card games that required matching objects on the basis of initial and final phonemes. Some of the gains made were maintained through the first and second grades (Byrne & Fielding-Barnsley, 1993, 1995). However, an uncontrolled trial using regular

preschool teachers and classrooms found substantially smaller effects and a large degree of variability in the fidelity of program implementation (Byrne & Fielding-Barnsley, 1995), findings which question the potential success of a staff-implemented phonological training program under nonexperimental conditions in children's preschool environments.

According to Bus and van Ijzendoorn (1999), the best way to determine the causal relationship between phonological awareness and reading acquisition is through controlled experimental studies. The main difference between phonological awareness studies lies in the choice of program. Programs may or may not present a linkage with letters or written words. The aim of their meta-analysis was to determine the best type of training to develop phonological awareness. The study compared programs involving explicit letter and word linkages with exclusively phonetic programs. Because long-term effects of preschool instruction in phonological awareness can also help determine causal effects, the final aim of the study was to test the hypothesis that phonological awareness training does have long-term effects on reading skills.

Bus and van Ijzendoorn (1999) compared 36 studies ($N = 3,092$) testing the effects of training programs on phonological awareness and 34 studies ($N = 2,751$) testing effects on reading skills. Some of the studies overlapped the two areas of concerns so the numbers of participants cannot be added together. This review of current literature tested six hypotheses:

- Training phonological awareness affects learning-to-read processes in a positive and substantial way.

- Phonological training is more effective when the program combines phonological training with written letters or words.
- Starting early with phonological training is more effective than starting later in childhood.
- Children with reading problems profit more from phonological awareness training than children who develop reading abilities in a normal way.
- More carefully designed experimental studies may show systematically smaller effect sizes, because experimental artifacts cannot inflate the outcome.
- Experiments using simple posttests limited to the use of letter-sound rules may seem more effective than experiments using posttests with real-word identification. (Bus and van Ijzendoorn, p. 405)

The results of the analysis showed that for both phonological awareness and reading exclusively phonetic programs were equally effective as programs embedded in a letter training, or a training using reading and writing practice. However, for phonological awareness alone, training embedded in reading and writing tended to be less effective than training with letter practice. The analysis also seems to settle the question of the causal relationship to acquisition of reading skills. In statistical terms, the researchers assert that "over 500 studies with null effects would be needed to negate the current research" (Bus & van Ijzendoorn, p. 411). However, the analysis does not support, conclusively, the proposition that phonological awareness is the single strongest indicator of reading development.

Programs such as Sound Foundations, which include letter training, have the greatest positive effect. The analysis shows that an early start with phonological training profits children more than waiting. In other words, preschoolers profit more than kindergartners, who, in turn, profit more than primary school children from training. Because the results show a greater effectiveness of programs utilizing letter or reading and writing practice than phonetic games alone, the analysis strengthens the case for a balanced approach in reading instruction rather than a literature-based program or a skill-based program used in isolation.

The majority of studies on phonological awareness training and its effects upon reading acquisition skills focus on preschool, kindergarten, and primary school children developing normally. In contrast, van Kleeck, Gillam, and McGadden (1999) investigated children with specific language impairments (SLI). The children in this study (N =24) were significantly lower in phonological awareness skills than age-matched normally developing children. The training itself involved 16 children divided into two 8-person groups given mini-lessons of 10-15 minutes in smaller groups of 3-4 twice a week during the two 12-week sessions. Students focused on rhyming activities during the first 12-week semester and on phoneme awareness during the second 12-week semester. Rhyming activities followed a prescribed pattern:

- Read a selected book
- Show and model five matched rhyme pairs
- Present the rhyme activities
- Play a rhyme identification game.

In the second week, the process would also include a rhyme generation game. The process would repeat with a new book in the third week. In the second semester, phonemic awareness training followed a similar model. Teachers were specifically asked not to provide any special instruction on phonological awareness outside of the planned training sessions.

The researchers noted significant improvement in phonological awareness at the end of the study. Both groups of eight children showed improvement. Moreover, the researchers were interested in the long-term effects of the training. They compared the tested children against other students who had attended the same preschool and pre-kindergarten. The trained group was tested at the beginning of their kindergarten and first grade year; they were on average 13.7 months older than the other preschool children and 2.5 months older than the pre-kindergarten children when they were post-tested (van Kleeck, Gillam and McFadden, 1999). While the study could not attribute the increase in rhyming ability to their training, the researchers did confidently attribute the increased phonemic awareness to the training.

The study supports the hypothesis that the earlier the intervention the greater the results and long-term effects. Also, it supports the hypothesis that children at greater risk of reading deficiencies profit significantly from such early training and intervention. The instruction was most helpful for students with little or no phonological awareness training prior to the program. The study additionally has implications for preschool programs in that it focused on classroom-based interventions of a relatively short nature (twice a week for 10-15 minutes), but implemented over a long period (24 weeks). Finally, the training

involved books and materials already available in the preschool program, thus requiring no additional outlays of funds.

O'Connor, Jenkins, Leicester, and Slocum (1993) examined the feasibility of teaching phonological manipulation skills to preschool children with disabilities. Forty-seven children, 4-6 years old, enrolled in a special education preschool, were randomly assigned to receive training in one of three categories of phonological tasks (rhyming, blending, and segmenting) or a control group. After seven weeks of training, results indicated that the children exhibited significant progress in each experimental category, but they demonstrated little or no generalization either within a category (e.g., from one type of blending task to another type of blending task) or between categories (e.g., from blending to segmenting). Although the children's level of cognitive development significantly predicted some learning outcomes, it did not limit the learning of the phonological tasks.

O'Connor, Jenkins, and Slocum (1995) examined the effects of instructional treatments on the development of specific and generalized phonological skills for low-skilled kindergarten children. Sixty-six children with low phonological manipulation skills were randomly assigned to 1 of 2 treatments or a control condition: (a) auditory blending and segmenting with limited letter-sound correspondences; (b) a global array of phonological tasks, with letter-sound correspondences; or (c) only letter-sound instruction. Children in both treatments showed improved phonological abilities, which transferred to a reading analog task. Treated children achieved a level of phonological awareness comparable to that of higher skilled children. The combination of blending and segmenting instruction encouraged generalized phonological awareness; however, the

ability to blend and segment accounted for more variance in reading analog scores than did other phonological tasks

Overall, the research results indicate that phonological awareness can be successfully enhanced through training in young children. Strategies and exercises that foster literacy and help children to discover the alphabetic principle are effective. To increase school preparedness, instruction in phonological awareness should be accompanied by training in letters and letter-sound associations. Children who enter school with these competencies will be better prepared to benefit from formal literacy instruction.

Children in high-risk groups and those who have been identified as having language or cognitive delays or other impairments require more intensive prevention efforts. Intensity, quantity, and maintenance of the highest quality of interactions around language and literacy are critical. Coupled with family-focused efforts and preschools that provide rich opportunities to learn and to practice language and literacy-related skills in a playful and motivating setting, children with risk factors can succeed.

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Running head: EFFECTS OF PHONEMIC AWARENESS DRILLS

The Effects of Phonemic Awareness Drills on Phonological Awareness and Word Reading Performance in a Later Learned Alphabetic Script

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Abstract

This study examined the effectiveness of phonemic awareness drills on phonological awareness and word reading performance in English of Mainland Chinese students in primary school. Employing a nonequivalent control group design, the research questions explored: (a) whether phonemic awareness drills promoted phonological awareness with the English language; (b) whether phonemic awareness drills enhanced word reading in English; and (c) whether the treatment on phonological awareness and word reading was generalizable across gender or if the findings were specific to gender. Participants were 202 students in grades 1 and 2, 95 who were female, attending a private elementary school in Hangzhou, China. Over a period of 10 weeks, 101 students in the experimental group engaged in phoneme production/replication, phoneme isolation, phoneme segmentation and counting the sounds, phoneme blending, rhyming, phoneme deletion, and phoneme substitution with English sounds. Assessments were subtests of the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (Elision, Blending Words, and Segmenting Words) and the Test of Word Reading Efficiency (Sight Word Efficiency). Analyses showed an important and consistent difference in words learned and phonological awareness gained by members of the experimental group, whether male or female. The findings strongly support explicit instruction in phonemic awareness promoted phonological awareness and word reading in English of Chinese primary school children.

The Effects of Phonemic Awareness Drills on Phonological Awareness and Word Reading Performance in a Later Learned Alphabetic Script

Phonemic awareness (PA) is the conscious ability to analyze spoken language into its component sounds (phonemes) and to perform mental operations on these smaller linguistic units (Liberman & Shankweiler, 1985; Wagner & Torgesen, 1987). It requires the ability to hear and manipulate distinct speech sounds apart from meaning or the representation of speech sounds in print. As stated by Sodoro, Allinder, and Rankin-Erickson (2002), "It is the awareness of sounds in *spoken* language separate from the representation of sounds by *written* language" (p. 223). PA is an aspect of phonological awareness, which is a more encompassing term referring to an awareness of larger spoken units such as syllables and rhyming words (Ehri, Nunes, Wilows, Schuster, Yaghoub-Zadeh, & Shanahan, 2001). Tasks such as tapping out the number of syllables in a word, rhyming words, telling the number of phonemes included in single words, identifying separate words in a spoken sentence, and deleting initial or final phonemes of a word demonstrate phonological awareness.

PA specifically refers to the "insight that every spoken word can be conceived as a sequence of phonemes" (Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., & Griffith, P., 1998, p. 52). For example, *bat* is one word, but it is composed of three phonemes: */b/*, */a/*, and */t/*. PA is the knowledge that discrete speech sounds constitute words and that manipulating speech sounds can create new words (Greene, 1997). It is not the same as phonics (learning letter-sound correspondences) but can be considered a prerequisite to success in phonics instruction (Adams, 1990; Juel, 1988; National Reading Panel, 2000). Tasks involving

blending, deleting, substituting, or moving phonemes within or between words require PA or the ability to detect and manipulate individual sounds.

Phonological awareness is a strong predictor of reading acquisition (Blachman, 1984; Bradley & Bryant, 1985; Byrne & Fielding-Barnsley, 1991, 1993; Calfee, Lindamood, & Lindamood, 1973; Hatcher, Hulme, & Ellis, 1994; National Reading Panel, 2000; Scarborough, 1998). It has been documented in the research literature (Adams, 1990; Bradley & Bryant, 1983; Uhry, 1993, 1999) as an associate of beginning word reading in young children. Training studies (Ball & Blachman, 1991; Bradley & Bryant, 1983; Cunningham, 1990; Lundberg, Frost, & Petersen, 1988; Torgesen, Wagner, Rashotte, Alexander, & Conway, 1997; Uhry & Shepard, 1993) show an advantage in learning to read for children trained in phonological awareness in comparison with children without this training. Specifically, Lundberg *et al.*, (1988), Cunningham (1990), Ball and Blachman (1991), and Hatcher *et al.*, (1994) all demonstrated that comparison children exhibited greater improvement in reading performance than controls after explicit training on sound segmentation skills. Likewise, the National Reading Panel (2000) conducted a quantitative meta-analysis of 52 studies evaluating the effects of PA instruction on learning to read and spell. Findings revealed that teaching PA to children significantly improved their literacy development and essential foundational knowledge in the alphabetic system.

The correlation between phonological awareness and word reading has been widely researched. Many studies in this area are developmental in nature and emphasize both the predictive power and practical significance of phonological awareness. McDougall, Hulme, Ellis, and Monk (1994) found that English-speaking children's (aged

7 to 10 years) rime judgment and phoneme deletion abilities were positively correlated with their read-aloud performance, and that such a correlation was independent of the contribution from short-term memory. Leather and Henry (1994) and Gathercole, Willis, and Baddeley (1991) reported similar findings with younger children ranging in age from 4 to 7 years.

As the structure of the English writing system is alphabetic, PA ~~is thought to~~ contributes to children learning to read. Words have prescribed spellings that consist of letters symbolizing sounds in fairly predictable ways while spoken language has no breaks in signaling where one phoneme ends and the next one begins. The task of distinguishing the separate phonemes in word pronunciations so that they can be matched to letters is difficult. The discovery and identification of phonemic units are facilitated by explicit instruction in the structure of language (Ehri, Nunes, Wilows, Schuster, Yaghoub-Zadeh, & Shanahan, 2001). This is demonstrated by research revealing that people who have not learned to read and write have difficulty performing PA tasks (Morais, Bertelson, Cary, & Alegria, 1987), and people who have learned to read in a non-alphabetic script, such as Chinese, have difficulty segmenting speech into phonemes (Mann, 1987; Read, Zhang, Nie, & Ding, 1987).

In addition to literacy acquisition in English, studies suggest that an understanding of the phonological constituents of words is an important determiner of reading success in many other alphabetic orthographies such as Spanish (Carrilo, 1994; Defior & Tudela, 1994), Portuguese (Cardoso-Martins 1995; Carraher, 1987; Cary & Verhaeghe, 1994), German (Wimmer & Hummer, 1990; Wimmer, Landerl, & Schneider, 1994), Turkish

(Oktay & Aktan, 2002), Norwegian (Lundberg, 1991), Italian (Cossu, Shankweiler, Liberman, Katz, & Tola, 1988), and Greek (Aidinis & Nunes, 2001; Porpodas, 1989).

The idea that phonological awareness promotes reading in the alphabetic system has been extended to the non-alphabetic Chinese script. Chinese is a logographic writing system in which the smallest pronounceable unit is the character, and each character is associated with a syllable. Speech sounds are coded at the level of the syllable; individual phonemes are simply not represented in the script. Over 80% of Chinese characters are compounds containing a phonetic and a semantic component. The phonetic part provides information about the pronunciation. According to Tzeng (1981), this feature relies on a certain form of print-sound regularity and constitutes an example of phonological recoding, although it does not operate at the phonemic level as in the alphabetic system. The semantic component encodes the meaning. Furthermore, Chinese has a large number of words with the same pronunciation but a different meaning. What distinguishes these words is their tonal quality. Mandarin has four tones: high, rising, falling-rising, and falling. For example, the word *mai* with falling, or 4th tone, means "sell," and *mai* with falling-rising, or 3rd tone, means "buy." Every syllable is pronounced on one of these four tones, except when it is unstressed. Then, the tone distinctions disappear, and the unstressed syllable is pronounced light and short (McNaughton, 1979).

In Mainland China children learn to read logographic Chinese with the aid of Pinyin, "...a set of symbols used to transliterate Chinese characters and combine speech sounds of the common speech into syllables" (Beijing Languages Institute, 1989, p. 37). Pinyin uses the Latin alphabet, modified to meet the needs of the Chinese language. It is a shallow alphabetic orthography with a regular grapheme-phoneme correspondence,

which differs from that of English in a number of ways. For example, the letter *q* need not be followed by *u*, and the corresponding phoneme sounds like */ch/* as in the word *church*. Tone is marked with diacritics.

Liow and Poon (1998) examined the impact of phonological awareness in English and Chinese with 57 multilingual, grade 3 students whose language backgrounds were English, Chinese (Mandarin dialect), or Bahasa Indonesia (a member of the Malay language family common among ethnic Chinese Indonesian children). Assessments were a homophone decision task; an English spelling test comprised of regular words, irregular words, and non-words; and a Pinyin spelling test. All three groups of students were studying English and Chinese in the same school in Singapore. The Bahasa Indonesia group exhibited the highest levels of alphabetic phonological awareness, followed by the English group, and then the Chinese group. In Mandarin, the students' performance on the Pinyin spelling test suggested that tonal phonological awareness is relatively independent of alphabetic phonological awareness, and that this may affect children's strategies for the subsequent acquisition of a second written language.

Huang and Hanley (1977) investigated whether a child's phonological awareness and visual skills before instruction in school had any predictive power for later Chinese reading ability among 40 grade 1 students in Taiwan. The study also examined the extent to which phonological awareness and visual skills varied in three separate testing sessions during grade 1: before the children learned the alphabetic system Zhu-Yin-Fu-Hao (a system where each phoneme is represented by a distinctive visual symbol), immediately after the children learned Zhu-Yin-Fu-Hao, and at the end of the school year. The results showed that phonological awareness at the first testing session was significantly related

to the ability to read Chinese characters at the end of the first year. However, the predictive power of early phonological awareness decreased markedly when the effects of preschool reading scores were factored out. In addition, the 10 weeks of instruction in the alphabetic system led to an increase in performance on all tests of phonological awareness. This is consistent with the view that learning an alphabetic script improves phonological awareness ability.

Holm and Dodd (1996) investigated the effect of first-learned scripts on the acquisition of English literacy skills. Using a battery of tests, they looked at English segmentation and reading/spelling performance among four groups of undergraduates using different first-learned scripts. The Vietnamese and Australian undergraduates had adopted the alphabetic system early in their literacy development. The Mainland Chinese and the Hong Kong participants both used the logographic Chinese script; however, the former group had learned to read the characters with the help of Pinyin whereas the latter group had not. Although performance on real English words was equivalent, the Hong Kong participants performed poorly in English segmentation tasks compared to the other groups, even though they had the longest history of reading in English (averaging 15 years, compared to 10.4, 4.9, and 14.4 years for the Mainland Chinese, Vietnamese, and Australian subjects, respectively). The researchers concluded that the non-phonemic strategy developed in reading Chinese without Pinyin was so dominant that it applied to reading in the later-learned English script.

This study investigated the effectiveness of PA drills on phonological awareness and word reading performance in English of Mainland Chinese students in grades 1 and 2. The research questions explored: (a) whether PA drills promoted phonological

awareness with the English language, given a tonal primary language; (b) whether PA drills enhanced word reading in English, given an initial logographic writing system; and (c) whether the treatment on phonological awareness and word reading was generalizable across gender or if the findings were specific to gender.

Method

Sample

The sample was expected to consist of approximately 200 first and second grade Chinese children from four classrooms attending school in Hangzhou, China. The sample was a convenience sample based upon availability and access to existing classrooms. The experimental and control groups were randomly chosen.

In the educational system of the People's Republic of China (PRC), nine years of compulsory education (grades 1-9) are required. Students are taught Chinese using Pinyin ~~is taught~~ starting in grade 1, and English is ~~just being~~ introduced in grade 3. Children begin their schooling at six years of age, and students attend upper middle school or high school only if their test scores are acceptable. At this elementary school, students were ~~instruction was~~ taught English in grades 1-6, 35 minutes per class, five classes per week. The English lessons consisted of listening and repeating words or story lines, saying and doing actions, and chanting or singing. Neither PA nor letter-sound correspondence in English was taught explicitly.

Procedure

Campbell and Stanley's (1963) nonequivalent control (comparison) group design structured this quasi-experimental study. A priori, an experimental difference of two additional correctly identified words would constitute an important finding while an

alpha level of .05 was required for experimental data consistency. Inherent in the nonequivalent control group design is the internal validity threat of selection. To control for the nonrandom assignment, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used in the statistical analysis.

Measures of word reading and phonological awareness were determined using the following means:

Word reading. The Sight Word Efficiency (SWE) subtest of The Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE) (Torgesen, Wagner, & Rashotte, 1999) assesses the number of printed real words in English that can be accurately identified within 45 seconds. The subtest has two alternate forms, Form A and Form B, listing 104 words each. Materials needed are a stopwatch, the profile/examiner record booklet, and the appropriate form of the Sight Word Efficiency Reading Card.

Phonological awareness. The Elision (EL), Blending Words (BW), and Segmenting Words (SW) subtests of the Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP) (Wagner, Torgesen, & Rashotte, 1999) were used to assess phonological awareness. All three subtests contain 20-items each. No materials, except for the profile/examiner record booklet, are required.

The EL subtest measures the extent to which an individual can say a word, and then say what is left after dropping out a designated sound. For the first two items, the examiner says a compound word and asks the student to say that word, and then say the word that remains after dropping one of the syllables. For the remaining 18 items, the student listens to a word and repeats that word, and then is asked to say the word without a specific sound. For example, the examinee is instructed, "Say *bold*." After repeating

"bold," the student is told, "Now say *bold* without saying /b/." The correct response is "old." Testing stops when the examinee misses three consecutive items.

The BW subtest measures an individual's ability to combine sounds to form words. The examinee listens to a series of separate sounds and then is asked to put the separate sounds together to make a whole word. For example, the examinee is asked, "What word do these sounds make: t-oi?" The correct response is the word "toy." Testing stops when the examinee misses three consecutive items.

The SW subtest measures the ability to say the separate phonemes that make up a word. The examinee is told to repeat a word, then to say it one sound at a time. For example, the examiner tells the examinee to say "beast" and then to say it one sound at a time. The correct response is "b-e-s-t." Testing stops when the examinee misses three consecutive items.

Training Phase

Participants were trained over a period of 10 weeks, during which five 10-minute PA sessions were conducted every week, totaling 50 sessions (500 total minutes) for the experimental group. Training took place during English class where class size approximated 50 students, and individuals recited as a whole or were called upon singly.

With the cooperation of the school administration, two English teachers in the school were responsible for the training: Teacher A taught the experimental group in grade 1 and the control group in grade 2; Teacher B taught the control group in grade 1 and the experimental group in grade 2. The investigator met weekly with the teachers to review the week's drills and to ensure their adherence to the training protocols. The teachers were aware of the purpose of the study.

Sounds and Letters for Readers and Spellers (Greene, 1997) was the resource used for the PA instruction. The text contains 18-units of scripted PA drills, each unit consisting of nine stages or activities: 1. phoneme production/replication, 2. phoneme isolation, 3. phoneme segmentation and counting the sounds, 4. phoneme blending, 5. rhyming, 6. phoneme deletion, 7. phoneme substitution, 8. phoneme reversal, and 9. Pig Latin recitation. For the purposes of this study, the teachers presented two units per week, encompassing stages 1-7. The following describes these seven stages:

Stage 1 Phoneme production/replication. The teacher says a phoneme and the students repeat the sound. Example: "Say */m/*." The response is *"/m/."*

Stage 2 Phoneme isolation. The teacher says a word containing two to four phonemes; she then instructs the students to isolate a certain phoneme. Example: "Say **mat**." (Response: "**mat**.") "Say the first sound in **mat**." (Response: "*/m/*.")

Stage 3 Phoneme segmentation. The teacher says a word containing more than one phoneme; she then instructs the students to say the sounds in the word. Example: "Say **dad**." (Response: "**dad**.") "Say the sounds in **dad**." (Response: "/d/ /a/ /d/.")

Stage 4 Phoneme blending. The teacher says several phonemes. The students repeat what the teacher says until the word in pronounced. Example: "Listen and repeat: */a/ /m/, /a/ /m/,* **am**. (Response: "*/a/ /m/, /a/ /m/,* am.")

Stage 5 Rhyming. The teacher says a word. The students respond with a word that rhymes. Example: "Say a word that rhymes with **mat.**" (Response: "hat," "bat.")

Stage 6 Phoneme deletion. The teacher says a word containing more than one phoneme; she instructs the students to delete a phoneme and say the remaining sound(s). Example: "Say **cat**. Say **cat** without the */t/*." Response: "*/ka/*."

Stage 7 Phoneme substitution. The teacher says a word containing more than one phoneme; she instructs the students to change one of the sounds to another sound and say the new word. Example: "Say **bat**. Now change the last sound in **bat** to */m/.* " Response: "*/bam/.*"

After 10 weeks of instruction, all groups were post-tested using the Sight Word Efficiency subtest of the TOWRE and the Elision, Blending Words, and Segmenting Words subtests of the CTOPP.

Results

Initial Considerations

At the initiation of the study, the researchers obtained permission to conduct the study from both the American university and the Chinese authorities. Then they consulted with the administrators and teachers at the school site. At the request of the principal, two English teachers in the school were responsible for the training: Teacher A taught the experimental group in grade 1 (n = 50) and the control group in grade 2 (n = 51); Teacher B taught the control group in grade 1 (n = 50) and the experimental group in grade 2 (n = 51). Both teachers were 25-year-old females with similar training who started teaching English at the school in 1998.

Participants

Participants were all first grade (n = 100) and all second grade (n = 102) Chinese children from four classrooms attending school in Hangzhou, China. Of the 202 children in the sample, 95 (47%) were females, and 107 (53%) were males. At the first testing session, the students ranged in age from 74 to 109 months, with a mean age of 91 months with a standard deviation of 8 months. In the judgment of the children's two teachers,

none of the students had perceptual or neurological problems, and none were mentally deficient.

The children attended a private, boarding, elementary school (grades 1-6) located in Hangzhou, the capital city of approximately 1.69 million people, in Zhejiang Province. Based on test scores, the school admits 102 new students annually. The children came from middle to upper middle class families who lived in this province, except for one boy in grade 2 who lived in Hong Kong. The language spoken in school was Putonghua (Mandarin); however, at home the children spoke dialects dependent on the region of their residence. For example, a child from Wenzhou, a city in southeastern Zhejiang Province, pronounced words quite differently from a child who lived in Hangzhou.

The pre-testing took place in February 2002 during the first week of the second semester of the school year. After 10 weeks instruction in phonemic awareness drills, the children were post-tested. During each testing session, the children were assessed individually in a quiet room in the school by one of the researchers or by one of the three trained educators. Total testing time per session was about 15 minutes. Measures of word reading and phonological awareness were administered to all participants.

Reporting Conventions

The findings are reported with values rounded to the nearest integer, the same level of precision of the data collected. The posttest scores reported are the adjusted scores as determined by ANCOVA procedures. It is noted that the posttest scores were only slightly adjusted by the procedure, usually in the order of plus/minus .02 words to plus/minus .2 words per group. This low level of adjustment indicates the groups

generally began the research at very nearly the same level of achievement thus providing the effect of random assignment.

Statistical Findings

Word reading. The Sight Word Efficiency subtest calculated an initial identification of five words for both the control and experimental group. After the 10 weeks of intervention, the control group scored eight words while the experimental group scored 10 words. This provided the control group with a gain in recognition of three additional words, and the experimental group having gained five additional words over their pretest scores. The experimental group gain of two words per student has a consistency reflected in the p-value of 0.0004.

Phonological awareness. The Elision (EL), Blending Words (BW), and Segmenting Words (SW) subtests provided a measure of phonological awareness. The EL scores were again identical, to the nearest word, for both the control and experimental groups, each scoring five points on the pretest. The posttest scores found an experimental difference of two words with the experimental group outscoring the control group by two words per student with a p-valued calculated at 0.0001.

The BW subtest resulted in a larger experimental difference with the experimental group outscoring the control group by four words per group member. This difference is supported by a p-value of 0.0001.

The SW subtest had the highest experimental difference, five words per group member, with the experimental group outscoring the control group. The five words per student gained by the experimental group are supported by a p-value of 0.0001.

These results are evident when plotted against each other (see Figure 1).

[insert Figure 1 here]

Male/Female Differences

There were no differences in scores between females and males, either in the pretest scores or the adjusted posttest scores over all or when contrasted by control and experimental groups. There were also no differences in gain scores between females and males in the control group and their counterparts in the experimental group.

These findings may also be expressed by calculating a Pearson r correlation on the posttest scores. The experimental group scores correlate well among subtests having r-values that range from .40 to .59. The control group correlations are not as strong or consistent, having r-values ranging from .21 to .62. All correlations met the required p-value of .05 or less.

Discussion

Initial Hypothesis

This research considered a priori that an important experimental difference would be established by a finding in which the experimental group's average gain exceeded the control group's average gain by at least two words and sufficient experimental consistency of the data would be established at an alpha level of .05. These experimental requirements were met on all measurements; i.e., each of the subtest scores indicated an important and consistent difference in English word reading and phonological awareness gained by the members of the experimental group that were provided with the intervention. These findings not only support the contention that the PA drills serve to improve Chinese primary students' English literacy achievement, but the intervention does so at an important difference consistently and across several measures.

Explicit instruction in PA illustrates the structure of words and how words can be pulled apart, manipulated, and put back together. An awareness of this structure is a vital component of literacy development of children who are native English speakers. PA instruction for children who are learning to speak English as a second language provides an opportunity for those children to learn about word structures, which is a basic foundation of language. The results of this study determined that young Chinese children, speakers of a tonal primary language, could be taught to segment, blend, and manipulate the phonemes in English words. This provides evidence that differs from previous findings that people who have learned to read in a script that is not graphophonemic have difficulty segmenting speech into phonemes (Mann, 1987; Read, Zhang, Nie, & Ding, 1987). In addition, the children were successful in developing phonological awareness when the PA instruction focused on more than two types of phoneme manipulation. This counters the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading (2001) report that stated, "Phonemic awareness instruction is most effective when it focuses on only one or two types of phoneme manipulation, rather than several types" (p. 7). The findings of this study strongly support explicit instruction in PA using several types of phoneme manipulation promotes phonological awareness, including segmenting words, and word reading in English of Chinese primary school children.

Anecdotal accounts from the teachers of both the experimental and control groups indicated that the children who received the PA instruction showed increases in their oral language use of English. The children in the experimental group were using more vocabulary and combining more words together in creating novel sentences in English.

The correlations that were calculated provide additional research information. The experimental group receiving the PA drills had consistent and moderately strong positive correlations among posttest subtest scores ranging from .40 to .59. This finding indicates that the treatment provides consistent improvement across all subtests for the students in this research. The correlations for the control group were, however, not as consistent or as strong. These correlations ranged from a low of .21 to a high of .62, indicating that those students not receiving the treatment could not be expected to do well across all of the measures used in this research.

A student who received PA drills could anticipate a total of 12 additional points on all subtests combined than had the same student not received the intervention. For a population of just 100 students, this increase represents 1,200 more correct responses with the intervention than in its absence. Furthermore, the intervention appeared to have contributed to providing students with improvement at a higher level of consistency throughout subtest scores (.40 contrasted with .21) without sacrificing improvement at the highest level of consistency between the two groups (.59 contrasted with .62).

Recommendation

China has the world's largest education system. The 1986 Law on Compulsory Education requires that children receive nine years of formal schooling comprised of six years of primary education and three years of junior high education. As mandated by the State Education Ministry of the People's Republic of China and commencing September 2001, English will become a nationwide required subject for all students in grade 3 and above by 2005. Prior to the mandate, most urban, public schools offered English as an elective to students in grades 5 and 6, two lessons per week, 40 minutes per lesson.

According to the new curriculum standard, 3 to 4 lessons will be offered per week, 40 minutes per lesson. As all students in the urban areas will soon be studying English in grades 3-9, large numbers will receive instruction.

Chinese teachers of English are currently trained to teach English in the communicative way, with attention attached to developing student interest and oral English. Those who teach English in grade levels 1-6 are required to have three years of study in English at the college level. As English is now so critically needed, many teachers lack adequate training both in English language proficiency and teaching methodology. Although not previously trained in PA, the two Chinese teachers in this study learned quickly the sounds in the intervention and taught the lessons well. Chinese teachers of English who lack PA could benefit from the drills to enhance their phonological awareness skills in English. Furthermore, as the drills are scripted, sequential, and cumulative, the intervention is straightforward to administer.

This research determined that Chinese students in grades 1 and 2 improved their English literacy achievement by an important and consistent amount. Further, the PA drills were found to be unbiased in its benefit for improving both male and female students' English language development. The educational benefit of this intervention is well supported by the findings of this research. Therefore, PA instruction that fosters phonological awareness and word reading of English is recommended. This intervention would contribute to the critical skills required for the learning of English, as mandated by the most populated country in the world. That many Chinese students have difficulty mastering English word spelling shows their inadequate knowledge of sounds and the link to spelling. PA instruction can help most students learn to spell (Center for the

Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 2001). In addition, the drills could be added to the resources to teach English in China. Currently, a new series of English textbooks for primary, junior high, and senior high schools are being published. The textbook content does not include PA instruction. The drills would provide linguistic activities the promote reading and spelling.

Implications for future research include investigating the effectiveness of PA drills not only on Chinese students in grades 3 and higher, but also on Chinese adults learning English. Research could also examine changes in vocabulary development and spelling as a result of PA instruction. PA can be taught, and for those who never mastered it, this intervention may provide the missing component to English literacy.

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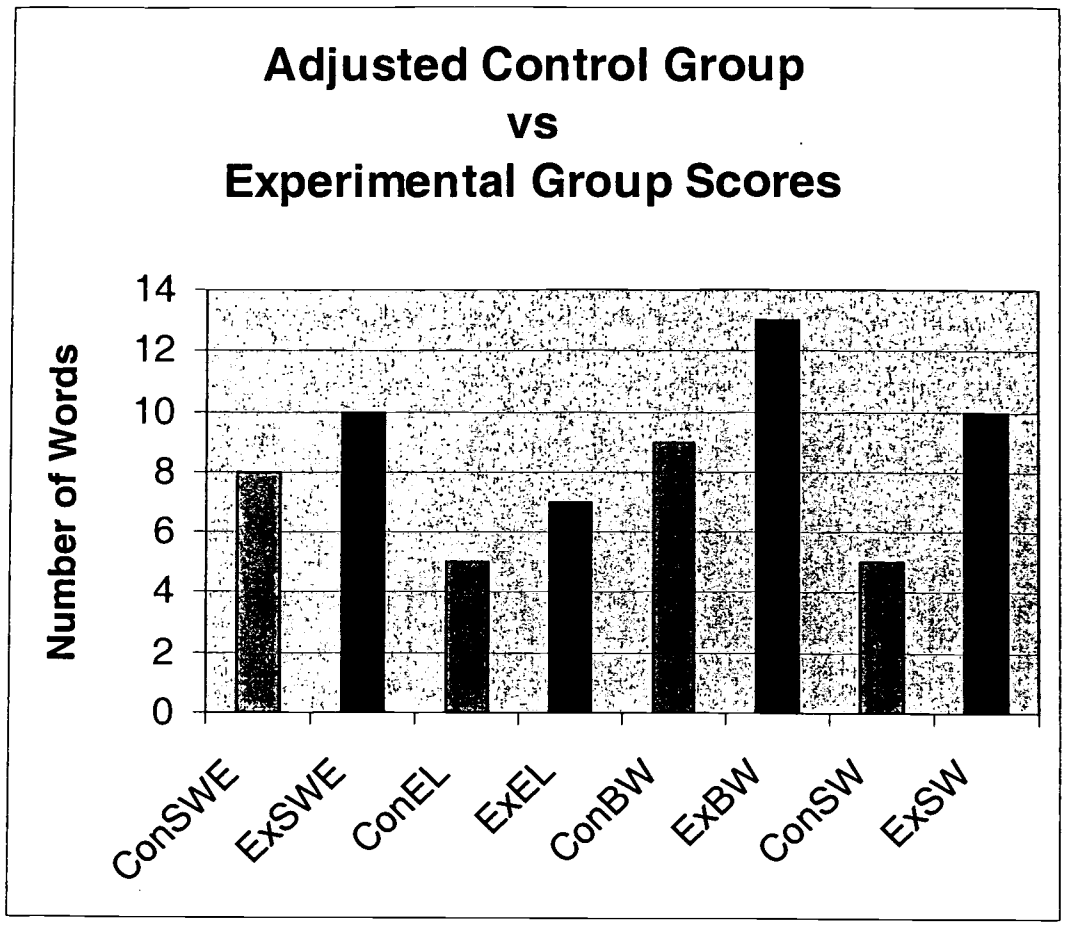
Figure 1. Effects of phonemic awareness drills on sight word efficiency (SWE), elision (EL), blending words (BW), and segmenting words (SW): Adjusted control group (CON) vs. experimental (EX) group scores.



The Effects of an Early Reading Curriculum on Language and Literacy Development of Head Start Children

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Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write and is usually acquired in a relatively predictable manner beginning at birth and continuing throughout life, assuming that the appropriate exposure and instruction are present (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Early literacy refers to behaviors seen in very young children, typically, two- to three-year-olds as they attempt reading and writing acts without the awareness or understanding of letter-sound relationships. Emerging literacy refers to behaviors observed in four- to five-year-old children when an awareness and understanding of letter-sound relationships begins to develop. This process builds as children develop their oral language structures, gain an awareness of the sound structure of language, and find meaning in the symbols around them (Braunger, Lewis, & Hagans, 1997; Lonigan, Bloomfield, Anthony, Bacon, Phillips, & Samwel, 1999).

Children use strategies from learning oral language to help them make sense of environmental print. In this way, language competent children are able to grasp the processes of reading and writing in a timely manner (Katims & Pierce, 1995). More than two decades of research on early and emerging literacy emphatically demonstrates that children can, and do, learn a great deal about reading during the preschool years in preparation for reading independently (Adams, 1990; Lonigan et al., 1999; Snow et al., 1998; van Kleek, 1998). The likelihood that a child will succeed in first grade depends most of all on how much she or he has already learned about reading before getting there (Adams, 1990).

In order to facilitate the development of young learners, many who exhibit a wide range of needs and abilities, the question of preschool curriculum must be addressed. Goffin (2000) acknowledges the dilemma currently faced by early childhood programs as she notes:

> Driven by public demands for positive child outcomes, the sense of urgency surrounding school reform, and the prevalence of poor-quality child care, early childhood curriculum models are being promoted as a way of ensuring that public dollars are wisely spent and that children enter school ready to learn. (http://askeric.org/plweb-cgi/obtain.pl. para 14, retrieved 9-18-02)

A number of early childhood curriculum models, generally based on theories of child development, have been in use for several decades. However, previous investigations of the most commonly used models are generally outdated and fall short of providing a clear picture of the actual practices that are used to link assessment to the curriculum (Pretti-Frontczak, Kowalski, & Brown, 2002). Given that our current national agenda presents a compelling argument for early childhood programs to establish a strong language and literacy environment, research-based teaching/learning models that support early reading principles across the curriculum are necessary. In particular, the demand for curriculum models that provide guidance for the development of print-rich learning environments, oral language activities, and phonological awareness has received considerable attention in response to the current National Reading Panel (2000) and the National Research Council's (1998) recommendations for evidence-based approaches to early reading instruction.

Early and Emerging Literacy

Three major areas found to be critically important in the development of early and emerging literacy skills have been identified (Braunger et al., 1997; Lonigan et al., 1999; Snow

et al., 1998; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998) as: (a) a strong foundation in oral language skills, (b) an awareness of the sound structure of language, and (c) many exposures and experiences with print. A strong foundation in oral language skills develops as children gain an understanding of the structures and meaning of language. When children begin to realize that the words they say not only have meanings but also have structures which can be manipulated, they are developing phonological awareness, which is the explicit awareness of word structure – syllables, sounds, etc. – that can be changed depending on the context. As children are provided with opportunities to see and play with written symbols, they develop an awareness of print.

Clearly, there is a strong connection between language and literacy development (Braunger et al., 1997) particularly during the early childhood years, birth through eight (Schickedanz, 1999). Families, caregivers, and early childhood educators have a significant impact on children's language and emerging literacy skills. Those who work with young children have a critical window of opportunity to offer support in helping them acquire rich language and emerging literacy skills (Moats, 2000). Literacy development is affected by language and literacy experiences shared by family members and teachers, the books and written material found in the home and at school, and the attitudes of the family and school toward literacy. Children who are provided with a wide variety of experiences and opportunities to talk, tell stories, read storybooks, draw, and write are generally successful in learning to read and write (Braunger et al., 1997).

Early Identification of At-Risk Readers

Children who exhibit difficulty learning oral language are at significant risk for having problems learning to read (Adams, 1990) as are children growing up in poverty (Rush, 1999). Academic success is highly correlated to economic status (Brint, 1998; de Marrais & LeCompte,

1999). Hodgkinson (2000) claims that poverty is a universal handicap citing that 20 percent of the children in the United States live in poverty. Hart and Risley (1995, 1999) determined that family economics was a significant factor in children's language development finding that children in low-income families heard less language and said fewer words.

Children who are at risk for reading disabilities can be identified before experiencing reading failure in elementary school, providing the assessment, curricular strategies, and teacher knowledge are in place that are responsive to early recognition. Catts, Fey, Zhang, and Tomblin (2001) investigated kindergarten predictors of second grade reading outcomes and identified five key variables in their longitudinal study. They concluded that children in second grade who were struggling with reading had difficulty with letter identification, sentence structure, phonological awareness, and word recall when they were in kindergarten. Another predictive variable was the education level of the children's mother. Each of these skills related directly to oral language, phonological awareness, and print awareness.

Bishop and Adams (1990) developed a "critical age" hypothesis suggesting that young children who experience difficulty acquiring language and who are able to develop age-appropriate language skills before the age of five to five and a half have a much greater chance of learning to read and write without experiencing difficulty. However, children, whose delays in language development persist after the age of five and a half, tend to have a much greater chance of also experiencing similar difficulties learning literacy skills. Unfortunately, many early childhood centers may not provide the learning experiences and teaching strategies that empirical evidence suggests clearly supports early literacy development. In a study of four-year-olds in Head Starts, Title I kindergartens, and child care centers, Layzer, Goodson, and Moss (1993)

noted that more than 25% of the classrooms did not have a story time and only 10% of teacher's time was spent in individual language interaction.

The development of emerging literacy skills in young children is too important to allow a "wait and see" approach. To facilitate the development of literacy skills, children need to acquire oral language skills, develop phonological awareness skills, and have many varied exposures and experiences with print. Identifying children's strengths and needs in language and emerging literacy skill development allows educators to plan early and appropriate interventions (Marvin & Wright, 1997). Current research overwhelmingly supports the importance of facilitating early and emerging literacy skills in preschool-aged children as a critical foundation for literacy development.

Montana Early Literacy Project

The Montana Early Literacy Project (MELP) offers a curricular approach that emphasizes early reading activities for preschool children. The purpose of the Model is to build early literacy and language skills in young children, especially those with disabilities, by developing partnerships with families, schools, and community members and by using developmentally appropriate services that are individually and culturally sensitive. The Model recognizes and expands upon everyday events and existing routines of classroom and home environments to build literacy and language directly into children's daily experiences. Additionally, the Model provides teaching and staff support with the knowledge necessary to implement these comprehensive services.

The Model incorporates five key components that describe how to develop literacy and language skills in young children with and without disabilities. Component One identifies procedures using developmentally appropriate thematic units with specific strategies,

interventions, and activities that embed literacy and language throughout children's existing routines during the school day. Component Two provides a method to identify early literacy and language needs of individual students and to design Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives that meet children's needs. Component Three provides strategies to foster family participation in literacy and language activities, both at home and at school. Component Four addresses means of providing inclusive, respectful, and culturally responsive literacy services that celebrate individual differences of children and their families. It also focuses on the understanding and appreciation of the cultural practices, beliefs, and traditions of Native Americans in Montana. Component Five provides teachers, support staff, and families with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the Model.

The MELP Model was developed at two demonstration sites: CO-TEACH Preschool, located on The University of Montana - Missoula campus, and Cherry Valley Elementary School, located on the Flathead Indian Reservation, for fostering emerging literacy and language skills in young children with diverse abilities. The MELP Model also was replicated at four sites in Montana: Head Start, Missoula; Awesome Discoveries Daycare, Polson; Missoula County Public School (MCPS) Preschool Program, Missoula; and Smart Start Preschool, Polson.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of the MELP Model for improving the early and emerging literacy skills of young children who are at risk of developing reading difficulties. The main question addressed was: What effect does the Montana Early Literacy Project Curriculum have on the language development of children in Head Start?

Method

Participants

Children from three Head Start classrooms participated in this study in either a combined Montana Early Literacy and traditional curriculum classroom or a traditional curriculum only classroom. All children in the study were reported to be at risk for developing challenges with academic success given the low social economic status criteria for participation in the Head Start program. The MELP curriculum group began with 18 children participating in the Head Start classroom and concluded with 14 children. One child moved during the middle of the study, and three children did not complete all of the testing. This group was comprised of 7 girls and 7 boys and the average chronological age was 4 years, 2 months during the pre-test and 4 years, 9 months during the post-test. Two children in the group received special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Three of the children in this sample were learning English as a second language.

The traditional curriculum group included 32 children enrolled in the two Head Start classrooms using the standard curriculum at the beginning of the study. Eleven children moved during the middle of the study, and six children were unable to complete the testing, which resulted in 15 children included at the end of the study. Of this group, 8 were girls with an average chronological age of 4 years, 3 months during the pre-test and 4 years, 10 months during the post-test. Two children were receiving special education services under IDEA, and one child was learning English as a second language. Table 1 presents the sample characteristics for the children participating in the study.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Procedure and Measures

The study included the collection of assessment data on early and emerging literacy and language skill development using a pre-test, post-test control group design (Campbell & Stanley,

1963). The children were assigned to each classroom before the beginning of the school year. The education coordinator for the area Head Start selected three classrooms to participate in the study based on consistency in teaching styles, behavior management, and classroom structure. Two classrooms using the traditional Head Start curriculum served as the control group. One classroom using the MELP Model curriculum in addition to the traditional curriculum served as the comparison group. The teacher and assistants were trained in the use of the Model.

Pre-test data were obtained in September at the beginning of the school year, and post-test data were gathered in May at the end of the school year. Two assessments were used: the Emerging Literacy Screening in *Building Early Literacy and Language Skills* (Paulson, Noble, Jepson, & van den Pol, 2001) and the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – III, (PPVT-III) Form A* (Dunn & Dunn, 1997). Assessments were conducted individually in a quiet room near the Head Start classrooms by project staff who were specifically trained in each measurement. In order to further evaluate the impact of the MELP curriculum on children's expressive language development, individual spontaneous language samples were collected for each of the participants. Sampling occurred in October, prior to the introduction of the MELP curriculum, and again in April, approximately six months later.

The Emerging Literacy Screening includes developmentally sequenced skills in three foundation areas of literacy development: language use, phonological awareness, and print development. The results provide a raw score and a percent correct score for each of the three areas as well as a total composite raw score and percent correct score.

The PPVT-III is a standardized, norm-referenced measure of receptive vocabulary development. The results provide a raw score, a percentile rank, a standard score, and an age equivalent.

Language samples were obtained using a set of softbound wordless picture books by Mercer and Marianna Mayer (1967, 1971, 1974, 1975). Individual children were seated at a small table in their classroom, and the researcher prompted them to "Look at the book and tell me what is happening." Children were encouraged to describe the activities in two of the books for the fall sample and two similar books for the spring sample. The researchers prompted children to "Look at that!" and "Tell me what else is going on." However, the children were allowed to guide the speed and duration of each session. Sessions ranged from 10 to 20 minutes, and all utterances were tape recorded for analysis.

Tape-recorded language samples from each child were transcribed and entered into the Systematic Analysis of Language Transcripts, Research version 7.0 (SALT) computer program. SALT is a software package developed by the Language Analysis Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin- Madison (1984-2002). Using SALT and guided by a specific transcription protocol, researchers obtained an analysis of language performance at the word, morpheme, utterance, and discourse level for each child. Data from fall and spring were transferred into EXCEL spreadsheets and grouped into three categories for analysis of expressive language growth: (a) Total utterances; (b) Mean Length of Utterance (MLU); and (c) Different Word Roots (vocabulary growth). MLU in morphemes corresponds to chronological age as well as to stages of linguistic development and is considered to ve a valid index of language development when the MEL is between 1.0 and 4.5 morphemes (Bailey and Wolery, 1989). Analyses included calculation of gain scores, percentage of change within individuals and within groups, magnitude of effect size within groups, and independent t-tests to note significant differences between groups.

The null hypothesis of this study assumed there would be no important or statistically reliable difference between the adjusted average post-test scores of the Head Start classes using the traditional curriculum and the classroom using the MELP Model curriculum. An important difference was defined as 10 percentage points on the adjusted mean scores of the Emerging Literacy Screening. An important difference on the PPVT-III was defined as an increase of 10 points on the raw score. This amount reflects an approximate increase of seven months (the duration of the study) in receptive vocabulary for four-year-old children. Statistical reliability was set at $\alpha = .05$ for both assessments. An expected developmental increase in MLU from pre-test to post-test was predicted to be approximately .6 using the equation: age (in months) + MLU (Miller, 1981). An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was calculated for each of the assessments: the Emerging Literacy Screening, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III, and the language sample data.

Results

At conclusion of the study, the MELP curriculum group included 14 children who participated in the Head Start classroom using the MELP Model curriculum. Fifteen children in the two Head Start classrooms using the traditional curriculum served as the control group (n = 29).

On the Emerging Literacy Screening, the MELP group received a mean percent correct score of 41.4% on the pretest, an unadjusted mean score of 71.7%, and an adjusted mean score of 68.2% on the post-test, an increase of 30.3 (unadjusted) and 26.8 (adjusted) percentage points. The traditional group received a mean score of 33.7% on the pre-test score, an unadjusted mean score of 48.8%, and an adjusted mean score of 52.0% on the post-test, an increase of 15.1 (unadjusted) and 18.3 (adjusted) percentage points.

On the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – III, the MELP group received a mean raw score of 51.9 on the pre-test, an unadjusted post-test mean score of 58.0, and an adjusted post-test mean score of 55.2. The traditional group received a pre-test mean raw score of 44.1, an unadjusted post-test mean score of 53.5, and an adjusted score of 56.1.

For the results of the Emerging Literacy Screening, homogeneity of variance was established between the sample groups, which were relatively the same size. The F-test conducted for the homogeneity of regression resulted in an F-value of .36 and a p-value of .55. The F-ratio was determined to not be statistically reliable indicating that the two samples had common slopes. Therefore, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was run. The ANCOVA resulted in an F-ratio of 20.85 and a p-value of < 0.0001.

Homogeneity of variance was again established between the sample groups for the raw score results of the PPVT-III. The F-test conducted for the homogeneity of regression resulted in an F-value of 1.00 and a p-value of .33. The F-ratio was determined to not be statistically reliable indicating that the two samples had common slopes. Therefore, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was run. The ANCOVA resulted in an F-ratio of .04 and a p value of .84.

An important difference was set at 10 percentage points a priori for the results of the Emerging Literacy Screening. The class using the MELP Model curriculum outscored the class using the traditional curriculum by 22.91 (unadjusted) and 16.19 (adjusted) percentage points. An important difference of 10 points in the raw score of the PPVT – III was set a priori. The results comparing the pre- and post-tests of the PPVT-III did not indicate an important difference between the groups.

Results of fall and spring language sampling for the MELP curriculum classroom (n = 14) and the traditional curriculum classroom (n = 15) are displayed in the attached tables. Table

7 illustrates each child's Total Utterances during the language sampling sessions. Table 8 lists Mean Length of Utterance (MLU) for each child and each classroom. Table 9 highlights each child's use of Total Different Word Roots, a strong indicator of vocabulary development. According to paired sample t-test results, significant differences were not indicated between groups on any of the fall (pre) measures. It should be noted that the mean length of utterance for both groups was measured on the pretest to be within Brown's Early Stage IV, which corresponds to the 42-46 month age range, indicating an average range delay approximating 4 to nine months. In the spring, t-test analyses indicated statistically significant differences noted in Total Utterances (p=.004) and Different Word Roots (p=.009) between the two groups. Within group analysis revealed that the classroom using the MELP curriculum had significantly greater gains in Total Utterances (90%), moderate gains in MLU (13%), and large gains in Different Word Roots 80%). When reviewing individual children's growth, minimal decreases in MLU were noted in four instances.

In the traditional classroom, the children demonstrated moderate gains in Total Utterances, (23%) minimal changes in MLU (7%) and moderate gains in Different Word Roots (26%). Individual children evidenced significant decreases in 14 instances across all three language areas, a troubling outcome considering these children already evidenced language delays.

In the traditional classroom, the children demonstrated moderate gains in Total Utterances (23%), minimal change in MLU (7%), and moderate gains in Different Word Roots (26%). Individual children evidenced significant decreases in 14 instances across all three language areas.

More specifically, in all three of the areas assessed, the children in the MELP curriculum classroom made substantially greater gains than those using the traditional curriculum. Vocabulary growth, as indicated by children's gains in Different Word Roots, was the most significantly impacted as the magnitude of the effect size of the change (80%) from fall to spring exceeded 2.9 (.5 to .8 is considered to be a moderate effect; anything higher is considered a large effect (Cohen, 1988). Children receiving the traditional curriculum also increased their vocabulary by 25%, with a corresponding moderate effect size of .7.

Children in the MELP classroom demonstrated a significant increase (90%) in Total Utterances during the spontaneous language sampling with a large effect size of 1.8. In comparison, the traditional curriculum classroom demonstrated change (12%) that was relatively small in effect size (.27). Growth in MLU, while mildly significant for the MELP classroom (ES = .44; 13%), was minimal for the traditional curriculum classroom (ES = .26; 7%), indicating substantially slower growth in linguistic development, particularly in the development of grammatical rules. Table 3 presents the ANCOVA summary of adjusted means for each assessment.

[Insert Table 3 here]

The results from each section of the Emerging Literacy Screening provide an interesting comparison. Pre-test levels between the MELP and traditional groups were fairly consistent across all assessment measures, including language sampling. The test total score averages were similar. The pre-test scores of the language use section had a higher level of skill attainment than the print development and phonological awareness scores. The results of the post-test indicated growth for both groups in language development. The MELP group increased by 21 percentage points and the traditional group increased by 12 percentage points. The print development and

phonological awareness sections were even more compelling. The MELP group showed an increase in the mean score of 40 percentage points while the traditional group showed an increase of 24 points in print development. For phonological awareness, the MELP group began at 29 and rose to 63, an increase of 34 points. The traditional group began at 18 points and gained 11 percentage points. Table 4 presents the subtest scores of the Emerging Literacy Screening for both groups.

[Insert Table 4 here]

Discussion

The Montana Early Literacy Project developed a model that provides early childhood educators with the needed supports to expand upon everyday events in existing routines in classrooms and homes to build language, literacy, and early reading activities directly into children's daily experiences creating language and print rich environments. The results of this study determined that the Model was successful in developing language and literacy skills in young children who are at risk of experiencing challenges learning to read and write.

Children who participated in the classroom using the Model demonstrated significant increases in the foundation skills in language, phonological awareness, and print development. They were using longer and more complex sentences with richer vocabulary. They were developing a sense of the structure of language by rhyming, blending, and segmenting words. They learned many print conventions and they were writers.

The results of this study determined that the class using the MELP Model curriculum gained an average of 31percentage points on the Emerging Literacy Screening in eight months during the Head Start preschool program. The class using the standard curriculum gained an

average of 15 percentage points during the same time period. The children using the MELP Model curriculum outscored the other class by 23 unadjusted and 16 adjusted percentage points on post-test scores of early literacy tasks. Statistical reliability was determined to be < .0001 exceeding the established level of reliability at .05. A statistically reliable and important difference was found. Children in Head Start who participated in the MELP Model curriculum had higher levels of early literacy skill development than those participating in the traditional curriculum.

In addition, children who experienced the MELP curriculum made significant gains in narrative discourse development as evidenced by the 89% increase in Total Utterances from the fall to the spring language sampling. They not only had more to say about the topics presented, they also used a broader vocabulary, which serves as a critical precursor to reading comprehension. Certainly some of this gain can be attributed to expected developmental growth over the time period between language samplings. However, when compared to the gains made by the children using the traditional curriculum (23%), these data indicate a significant curriculum effect.

Comparatively, the results of the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III* indicated that both groups gained an average of seven months growth in their receptive vocabulary skills. This increase in vocabulary is an expected gain due to typical development and participation in language-rich environments. These results provide an interesting contrast to the datagathered from the other measures and may be related to the challenges of conducting formal standardized assessment with young children, in particular the potential lack of test sensitivity to the time period between assessments (NAEYC, 1998).

This study demonstrated that young children who participateded in a Head Start classroom using the MELP Model had higher levels of learning in early and emerging literacy skill development compared to young children who participated in the standard Head Start curriculum. The researchers recommend that additional studies be conducted to determine what specific strategies and activities are most effective in developing early literacy skills in preschool-aged children. Larger sample size and additional classes are recommended for future studies to determine the efficacy of the MELP Model.

Implications for Practice

The results obtained from this study suggested that children from low-income families, and those at risk for early reading failure were able to make considerable gains in their early literacy and language skills by participating in a language and print rich environment where literacy activities were intentionally embedded into existing routines and events. These critical skills provide the foundation for learning to read and write. Curricula such as described in the MELP Model and similar efforts in Head Start classrooms are vital for providing optimal opportunities for children who are most at risk for developing challenges with literacy.

As early childhood professionals continue to adopt practices that promote early reading skills among young children it is imperative that developmentally appropriate practices be considered in curriculum design. Children need teachers who will offer a variety of literacy opportunities throughout the day, using curriculum that is meaningful, engaging and cognitively challenging for a range of abilities and interests. The Montana Early Literacy Project appears to be a viable curricular option for Head Starts and other early childhood centers where early reading skills are facilitated through developmentally appropriate language and literacy activities.

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Table 1 Participant Characteristics

	MELP Curriculum (n=14)	Traditional Curriculum (n=15)
Gender	7 girls, 7 boys	7 girls, 8 boys
Chronological Age Pre-Test Post-Test	4 years, 2 months (50 mo.) 4 years, 9 months (57 mo.)	4 years, 3 months (51 Mo.) 4 years, 10 months (58 mo.)
Children with Disabilities	2	2
English Language Learners	3	1

Table 2 Pre- and Post-Test Mean Scores for the Emerging Literacy Screening, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III, and Language Sampling

	MELP Group		Traditional Group	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Emerging Literacy Screening				
Unadjusted Mean % Correct Scores	41.4%	71.7%	33.7%	48.8%
Adjusted Mean % Correct Scores		68.2%		52.0%
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III				
Unadjusted Mean Raw Scores	51.9	58.0	44.1	53.5
Adjusted Mean Raw Scores		55.2		56.1
Standard Score	95.6	97.4	91.2	92.0
Language Sampling				
Total Utterances	42	80	51	57
Mean Length of Utterance	3.46	3.92	3.43	3.68
Total Different Root Words	67	121	73	91

Table 3 ANCOVA Summary of Adjusted Means

Emerging Literacy Screening

Source	Sum of Squares	dF	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Probability
Between	1838.41	1	1838.41	20.86	<0.0001
Error	2291.73	26	88.14		
Total	4130.14	27			

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - III

Source	Sum of Squares	dF	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Probability
Between	4.90	1	4.90	.04	.84
Error	3168.25	26	121.86		
Total	3173.46	27			

Language Sampling:

Total Utterances

Source	Sum of Squares	dF	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Probability
Between	4730.84	1	4730.84	13.06	.001
Error	9420.88	26	362.34		
Total	14151.72	27			

Mean Length of Utterance

Source	Sum of Squares	dF	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Probability
Between	.34	1	.34	.37	.546
Error	23.51	26	.90		
Total	23.85	27			

Different Root Words

Source	Sum of Squares	dF	Mean Squares	F-Ratio	Probability
Between	8518.46	1	8518.46	19.00	.0002
Error	11653.80	26	448.22		
Total	20172.27	27			

Table 4 Subtest Scores of the Emerging Literacy Screening

	MELP Group		Traditional Group	
	Pre Test	Post Test	Pre Test	Post Test
Print Development	31	71	26	50
Language Use	66	87	59	71
Phonological Awareness	29	63	18	29
Total	41	72	34	49

Acknowledgments:

Ann Minkler, Mary Bunce, Marcy Otten, Gail Goodner, Amy Foster Wolferman, Clark Schlege, Joan Kuehn, Chris Lande, Gale Bertoglio, Scot Anderson, Rebecca Anderson

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November 12, 2002

Montana Early Literacy Program Personnel
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

Dear MELP Leadership:

I am writing to confirm that being part of the Montana Early Literacy Program for the past few years has had a very positive effect on Head Start classrooms throughout our five county region. The development of the literacy tubs has been a fantastic addition to our library. Their use has been constant.

In my opinion, Gail Goodner, as teacher in the Dolphin classroom, has accomplished the most extensive personal and classroom management improvement by being intertwined in the regular support, screening, observation, and outcome growth for the students she serves. She has facilitated guidance to other staff about use of the literacy materials, presented at state conferences, and frequently contributed ideas at education component meetings. Her skills seem to have blossomed in a way that is becoming contagious to other classrooms. I am aware that she even worked through the summer on new literacy crates and that she is currently working hard to be even more talented at using a digital camera and computer technology to develop books.

On October 22, Child Start, Inc. (our Missoula Head Start) was observed in an attempt to be National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited. The final decision will happen in sixty days, however, during the exit interview I took notes about comments the two validators made about specific rooms. The Dolphin group had "exemplary literacy practices." I was told that the observer thought the monthly books were great! She appreciated being able, at a glance, to see a police officer had visited, that the children attended a firefighter puppet show, could read exact comments from the children, and was delighted that for parents the photographs and text showed each child. She also commented about terrific writing books and dictation from the children evident in the room. Her complimentary comments and rating of "3-Fully met" in each language and literacy category for this classroom was exciting to see.

As far as the entire program goes, use of the laminator and spiral binder now seem essential to more and more classes. Digital cameras seem a bit threatening still, but we are delighted to be gradually learning. As a program, there is plenty of room for growth apart from the Dolphin class. In fact, I am charged with implementing a new national mandate to improve literacy skills. I stand in awe of the changes made in the Dolphin class, and I know we must work to spread those skills elsewhere.

With a grateful heart, I sign as sincerely yours,

Joan Kuehn

Kuehn
/ Education Coordinator

1st ANNUAL EARLY LITERACY CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 16, 1999 AT CHERRY VALLEY SCHOOL

SPONSORED BY

CHERRY VALLEY SCHOOL,

U OF M DIVISION OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

and

EVENSTART AT CHERRY VALLEY SCHOOL

Studies show reading is the fundamental skill for life success. You can make a difference in preparing a child for school. Learn how you can provide early literacy experiences. Help guide young children to reading and writing success. This conference will include:

*** STORYTELLING**

*** LEARN THROUGH PLAY**

*** PROMOTE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

*** HANDS-ON CREATIVE LITERACY ACTIVITIES**

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 16,1999

8:00 A.M.	Registration
8:30-9:00	Welcome & coffee
9:00-9:45	1st workshop
9:50-10:30	2nd workshop
10:30-11:15	3rd workshop
1:15-12:00	4th workshop
12:00 -1:00	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	End of Day

PREREGISTRATION FORM

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

_____

PHONE_____

AGENCY_____

OCCUPATION_____

COMPLIMENTARY REGISTRATION & LUNCH

__YES, I WILL ATTEND LUNCH

__NO LUNCH, THANK YOU

SPACE IS EXTREMELY LIMITED!
PREREGISTER BY
MONDAY, OCTOBER 11.
SEND REGISTRATION FORM TO:

CHERRY VALLEY SCHOOL
111 4TH AVE E.
POLSON MONTANA 59860

CALL 883-6333.

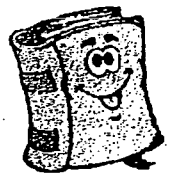
THANK YOU

Cherry Valley Early Literacy Conference

Saturday, October 16th 1999

8:00 - 8:30am Registration, Session Sign-Ups, Coffee and Conversation

8:30 - 9:00am Welcome, Opening Remarks in Gym.



9:00 - 9:45am Section One

Literacy Through Play

In this session you will learn how to create meaningful literacy play centers in your home. You will participate in activities to create ready to use literacy play centers.

Presenter: Amanda Thompson
Early Childhood Specialist

Location: Room 7

Tools for Early Reading Assessment

Participants will have the opportunity to explore a variety of early reading assessment tools such as running records and the Observational Survey. This session will be adapted to meet the needs of the group attending.
This session leads naturally to "Using Assessment to Plan for Reading Instruction" offered in section two.

Presenters: Joyce & Doug Crosby
Literacy Specialists

Location: Room 12

Storytelling

"Above all else stories are perhaps the best presents children can receive for they are beyond the power of money to buy or the world to take away."
This workshop will inspire you to find your hidden storyteller.

Presenter: Bill Starkey
School Counselor

Location: Room 15

*The Early Literacy Project

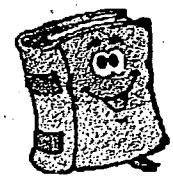
This session will share methods for using the natural routine and activities of the preschool classroom to foster early literacy development. Participants will examine their beliefs about how children become literate. They will share how to use common children's songs and books. Actual materials that are used for opening circle, learning centers, library, art, free play, and music will be displayed.

*This workshop repeated in section three.

Presenters: Lisbeth Vincent, Linda Whedbee & Stacia Jepson U of M

Location: Room 11 - Library

9:50 - 10:30am Section Two



Improving Communication: How to Encourage Language Development

The purpose of this session is to teach parents and care givers specific interaction styles to improve communication with young children. These interaction styles will help encourage speech and language development. Use of daily routines to improve communication and language skills will be discussed. Red flags for early identification of speech and language delays will be shared.

Presenter: Colette Salmon
Speech Pathologist

Location: Room 7

Using Assessment to Plan for Reading Instruction

Participants will have the opportunity to see how the results from early reading assessments are used to determine next learning steps for our students.
This session will be adapted to meet the needs of the group attending.
This session naturally leads to "Selecting Resources for Reading Instruction" offered in section three.

Presenters: Joyce & Doug Crosby
Literacy Specialists

Location: Room 12

Writing in the Early Years

This session will focus on early writing. Participants will learn how to identify various stages of writing and how to promote writing development in the home and classroom.

Presenters: Mickey Hanson
Principal Lakeside Elem.
Debbie Hogenson
Literacy Specialist

Location: Room 11 - Library

*Extending the Story

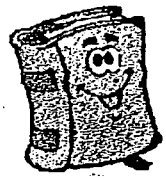
In this session you will see several examples of activities and questions you can use to extend the stories you read in your day care. After seeing some examples you will have the opportunity to make up your own extension activities for a well known children's book. Take a copy of all the ideas presented with you for ready to use activities.

*This session repeated in section four.

Presenter: Julie Duford
Primary Multiage Teacher

Location: Room 18

10:45 - 11:30am Section Three



Literacy Through Play in the Classroom

In this session you will learn how to create meaningful literacy play centers in your classroom. Natural literacy assessment and the teacher's role in the literacy play center will be discussed.

Presenter: Amanda Thompson
Early Childhood Specialist

Location: Room 7

Selecting Resources for Reading Instruction

This session will focus on how to select texts designed for specific learning needs which have been evaluated from reading assessment. Small group instruction will be addressed. A discussion about the challenges and supports the text offers will be incorporated.

Presenters: Debbie Hogenson &
Doug Crosby
Literacy Specialists

Location: Room 15

*Literacy From Birth

This session will explore the path to literacy starting at birth. We will discuss the essential role that language plays in creating the foundations of literacy. This information would be of interest to anyone working with babies, toddlers or preschool children.

*This session repeated in section four

Presenter: Joyce Crosby
Reading Specialist

Location: Room 12

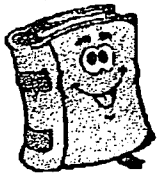
*The Early Literacy Project

This session will share methods for using the natural routine and activities of the preschool classroom to foster early literacy development. The presenters will help the participants to examine their beliefs about how children become literate. They will share how to use common children's songs and books. Actual materials that are used for opening circle, learning centers, library, art, free play, and music will be displayed.

*This session is a repeat from section one.

Presenters: Lisbeth Vincent, Linda Whedbee & Stacia Jepson U of M

Location: Room 11 - Library



11:35 - 12:20am Section Four

Phonological Awareness: A Link to Literacy

The purpose of this session is to share research findings with teachers about the relationship between phonological awareness and literacy skills. The stages of phonological awareness development will be discussed. Several activities to incorporate various phonological awareness skills in the classroom will be reviewed. A reference list of research articles and additional resources on this topic will also be provided.

Presenter: Colette Salmon
Speech Pathologist

Location: Room 7

*Extending the Story

In this session you will see several examples of activities and questions you can use to extend the stories you read in your day care. After seeing some examples you will have the opportunity to make up your own extension activities for a well known children's book. Take a copy of all the ideas presented with you for ready to use activities.

*This session is a repeat from section two

Presenter: Julie Duford
Primary Multiage Teacher

Location: Room 18

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*This session is a repeat from section three

Presenters: Joyce Crosby
Reading Specialist

Location: Room 12

Browsing Children's Literature / Storybook Weaving

School, public librarians and America Reads will present tips for utilizing children's literature and web sites. Come contribute to a storybook weaving. Have in mind a favorite book from your childhood or as an adult. This creative art activity is appropriate for all ages and settings.

Presenters: Dale Hannon & Lou Ann Kranz - Librarians
Roxanne Hovenkotter - America Reads
Co Carew - Social Worker

Location: Gym

Cherry Valley Literacy News

This collection of articles written by Cherry Valley Staff, outlines some of the ways in which we as a staff and you as parents can help children become confident, capable, independent readers and writers.

Literacy

Literacy is defined as being literate or able to read, write and speak effectively. Children begin their journey to literacy long before entering school. When young children look at picture books and understand the "story", when they mimic adults or older siblings by scribbling on paper or when the letters in their name become known, the child is on their way to becoming literate. From these beginnings the child realizes that they can make sense of their world and gain praise from the important people in their lives.

Each child then begins school as an emerging reader and writer with their own knowledge of literacy and with great expectations of continued satisfying experiences. The purpose of reading and writing is to communicate meaning so the teacher will plan meaningful activities to reinforce the emergent skills that students bring to school. They will then seek to help children develop strategies so they will succeed in new reading, writing and speaking endeavors.

Teachers constantly demonstrate how to use strategies when they read big books, when they write classroom news,and when they read and write with small instruction groups.

An emerging reader may use pictures to gain meaning and will learn to move from left to right and top to bottom when they look at a page of text. A developing reader will use meaning and pictures and beginning and ending sounds of words. Finally a fluent reader uses the meaning of the story while cross-checking with words and the structure of the sentence.

This approach to literacy instruction is not anti-skills. In fact, phonics and spelling are important strategies that are taught in context as part of a whole, exciting, meaningful and appropriate program for the child. Each child is an individual, progressing on this journey at their own rate. Together, parents and teachers can support and celebrate as our children grow in their own ability to read, write and speak.

IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT YOU CAN DO!!

Research shows us that "the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading - is reading aloud to children." It's as simple as that! It is through reading to our children that we give them a chance to develop listening, vocabulary, sentence structure, prediction and problem solving skills. These skills and strategies are the tools we use to become life long readers.

Just 15 - 20 minutes a day spent reading to your child will make the world of difference. This is not only true for young children, read to your child all the way through school. A child may be able to read very well when they are in third grade but they are also able to listen to and understand books written for much older children. By reading to these children you continue to increase their knowledge of words and the world around them.

What About Phonics?

Teachers are often asked about their methods of phonics instruction in the classroom literacy curriculum. At Cherry Valley School we believe effective teaching interweaves phonics instruction within the context of connected, informative and engaging text.

Phonics is the blending of each letter sound by matching it to a letter symbol . Traditional phonics instruction used to teach children to go from symbol to sound and was presented in a predetermined sequence, often as an isolated skills task.

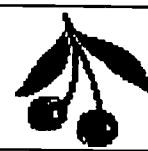
Now children are taught to hear a sound first as it occurs within a word and then to identify it with its symbol. These sound-symbol relationships are reinforced as children begin to read and write from the first days of school.

Phonics can be a powerful word identification tool. But we know reading is more than decoding letter-sound relationships.

Teachers give beginning readers guidance in how to apply phonic strategies, along with using the meaning and the language of the text to read. Early and frequent exposure to large quantities of print is the key to developing an awareness of sounds when both reading and writing.

Research has shown that an early awareness of letter-sound relationships is an important factor in children's success in beginning reading. Young children are sensitive to the sounds of language around them. Even before school entry they begin to sift, sort and categorize language they hear and use.

Parents can help foster this phonemic awareness in their children by talking and reading to them. Poetry, songs, nursery rhymes and, of course, storybooks are wonderful ways to increase your child's awareness of the sounds of our language.



READING STRATEGIES

What you can say when someone is stuck on a word, says the wrong word or is confused.	*What you can say next.*
- do you want more time or help?	*- I liked the way you tried to figure that out.*
- what do you know that might help you?	*- Good Job! You checked the picture and checked the word.*
- what can you do to figure that out?	*- You worked that out all by yourself.*
- look at the picture and the first letter of the word.	*- You can do it.*
- what word do you know that looks like that?	*- Good try.*
- what part of that word do you know? (are there any small words in the big word)	*- You're thinking about the story and what would make sense.*
- skip the word and read to the end of the sentence.	*- That's good reading.*
- try that again, re-run the sentence.	*- It's fun to listen to you read.*
- think about the story, does that make sense?	*- Wow! You found the tricky part and figured it out all by yourself.*
- does that look right, does it sound right?	
- you like me to tell you the word?	

The Gift

Give your child the gift of literacy. As adults we can help our children become literate by reading to them daily. Read books, signs on the street, menus, shopping lists, where ever children come into contact with print is an opportunity that should not be over looked. It is through encounters such as helping find the can that says "Tomato Soup" at the grocery store that gives print meaning to the child. Encourage them to write to loved ones even before their print can possibly make sense to anyone. You can send along a copy of what they wanted to say, just in case. Giving children the gift of understanding - what they think, they can say - what they say, they can write - what they write, they can read and share!

Independent Strategies

When I get stuck on a word in a book.
There are lots of things to do.
I can do them all, please, by myself;
I don't need help from you.

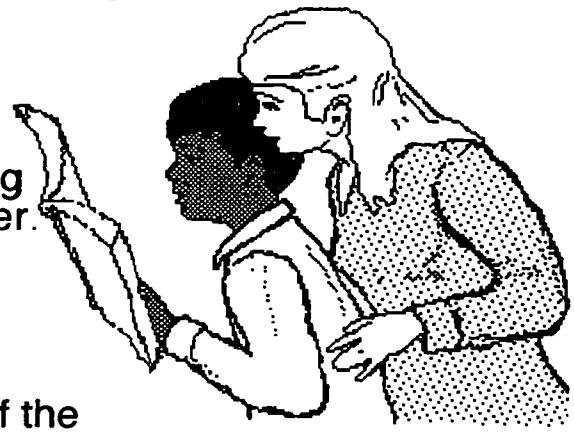
I can look at the picture to get a hint.
Or think what the story's about.
I can "get my mouth ready" to say the first letter,
A kind of "sounding out"
I can chop the word into smaller parts,
Like *on* and *ing* and *ly*,
Or find smaller words in compound words
Like *raincoat* and *bumblebee*.
I can think of a word that makes sense in that place,
Guess or say "blank" and read on
Until the sentence has reached it's end,
Then go back and try these on;
"Does it make sense?"
"Can we say it that way?"
"Does it *look* right to me?"
Chances are the right word will pop out like the sun
In my *own* mind, can't you see?

If I've thought and tried out most of these things
And I *still* do not know what to do,
Then I may turn around and ask
For some help to get me through.

Jill Marie Warner

Reading Together

Here are some important tips to help you when your child is reading books to you, that they have brought home from school in their purple book bags.



-find a quiet place away from the TV or other distractions.
-Choose a time when your child is not tired, hungry or keen to do something else, and you can enjoy reading together.
-Give your child a chance to *think* about the word and the meaning of the story before you try to help or correct.
-Do not isolate words or sounds.
-If a word is unknown, tell your child and if the book becomes *too* difficult, read to your child instead.
-Provide encouragement and praise.
-Enjoy the story!

READING RECOVERY

Cherry Valley School is currently providing an early intervention program for first-grade students called Reading Recovery. Reading Recovery is designed to assist children in the first grade who are having difficulty learning to read and write. Eligible children are tested and identified to receive a short-term, individually designed program of instruction that allows them to succeed before they enter a cycle of reading failure. The goal of Reading Recovery is to bring children up to the average reading level of their class within 12-20 weeks.

Begun more than 30 years ago in New Zealand, Reading Recovery is now being implemented in six countries, including four Canadian provinces, 48 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. Approximately 60,000 North American children were served by more than 5,000 trained Reading Recovery educators during the 1993-1994 school year. National and international Reading Recovery research data confirm the effectiveness of this early intervention. Similarly, Reading Recovery at Cherry Valley has helped children to become confident, independent readers.

Big Books

Have you heard about "Mrs. Wishy Washy" and "Hairy Bear" and wondered where your kindergartners meet such characters? The answer is - **Big Books**. Big books are just that. They have enlarged text and illustrations for modeling the writing process.

Big books are used in many ways. Children learn to predict what will happen through pictures and shared reading of the book. They also learn about parts of a book, that we read from left to right and that words match our speech as we read. The mechanics of reading is also a concept of the big book - letter, word, sentence knowledge, spacing between words and punctuation marks. We predict the inside of a book by its cover and match the meaning of vocabulary to the text.

In kindergarten your child will be exposed to hundreds of books read to them by their teachers. The greatest gift you can give to your child is to read aloud to them and continue the process. Children initially learn about reading by listening to others read to them!

Sustained Silent Reading

At Cherry Valley this is a time during the school day where students choose books and silently read on their own. This is a very important time because it allows the students to choose a book that they are interested in and on their own they can look very carefully at the words and pictures to gain meaning from the story. Most students would do this on a daily basis, anywhere from 5 to 20 minutes depending on their age and interest.

Literacy in the Preschool Setting

Cherry Valley currently has a preschool program for children identified with special needs. Literacy components, reading, writing and speaking are a part of everyday. The children are not only listening and learning through the books we read, but are beginning to think of themselves as "readers". In setting the stage for these preschoolers to grow in their literacy skills, we have learned that GOOD READERS:

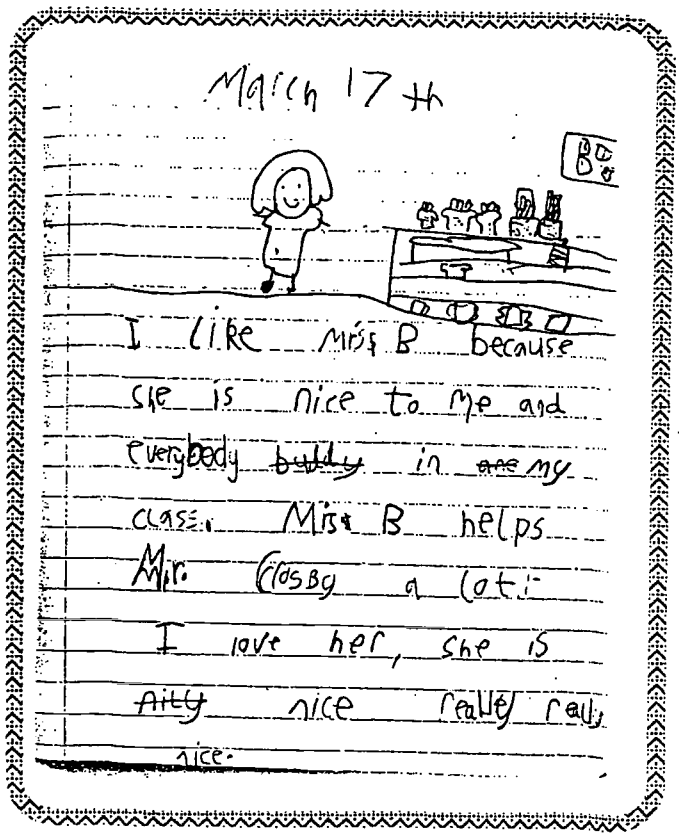
Can find the title of a book.
Can find the first page.
Use pictures to find meaning.
Guess at what is going to happen next.
Print goes from the left page to the right.
Have FUN reading.
Know the meaning of Author and Illustrator.
Turn the pages one at a time from the top.
Follow the print with their finger left to right
Ask questions if they don't understand.

Read outloud.

New to the Prekindergarten this year are take home books with book bags just like the BIG KIDS!

Draft Writing

Draft Writing is a very important part of the way we teach writing at Cherry Valley. It is through writing that children learn to write! When writing in their draft writing books, children are encouraged to write from their own experiences to create stories, letters or journal entries. When children write in these books they use a process known as developmental spelling. Typically over time, children move from writing the first letter of the word to writing other letters they can hear and finally to the correct spelling. Once they have completed their draft writing the teacher will have a conference with the child to correct any misspellings before publication.



The Writing Process

The writing process is a technique that can be used with children of any age in order to give them an understanding of how we go about writing.

The process involves several stages which are taught to the children by demonstration and modeling. The stages are as follows :

-PLAN , the student comes up with an plan for a story, poem, or other writing.

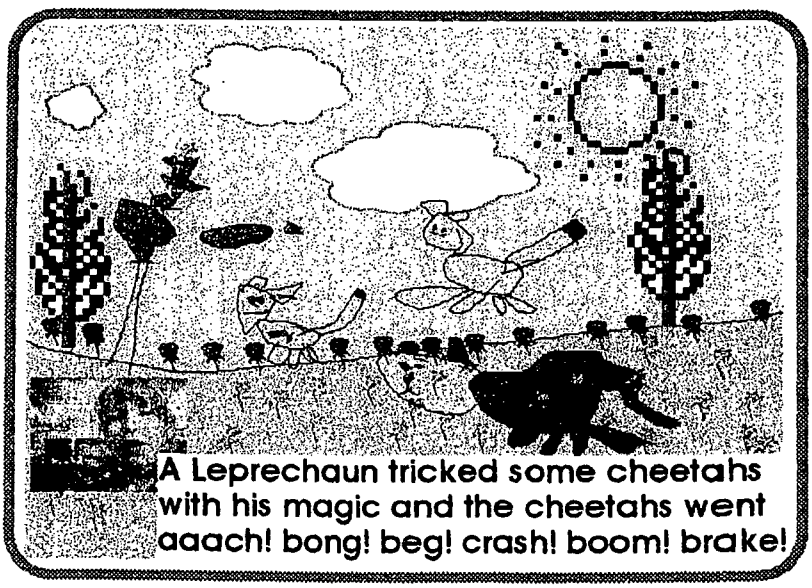
-DRAFT , a draft copy is written using childs own ideas, spelling and punctuation.

-EDIT , the student then edits their paper looking for changes that could be made to improve the writing. The writing may also be edited by another member of the class.

-CONFERENCE , a conference with the teacher takes place where the teacher also suggests changes that could be made.

-PUBLISH , the piece is rewritten, a title page and cover are completed and illustrations added.

-SHARE & ENJOY - the work can now be shared and the process begins again.



A Leprechaun tricked some cheetahs with his magic and the cheetahs went aaach! bong! beg! crash! boom! brake!

Computer Writing

This year many of the children in kindergarten and first grade are learning how to write their stories and journals on the Macintosh computer. We use a program called Kid Pix which allows the students to first write, using the keyboard then illustrate using various tools including colored pencils and stamps. We can then put these stories and journals together as a slide show and add children's narration and video to make a computer presentation.

Great Web Sites for Kids on the Internet

Here are some web sites that have hundreds of links to other interesting placing for kids and they are all created with the child, parent and teacher in mind.

Cherry Valley School *www.digisys.net/cherry*
One of the best web sites on the Internet!! Check out the lunch menu, monthy newsletter, individual classes and a wonderful page of Fun & Interesting links to some great sites.

Interesting Places for Kids www.crc.ricoh.com/people/steve/kids. Here you can find numerous links on art & literature, music, museums, exhibits, science & math, arts & crafts, toys, games, movies and lots of web pages made by and for kids.

Uncle Bob's Kids' Page gagme.wwa.com/~boba/kids. is even bigger with more graphics and has seven sections loaded with listings of great places to explore. Check out CyberKids Launchpad, visit Sea World or the Ontario Science Center and surf through LEGO Information, NASA outer space, the space telescope, the White House, Muppets, spotlights on Disney's current movies and tons more. Bob Allison has several links for parents concerning Protecting Children in Cyperspace and the National Parent Information Network.

Bill Nye the Science Guy nyelabs.kcts.org/ Visit Nye Labs Online and get the Demo of the Day that goes with the daily PBS episode, email Bill Nye, take a look around Nye Labs and learn about Physical, Planetary and Life Science by surfing over two hundred unique web pages complete with sounds, quicktime videos, and some funny Bill Nye sayings ..."Science Rules"

International WWW Schools Registry web66.coled.umn.edu/Schools. Go here to view interesting web pages of schools from around the world. See and learn about students, their schools and culture.

Global Rigby Keypals www.reedbooks.com.au/rigby/global/keypal. If you want an email penpal or "keypal" from anywhere in the world here is the place to look. You can leave your email address or write to one that is listed as either an individual or teacher & class entry.

Happy Surfing! And let us know your favorite Web Sites for Kids by email: cherry@digisys.net

Art & Literacy

The contribution of art to literacy is multilayered. Since most young children are wildly creative, experiences in various artistic mediums allow for expression of this creativity.

The opportunity to discuss a piece of art with a sensitive adult not only helps a child clarify his thoughts and feelings about his piece, but also validates his perceptions. Discussion of a child's art work enables the teacher to gain insight into the child's interests, hopes and dreams in an unobtrusive way, thereby increasing her understanding of the child. Art projects provide a natural springboard for oral and written language activities, which are an integral part of literacy. What better way to encourage speaking and writing skills than to speak or write about that which you have created yourself and know best?

Once upon a time.... Fairy tales and folk tales provide one of the most enjoyable experiences in children's literature. Folk/fairy have been part of children's cultural heritage for centuries. The stories help children understand the customs and cultures of people all over the world. Folk/fairy tales deal with important themes: good triumphs over evil; clear thinking solves problems; perseverance and hard work pay off; unselfishness is rewarded; and justice will be done. While some tales are violent, they provide an acceptable way for children to deal with violence. The stories stimulate a child's imagination with their wonderful, rich vocabulary, and appeal to all children. Most importantly, children feel connected with parents grandparents by reading the same tales that past generations have read. So dust off those old tales! A large selection is available at the Cherry Valley or Polson Public Library. Enjoy them with your child.

Literature is no one's private sound.literature is common ground; let us trespass freely and fearlessly and find our own way for ourselves.
Virginia Woolf

Build Memories Through Reading

Build memories through reading,
Through actions and from your heart.
Show children you love them,
From a very early start.
It doesn't take a rich man,
A poor will surely do.
Books can be bought, or borrowed,
They are treasures old and new.
Children should be loved and cuddled,
Show them that you care,
Build memories through reading,
The ones only you can share.

by Penny Hirschman

Read to your child each day!!!!!!
(even just 15 minutes)

Help them:

- build vocabulary
- develope critical listening skills
- improve their attention span
- develop problem solving skills
- develop print to word relationships
- develop skills making predictions
- develop left to right and top to bottom directionality
- learn to want to read!!!!!

Talk about what is happening in the story!!! Ask them what they might do if they were one of the people in the story, ask what they think might happen next!! Talk about new vocabulary. You can even "read" books with no words -- talk about what is happening in the pictures.

The school librarian, the city librarian, or your childs' teacher can help you find appropriate and popular stories. Take your child to the library and let them pick a book!!! Some authors that frequently show up in the book club offerings are:

Eric Carle	Pat Hutchins
Audrey Wood	Dr. Suess
Leo Lionni	Chris VonAllsburg
Mercer Mayer	David Wiesner

Make reading together a part of your everyday fun routine with your kids. Enjoy the special time together and help ensure their becoming readers and successful students!!!!!!!!!!

Please register by Feb. 2

"Celebrating the First Five Years"
registration form

Name: _____

Address: _____
_____
_____

Phone: _____

☐ I will need child care

ages of children _____

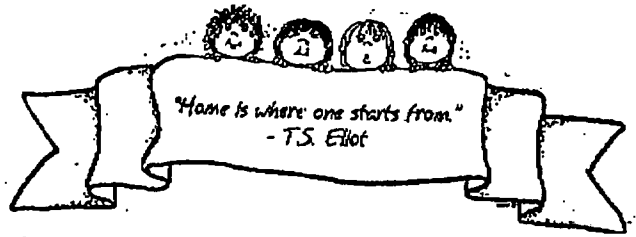
☐ I (we) will be staying for lunch

Number of adults _____

Number of children _____

Beach Transportation of Missoula will provide rides to and from the workshop.

Please check here _____ if you plan on riding the bus.
How many passengers? ____



"Celebrating the First Five Years"

A free workshop for parents and caregivers of children, ages birth through five

Saturday, February 10, 2001
8:30 - 1:30 p.m.
Cherry Valley School
Polson, MT

Learn to guide and extend your child's learning through everyday activities.

Become a true partner in your child's education and lifelong journey to literacy.

Sessions offered:

- Learning at Home
- Learning in the Community
- Learning at School

Lunch will be provided at no cost to participants.
Child care is available.

Registration limited to 75 participants. To register, call Cherry Valley school at 883-6333, ext. 5, or mail the registration form by Feb. 2 to
Elaine Meeks
Polson School District
111 - 4th Ave. E
Polson, MT 59860

Presented and sponsored by:
Division of Educational Research and Service at The University of Montana
Montana Parent Information Resource Center Network
Polson Partnership Project / Cherry Valley School

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Workshop Evaluation Summary

Of the 32 evaluations returned 72% stated they were parents, 31% day care providers, 13% teachers, and 3% marked other. With some marking two categories, ie: day care provider and parent.

A unanimous tone was expressed throughout all the evaluations, that the workshop was well organized, informative, useful, and fun. Below is a break down of the overall view from each question asked on the survey:

Question #1 What did you like best about the workshop? People expressed that they liked the handouts, hands on activities, and the useful, practical advice that they felt they could easily apply to their daily lives. They enjoyed the enthusiasm of the presenters, the rotating schedule and length of each session, and the fact that this workshop was held on a Saturday which enabled them to attend.

Question #2 What was the most informative? People enjoyed the hands on activities and being able to see already made materials and ideas from the tubs. They felt this gave them the experience and materials to actually go out and use what they made and saw. Many expressed that the information about learning in the community, and at home was very helpful, practical and easy to incorporate into their schedules. Making the community a learning experience and learning how to read to your child, was some valuable information to some.

Question #3 What will you do differently? From parents to daycare providers to teachers, they stated how they would use the activities shared at the workshop into their daily lives. Parents liked the community bags, and how you can teach your child literacy/educational lessons while out doing your errands. Every parent stated how they were going to do things differently after this workshop. Some were going to read more to their child, make a busy bag and use the community as an educational tool, and some were going to be more creative. Day care providers got many useful tips and ideas from the tubs, hands on activities, and sessions. They stated how they were going to use this useful information back in their daycare, plus share the information with the parents of the children they watch. Teachers expressed that they would use the check out bags for students to take home, plus they received many art and literacy ideas from the tubs that they were going to use in their classrooms.

Question #4 How can we improve this presentation? Many stated that they could not see a way to improve, they thought the whole workshop was excellent. Others came up with some wonderful ideas such as; repeating the workshop, and having the people who attended it, promote it, as to reach out to more parents/daycare providers. Another mentioned that it would be nice to have a workshop with your child in attendance. Getting to put some of this practical information into practice while you attend the workshop. Many recommended getting more people to attend because they felt this information was so important.

Question #5 What other information would be helpful? Many daycare providers stated they would like to see a session dealing with discipline/behavior modification, stress management and organization. Some stated that it would be nice to have a similar workshop about another subject area such as math, or incorporating another subject area into this workshop. Some others stated they thought a workshop dealing with the age's five and beyond would be nice. One comment made pertained to multiple intelligence, and one comment about brain developmental stages, both wanted to learn more about these areas.

Again, this workshop was so well received. People expressed their thankfulness for such a program, amazement that it was free, and that the bus service, lunch, and childcare were a very nice touch. By reading all the evaluations it is apparent that this conference was a huge success.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

I like it all, the workshop descriptions

2. What was the most informative?

Early Literacy materials and Activities - Cafeteria A · B · C. D.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

I will read more with the 2 + Three years

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   All the great Ideas on Reading with Kids.

2. What was the most informative?
   Everything

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

I loved it all.

2. What was the most informative?

learning in the community

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

almost everything!

4. How can we improve this presentation?

find a way to have more people attend it.

5. What other information would be helpful?

a list of resources in the communities for parents / W phone #s.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

ideas for activity bags – alternatives to reading books to your child, yet still teaching literacy.

2. What was the most informative?

lots of good pre-school information.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

read more

do quick stories, not read a book word for word and point out key things in a book

4. How can we improve this presentation?

it was great

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a:			
X parent	____ child care provider	____ service provider	
X teacher	____ student	____ other: _____	

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

   The variety

2. What was the most informative?

   I like making the busy bags and getting all the handouts!

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

   Spend more time reading with my children

4. How can we improve this presentation?

   It was great

5. What other information would be helpful?

   Expand on other curricular areas!

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
I liked the ideas I got about sequencing & left to right. Things that are right there but I don't think about. All the workshops were educating & informative to help my children
2. What was the most informative?
Workshop A & B were good & informative - all of them were but I found those two were the ones I would use the most

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
Be more aware of everyday activities. Sing

4. How can we improve this presentation?
It was a great presentation & I'm thankful for the opportunity to attend.

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

everything- very imformative- learned lots of new ideas.

great workshop!

2. What was the most informative?

learning different ways; ideas on how to apply these to my children + their learning

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

be more creative, take more time w/ my children- use alot of the ideas!

4. How can we improve this presentation?

—

5. What other information would be helpful?

Thank you!

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent X child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

I liked them all. Each one gave me ideas that I will use!

2. What was the most informative?

How simple everyday tasks is important in children's learning

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

se a lot of the ideas in our home & daycare
ause I realized the importance of basic concepts that
l help with children's language & writing & reading.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

not at all — it was all great

5. What other information would be helpful?

discipline

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent X child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
I can utilize some of all of the ideas. To use in my daycare.

2. What was the most informative? The tubs in the cafeteria were very informative.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
Not take children for granted. They are very important to pay attention to. You can also learn from them.

4. How can we improve this presentation? Time. It is important to learn as you go. So you really can't improve this presentation. It was perfect, for the time and era we are in.

5. What other information would be helpful? Maybe Discipline tactics for youngones.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

✓ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

Opened my minde to so many more was to present literacy

2. What was the most informative?

Ways to bring parents more information

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Open up the World of literacy for children.

4. How can we improve this presentation? It was Wondful

5. What other information would be helpful?

I learned alot

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ✓ child care provider ___ service provider
___ teacher ___ student ___ other: ___

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why? "Local" ! **
(2. "Sat") I didn't have to leave work.)
3. friendly informative staff-presenters. Well organized
4. I like the hands on activities bag & playdough

2. What was the most informative?

Very good ideas from session "A",

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

I will stress these ideas to all our parents Re: How important they are concerning their child and literacy aswell as the child's entire education

4. How can we improve this presentation?

you all did a great Job.

5. What other information would be helpful? 1. How to organize a larger group of preschool children,

2. Stress mgmt for caregivers of young children.

3. How to respect the young child (children of all ages.)

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

I like it all, the workshop descriptions

2. What was the most informative?

Early Literacy materials and Activities - Cafeteria
A · B · C · D.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

I will read more with the 2 & Three years

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

all the workshops were very good
I especially liked No. B

2. What was the most informative?

I enjoyed the tub activities
& hand on activities
playdough, bags, etc also enjoyed seeing the new books out

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Lots of good reading
& art activities for daycare

4. How can we improve this presentation?

everyone did
a good job presenting
useful easy to use info

* very helpful to parents helping children be interested in reading

5. What other information would be helpful?

maybe a workshop
on math?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
I loved the hands on activities. I wouldn't be surprised if this is also was the way my children Learn.
2. What was the most informative?
I found alot of information in the class from Roxanne and Lisa. They had a bunch of wonderful ideas, I wish I would have had this 10 years ago!
3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
I will be more attentive to the needs of all my children.
4. How can we improve this presentation?
How about a class where the children attend, and they work on concepts with the parents
5. What other information would be helpful?
Maybe a class or two that has helpful tools for older children.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

The fun intermixed with the information It's a great way to learn at any age

2. What was the most informative?

all of it

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

alot of more Reading

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

teaching kids other useful things Like cleaning up

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent X child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
the Emerging Literacy checklist
Have more Helpful Ideas + resources

2. What was the most informative?
the more literacy activities
list.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
Iterduce children to more things

4. How can we improve this presentation?
Read a lot more & talk about
the thing around us.

5. What other information would be helpful?
~~How to Getting~~ P How to get Parnet
more involed.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

well organized

worksheet handouts - were very helpful – so much information was covered in a short time

2. What was the most informative?

encouraging children at the level of skill they are at - especially with writing – not always correcting how they are doing something but allowing them to explore there 'new' skills and develop them

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

incooperate more learning activities while running errands

4. How can we improve this presentation?

opportunity to make copies of some of the patterns and workbooks –

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: ____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
I feel I have learned so much today. Thank you for providing such knowledgable people with so much great information.

2. What was the most informative?
I don't know that I can pinpoint one specific item. It was all Wonderful!

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
Take a few extra seconds, or minutes throughout the day as opportunities come up to incorporate literacy and just talk.

4. How can we improve this presentation?
Everything was so great! I can't even think of any suggestions for improvement.

5. What other information would be helpful?
I recently learned of the idea of Multiple Intelligences. I would love to learn how to incorporate different "intelligences" to teach a child with some learning difficulties) reading and writing.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student __X__ other: Family Advocate

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   The ~~workshop~~ Workshops were well organized - I liked the length, hands on activity - different people teaching - I liked it being in a school (learning environment) instead of a hotel
2. What was the most informative?
   Seeing the materials in the Tubs, Learning in the community
3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   Put more time into making lessons and taking more time for learning
4. How can we improve this presentation?
   Advertise More
5. What other information would be helpful?
   Brain Development for Newborns and how to work with them

Thank-you for the Bus!

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ✓ other: Parent Educator WORD

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

enthusiastic presenters were excellent - They exude such a love & passion for their work & it's contagious

2. What was the most informative?

All the information was an excellent reminder

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Get more parents to attend

4. How can we improve this presentation?

It was perfect & well planned. Info given, hands on, lunch, etc Workshop were a perfect length.

5. What other information would be helpful?

More ways to teach parents the value of being involved in their childs learning. How do we get them to engage?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

Everything like the Storytelling

2. What was the most informative?

How important early literacy is for preschoolers.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Taking more time to enjoy reading to kids

4. How can we improve this presentation?

don't need any improvement

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider X service provider

X teacher ____ student ____ other: Tech assistant F.Babies

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

Just right amount of time - liked rotating around for topics - hands on activities.

2. What was the most informative?

I was interested in book bags / learning act. at home

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

I have several key points to stress to parents through p. involvement act.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Map on flyer

emphasis on math act. at home

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ___1/___ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

The ideas on what to do when you go places
I also really liked the ideas on reading different ways

2. What was the most informative?

I thought it all was informative.
I enjoyed the preschool part, But didnt feel it
applyed to me.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

I will take my new little bag with us places and
do fun things with it.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ✓ Own & operate daycare child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: Public Health/School Nurse

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   The importance of Reading and learning

2. What was the most informative? It was all very good.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   I will set up learning centers
   Do more learning activities at daycare.
   make & use activity bags for my own small children

4. How can we improve this presentation?
   You did a great JOB Everyone was entergentic, cheerful & informative.

5. What other information would be helpful?
   Information on ~~ADD~~ disipline issues in group settings. Getting education INFO out to the parents etc.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

There were a lot of helpful, practical ideas given that can be incorporated into everyday activities. I also appreciated the handouts that were available for later use

2. What was the most informative?

The developmental process + easy ways to make learning practical, that are focused on the child's individual stage of development

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

I will do more projects with my child + encourage her to write more.
I will do more learning activities on the go.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

I would like to learn more on Speech development.

5. What other information would be helpful?

more info. on how to develop the idea of Sequencing.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

so much practical advise to apply to daily activities

2. What was the most informative?

Lisa Kenney / Roxanne Hranicka

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

talk, explain more things to my child, be creative in home teaching

4. How can we improve this presentation?

keep up the great work

5. What other information would be helpful?

more handouts!

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

Organization

2. What was the most informative?

K - A

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   All the great Ideas on Reading with Kids.

2. What was the most informative?
   Everything

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

I loved it all.

2. What was the most informative?

learning in the community

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

almost everything!

4. How can we improve this presentation?

find a way to have more people attend it.

5. What other information would be helpful?

a list of resources in the communities for parents / w/ phone #s.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

ideas for activity bags – alternatives to reading books to your child, yet still teaching literacy.

2. What was the most informative?

lots of good pre-school information.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

read more

do quick stories, not read a book word for word and point out key things in a book

4. How can we improve this presentation?

it was great

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

X teacher ____ student ____ other: ____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

The variety

2. What was the most informative?

I like making the busy bags and getting all the handouts!

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Spend more time reading with my children

4. How can we improve this presentation?

It was great

5. What other information would be helpful?

Expand on other curricular areas!

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
I liked the ideas I got about sequencing & left to right. Things that are right there but I don't think about. All the workshops were educating & informative to help my children
2. What was the most informative?
Workshop A & B were good & informative - all of them were but I found those two were the ones I would use the most

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
Be more aware of everyday activities. Sing

4. How can we improve this presentation?
It was a great presentation & I'm thankful for the opportunity to attend.

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

everything- very informative- learned lots of new ideas.

great workshop!

2. What was the most informative?

learning different ways, ideas on + how to apply these to my children + their learning

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

be more creative, take more time w/my children- use alot of the ideas!

4. How can we improve this presentation?

—

5. What other information would be helpful?

Thank you!

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent X child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

I liked them all. Each one gave me ideas that I will use!

2. What was the most informative?

How simple everyday tasks is important in children's learning

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

se a lot of the ideas in our home & day care use I realized the importance of basic concepts that help with children's language & writing & reading.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

not at all — it was all great

5. What other information would be helpful?

discipline

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent X child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   I can utilize some of all of the ideas. To use in my daycare.

2. What was the most informative? The tubs in the cafeteria were very informative.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   Not take children for granted. They are very important to pay attention to. You can also learn from them.

4. How can we improve this presentation? Time. It is important to learn as you go. So you really can't improve this presentation. It was perfect, for the time and era we are in.

5. What other information would be helpful? Maybe Discipline tactics for youngones.

Thanks to Coteach
Lucy and Lolo school for helping
e help my child
ave a future.

Helen Barnes

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: ____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

Hands on Multisensory
List Groc store
Speach Bag
Lucy Heart Paulson for her
Knowlege & Skill in
teaching Kids & Parent
how to teach
ther Kids about
Learning is fun

2. What was the most informative?

Play Dough 2 snakes
make Letters - also like
Blocks 2 Bag C 2 small 2 BIG
ake All Letters C 1/2 Circles 2 small

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Lucy has Recomended shopping list - We will
Be doing it I have a speech Bag for Doc Appoints
will use the smaller Plastic one made today
for Grocery Shopping lists

4. How can we improve this presentation?

Use orton Gillingham training
& multisensory Phonoletic aproach to
teaching Early litteracy. Lower case letters first
e o a d g m l

5. What other information would be helpful? Both Lolo School
& Cold Springs are using
Orton w/ huge Success
Both Regular & Resorce
Room teachers now
interested K thru 3

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

__X__ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   Hands-On Activities, good information and hand-outs to help parents connect with schools in teaching literacy at home.

2. What was the most informative?
   I liked being able to see what Cherry Valley does → pecially the parent take home packets to check out. I found alot of good information in them and got good ideas for making them.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   Make take home packets for parents to check out.
   Also have students start journals in class.

4. How can we improve this presentation?
   Try to get more to come → well presented material.

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   All the ideas. Obviously, a lot of work and passion went into this workshop. The people who make things like this happen are the best.

2. What was the most informative?
   Each session was very informative. Each session was a reinforcement of the last. So many great ideas.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   I will be looking for more opportunities to help my children read better. I learned many great, easy, ways to do so.

4. How can we improve this presentation?
   I'm not sure. This whole thing was well done.

5. What other information would be helpful?
   Education is constantly evolving. Every time you hold a workshop like this, new ideas will be introduced. What would be more helpful would be to have more workshops.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
I loved the different ways you can set up games to make reading fun.

2. What was the most informative?
I loved the do's + dont's of reading and writting. I learned good things from that.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
I will make sure to read and play more with my children.

4. How can we improve this presentation?
I feel that there could be some copies of songs that you can sing to your children expecially parents who may not be able to hear The words + at least it's written down on paper.

5. What other information would be helpful?
how to be able to get The other parent (step) who's not really active in fun stuff to join what is necessary for The children to learn and enjoy life for The future

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider
____ teacher ____ student ✓ other: Coordinator

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
taking items home – things to copy for families
– ideas to share w/ teachers
– my own book bag

2. What was the most informative?
Seeing Cherry Valley / Networking + having parent tips.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
Try to work together as a group on FUN classroom materials at Education Component meetings. ex) parent packs or whole kits

4. How can we improve this presentation?
Strong-arm more people to attend, or repeat it so those that attended can spread the word its a great day.

5. What other information would be helpful?
Grant options

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student X other: Family Advocate

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

   The ~~workshop~~ Workshops were well organized - I liked the length, hands on activity - different people teaching - I liked it being in a school (learning environment) instead of a hotel

2. What was the most informative?

   Seeing the materials in the Tubs, Learning in the community

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

   Put more time into making lessons and taking more time for learning

4. How can we improve this presentation?

   Advertise More

5. What other information would be helpful?

   Brain Development for Newborns and how to work with them

Thank-you for the Bus!

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ✓ other: Parent Educator WORK

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

enthusiastic presenters were excellent - They exude such a love & passion for their work & it's contagious

2. What was the most informative?

All the information was an excellent reminder

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Get more parents to attend

4. How can we improve this presentation?

It was perfect & well planned. Info given, hands on, lunch, etc Workshop were a perfect length.

5. What other information would be helpful?

More ways to teach parents the value of being involved in their childs learning. How do we get them to engage?

Service & lunch was nice - Such a well planned worksh

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

Everything like the Storytelling

2. What was the most informative?

How important early literacy is for preschoolers.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Taking more time to enjoy reading to kids

4. How can we improve this presentation?

don't need and improvement

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider X service provider
X teacher ____ student ____ other: Tech assistant F. Babies

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   Just right amount of time - liked rotating around for topics - hands on activities.

2. What was the most informative?
   I was interested in book bags / learning act. at home

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   I have several key points to stress to parents through p. involvement act.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?
   Map on flyer
   emphasis on math act. at home

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   The ideas on what to do when you go places
   I also really liked the ideas on reading different way

2. What was the most informative?
   I thought it all was informative.
   I enjoyed the preschool part, But didnt feel it
   applyed to me.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   I will take my new little bag with us places and
   do fun things with it.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ✓ child care provider (Own a operate daycare) ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: Public Health/School Nurse

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   The importance of Reading and learning

2. What was the most informative? It was all very good.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   I will set up learning centers
   Do more learning activities at daycare.
   make & use activity bags for my own small children

4. How can we improve this presentation?
   You did a great job. Everyone was entergentic, cheerful & informative.

5. What other information would be helpful?
   Information on ~~~~ disipline issues in group settings. Getting education info out to the parents etc.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ↘ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

There were a lot of helpful, practical ideas given that can be incorporated into everyday activities. I also appreciated the handouts that were available for later use

2. What was the most informative?

The developmental process + easy ways to make learning practical, that are focused on the child's individual stage of development

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

I will do more projects with my child + encourage her to write more.
I will do more learning activities on the go.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

I would like to see more on speech development.

5. What other information would be helpful?

more info. on how to develop the idea of sequencing.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

   So much practical advise to apply to daily activities

2. What was the most informative?

   Lisa Kenney / Roxanne Hrenkoff

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

   talk, explain more things to my child, be creative in home teaching

4. How can we improve this presentation?

   keep up the great work

5. What other information would be helpful?

   more handouts!

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

Organization

2. What was the most informative?

K - A

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

Thanks to Coteach
Lucy, and ~~Lolo~~ school for helping
me help my child
have a future.

Helen Barnes

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: ____________

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

Hands on Multisensory
List Groc store
Speach Bag

2. What was the most informative?

Lucy Heart Paulson for her Knowlege & Skill in teaching Kids & Parents how to teach their Kids about Learning is fun

Play Dough 2 snakes make Letters - also like blocks 2 Big C 2 small 2 BIG ½ Circles 2 small || make All Letters

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Lucy has Recomended shopping list - We will Be doing it I have a speach Bag for Doc Appoints will use the smaller Plastic one made today for Grocery Shopping lists

4. How can we improve this presentation?

Use orton Gillingham training A multisensory Phonoletic aproach to teaching Early litteracy. Lower case letters first c o a d g m l

5. What other information would be helpful? Both Lolo School & Cold Springs are using Orton w/ huge Success Both Regular & Resorce Room teachers now interested K thru 3

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

__X__ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   Hands-On Activities, good information and hand-outs to help parents connect with schools in teaching literacy at home.

2. What was the most informative?
   I liked being able to see what Cherry Valley does → especially the parent take home packets to check out. I found alot of good information in them and got good ideas for making them.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   Make take home packets for parents to check out.
   Also have students start journals in class.

4. How can we improve this presentation?
   Try to get more to come → well presented material.

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   All the ideas. Obviously, a lot of work and passion went into this workshop. The people who make things like this happen are the best.

2. What was the most informative?
   Each session was very informative. Each session was a reinforcement of the last. So many great ideas.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   I will be looking for more opportunities to help my children read better. I learned many great, easy, ways to do so.

4. How can we improve this presentation?
   I'm not sure. This whole thing was well done.

5. What other information would be helpful?
   Education is constantly evolving. Every time you hold a workshop like this, new ideas will be introduced. What would be more helpful would be to have more workshops.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: ____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
I loved the different ways you can set up games to make reading fun.

2. What was the most informative?
I loved the do's + dont's of reading and writting. I learned good things from that.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
I will make sure to read and play more with my children.

4. How can we improve this presentation?
I feel that there could be some copies of songs that you can sing to your children expecially parents who may not be able to hear the words + at least it's written down on paper.

5. What other information would be helpful?
how to be able to get the other parent (step) who's not really active in fun stuff to join what is necessary for the children to learn and enjoy life for the future.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider
____ teacher ____ student ✓ other: coordinator

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
taking items home – things to copy for families
– ideas to share w/ teachers
– my own book bag

2. What was the most informative?
Seeing Cherry Valley / Networking + having parent tips.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
Try to work together as a group on FUN classroom materials at Education Component meetings. ex) parent packs or whole kits

4. How can we improve this presentation?
Strong-arm more people to attend, or repeat it so those that attended can spread the word its a great day.

5. What other information would be helpful?
Grant options

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

__✓__ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

opened my minde to so many more was to present literacy

2. What was the most informative?

Ways to bring parents more information

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

open up the world of literacy for children.

4. How can we improve this presentation? It was wondful

5. What other information would be helpful?

I learned alot

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: ____________

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why? 1. Local ! **
(2. Sat) I didn't have to leave work.)
3. friendly informative staff-presenters. well organized
4. I like the hands on activities bag & playdough

2. What was the most informative?

Very good Ideas from session "A",

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

I will stress these Ideas to all our parents Re: How important they are concerning their child and literacy aswell as the child's entire education

4. How can we improve this presentation?

You all did a great Job.

5. What other information would be helpful? 1. How to organize a larger group of preschool children,

2. Stress mgmt for caregivers of young children.

3. How to respect the young child - (Children of all ages.)

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ____ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

all the workshops were very good
I especially liked No. B

2. What was the most informative?

I enjoyed the tub activities
& hand on activities
playdough, bags, etc also enjoyed seeing the new books out

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Lots of good reading
& art activities for day care

4. How can we improve this presentation?

everyone did
a good job presenting
useful easy to use info

* very helpful to parents helping children be interested in reading

5. What other information would be helpful?

maybe a workshop
on math?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
   I loved the hands on activities. I wouldn't be surprised if this is also was the way my children Learn.
2. What was the most informative?
   I found alot of information in the class from Roxanne and Lisa. They had a bunch of wonderful ideas, I wish I would have had this 10 years ago!
3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
   I will be more attentive to the needs of all my children.
4. How can we improve this presentation?
   How about a class where the children attend, and they work on concepts with the parents.
5. What other information would be helpful?
   Maybe a class or two that has helpful tools for older children.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

The fun intermixed with the information It's a great way to learn at any age

2. What was the most informative?

all of it

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

alot of more Reading

4. How can we improve this presentation?

5. What other information would be helpful?

teaching kids other useful things Like cleaning up

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: X parent X child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?
the Emerging Literacy checklist
Have more Helpful Ideas + reasonses

2. What was the most informative?
the more Literacy activities
list.

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?
Iterduce children to more things

4. How can we improve this presentation?
Read a lot more & talk about
the thing around us.

5. What other information would be helpful?
~~How to Getting~~ P How to get Pernet
more involed.

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ✓ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: ____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

   well organized

   worksheet handouts - were very helpful – so much information was covered in a short time

2. What was the most informative?

   encouraging children at the level of skill they are at - especially with writing – not always correcting how they are doing something but allowing them to explore there "new" skills and develop them

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

   incooperate more learning activities while running errands

4. How can we improve this presentation?

   opportunity to make copies of some of the patterns and workbooks –

5. What other information would be helpful?

Workshop Evaluation

"Celebrating the First Five Years"

Saturday, February 10, 2001

Cherry Valley School, Polson, Montana

I am a: ✓ parent ____ child care provider ____ service provider

____ teacher ____ student ____ other: _____

1. What did you like best about the workshop? Why?

I feel I have learned so much today. Thank you for providing such knowledgable people with so much great information.

2. What was the most informative?

I don't know that I can pinpoint one specific item. It was all Wonderful!

3. What will you do differently because of this workshop?

Take a few extra seconds, or minutes throughout the day as opportunities come up to incorporate literacy and just talk.

4. How can we improve this presentation?

Everything was so great! I can't even think of any suggestions for improvement.

5. What other information would be helpful?

I recently learned of the idea of multiple Intelligences. I would love to learn how to incorporate different "intelligences" to teach a child (with some learning difficulties) reading and writing.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

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