

The Benefits of Preschool: Do Children Who Attend Preschool Prior to Kindergarten Achieve  
Higher Test Scores

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### Correlation between Preschool Attendance and Test Scores

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine what, if any, impact that attending a four year old kindergarten program had on five year old kindergarteners reading ability as measured by Dominie testing, compared to those five year olds who did not attend a four year old program at Inman Elementary School. The significance of this study was to not only determine if there is a difference in aptitude and ability in the area of basic reading skills, concepts about print, but to find the strengths in the curriculum content taught in our preschool program at Inman Elementary School. The researcher strived to use the information gained through this study to build a more comprehensive curriculum for the four year old program and promote progress in school readiness. There is a great deal of money, time, and effort put into these preschool programs nation-wide. Is it worth it? Are the results truly showing a benefit or is just an academic daycare at its best?

*Keywords:* preschool, Read to Succeed, South Carolina, reading skills, testing

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## **Statement of the Problem**

On April 2014, Governor Nikki Haley signed into law the “Read to Succeed” legislation which is designed to allow South Carolina families access to a preschool program. Many families were missing out on the advantages that are afforded by this program because they have previously only been offered in the private sector. The ultimate purpose behind this bill was to insure that at-risk students receive as much help as possible in reading instruction in this early formative time. Haley hoped to see fewer children reaching the third grade unable to read and then having to be retained.

This bill raised hopes that preschool can and will make a difference in reading abilities, but the question still exists, does a four year old kindergarten program make a difference ? Are the benefits of a preschool program worth the expenditure of time, money and workforce that will be spent on these programs?

## **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study was to not only determine if there is a difference in aptitude and ability in the area of basic reading skills, concepts about print, but to find the strengths in the curriculum content taught in our preschool program at Inman Elementary School. The researcher strived to use the information gained through this study to build a more comprehensive curriculum for the four year old program and promote progress in school readiness. Due to new testing standards it is essential that the students be prepared for the educational challenges that these students face.

## **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine what, if any, impact that attending a four year old kindergarten program had on five year old kindergarteners reading ability as measured by Dominie testing, compared to those five year olds who did not attend a four year old program at Inman Elementary School.

## **Justification of the Research**

The teacher researcher had taught the four year old preschool class at Inman Elementary School and then looped with the same four year old class to kindergarten the next school year. Her experiences motivated this study to not only document if the benefits can be seen in scores on the Dominie test but to also refine the curriculum taught. The researcher has personally undertaken the goal of improving and challenging the instruction in IES' preschool and primary reading program.

## **Deficiencies in Past Research**

In the past few years expanding preschool programs to become more worthwhile and educationally sound has been debated in the local and national educational sector. It has become a more widely accepted practice to send children to an educational preschool rather than just a social play-day facility. Articles have been written and discussions made about this topic, but only a few studies have been done to actually document the specific differences on a test that measure the concepts about print between the students who have attended a preschool and those who have not. The researcher wanted to take it a step further and actually compare the students in her class that have or have not participated in IES' program.

## **Importance of the Findings of This Study**

The researcher's goal behind implementing this study was to be able to present them to the principals and teachers at IES for consideration of further achieving a more refined and enhanced curriculum. The goal of the preschool program being to not only prepare these four year olds for kindergarten but to promote and enhance reading concepts and skills that will be beneficial in the following years.

## **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The questions which the research intended to address are:

1. Do kindergarten students who attended Inman Elementary School's four year old kindergarten program achieve higher scores on the Show Me Book test?
2. Do kindergarten students who have not attended Inman Elementary School's four year old kindergarten program achieve higher scores on the Show Me Book test?
3. Do all five year old kindergarteners perform equally well on the Show Me Book test?
4. Does the level of parental involvement make up for a lack of preschool attendance?

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

#### **No Child Left Behind Act**

Today in American society a great deal of importance has been placed on high performing test scores and quality education programs. It has become the goal of all educational institutions that all children have access to a quality educational program, one of these being a preschool program. The No Child Left Behind Act has been proposed to provide all children with an equal opportunity to obtain and participate in a high-quality education that encompasses these four aspects (NCLB, 2001). The NCLB Act has stressed accountability to ensure that students who are at an economic disadvantage can achieve academic proficiency, and provided flexibility that allows school districts the opportunity to spend their federal funding in the way that they deem most effective and efficient. Other aspects of the NCLB Act are research-based education that emphasizes educational programs and practices that have been proven effective through research, and parent options that increases the choices available to the parents of students attending a Title 1 school. This law was implemented in 2002 and has since been a source of debate as to how to fulfill these guidelines.

#### **Research-Based Education**

The No Child left Behind Act instructs educators to provide an educational program that has been scientifically shown to be effective based upon relative data. Protheroe (2006) confirms that research tends to indicate that a prekindergarten experience does positively impact pre-school students' abilities to begin kindergarten with an advantage. School readiness, which is a huge factor in successful learning, via a quality preschool program can pay off in long-term



financial and educational benefits (p. 34). A study conducted with students from kindergarten through third grade by Bhavnagri and Samuels (1996), found that a public preschool program for disadvantage children produced positive effects on educational outcomes. These researchers believed that preschool attendance along with parental guidance improved the children's early school adjustment and, ultimately, their level of school readiness. School readiness has been defined as the "national priority for all children to enter school ready to learn (Hatcher et al., 2012).

Hatcher, Nuner and Paulsel state that an ecological view of readiness includes the interactive effects of particular environments such as school, home and child and community characteristics.

### **Accountability of a Preschool Program**

Accountability was instituted in American schools to insure that all students, even those from economically disadvantaged circumstances, are provided for equally so that they might achieve academic proficiency. In 2014 Governor Haley signed into law legislation to allow families the equal right to attend a preschool program no matter their financial situation. The question remains, do preschool programs make enough of a difference to justify the spending of the money and the commitment of the man-power resources? Also, is there a significant level difference in their test scores and their school readiness?

Love (2010) participated in a study that assessed and studied Early Head Start programs all over the United States. Significant learning advantages were found in cognitive, language, social-emotional development in behavior, attention and engagement. The same tests were given two years later and significant impacts continued to be seen in the same areas. The success of

this program not only included the academic and social aspects for the children but also impacted family life. The researcher concluded that the study showed that influences affected parental support in the growth and development of the children's oral skills and overall attitude toward literacy based activities (Love et al., 2010). The literacy activities done within the school day seemed to carry over such as daily reading and shared reading within the home. The effects of literacy exposure seemed to cultivate into the family routines. After the original evaluation on these children was concluded, their school attendance was tracked. The group of children and families examined were significantly more likely to demonstrate a more dedicated attendance and participation in a kindergarten setting. The researcher concluded with these findings. A quality preschool program that emphasizes home-based learning activities as well as parent education will always be more successful. Without including the parental training and support the growth made in the program were not as significant. Making the standards and goals known to the parents was another quality that was of major significance.

Another finding in Love's study was that more benefits were shown in the at-risk group than other groups. The children's and parent's attitude and engagement with the program played a large part in the attendance and participation and eventually the outcomes of the program. Overall this study showed the most progress in reducing aggressive behavior and improving positive approaches to learning for children and enhancing their home environments. What was concluded was that the scores on subject matters such as cognitive and oral skills did not show an impressive advancement in the ages of zero to three years, but the long-term outcomes such as vocabulary were noted. Love concluded that if preschool programs begin early, continue through kindergarten and sustain quality and intensive services, progress can be made through preschool programs.

## **Preschool and Literacy Development**

In the studies mentioned so far, one the biggest areas of achievement and success had been made in the subject of literacy and language development. It is common knowledge that most four years old will not come out of a quality preschool program with the proficiency to solve an algebraic problem or the ability to quote the periodic table, but to be able to speak clearly in a complete sentence and have a love for reading and writing, that is an accomplishment. More studies are being performed every day on finding better methods and ways to teach literacy. These same studies are also suggesting that starting to teach literacy skills at an early age far exceeds the achievements of the varied methods available. A Rutgers University study on the importance of language and literacy development, followed children throughout grade school and into adult life and found that for those children who attended a high quality preschool, they were more likely to graduate from elementary and high school, live healthier lives, have fewer social problems, and then earn more money later on in life (Morrow, 2005). Morrow stipulates that with better teacher preparation, continued professional development, and more family involvement all preschools can become high quality programs. According to Morrow, children who experienced a high quality preschool that emphasized language and literacy activities had greater achievement throughout school. The study also concluded that children who attended preschool were less likely to be retained in kindergarten through third grade, had higher graduation rates from high school and had fewer behavior problems. If a child does not have the appropriate language development by the age of three, success in school is unlikely, but with quality preschool, a child can catch up and can go on to experience success. Once again this study also found that children from families with the least formal education and lowest incomes appear to benefit the most.

The difference between a high quality preschool and one that was mediocre was the teacher preparation and the depth in which subjects were taught. Varied literacy activities showed the most advancement and growth. Activities such as read alouds, book discussions, writing activities, illustrating books, listening comprehension activities were some examples.

Curriculums that were well organized and rich in hands-on exploration were the best. A classroom that is immersed in literacy will contain a classroom library, a writing area, and a dress up area. Children need to be able to use their imaginations and personal experiences to express themselves in free play. Morrow also believed that in a quality preschool classroom correct behavior can be seen and learned which is beneficial for later years.

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van Kleeck

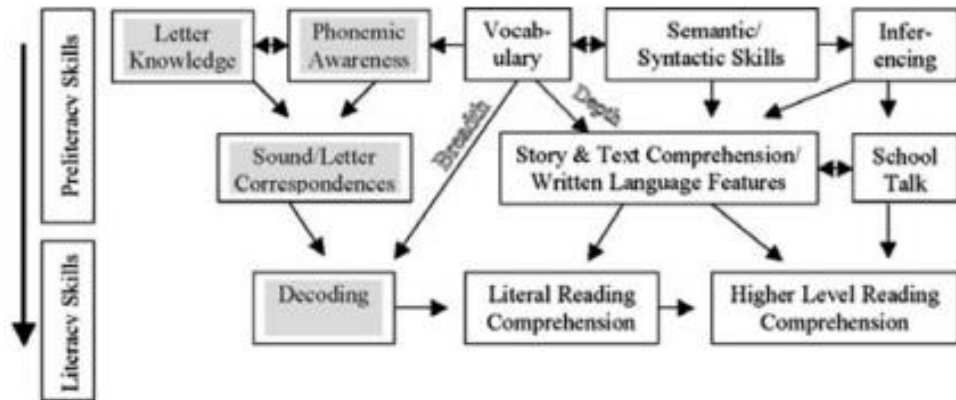


FIGURE 1. Progressing from preliteracy skills to reading comprehension via two simultaneous pathways.  
 Note. From "SLPS foundational role in reading comprehension: A response to Kamhi" by A. van Kleeck, 2007, *The ASHA Leader*, 12, p. 33. Copyright 2007 by American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Reprinted with permission.

Beginning literacy development comes from learning the names of letters and the sounds that they make. Concepts about print is a large part in literacy education. Children need to learn the parts of a book, left to right sequencing, differences between pictures and words. Mastery of these concepts will not always take place in preschool but the awareness of these concepts is put into place. Comprehension is also a significant and essential part of literacy development. Comprehension of a story will help to develop a love and interest in reading. Teaching inference is another crucial skill that needs to be taught in preschool. Van Kleeck believes that there is great value of targeting inference during storybook sharing with preschoolers (2008). Decoding is a necessary skill when teaching reading, but in order to teach a child to read more fluently and have better comprehension, inferring must also be learned strategy. Waiting to fix the problems in reading until a child is in the third or fourth grade is not an option any more. Prevention not correction is the answer to this problem. Teaching inference along with other fundamental literacy skills at a preschool age is the key. These studies have the same common theme of immersing these children in rich literacy activities will produce a competent and well-rounded reader and writer.

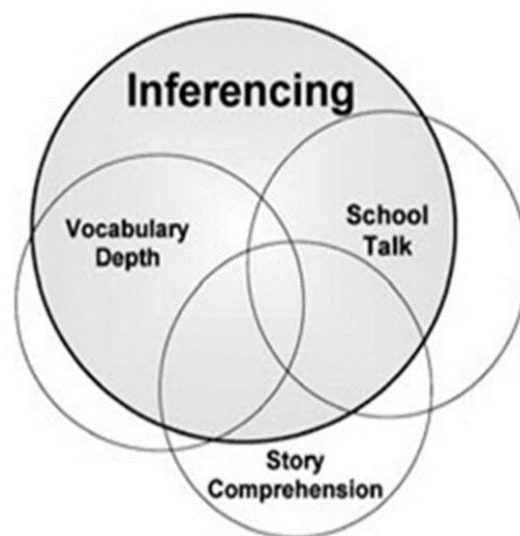


FIGURE 2. Relationship of inferencing to vocabulary depth, story comprehension, and school talk.

## **Reaching Families at Risk**

All of the previously mentioned studies have at one point or another mentioned the success of a high quality preschool program reaching children that are at risk and disadvantaged. It has been proven that it is much easier to train a child in a skill when they are young rather than correct a skill and have to reteach later. Zill and Collins (1996) state that knowing the range of developmental accomplishments and difficulties that children bring with them to kindergarten can help to understand the demands being placed on schools. No matter how extraordinary a school's curriculum is planned, executed and implemented will not eradicate or make up for the issues that a child is facing in their life. Parental support can exemplify the most ordinary curriculum and the lack of parental attention can invalidate the most outstanding lessons taught. Many students have families that do not speak English and/or come from uneducated families. It is more important now than ever that preschool programs reach these students and families early in school and build a good foundation for learning. Zill and Collins believes that teachers must maintain the interest and promote the growth of children who have already demonstrated signs of early literacy and numeracy, while simultaneously encouraging the development of these behaviors in children who have not yet acquired them. Preschool teachers and staff need to be able to differentiate instruction if each of the needs are to be met. Preschool teachers cannot pick and choose their students or their strengths and weaknesses, but have to be prepared to foster and develop all the challenges that come with their students.

## **Benefits for the Children, Families and Schools**

Lamy (2013) states that a great preschool experience provides children with foundational academic skills on which they can continue to build, as well as gain social abilities for getting along in a classroom. Lamy believes that a successful preschooler will develop into a happier

student in elementary school and high school which will then in turn lead to a young adult that makes good choices and have fewer early pregnancies and juvenile arrests. Without these errors in life, perhaps these students will make better choices, seek higher education, and live a more prosperous life. A quality preschool will also benefit the families as it has the ability to reach out and educate the parents as well as involve them in their children's learning thus strengthen families. Lamy states that of all the benefits that a preschool has to offer, the lessons in better parenting practices do not diminish after time. Also, preschools should offer tips and strategies for parents and students as they transition into kindergarten and first grade.

Lamy contends that schools and teachers benefit as well from a quality preschool. A kindergarten teacher will certainly reap the benefits of a student who comes in having a year of experience in reading, writing and social skills. Schools will benefit from students that do not have to be retained and in need of other special services. Lamy's research suggests that extending best early learning practices into elementary school yields rewards for children, parents, teachers and schools.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methods**

#### **Participants**

The individuals that participated in this study consisted of the researcher's class of twenty kindergarten students at Inman Elementary School (IES). The researcher and the classroom assistant administered the test.

#### **Research Design**

The Quasi-experimental study was conducted at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year. The following data was collected for each student: letter identification and concepts about print. The Dominic test that was administered scored the student's knowledge about concepts about print. This test had seventeen questions that assessed the students' ability to write their first and last name, pick the first and last word on the page, identify the difference between random letters and actual words, correct letters named out of fifty-two possible letters (uppercase and lower case), and orally read a simple sentence.

The researcher took the scores from this test and compared them between the two groups of students, those who had attended the preschool program at IES and those students who had not attended preschool at IES.

#### **Validity**

The validity of the testing was through comparison of the results for student's answers to the seventeen questions. All of the students were given the same questions in the same sequence and during the same time of day. The comparison was made between those students who



reported that they had attended IES preschool, and those who did not. There was no stipulation given on whether the student had been in the preschool only part year, if they did attend preschool at IES during any point in the previous year, those scores were evaluated as if they had attended full-year. Any student who attended some type of preschool program outside of IES were placed in the category of not attending preschool.

### **Terminology**

Dominie reading assessment: A portfolio of tests and tools that teachers can use to measure the reading and writing ability of children in kindergarten through third grade.

Developed by Diane Ford.

Concepts about print: Facts about books, letters, words, directionality, punctuation, and other pre-reading skills.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

This chapter shows the results of a quantitative study on the correlations of students who participated in the four year old kindergarten program and the scores of the students who did not attend the program. The researcher's purpose was to see if there is a difference in the ability and progress of a student who has been through a year of preschool. Does the fact that a student who has been previously exposed and trained in these concepts affect the outcomes of the students' overall ability and success as a kindergartener?

In Inman Elementary School's four year old program the students would have been instructed on these basic ELA concepts. These students would have been exposed to a type of testing mode that would have been similar to The Show Me book.

#### **Correlation Scores for the Dominic Test, The Show Me Book**

On August 20, 2014, the researcher tested the eighteen students in the participant class on the concepts of The Show Me book. This test is given to measure letter identification, knowledge of directionality when reading or following in a book, name writing and name identification, simple word identification, following directions, and ability to read a simple sentence. This test is administered again each nine weeks for anyone who does not score all answers correctly.

The correlations presented in Table 4.1 show the findings of the initial test administered and then Table 4.2 shows the scores of the test given in the second nine weeks period.

**Table 4.1: Scores on the first 9 weeks testing of The Show Me Book**

Students who completed The Show Me Book test.	Students who attended IES program	Students who did not attend the IES program	Results for students who attended	Results for those who didn't attend	Percent difference
18	4	14	Mean score = 14.75 Median score = 14.5	Mean = 8.93 Median = 7	Mean = 65% Median = 107%

Data presented in Table 4.1, “Scores on the first 9 weeks testing of The Show Me Book” indicates that of the 18 students that completed the “Show Me Book Test”, 4 had attended the Inman Elementary School’s pre-school program the prior year while a majority, 14, had not. The average score of those students who had attended the program was 14.75 out of 17 questions. The median score was 14.5. The mean score for the students who didn’t attend the program was 8.93 and the median 7. The percentage of difference between these two groups was 65% and the median score was 107% (this result is calculated by taking the top score group less the bottom score group and dividing by the bottom score group to ascertain the percentage difference between the median scores of the two groups). The scores of those who did not attend are 107% less than those who did attend. It is important to remember that the last group in the mean and median table presented is the percentage of difference between the results of the two groups. All percentages shown have been rounded.

**Table 4.2: Scores on the second 9 weeks testing of The Show Me Book**

Students who completed The Show Me Book test.	Students who attended IES program	Students who did not attend the IES program	Results for students who attended	Results for those who did not attend	Percent difference
18	4	14	Mean score = 17 Median score = 16.71	Mean = 17 Median = 17	Mean = 0.02% Median = 0.00%

Data presented in Table 4.2, “Scores on the second 9 weeks testing of The Show Me Book” indicates that of the 18 students that completed the “Show Me Book Test”, 4 had attended the Inman Elementary School’s pre-school program the prior year while a majority, 14, had not. The average score of those students who had attended the program was 17 out of 17 questions. The median score was 16.71. The mean score for the students who didn’t attend the program was 17 and the median 17. The percentage of difference between these two groups was 0.02% and the median score was 0%. This quasi-experimental study was conducted using a randomly selected class that the researcher was assigned. The Show Me Book test was administered by utilizing a one to one procedure and the test questions were scripted in an attempt minimize variances so that the validity of the test was more likely to be assured. The second test, administered the third week of October, was given to seventeen of the students because only one student had made a perfect score of seventeen out of seventeen answers correct.

On the first testing date the scores presented an extensive difference in ability and accuracy relative to performance on this test. As indicated in Table 4.2, by the second administration of the test, the disparity in proficiency was all but eliminated.

Chapter 5 will present a discussion of these findings and their overall impact on the value and importance of having a four year old kindergarten at Inman Elementary School. A determination will be made as to the benefits of this one particular aspect of a four year old kindergarten and if the benefits truly outweighs the cost of the program.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study were used to provide a descriptive analysis of the significance of students attending a four year old preschool program and the difference it made on the scores of The Show Me Book test. The researcher collected quantitative data and found the correlation between the students who did attend the program to be significantly higher the first nine weeks. However, the second testing phase showed only a very slight difference in scores.

### **Hypothesis Restated**

The researcher based the study on the following hypothesis, “Are the benefits of a preschool program worth the expenditure of time, money and workforce that will be spent on these programs?” This study was predicated upon the answers received from the following questions.

1. Do kindergarten students who attended Inman Elementary School’s four year old kindergarten program achieve higher scores on the Show Me Book test?
2. Do kindergarten students who have not attended Inman Elementary School’s four year old kindergarten program achieve higher scores on the Show Me Book test?

As shown in table 4.1, the initial scores made by the students who did attend the program were higher on the first testing. The second testing showed the other students who had not attended, eventually attained the same scores. The quantitative scores present an interesting finding that although there was determined to be a significant advantaged the first nine weeks of kindergarten for those who had attended the program, the advantage shown was short lived and

the significant growth did not carry into the further testing done throughout the first semester of school.

The four students that had attended the four year old program completed a full year of basic instruction in letter identification, phonemic training, and rudimentary reading skills. This was basically the very same material taught in the first semester of five year old kindergarten, only in a much more gradual method.

3. Do all five year old kindergarteners perform equally well on the Show Me Book test?

In table 4. 2 the researcher presented the scores from the second testing phase, these results reported that the gaps evened out and the ability level continued to grow amongst all the children at basically the same rate.

4. Does the level of parental involvement make up for a lack of preschool attendance?

Out of the four students who attended the four year old program, two students who did not attend the program scored higher on the first test than two of those who had attended the four year old kindergarten program. These two students who did score higher, but did not attend the program, had significant parental involvement in letter identification and beginning reading prior to attending kindergarten. This statement is based on the parent's own discussions with the researcher as to what level of training had been provided to these students prior to entering into kindergarten program. These parents also had shown a pattern of being highly involved and interested in their child's daily learning activities from the very first day of school and which continued throughout the school year. It is the researcher's opinion that these students likely had

an overall similar advantage to those students who had attended the four year old kindergarten program.

### **Overall Significance of the Study**

The results appear to show students who had attended the four year old kindergarten program, those who had a high level of parental involvement, those with less parental involvement, and those students considered to be ELA, had virtually the same skill level on this testing by the end of the first nine weeks of school. The researcher has determined that the results of this particular study shows that any lack of formal prior training, or high level of parental involved training before entering into the kindergarten program, provides only a short-lived advantage within the first nine week of school.

The researcher has used the quantitative data in which to compare the scores on a test and the conclusions presented are based on that scoring data. Just as in every testing situation there are variables. When comparing scores, learning abilities, and progression ratings, there are always going to be mitigating factors. Examples of these factors are, parental involvement, English language mastery, maturity level, extenuation circumstances for a particular student on a certain day such as whether there had been recent traumatic events within the family, whether a student has been properly fed or had proper rest etc., as well as the size of the sample being tested. The researcher believes that no two humans are exactly alike thus no two human's learning patterns can be compared. This is an indication that interpretations must be made by those educators who come into contact with these students on a daily basis.



## **Conclusion**

The researcher concludes that although data in this particular testing situation does not present any particular advancement for those students attending a four year old kindergarten experience, the value and benefits ultimately do come to light as was previously noted in the opening chapters of this study. The proof is in the outcome whether it shows in a testing scenario in kindergarten, a reading group in first and second grade, or in a writing test in third grade. Money, time, and effort are always worth building a stronger foundation in learning. A more in depth study should be continued on this same group of students who attended the program at Inman Elementary School that would include all facets of learning as well as social behavior of the student's tested in order to ascertain a true bearing on the significance of attending the four year old kindergarten program. There are six classes of five year old kindergarten at Inman Elementary School and inclusion of the entire kindergarten student population at the school, district, State etc., could provide a more conclusive set of data for this study. Continued documentation of this group as they advance through third grade would also provide a significant level of detail for this study.

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## Appendix A

### Research Proposal

**Researcher:** Julie Harrington

**Date:** July 15, 2014

**Site:** SWU

**Topic:** Does a four year old kindergarten program impact scores in 5 year old kindergarten?

**Proposed Title:** Preschool: It's not the income but the outcome that matters

**Problem Statement:** Does a four year old kindergarten program make a difference? South Carolina Governor Nicki Haley recently signed into law the "Read to Succeed" legislation which is designed to allow access to all South Carolina families to be able to send their four year old children to a preschool program. However, the question remains, are the benefits of this program worth the expenditure of time, money and workforce that will be spent on these programs?

**Significance of the study:** The significance of this study is to not only determine if there is a difference in aptitude and ability in the area of concepts about print but to find the strengths in the curriculum content taught in our preschool program at Inman Elementary School. The researcher strives to use the information gained through this study to build a more comprehensive curriculum for the four year old program and promote progress in school readiness. Due to new testing standards it is essential that the students be prepared for the educational challenges that they face.

**Purpose Statement:** The purpose of this quantitative study is to determine what, if any, impact that attending a four year old kindergarten program has on five year old kindergartners reading

ability as measured by Dominie testing, compared to those five year olds who did not attend a four year old program at Inman Elementary School.

**Hypothesis:** It is the hypothesis of the researcher that those children who attended the four year old kindergarten program at Inman Elementary School will score higher on the beginning of the year Dominie testing and are better prepared academically to begin the year as a five year old kindergarten student.

**Research Questions:** This study is predicated upon addressing the following research questions in an attempt to gather data as related to these hypothesis questions:

- 1) Do kindergarten students who attended Inman Elementary School's four year old kindergarten program achieve higher scores on the Show Me Book test?
- 2) Do kindergarten students who have not attended Inman Elementary School's four year old kindergarten program achieve higher scores on the Show Me Book test?
- 3) Do all five year old kindergarteners perform equally well on the Show Me Book test regardless of attending a preschool program?
- 4) Does the level of parental involvement make up for a lack of preschool attendance?

**Proposed Research Design:** The researcher will be doing a comparative study to see if there is a difference in the beginning scores on the Dominie testing between those students who have or have not attended the four year old kindergarten at Inman Elementary. The proposed method of testing will be The Show Me book test of the Dominie testing series. The group tested will be made of approximately twenty to twenty-five five year old students. The test will be administered the first week of school and all the students will be asked the same questions resulting in 17 scored answers. The test will be given and scored by the classroom teacher and or

assistant. The scores will be compared between the two groups of those who have attended the preschool program at Inman and those students who did not attend. A parent questionnaire will have been sent home before the test is given that will indicate if their child did attend the program, attend another preschool program, or inform the teacher of kindergarten readiness activities that are done on a regular basis.

**Rationale for Proposed Research Design:** The purpose for this study is to determine if the four year old preschool program does prepare the students for five year old kindergarten by teaching lessons through a curriculum-based learning environment. The research conducted will help to determine if a full year of curriculum based lessons will make a difference in the students understanding of concepts about print.

Approved By: *R. Keith East*

Comments: Proceed as planned

Date: July 23, 2014