



When DAP Meets GAP:
 Promoting Peaceful Co-existence between
 Developmentally Appropriate Practice
 & the Need to Address the Achievement Gap.

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Background

Funded by:

- National Institute for Literacy

Coordinated by:

- National Center for Family Literacy
 Laura Westberg, Director

In consultation with:

- National Institute for Child Health and Human Development
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Panel Members

- Dr. Anne Cunningham, University of California at Berkeley
- Dr. Kathy Escamilla, University of Colorado at Boulder
- Dr. Janet Fischel, State University of NY at Stony Brook
- Dr. Susan H. Landry, University of Texas—Houston
- Dr. Christopher J. Lonigan, Florida State University
- Dr. Victoria Molfese, University of Louisville
- Dr. Chris Schatschneider, Florida State University
- Dr. Timothy Shanahan (Chair), University of IL at Chicago
- Dr. Dorothy S. Strickland, Rutgers, State University of NJ

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Background

What we wanted to know!

- What can we do to help young children develop early literacy skills that are linked to successful development of reading, writing and spelling during the school years?
- What instructional programs and approaches (the interventions) support the early literacy skills and/or conventional literacy skills
- With whom do these efforts work best?

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To Investigate,
 We needed to identify Conventional Literacy Skills

What skills constitute the domain of conventional literacy skills?

- Decoding
- Reading Comprehension
- Spelling
- Writing

But what precedes these?

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Methodology:

Literature Searches

- Electronic Literature Search
- 9 categories of language and literacy-related terms
- Identified 7,000 records
- Supplemental procedures - reference lists; current journals, experts.

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Methodology: Study Selection

- Published in English
- Published in a Refereed Journal
- Empirical research with quantitative data on groups of children
- Language studied included alphabetic languages
- Included children between the ages of 0 and 5 or kindergarten children



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Methodology: Study Selection

299 studies identified that involved a predictive relation between a preschool or K skill and a later-measured conventional literacy outcome (decoding, reading comprehension, spelling).

MEASURE
Birth - Beg. K

MEASURE
End of K and Later



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Research Question #1

What are the skills and abilities that are linked to later outcomes in reading, writing and spelling?



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Findings: Research Question #1

Strong to Moderate Predictors of Success in Reading and Writing:

Alphabet Knowledge
Phonological Awareness/Phonological Memory
Concepts About Print/Print knowledge
Oral Language
RAN (Rapid Automatic Naming (letters/numbers)
Writing or Name Writing
Visual Processing



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Findings: Research Question #1

Some researchers combined variables Reading Readiness (combination of Alphabet Knowledge; Concepts about Print; vocabulary; memory, and phonological awareness) was also found to be a predictor of later literacy achievement.



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Research Question #2

What programs and interventions contribute to or inhibit gains in children's skills and abilities and are linked to later outcomes in reading, writing, and spelling?



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Findings: Research Question #2

- Efforts to teach code-related skills are highly successful
 - Most studies involved teaching phonological awareness
 - Most effective programs combined this with print training (alphabet knowledge and early decoding) involving awareness of print

These effects result in better early literacy and conventional reading outcomes.



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Findings: Research Question #2

- Shared reading interventions help promote print knowledge and oral language skills
 - Reading aloud and shared reading that encourage various forms of reader-child interaction were effective



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Findings: Research Question #2

- Parent and home programs were successful in promoting children's oral language skills and cognitive abilities.
- Language enhancement programs were successful at increasing children's oral language skills.
- Preschool and Kindergarten programs, in general, produced significant and large to moderate effects on spelling and reading readiness.



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Other findings

Age, SES, and race did not seem to alter the effectiveness of the various interventions.

Interventions that produced the largest effects were usually conducted as one-on-one or small-group instructional activities.



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More findings

- Activities tended to be teacher-directed and focused on helping children learn skills by engaging in the **use** of those skills
- Few used rhyming activities as the primary teaching approach
- Teaching children about the alphabet or simple phonics enhanced the effects of Phonological Awareness training.



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Key Report #2

"Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8", (3rd Ed.), 2009, NAEYC

www.naeyc.org



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Critical Issues: NAEYC

#1 Reducing learning gaps to enable all children to succeed

Critical learning gaps include:

- language development – oral and written (concepts about print)
- background knowledge



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Critical Issue: NAEYC

#2 Bringing pre-kindergarten and elementary education together

Not to push curriculum down, but, to articulate goals across levels and build a sense of coherence and consistency



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Critical Issue: NAEYC

#3 Recognizing teacher decision making as vital to educational effectiveness

- A good curriculum is vitally important.
- Effective teaching involves constant interaction and real-time decision making
- Teachers require ongoing support



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Making Connections & Making Sense

- #1 Reducing learning gaps to enable all children to succeed
- DAP focuses heavily on what is known about how children learn and how we best teach them.
- NELP offers evidence for current best practices for learning and teaching



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Making Connections & Making Sense

- #2 Bringing pre-kindergarten and elementary education together
- DAP stresses the importance of a continuous, coherent instructional framework from pre-kindergarten through the primary grades
- NELP offers evidence about programs and interventions that contribute to children's skills and abilities and are linked to later outcomes in reading, writing and spelling.



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Making Connections & Making Sense

- #3 Recognizing teacher decision making as vital to educational effectiveness
- DAP stresses the knowledge base that teachers need to make competent decisions (*NELP is cited*)
- NELP provides a rich, evidence-based source of information for practitioners to make purposeful and thoughtful decisions as they work with children and families



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Implications for Early Childhood Education from BOTH Reports

Standards/Instruction/Assessment

- **Standards**- shared vision of what children should know & be able to do
- **Instruction**- engaging, intentional, differentiated,
- **Assessment**- formative; linked to differentiated instruction

Professional Development - **Knowing what to do and why**: intentional teaching of specific skills and strategies within an integrated whole

Home/School Connections - **meaningful links to home** that build understanding and support

Young children need and deserve professionals who are both caring and informed.

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Classroom Application - NAME GAMES

Activities (in order of difficulty)*

- 1. Recognize name with graphic (photo)
- 2. Recognize name without graphic
- 3. Apply name recognition purposefully
- 4. Differentiate between and among names
- 5. Reconstruct own name
- 6. Visually match specific letters in names
 - Show three names - find the two names that begin with the same letter; end with the same letter
 - Show letter - find the name that has this letter at the beginning; at the end; somewhere in the middle)

**Note: All activities are modeled with whole group; followed up with small group and individuals as needed.*

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Classroom Application - NAME GAMES

Activities (in order of difficulty)*

- 8. Show letter and give its name -
Find a name with the letter (say name) in it.
- 9. Children identify letter then find a name with that letter in it.
- 10. Give name or "sound" -
Find a name that begins with the same sound as (give name); or sound (utter sound)
- 11. Encourage children to write their names on their work or just for pleasure

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Classroom Application - NAME GAMES

Activities (in order of difficulty)*

"Name Games" Support the Predictors of Reading and Writing

Alphabet Knowledge
Concepts About Print
Phonological Awareness
Oral Language
Writing Name/Writing
RAN (Rapid Automatic Naming/Lexical Access)

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Principles of Developmentally Appropriate Practice

"Name Games" activities support the principles of Developmental Appropriate Practice (*grounded in knowledge of child development*)

1. **Engaging** (*of interest and importance to children*)
2. **Scaffolded** (*(1) teacher models; (2) teacher collaborates with children; (3) children work independently*)
3. **Differentiated** (*includes - whole group, small group, one-to-one*)
4. **Explicit with opportunities for Indirect Follow-up** (*both are focused and engaging*)

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In summary --

- The NELP report is important because it identifies **WHAT** we must focus on in early literacy and it helps to inform **WHY**.
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice provides the framework for **HOW** we bring quality language and literacy learning experiences to young children.

HOW we teach makes a difference in HOW well children learn.

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