**Knowledge Application Essay**

**Introduction and Key Issue in the Field of Early Childhood Education**

In the field of early childhood education, one key issue is identifying effective ways to develop and enhance children’s emergent literacy skills such as alphabetic knowledge, print awareness and vocabulary in young children in kindergarten. Emergent literacy skills are the foundational literacy skills that occur prior to engaging in conventional reading (Schryer, Sloat & Letourneau, 2015). According to Schryer, Sloat, and Letourneau (2015) emergent literacy skills such as alphabetic knowledge, concepts of print, and vocabulary are needed for later reading. Kindergarten children are at an increasing risk if they experience difficulties in emergent literacy development (Justice & Pullen, 2003).

According to Justice and Ezell (2001), most children by the age of six can demonstrate emergent literacy knowledge. In order for children to be able to read, young children need to understand the form and function of print as well as other emergent literacy skills that form the foundation of conventional literacy instruction (Brown, 2014; Justice & Ezell, 2001). Young children who may not have the necessary emergent literacy skills may be children reared in poverty, children with developmental disabilities, and children with language delays (Justice & Ezell, 2001; Green, Terry, & Gallagher, 2014). According to Justice and Ezell (2001), emergent literacy skills include print awareness, word awareness, and alphabetic knowledge. Justice and Ezell (2001) further describe print awareness as the ability to recognize the function and form of print and the relationship between oral and written language. Word awareness is the ability to recognize words and alphabetic knowledge is the ability to identify the letters of the alphabet and the sounds associated with the letters of the alphabet (Justice & Ezell, 2001). According to Coyne, Simmons, Kame’enui, and Stoolmiller (2004), “Children who enter kindergarten have significant differences in early literacy skills. This puts young children at a risk for failing to learn how to read especially since they may have limited knowledge in literacy” (Coyne et al., 2004, p.146).

Even though young children need emergent literacy skills, it is important to consider the ways in which emergent literacy skills are developed. According to the National Education Association (2015), children who are read to have an advantage over children who are not. Data indicate that 26% of children who are read to are able to recognize all the letters of the alphabet compared to 14 percent of children who were read to less frequently (National Education Association, 2015; Duursma, Augustyn, & Zuckerman, 2008). Only 53% of children ages 3 to 5 have family members reading to them (NEA, 2015; Duursma, Augustyn, & Zuckerman, 2008). Data suggest that children from low income families are less likely to be read aloud everyday compared to children in families with incomes at or above the poverty level (Duursma, Augustyn, & Zuckerman, 2008).

According to the United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2016), the 2015 reading data reveal that the reading scores of fourth grade students are not significantly different from the 2013 reading data and that the 2015 reading scores of eighth grade students are lower than in 2013. According to the United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2016), the reading scores for grade four were higher in 2015 in 13 states (Utah, Oklahoma, Nevada, Wyoming, Kentucky, Rhode Island, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, District of Colombia, Vermont, Alaska, and Louisiana) compared to 2013. This suggests the importance of laying a strong foundation in emergent literacy skills at a younger age in order for children to be able to read fluently at a later stage.

**Storybook Reading and its Importance**

Although research on reading storybooks to children has been conducted over the decades, recent attention to storybook reading has provided additional insights into the importance of reading aloud to young children. During the 1970s and 1980s, research indicated that children developed knowledge of literacy before receiving formal instruction in school (Swanson, Wanzek, Petcher, Vaughn, Heckert, Cavanaugh, Kraft, & Tacket, 2011). As a result of this, it was hypothesized that children developed emergent literacy skills as they interacted with others and took part in literacy events with others. Storybook reading involves interactions between an adult and a child during reading (Pollard-Durodola, Gonzalez, Simmons, Kwok, Taylor, Davis, Kim, & Simmons, 2011). This forms a critical foundation for the development of later reading skills. Research indicates that storybook reading contributes to the development of emergent literacy skills (Allor & McCathren, 2003). Bellon and Ogletree (2000) indicate that reading aloud storybooks provide opportunities to learn skills such as letter-sound pattern recognition, rhyming, and development of vocabulary. Furthermore, storybooks exposes children to different settings, characters, and events (Bellon & Ogletree, 2000). According to Pullen, Tuckwiller, Konold, Maynard, and Coyne (2010), older children are able to engage in independent reading activities in order to expand their vocabularies. However, young children especially children in pre-kindergarten to second grade depend on oral language experiences that provide exposure to core vocabulary words. Storybook reading provides children with opportunities to learn new novel words and is an effective way for developing vocabulary in young children (Pullen et al., 2010).

One way to support young children’s reading development is to expose children to new vocabulary through shared storybook reading (Coyne et al., 2004). A study conducted by Hargrave and Senechal (2000) indicates that shared storybook reading is an evidence-based practice that facilitates the acquisition of new vocabulary. Research suggests that storybook reading intervention promotes language development and emergent literacy skills (Lefebvre, Trudeau, & Sutton, 2011).

One approach to shared reading is dialogic reading. Doyle and Bramwell (2006) indicated that dialogic reading is a “type of shared book reading that includes strategic questioning and responding to children while reading a book. According to Doyle and Bramwell (2006), “Dialogic reading relies on repeated readings of a book or story.” Dialogic reading is a shared storybook reading intervention used in improving a child’s oral vocabulary skills (Morgan & Meier, 2008, p. 12). According to Morgan and Meier (2008),

“Teachers are taught to ask children to answer open-ended questions about a story’s characters, setting, and events in the story. “Teachers are also taught to expand on children’s answers by repeating the answer, clarifying the answer, or asking further questions and providing praise and encouragement to children for giving input into the story as well as building on children’s interests, when selecting stories and questions regarding the story” (Morgan & Meier, 2008, p.12).

Pillinger and Wood (2014) conducted a study to compare the impact of dialogic reading on four-year-old children’s early literacy skills. Children were assessed before the intervention. The assessment focused on rhyming, word reading, concepts about print, and writing vocabulary. The results indicated that dialogic reading had a positive impact on children’s enjoyment of reading and that children who experienced shared book reading during the intervention showed improvements in word reading.

Hargrave and Senechal (2000) conducted a study in which preschool children with poor expressive vocabulary skills took part in a shared storybook reading. The authors wanted to find out if children will benefit in regular shared storybook reading compared to dialogic reading. The results revealed that children with limited vocabulary learned new words during the shared storybook reading. However, children who were in the dialogic reading condition gained more vocabulary.

Overall, research indicates that storybook reading can develop emergent literacy skills such as print awareness, alphabetic knowledge and vocabulary.

**Developing Print Awareness During Storybook Reading**

According to Justice, McGinty, Piasta, Kaderavek and Fan (2010), children develop print knowledge and understanding of print during shared storybook reading experiences. This means that when teachers read books to children, they can use that opportunity to incorporate print referencing (Zucker, Ward, & Justice, 2009). According to Zucker, Ward, and Justice (2009), there are four main domains of print referencing. These include print as an object of meaning, book organization and print conventions, alphabet knowledge, and concept of word (Zucker et al., 2009). The four broad domains can be subdivided into 15 different components of print referencing (Zucker, Ward, & Justice, 2009). For example, for the print meaning domain, there is what is known as print function, which focuses on the meaning that the function of print conveys. There is also environmental print in which words present in the environment are portrayed in illustrations (signs, labels, lists, recipes). In addition, there are concepts of reading in which the function of reading is to tell a story (Zucker, Ward, & Justice, 2009). According to Zucker, Ward, and Justice (2009), another domain is the book and print organization domain. It is important for children to be able to identify the front of a book and to read from the first page and then turn to the next page to continue reading. With print referencing, the title of the book plays an important role as a label and this in turn conveys meaning (Zucker, Ward & Justice, 2009). Being able to read from the top to the bottom of a page, reading from left to right, and moving to the next line are an important components of print referencing especially in relation to the direction of print (Zucker, Ward, & Justice, 2009). Zucker, Ward, and Justice (2009) stress the importance of knowing the role of an author, in that the author is the one who writes the words in a book. The third domain, focuses on the names of letters of the alphabet, knowing that letters come in two forms, lower case letters and upper case letters. The fourth domain focuses on the concept of words in print. For example, asking children to identify one word or count the words on a page (Zucker, Ward, & Justice, 2009).

Justice and Ezell (2002) conducted a study to examine the impact of participation in shared book reading that focused on print awareness of preschool children from low income families. Participants included 30 children. Fifteen girls and 15 boys with an age range of 41 to 62 months participated in the study. All the children spoke English as their first language. In terms of ethnicity, twenty seven children were Caucasian, two were Asian, and one was African American (Justice & Ezell, 2002). All the participants attended preschool. A pre-test and post-test research design was used for this study. Children were randomly assigned to an experimental group or control group. All the children had to complete an 8-week book reading intervention (Justice & Ezell, 2002). Children in the experimental group took part in an 8 week shared reading sessions that focused on print awareness (Justice & Ezell, 2002). Children in the control group took part in shared reading sessions that focused on pictures. The results indicate that children who participated in the storybook reading intervention emphasizing print awareness performed better than peers in the control group (Justice & Ezell, 2002).

Justice, McGinty, Piasta, Kaderavek, and Fan (2010) conducted a study in which print referencing style (e.g., identifying the front of the book, identifying the title of the book, knowing where to begin reading etc.) was used during a read aloud session. Fifty-nine teachers were randomly assigned to two conditions. Teachers in the experimental group focused on print referencing during storybook reading over a 30 week period while the comparison group did not focus on print referencing. The comparison group read the same books that the experimental group, using their business as usual reading style (Justice, McGinty, Piasta, Kaderavek, and Fan, 2010). Children who experienced a print-referencing style of reading performed better than children who were not exposed to the print referencing style (Justice, McGinty, Piasta, Kaderavek, and Fan, 2010).

A study conducted by Lefebvre, Trudeau, and Sutton (2011) compared the effects of two shared storybook reading interventions on language and emergent literacy skills of low income preschoolers. Participant included 42 French speaking children from low- income families and higher-income families. A quasi-experimental research design was used in this study. The control group focused on language and print awareness skills during storybook reading (Lefebvre, Trudeau, & Sutton, 2011). The experimental group focused on alphabetic knowledge during storybook reading. The results indicate that the experimental group performed better on alphabetic knowledge but not on vocabulary and print awareness (Lefebvre, Trudeau, & Sutton, 2011).

Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, and Hunt (2009) conducted a study to examine the impact of teacher use of a print referencing style during classroom-based storybook reading sessions conducted over an academic year. The lead teachers of 23 classrooms were affiliated with 4 early childhood programs in two states (i.e., Ohio and Virginia). Of the participating teachers, 22% held an advanced or graduate degree (n=5), 56% held a bachelor (n=10) or associate degree (n=3), and 22% held high school diploma (n=5).  Most of the teachers majored in early childhood education (n=8) or elementary education (n=5) and the remainder (n=10) majored in another area (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009)  The average teacher had 10.5 years of teaching experience and was 44 years of age. Six children were selected from each classroom for a total sample size of 142 (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009) Out of the 142 children selected, only children who had both pre and post measures of the outcome variables (i.e. measures of print concept, alphabet knowledge, and name writing) were included, reducing the sample size for the present set of analysis to 106 children (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009) Children who were eligible to enroll in this study exhibited risk factors, which generally included poverty, documented family stress (e.g. unemployment, homelessness), or suspected/diagnosed developmental problems. The sample included 59 boys and 47 girls (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009).

The average age of the children in the fall of the year was 4 years 4 months.  Sixty-seven children were non-Hispanic White, 24 were black, 9 were Hispanic White, 2 were Native American, and 2 were Asian (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009). The majority of the children spoke English at home.  Seventy-six percent of the children’s mothers did not have a college or university degree, and approximately one third of the mothers (34%) had no education beyond high school (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009). Approximately, one half of the children’s families had an annual household income in the range of 5,000 to 25,000 dollars, and the majority (75%) of families had annual incomes below 40,000 dollars. Six children received special education services (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009). A randomized controlled trial was the research design used in this study. Fourteen classrooms were randomly assigned to the print referencing condition and 9 were assigned to the shared storybook reading condition (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009). The teachers implemented a 30-week shared reading program using 30 books. Majority of the books were fictional, although there were alphabet books. Two types of measures were used in this study.  The child print knowledge outcomes and the classroom quality.  To measure children’s print knowledge outcomes, three standardized criterion reference tools were used.  All measures were administered in English (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009).  The first two measures were the *Upper-Case Alphabet Knowledge* and *Name Writing Ability* subtests of the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening. The alphabet measure was administered by asking children to produce the name of all 26 letters presented in random order.  Children received one point for each correct name (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009)  The *name writing* measure was administered by asking children to produce a portrait of themselves and then to sign it.  Children’s name-writing representations were scored on a seven-point scale based on a developmental continuum of early writing development (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009). The third measure was the Preschool Word and Print Awareness Assessment which examined children’s knowledge of concepts about print and words (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009). To implement this task, an examiner and child read a book together and the examiner embeds a series of structured tasks into the reading routine (e.g. the examiner ask child to show just one word on a page to demonstrate his or her ability to represent words as units of a written language. Results indicate that children whose teachers used a print referencing style during storybook reading performed better than teachers who did not use a print referencing style (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009).

Other studies have been conducted on print referencing. A study conducted by Zucker, Justice, and Piasta (2009) examined the frequency with which adults reference print when reading to preschool-age children. Seventeen pre-kindergarten teachers were randomly assigned to a regular reading condition and 92 videos of their shared reading sessions were analyzed for print referencing utterances. The results indicate that even though teachers discussed all domains of print studied, their rate of print referencing was relatively low.

**Developing Alphabetic Knowledge During Storybook**

Alphabetic knowledge can be developed during storybook reading. Alphabetic Knowledge focuses on the identification of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds associated with the letters of the alphabet (Ziolkowski & Goldstein, 2008). According to Ziolkowski and Goldstein (2008), alphabetic knowledge is critical in forming the foundation for the alphabetic structure of words. In teaching alphabetic knowledge through storybook reading intervention, it is important for teachers to explicitly provide instruction on alphabetic knowledge since this leads to gains in reading skills (Ziolkowski & Goldstein, 2008). Ziolkowski and Goldstein (2008) conducted a study with preschool children in which alphabetic knowledge was explicitly taught during shared storybook reading. The results indicated that initial sound intervention enhanced children’s initial sound fluency skills (Ziolkowski & Goldstein, 2008).

According to Aram (2006), letter knowledge among pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children are the best predictors of reading acquisition. Aram (2006) indicates that children who learn the letters of the alphabet during storybook reading are able to outperform other groups on letter knowledge. Yaden, Tam, Madrigal, Brassell, Massa, Altamirano and Armendariz (2000) conducted a study using storybooks to teach the letters of the alphabet and results indicate that the preschoolers were able to recognize the letters of the alphabet after the intervention.

**Developing Vocabulary During Storybook**

According to Pullen et al. (2010), vocabulary knowledge is a strong predictor of reading comprehension. Students who are not exposed to large vocabulary words earlier on especially those in the lower elementary grade levels are more likely to struggle in reading once they reach the upper grades (Maynard & Coyne, 2010). Chlapana and Tafa (2014) note that some children, especially children from homes in which English is not the dominant language at school, come to school with insufficient vocabulary. Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, and Sherman (2015), indicated that children from families with low socioeconomic status may have limited oral language skills and this puts them at risk for reading disabilities later on.

It is widely known that when students are exposed to rich literacy environments that foster vocabulary development they are more likely to succeed in school and to understand or comprehend books that they read as compared to their peers who have limited vocabulary (Coyne, McCoach, & Kapp, 2007). According to Coyne, et al., (2007), young children are at a risk of experiencing reading and learning difficulties and being identified as having a language or reading disability if they fall behind their peers in developing vocabulary knowledge.

According to Chlapana and Tafa (2014), an effective way of introducing words to children is to read storybooks aloud for children to hear. Recent studies that have been conducted by prominent researchers on vocabulary development suggest that children who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds and who are poor are more likely to fall behind their peers who are from high income families (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). Children with limited oral and language skills are more likely to be at risk for reading disabilities, especially if they are from families with low socio economic status (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). According to Coyne, McCoach, Loftus, Zipoli, and Kapp (2009), children of poverty are more likely to have poor vocabulary skills compared to their middle or high-income peers because initial oral vocabulary skills begin at home based on the interactions and experiences that these children have with their family members (Coyne, et al., 2009; Wasik & Bond, 2001). Nielsen and Frierson (2012) suggest that not all children of poverty lag behind their peers but rather it depends on the language experiences that these children encounter as a result of being exposed to vocabulary words.

According to Wasik and Bond (2001), children learn vocabulary by reading books and also learn about conventions of print. Moreover, children who engaged in higher level conversations and dialogue about the story do perform better on vocabulary and language measures than children who focused mainly on low level utterances such as describing a page or answering questions that required a yes or a no response. Research also indicates that children who are engaged in reading a book with an adult learned more vocabulary compared to their peers who listened passively to the book reading (Wasik & Bond, 2001).

According to Coyne et al. (2009), research on storybook reading suggest that students who are at risk for language and literacy difficulties and have smaller vocabularies are less likely than their peers with larger vocabularies to learn words incidentally while listening to stories. Pullen et al. (2010) notes that vocabulary knowledge plays an important and critical role in an individual’s process of becoming a reader because having a large repertoire of core vocabulary makes reading a text much easier than not knowing any words at all. Vocabulary knowledge is critical since it helps in learning to read and reading to learn (Pullen et al., 2010).

Maynard and Coyne (2010), suggest that emergent literacy skills based on alphabetic principle, phonemic awareness and phonics only do not necessarily have an impact on students reading ability and that for students to be fluent readers, there is the need to build a strong foundation on phonics, alphabetic principle, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary. Justice, Meier, and Walpole (2005) suggest that in order for vocabulary instruction to be successful, there is the need to emphasize explicit instruction focused on words or core vocabulary needed to succeed in the general education classroom. Silverman (2007) indicated that when teaching vocabulary to children through read alouds, children should be actively engaged in defining, discussing, manipulating, experiencing, saying, and spelling words.

According to Neilsen and Friersen (2012), there is little research on vocabulary development in the lower grade levels in public schools, especially, in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Research on storybook reading indicates that children who are at risk for language and literacy difficulties and have less vocabularies are more likely to learn words incidentally while listening to stories (Coyne, McCoach, & Kapp, 2007). Research also suggests that there is the need to focus on developing the depth of vocabulary knowledge by providing students with opportunities to discuss and interact with the words they hear during storybook reading (Coyne, McCoach, Loftus, Zipoli & Kapp, 2009; Moinzadeh & Moslehpour, 2012; Zhang & Lu, 2015).

Justice, Meier, and Walpole (2005) suggest that in order for vocabulary instruction to be successful, there is the need to emphasize explicit instruction of the words or core vocabulary needed to succeed in the general education classroom. Research also suggests that there is the need to focus on developing the depth of vocabulary knowledge by providing students with opportunities to discuss and interact with the words they hear during storybook reading (Coyne, McCoach, Loftus, Zipoli, & Kapp, 2009). According to Silverman, Crandell, and Carlis (2013), the social constructivist theory suggests that children learn words by socially interacting with others. Silverman, Crandell and Carlis (2013) indicates that storybook reading experiences can foster social construction of vocabulary knowledge because adults can scaffold children’s understanding of words during shared storybook reading. During shared storybook reading, children are exposed to words indirectly (Silverman, Crandell, & Carlis, 2013). Silverman, Crandell, and Carlis (2013) noted that reading aloud to children has an effect on vocabulary and that it depends on the quantity and quality of interaction between children and their parents or teachers. During shared storybook reading, teachers discuss the target words based on the context by asking questions, providing feedback and extending conversations (Silverman, Crandell, & Carlis, 2013).

Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, and Sherman (2015) conducted a study to examine the effects of an automated storybook intervention designed to promote school readiness among at risk pre-kindergarten children. The participants included 18 children, 11 girls and 7 boys with a mean age of 4 years 6 months recruited from 3 prekindergarten classrooms (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). All the participants were African American. None of the participants had an identified disability or received services through an Individualized Education Program. All the children spoke English as their first language (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). Many of the children in these classrooms had limited oral language skills. Two research designs were employed in this study (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). A randomized control group design and an embedded single subject design. Eighteen children from public prekindergarten programs serving families with low income were randomly assigned to the Story Friends treatment or a business-as-usual comparison (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). Participants in groups completed measures of vocabulary and comprehension.  Participants in the treatment group completed measures of instructional content for each book (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). The duration of the study, including pretesting, and post testing was 14 weeks. Review books were included after three instructional books (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). After completing the three lessons for the three instructional books, participants listened to the review book one more time and completed the unit post-test (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). Participants in the treatment group completed measures of instructional content for each book as part of the embedded single-case experimental design (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015).  The Assessment of Story Comprehension was used to measure improvements in questioning answering.  Story friends’ participants had significantly higher scores on measures of vocabulary than the comparison group and the effect sizes were larger, whereas more modest effects were shown for comprehension measures.  Results show a feasible means of teaching pre-kindergarten children challenging vocabulary that has the potential to facilitate later literacy development (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015).

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for storybook reading is based on Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory. Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that learning is highly social especially because there has been an increase in social learning in order to master language. According to Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory, children must be active participants in constructing their own knowledge. Vygotsky’s theory suggests that individuals learn through their interactions and communication with others (Zucker, Justice. & Piasta, 2009). Vygotsky examined how social environments influence the learning process. Adult-child shared book reading interactions enable children to discuss and collaborate with peers especially when it comes to developing core vocabulary words. Through storybook reading, children interact with the reader as the reader reads the text (placing emphasis on the words in the text, phonics and emergent reading behaviors such as concepts of print) and shows pictures of the illustration in the book to the children.

The read aloud experience fosters the social construction of vocabulary knowledge because, during read alouds, adults can scaffold children’s understanding of words within a shared context. In fact, through dialogue about the content of books, including the words in the texts, children can develop an understanding of concepts with which they have no direct experience (DeTemple & Snow, 2003). Therefore, read alouds can serve to build children’s background knowledge as well as their vocabulary. Children certainly learn words through indirect exposure by associating a spoken word with an object, action, or concept in their immediate environment, but direct instruction in the context of read alouds ensures that young children who may not regularly encounter a wide range of contexts or sophisticated words in their everyday lives have meaningful, scaffolded encounters with such words through books (Coyne, McCoach, Loftus, Zipoli, & Kapp, 2009).

**Methods for Studying Storybook Reading**

Across multiple studies, researchers have used quantitative approaches to study the impact storybook reading intervention has on developing emergent literacy skills in young children. None of the studies utilized a qualitative approach. This is because all the articles focused on the storybook reading intervention. Studies that normally focus on an intervention are quantitative in nature.

Even though all the studies were quantitative, these studies varied slightly based on the research design. Randomized control groups research design embedded in a single case design has been used to promote school readiness among pre-kindergarten children who were at risk (Kelley, Goldstein, Spencer, & Sherman, 2015). Group research design has been used to examine the impact that direct and interactive instruction has on children’s vocabulary learning during storybook reading (Chlapana & Tafa, 2014). Quasi-experimental research design has been used to examine the effects of small group storybook intervention on vocabulary and narrative development of kindergarten students who were at risk for reading achievement (Nielsen & Friesen, 2012). A single-case experimental design was used to investigate the effects of vocabulary and comprehension intervention embedded in storybooks (Spencer, Goldstein, Sherman, Noe, Tabbah, Ziolkowski, & Schneider, 2012). A randomized control trial has been used to examine the impact of print referencing by teachers during storybook reading intervention (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009).

**References**

Adams, M. J. (1990). Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Allor, J. H., & McCathren, R. B. (2003). Developing emergent literacy skills through storybook reading. *Interventions in Schools and Clinics*, *39*(2), 72-79

Aram, D. (2006). Early literacy interventions: The relative roles of storybook reading, alphabetic activities, and their combination. *Reading and Writing, 19*, 489-515. doi: 10.1007/s11145-006-9005-2

Bellon, M. L., & Ogletree, B. T. (2000). Repeated storybook reading as an instructional method. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 36*(2), 75-81

Brown, C. S. (2014). Language and literacy development in the early years: Foundational skills that support emergent readers. *The Language and Literacy Spectrum, 24*

Chlapana, E., & Tafa, E. (2014). Effective practices to enhance immigrant kindergarteners’ second language vocabulary learning through storybook reading. *Reading and Writing, 27,* 1619-1640. doi:10.1007/s11145-014-9510-7

Coyne, M. D., Simmons, D. C., Kame’enui, E. J., & Stoolmiller, M. (2004). Teaching vocabulary during shared storybook readings: An examination of differential effects*. Exceptionality, 12(3),* 145-162. doi:10.1207/s15327035ex1203\_3

Coyne, M. D., McCoach, D. B., & Kapp, S. (2007). Vocabulary intervention for kindergarten students: Comparing extended instruction to embedded instruction and incidental exposure. *Learning Disability Journal*, *30*(2), 74-88. doi: [10.2307/30035543](http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/30035543)

Coyne, M. D., McCoach, D. B., Loftus, S., Zipoli, R., & Kapp, S. (2009). Direct vocabulary instruction in kindergarten: Teaching for breadth versus depth. *The Elementary School Journal, 110*(1), 1-18.

DeTemple, J., & Snow, C. E. (2003). Learning words from books. In A. van Kleeck, S. A. Stahl, & E. B. Bauer (Eds.), On reading books to children: Parents and teachers (pp. 15–34). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Duursma, E., Augustyn, M., & Zuckerman (2008). Reading aloud to children: The evidence. *Archives Disease Child, 93*(7), 554-557. doi: 10.1136/adc.2006.106336

Green, K. B., Terry, N. P., & Gallagher, P. A. (2014). Progress in language and literacy skills among children with disabilities in inclusive early reading first classrooms. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 33*(4), 249-259. doi: 10.1177/0271121413477498

Hargrave, A. C. & Senechal, M. (2000). A book reading intervention with preschool children who have limited vocabularies: The benefits of regular reading and dialogic reading. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 15*(1), 75-90.

Justice, L. M., & Ezell, H. K. (2001). Word and print awareness in four year old children. *Children Language Teaching and Therapy, 17*(3), 207-225

Justice, L. M., & Ezell, H. K. (2002). Use of storybook reading to increase print awareness in at-risk children. *American Journal of Speech Language Pathology, 11,* 17-29

Justice, L. M., Kaderavek, J. N., Fan, X., Sofka, A., & Hunt, A. (2009). Accelerating preschooler’s early literacy development through classroom-based teacher-child storybook reading and explicit print referencing. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 40*(1), 67-85. doi:10.1044/0161-1461(2008/07-0098)

Justice, L. M., McGinty, A. S., Piasta, S. B., Kaderavek, J. N., & Fan, X. (2010). Print-focused read alouds in preschool classrooms: Intervention effectiveness and moderators of child outcomes. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 41*(4), 504-520. doi: [10.1044/0161-1461(2010/09-0056)](http://dx.doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461%282010/09-0056%29)

Justice, L. M., Meier, J., & Walpole, S. (2005). Learning new words from storybooks: An efficacy study with at-risk kindergarteners. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 36*(1), 17-32. doi: 10.1044/0161-1461(2005/003).

Justice, L. M., & Pullen, P. C. (2003). Promising interventions for promoting emergent literacy skills: Three evidence-based approaches. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 23*(3), 99-113

Kelley, E. S., Goldstein, H., Spencer, T. D., & Sherman, A. (2015). Effects of automated tier 2 storybook intervention on vocabulary and comprehension learning in preschool children with limited oral language skills. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 31,* 47-61. doi:10.1016/j.ecresq.2014.12.004

Lefebvre, P., Trudeau, N., & Sutton, A. (2011). Enhancing vocabulary, print awareness and phonological awareness through shared storybook reading with low income preschoolers. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 11(4),* 453-479. doi: 10.1177/1468798411416581

Moinzadeh, A., Moslehpour, R. (2012). Depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge: Which really matters in reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners? *Journal of language Teaching and Research, 3*(5), 1015-1026. doi: 10.4304/jltr.3.5.1015-1026

National Education Association (2015). *Facts about children’s literacy*. Retrieved from http://www.nea.org/grants/facts-about-childrens-literacy.html

Nielsen, D. C., & Friesen, L. D. (2012). A study of the effectiveness of a small-group intervention on the vocabulary and narrative development of at-risk kindergarten children. *Reading Psychology, 33*, 269-299. doi:10.1080/02702711.2010.508671

Pillinger, C., & Wood, C. (2014). Pilot study evaluating the impact of dialogic reading and shared reading at transition to primary school: Early literacy skills and parental attitudes. Literacy, 48(3), 155-163. doi: 10.1111/lit.12018

Pollard-Durodola, S. D., Gonzalez, J. E., Simmons, D. C., Kwok, O., Taylor, A. B., Davis, M. J., Kim, M., & Simmons, L. (2011). The effects of an intensive shared book reading intervention for preschool children at risk for vocabulary delay. *Exceptional Children, 77*(2), 161-183.

Pullen, P. C., Tuckwiller, E. D., Konold, T. R. Maynard, K. L., & Coyne, M. D. (2010). A tiered intervention model for early vocabulary instruction: The effects of tiered instruction for young students at risk for reading disability. *Learning Disabilities Research, 25*(3), 110-123. doi:

Schryer, E., Sloat, E., & Letourneau, N. (2015). Effects of an animated book reading intervention on emergent literacy skills development: An early pilot study. *Journal of Early Intervention, 37*(2), 155-171. doi: 101177/1053815115598842

Silverman, R. D. (2007). Vocabulary development of English-language and English-only learners in kindergarten. *The Elementary School Journal, 107*(4), 365-383.

Silverman, R., Crandell, J. D., & Carlis, L. (2013). Read alouds and beyond: The effects of read aloud extension activities on vocabulary in head start classrooms. *Early Education and Development, 24*, 98-122. doi: 10.1080/10409289.2011.649679

Spencer, E. J., Goldstein, H., Sherman, A., Noe, S., Tabbah, R., Ziolkowski, R., & Scheider, N. (2012). Effects of an automated vocabulary and comprehension intervention. *Journal of Early Intervention, 34*(4), 195-221. doi:10.1177/1053815112471990

Swanson, E. A., Wanzek, J., Petscher, Y. Vaughn, S., Heckert, J., Cavanaugh, C., Kraft, G., & Tacket, K. (2011). A synthesis of read aloud intervention on early reading outcomes among preschool through third graders at risk for reading difficulties. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 44*(3), 258-275. doi: 10.1177/0022219410378444

United States Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2016). *Reading assessment*. Retrieved from http://www.nationreportcard.gov/reading\_math\_2015/#?grade=4

Wasik, B. A., & Bond, M. A. (2001). Beyond the pages of a book: Interactive book reading and language development in preschool classroom. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 93*(2), 243-250. doi: [10.1037/0022-0663.93.2.243](http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.93.2.243)

Yaden, D. B., Tam, A., Madrigal, P., Brassell, D., Massa, J., Altamirano, S., & Armendariz, J. (2000). Early literacy for inner city children: The effects of reading and writing interventions in English and Spanish during preschool years. *The Reading Teacher, 54*, 186-189.

Zhang, X., & Lu, X. (2015). The relationship between vocabulary learning strategies and breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge. *The Modern Language Journal, 99*(4), 740-753. doi: 10.1111/modl.12277

Ziolkowski, R. A., & Goldstein, H. (2008). Effects of an embedded phonological awareness intervention during repeated book reading on preschool children with language delays. 31(1), 67-90. doi: 10.1177/1053815108324808

Zucker, T. A., Justice, L. M., Piasta, S. B. (2009). Prekindergarten teachers’ verbal references to print during classroom-based, large-group shared reading. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 40*, 376-392

Zucker, T. A., Ward, A. E., & Justice, L. M. (2009). Print referencing during read-aloud: A technique for increasing emergent readers’ print knowledge. The Reading Teacher, 63(1), 62-72. doi: 10.1598/RT.63.1.6