Review of Literature

Alphabet
Developing Early Literacy Skills: A Meta-Analysis of Alphabet Learning and Instruction

A meta-Analysis was conducted to pursue a comprehensive evaluation to distinguish published and unpublished studies investigating the effects of instruction on alphabet outcomes. But, despite a small amount of agreement is present about how to advance the development of alphabet ability adequately. There were 8,468 students from all over the United States from a substantial amount of studies. The results indicated that school based instruction had considerable effects compared to home-based instruction. Small group instruction also presented considerable effects on students rather than individual tutoring programs.

- “In the field of early literacy, alphabet knowledge refers to children’s familiarity with letter forms, names, and corresponding sounds, as measured by recognition, production, and writing tasks.” Piasta and Wagner, p. 8
- “Despite these initiatives, relatively little is known about the impact of early instruction on the development of alphabet knowledge.” Piasta and Wagner, p. 8
- “Many participants were considered at risk for reading difficulties because of socioeconomic, disability, or low skill-level status, and this was particularly true for elementary school-aged participants.” Piasta and Wagner, p. 14
- “Research aimed in promoting elucidating the causal role of alphabet knowledge in promoting literacy development is required.” Piasta and Wagner, p. 25

Phonemic Awareness
An Investigation of Treatment Scheduling for Phonemic Awareness with Kindergarteners Who are at Risk for Reading Difficulties

A study assessed 2 schedules of implementation for phonemic awareness. The purpose of the two studies was to discern how a short, extreme schedule, followed by a no treatment schedule would oppose to a more current dispersed schedule. There were forty-one five to six year old kindergartners, with 22 students learning English as a second language. The students with under-developing letter names and first sound knowledge participated in 11 hours of phonemic awareness instruction. The focus was specifically on concentrated phonemic awareness (CP), dispersed phonemic awareness (DP), and dispersed vocabulary control (CON). The results concluded that students that were learning English as a second language performed comparable to that of Native English speakers. Students with reasonable deficits in letter naming and first sound knowledge showed revealing advantages after both implementations of the 2 conditions.

- “Phonemic awareness is the understanding that words are composed of sounds that are separable and manipulable.” Ukrainetz, p. 88
- “Despite their smaller achievements, these are the children for whom explicit phonemic awareness instruction offers the greatest benefit.” Ukrainetz, p. 88
- “Regular classroom instruction is not considered sufficient for weaker learners, but its presence may reduce the amount of time needed in supplementary intervention.” Ukrainetz, p. 88
- Significant growth continued in the second portion of the study. First-sound isolating stayed at mastery, last-sound isolating maintained gains, and blending and segmenting improved further.” Ukrainetz, p. 96
- “Given an educational context in which a teachable skill is a high priority, at-risk kindergartners may make large gains with only classroom instruction and incidental benefits from treatments on a different language area.” Ukrainetz, p. 98

Phonological Skills and Writing of Presyllabic Children

A two week study was performed to analyze relationships between the advancement of phonological skills and development of knowledge about writing in kindergarten. 71 middle class children in Portuguese that showed presyllabic invented spelling were involved in this testing. The students were divided between three groups, 2 experimental groups which included a writing program and one controlled group that did
not include a writing program. The results indicated that a writing program enhances syllabic children to advance in creative spelling and phonological skills.

- “Given an educational context in which a teachable skill is a high priority, at-risk kindergartners may make large gains with only classroom instruction and incidental benefits from treatments on a different language area.” Ukrainetz, p. 98
- “The role phonological awareness plays in learning to read was redefined when it was conjugated with letter-name familiarity as a fundamental basis for understanding the alphabetic principle.” Alves-Martins and Silva, p. 466
- “As far as phonological skills are concerned, the data show that there were both similarities and differences between the groups.” Alvis-Martins and Silva, p. 479
- “The skills that enable children to think about oral language and the way in which children represent the written code begin to influence one another at quite early stages.

Naming Speed and Reading: From Prediction to Instruction
The studies conducted research on literature and its connection to reading. The researchers examined phonological awareness, word and text reading fluency, decoding skills, vocabulary, comprehension skills and naming speed and its effect on language and its relationship to reading. Naming speed, “refers to how quickly an individual can pronounce the names of a set of familiar stimuli.” (Kirby, Georgiou, Martinussen, and Parrila, p. 341) Students that are behind in naming speed and phonemic awareness show to be the most at risk for reading difficulties. Most of these studies were conducted with students that had difficulties with reading skills, slow digit naming speed, fell below the median in word reading, and dyslexia. There were a broad range of ages from kindergarten to fifth grade that participated in these studies. There is not a great deal of research about whether naming speed can be effective through instruction, and the research that is present is divided. The research explanations could also provide not what is correct or incorrect, but rather provide research that tells us that early detection with reading tasks and interventions within a curriculum would be the most effective way to improve naming speed measures. It is also helpful that teachers are able to identify what the reading difficulty is and prepare interventions accordingly.

- “Naming speed refers to how quickly an individual can pronounce the names of a set of familiar stimuli.” Kirby, Georgiou, Martinussen, and Parrila, p. 341
- Naming speed has been related to reading ability in two ways, either as a continuous variable correlated with reading ability, or as a categorical variable, in which case groups that differ in naming speed are compared with respect to reading variables.” Kirby, Georgiou, Martinussen, and Parrila, p. 344
A study was conducted to analyze the order of learning phonological sensitivity skills with preschool and kindergarten children. These skills were researched in terms of four levels of phonetic involvement (words, syllables, onsets and rimes, phonemes) and task involvement (blending detection, elision detection, blending, elision). There were 947 two to five years from a diverse background that participated in this study. Students were assessed for delays in speech, language, and nonverbal intelligence. The students were also assessed on phonological sensitivity with six measures by the Anthony et al. (2002) The test also included pictured and non pictured texts to support student’s interests. The findings of this study suggests that children possess the variety of phonological skills in combined stages rather than taught in sequential order. This study provided strong results for the quasi-parallel development of phonological sensitivity skills with two to five year old children. It also may provide improvement to support a framework to aid early interventions for reading difficulties that may also minimize academic, social, and behavioral difficulties.

- “Phonological sensitivity skills should be taught at the word level before the syllable level, at the syllable level before onset/rime level, and at the onset/rime level before the phoneme level.” (Lonigan, Driscoll, Phillips, and Burgess, 2003, p. 483)
- “Specification of the development of phonological sensitivity also may have important implications for reading instruction.” (Lonigan, Driscoll, Phillips, and Burgess, 2003, p. 483)

Chapter 1. Readiness/Phonemic Awareness

Preparing children to master sounds in language assists all learners to read. This chapter discussed how phonemic awareness and letter recognition are the two key components of how successful children will be with reading skills. It is also the beginning process to reading. Before children learn to read, they must first possess the understanding of sounds that are associated with the letters, are the same as what they hear. Phonemic awareness consists of letter sound identification, recognizing syllables, segmenting and blending, identifying beginning, middle and end sounds, concept of a word, concept of print, and rhythm. http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/103316/chapters/Readiness~Phonemic-Awareness.aspx
What’s Basic in Beginning Reading? Finding Common Ground

This article discussed a debate between phonics and whole-part-whole instruction to reading. Whole-part-whole instruction provides a correspondence between both approaches. Lessons consisted of base of instruction followed by the knowledge of the lesson and then apply the knowledge to it. This article also discussed providing engaging and intense instruction that is balanced to all learners. Phonetic and phonemic awareness needs to be a balanced tool for success in reading.


Chapter 2. Phonemic Awareness

Children that enter school with the base for phonemic awareness are more likely to succeed at reading. If not, the teacher needs to provide a rich instruction for these students for success in reading. This article was not available through ascd.org. It needed to be purchased.

http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/104134/chapters/Phonemic-Awareness.aspx

An ASCD Study Guide for The Threads of Reading: Strategies for Literacy Development
This book provides explanations for the six foundational traits for students to know to become successful readers. The six traits are readiness/phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and higher order thinking.

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Vocabulary
Vocabulary Practice in Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Classrooms

An observational study was administered to compare the relationships between regularity with which teachers used a variety of vocabulary instructional strategies. This study also observed student vocabulary gains during a read aloud and non read aloud times. There were 244 students with ages ranging from four to six years of age. The students that participated in this study attended one of the 16 prekindergarten and kindergarten classrooms located in the Midwest. The results indicated that there were some approaches that connected to students that had higher vocabulary knowledge than for students with lower vocabulary knowledge. The results from this study also showed the impact of some approaches may be connected to whether the teacher used the approaches during read aloud time or during non read aloud time.

- “It may be important to focus more on vocabulary instruction during non read-aloud time in addition to instruction during read-aloud time. Furthermore, it may be beneficial to direct different practices toward children with more or less vocabulary knowledge.” Silverman and Crandell, p. 318
- “The main effect of Word Study is positive. Every time teachers used word-study practices with vocabulary words during read-aloud time is associated with an additional 1.25 standard points.” Silverman and Crandell, p. 329
- “It is hypothesized that children are more successful at learning and remembering words when they have clear phonological representations of words and exposure to the orthographic representation of words.” Silverman and Crandell, p. 334
- “Most of the language arts blocks consists of activities other than read-aloud time, and these activities appear to hold great potential to support children’s learning of words.” Silverman and Crandell, p. 336

Peitz, Vena, (1996) compared two teaching methods for teaching vocabulary at the first grade level. These methods were teaching vocabulary in context and teaching vocabulary in isolation. There were thirty-two first grade students from varying background. A pre-test and post-test was created by the teachers for administration. The teachers conducted an activity that reviewed the vocabulary words taken from a Dolch list and a Harris Jacob’s list. The students were to play a hangman game using these words from the lists. This activity was conducted as an isolation approach. Students also participated in a share aloud
by the teacher while the students used pictures for clues, framed words, created strategies for context clues, and meanings of words. The results revealed no significant difference in vocabulary acquisition. Therefore both methods of teaching vocabulary appear to be equally effective. This study can be applied to the kindergarten level by using the kindergarten sight word list provided by the basal purchased and implemented by the district.

Reading Strategies
Does an activity-based learning strategy improve preschool children’s memory for narrative passages?

Biazak, Marley, & Levin, 2010, conducted a study to evaluate two “indexical” prognosis. Strategy one included an activity-based approach to comprehension development compared to strategy two which consisted of a listening-only approach to comprehension development. The results indicated the students at the preschool level, using an activity-based approach, benefited from manipulating toys to represent retelling of a story. The positive effects from this activity-based approach also discussed that these results may attribute to children physically interacting with manipulative’s that gave them visual and pictorial representation. Participants from this study consisted of 56 preschool children, within a University based daycare in the Southwestern United States.

- “We expected enactive representations, or “hands on” activities, to be especially effective with preschool-age children.” Biazak, Marley, and Levin, 2010, p. 516
- “The Authors concluded that the activity-based strategy facilitated indexing, which in turn resulted in the production of dynamic visual imagery representations.” Biazak, Marley, and Levin, 2010, p. 517

Address Reading Problems Early

This article discussed how early awareness of reading difficulties can help students overcome their challenges if they are exposed to intense early interventions. These struggles may lead to feelings of worthlessness and failure. With this, comes unmotivated students and a larger gap between where they need to be and where they are. If early interventions and effort from the student occurs, the student will feel more successful which can guide the student into the right direction of reading.
Chapter 1. Research-Based Practices for English Language Learners
This chapter discussed effective ways to teach ELL students. These effective strategies include explicit skill instruction, student-directed activities, instructional strategies that enhanced understanding, opportunities to practice, systematic student assessment, and a balanced curriculum.
http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/108002/chapters/Research-Based_Practices_for_English_Language_Learners.aspx

Wiseman (2010) conducted a study to examine how a teacher can guide students’ learning by achieving an interactive read-aloud as an element of the kindergarten literacy curriculum. The teacher’s approach promoted interaction in the classroom as the students read and understood the stories as a whole group. Students were observed during a read-aloud and documentation was recorded. The use of journal writings was also recorded as data. Results from the nine month study within an inner-city kindergarten classroom stated that an interactive read-aloud were great opportunities for beginning readers because it provided for open-ended discussions and direct reading instruction (Wiseman 2010, p. 433, par 1). With the implementation of modeling by the teacher on certain ways of thinking and comprehending text, kindergarten students will be able to read, understand, and critique a story.

Participants