A CASE STUDY OF LOW PERFORMING STUDENTS IN A NEW
EXTENDED-DAY KINDERGARTEN CLASS

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Abstract

Five students in a new Extended-Day Kindergarten program at Round Meadow Elementary School in the Las Virgenes Unified School District were studied during the year 2006-2007. These students had scored the lowest in the class on the Fall assessments for Upper Case and Lower Case Letter Name Recognition, Letter Sounds, and Numeral Recognition. Parent interviews and assessment data, along with student work and teacher observations, were the methods of collection information for each of the students. Intervention strategies were used in the classroom as well as at home. The questions explored in this study were as follows: (a) How did the curricular resources affect student learning? (b) How did the students respond to the intervention strategies? (c) How did the extended-day schedule affect student learning?
Chapter 1

Introduction

Background

Kindergarten establishes the foundation upon which later success in school is built. It fosters a young child’s independence, love of learning and involves many new experiences. Teachers and principals are recognizing the importance of maximizing the benefits of kindergarten by advocating for kindergarten programs to be extended past the traditional half-day schedules to extended and full day programs (Quality Full-Day Kindergarten, 2006).

I have taught kindergarten for a total of 18 years. The first nine years I taught bilingual kindergarten in the Hueneme School District, a low socio-economic school district consisting of many English language learners (ELL) and students at risk with little resources available to them. The last nine years I have taught kindergarten in the Las Virgenes Unified School District, a high socioeconomic school district with very few ELL students, but many students with Special Education needs. I have found that the average kindergartener enters kindergarten knowing most of the letter names, many letter sounds, and can recognize the numbers zero through 10, but struggles with numbers past 10. Additionally, the only word most kindergarten students know how to write is their name, which is usually written in all capital letters. By the end of kindergarten, most kindergarteners know all of the letter names and sounds, can recognize most of the numbers to 30, and can write their name with the correct use of upper and lower case letters as well as write more than one sentence with the correct use of upper and lower case letters, spaces in-between words, and correct punctuation.
In the year 2006-2007, I was especially interested in watching the growth of my kindergarten students because this was the first year that my school, Round Meadow Elementary, had implemented an Extended Day Kindergarten Program. There was now an additional 80 minutes of instruction each day allowing for more time to vary the type of instruction to balance teacher-and child-initiated activities, vary the types of instructional groupings throughout the day, more opportunities for in-depth studies on topics, and more time for assessment. Additionally, there was a 45-minute lunch/recess period each day for more social and physical interaction.

**Statement of Problem**

The past function of kindergarten, to provide children with their first school experience, is now the role of the pre-kindergarten program. As a result, kindergarten must assume a more demanding function. It must account for the widely diverse abilities of today’s kindergartners, and focus not only on social and physical but also on cognitive areas of learning. It must provide identification and remediation of early learning deficits as well as individualized instruction according to each child’s needs (Naron, 1981).

One of the advantages of an Extended-Day Kindergarten program is that it gives teachers more time with their students for assessment and individualized instruction. Additionally, teachers are able to detect learning and developmental needs earlier and recommend prevention services (Full-Day Kindergarten 2005).

In the Las Virgenes Unified School District, if a student is experiencing difficulties after intervention techniques have been implemented by the classroom teacher, the teacher brings documentation of the interventions he/she has implemented to
a committee called a Student Study Team. The Student Study Team consists of the principal and other teachers to collaborate about what other interventions might be implemented.

One aspect of being a kindergarten teacher that is unique to the teaching profession is that he/she is the first elementary school teacher to convey observations about their students, some of which may be difficult for the parents of a kindergarten child to accept. However, it is also a very important time for parents to get feedback from the kindergarten teacher about his/her observations of their child.

In the Fall of 2006, I assessed my students for letter names, letter sounds, and recognizing numbers to 30 in order to gather baseline data. I was able to determine the five lowest performing students in my class and chose those students to study for this paper. (See Table 1 and Figure 1, Table 2 and Figure 2, Table 3 and Figure 3, Table 4, Figure 4.)
Table 1

*Fall 2006 Upper Case Letter Name Assessment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Number of Correct Upper Case Letter Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The total number of Upper Case Letter Names possible was 26.

Figure 1

*Fall 2006 Upper Case Letter Name Assessment*
Table 2

*Fall 2006 Lower Case Letter Name Assessment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Number of Correct Lower Case Letter Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The total number of Lower Case Letter Names possible was 26.

Figure 2

*Fall 2006 Lower Case Letter Assessment*
### Table 3

*Fall 2006 Letter Sound Assessment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Number of Correct Letter Sounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The total number of Letter Sounds possible is 26.

### Figure 3

*Fall 2006 Letter Sound Assessment*
Table 4

*Fall 2006 Numeral Recognition Assessment (Numerals 0-30)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Number of Numerals Recognized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The total possible number of correct responses was 31.

Figure 4

*Fall 2006 Numeral Recognition Assessment for Numerals 0-30*
**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this paper was to explore how a newly implemented schedule along with strategic, curricular interventions affected students’ progress toward improvement in their academic and behavioral success in kindergarten. As well, the purpose was also to develop a process by which student progress could be effectively communicated to parents.

**Research Questions**

Three research questions were pursued in this study. The research questions explored in this study were as follows:

- **Research question one.** How did the curricular resources affect students learning?
- **Research question two.** How did the students respond to the intervention strategies?
- **Research question three.** How did the extended-day schedule affect student progress?

**Importance of Study**

In Fall 2005, the teachers of Round Meadow Kindergarten, which is a part of the Las Virgenes Unified School District in the southern California region, investigated extending the traditional half-day kindergarten program (three hours and 20 minutes). The teachers visited an extended day kindergarten program at Sumac Elementary School, which was the only school in the Las Virgenes Unified School District that had changed from the traditional half-day kindergarten program to an extended-day kindergarten program (five hours). The teachers also visited two full-day kindergarten programs (six
hours) at Pomelo and Woodland Hills Elementary School, which were both in the Los Angeles Unified School District. After seeing how tired the students and teachers were when teaching the full-day kindergarten programs, the Round Meadow Kindergarten Teachers chose to go to the extended-day program.

Currently, there is very little information available about extended day kindergarten rather than full-day kindergarten. I spoke with Dr. Jean Feldman, a kindergarten teacher who has been a speaker at the Southern California Kindergarten Association. When I asked her about her opinion of Extended Day Kindergarten, she replied, “Many teachers think they have to add things to the curriculum. Actually, you can just slow down the pace and enjoy the children! I’ve taught Full-Day and Half-Day, but Extended-Day where the children leave at 1:00 p.m. sounds perfect” (Dr. J. Feldman, personal communication, July 17, 2006).

The results of this study would be important for other schools in the Las Virgenes Unified School District who are teaching half-day kindergarten programs as well as other districts looking at extended day kindergarten programs. Since this was the first year extended day kindergarten was implemented at Round Meadow Elementary School, the kindergarten teachers and administrators in the Las Virgenes Unified School District were interested in the data to show whether or not this new program was successful or not. As of 2006, there were three schools in the Las Virgenes Unified School District that changed to Extended-Day Kindergarten. One other school, Lupin Hill Elementary School, also decided to change to Extended-Day Kindergarten in 2006. Five schools in the Las Virgenes Unified School District were still teaching the traditional half-day kindergarten program. Documentation of student progress would be one way to measure
the success of this program. Additionally, this study could help shed light on using the additional one hour and 45 minutes per day to improve the learning for students who are having difficulties at the beginning of their school experience so that they could maximize their potential as they grow physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The first public kindergarten in the United States originated in 1873 as a full-day program to develop children’s cognitive, physical, and social development in order to ease the transition into formal schooling. At that time, kindergarten was introduced as a nurturing, play-based program (Bloch, 1987; Piñata & Cox, 1999). The full day kindergarten schedule continued until World War II. After the war, the half-day schedule became popular due to the shortage of qualified teachers and building space, the growing birthrate, and the feeling that five year olds were not mature enough for a full-day program (Puelo, 1988.) Since the 1990’s, there has been a redevelopment of full-day kindergarten programs in the United States. California joined the trend of changing to full-day kindergarten classes in March, 2002, when a commission of educators called for schools across the state to phase in a full day of kindergarten (Moore, 2002).

According to San Diego Union Tribune writer, Helen Gao (2005) “Kindergarten is no longer about doing kid stuff. While the blocks, crayons and puzzles remain part of school; these childhood staples are a side dish on a full menu of academic activities that take youngsters far beyond the ABC’s (¶1). The explanation for this observation of what current kindergarten curriculums entail in this state is due to the implementation of the California State Standards since 1997. The Kindergarten State Standards have guided instruction for kindergarten teachers to teach what used to be the curriculum in first grade. Consequently, kindergarten teachers who have been teaching for the traditional
half-day schedule of three hours and 20 minutes have more curriculum to cover without adding extra time to fit it all in.

The redevelopment of full day kindergarten programs came about due to some of the following reasons: (a) Arranging child care during the workday was less costly and less complicated for single-parent families and families with both parents working when the child was in school for the whole day rather than half of the day (Guillo 1990; Morrow, Strickland, and Woo 1998); (b) Children who spent some of their pre-kindergarten years in nursery school classes or child-care arrangements were ready for the cognitive, social, and physical demands of a full-day kindergarten (Guillo); (c) Teachers had more time to get to know their children and individualize their instruction (Morrow, Strickland, and Woo 1998); (d) Children had more time to acquire the early academic skills taught in kindergarten (Morrow, Strickland, and Woo 1998); (e) In some classes, the change to a full day was made to provide enough time for children to complete kindergarten curriculum that had become much more difficult (Shepard and Smith 1998).

In the half-day kindergarten program I previously taught, the majority of the language arts curriculum was taught in 30 minutes per day during small group instruction. This year, with Extended-Day Kindergarten, I was able to include the same 30 minutes of small group instruction per day plus an extra 35 minutes up to three times a week to equal 165 minutes of language arts instruction per week. This included storytelling, retelling, rhymes and their relationship to word families, songs, author studies, activities that built the awareness of sound, symbol and the structure of words,
and many opportunities to experience the joy of daily reading coordinated with daily sharing of quality literature through read alouds.

For writing instruction in the Half-Day Kindergarten, there were 30 minutes of small group writing instruction each day and 30 to 60 minutes of writing per week that included journals and other types of writing opportunities. In Extended-Day Kindergarten, there were still 30 minutes of small group instruction with 90 minutes or more of instructional time that I was able to use for various types of meaningful writing experiences where I could integrate quality literature to enhance student writing.

Math instruction in half-day kindergarten totaled 90 minutes. With the Extended-Day Program, the students had 135 minutes of math instruction, allowing more time for the students to practice and explore the math concepts presented.

One of the big changes with the Extended-Day Kindergarten program at Round Meadow was that the students had two days of physical education instruction each week with 35 minutes per day instead of once a week. The Literature Review will be discussing the materials used in class and at home, which were used to provide the foundation, and intervention for the students in this case study.

Reading in an Extended Day Kindergarten Class

The Las Virgenes Unified School District has adopted the *Houghton Mifflin Reading Program*. This program provides instruction based on scientific research-based practices utilizing a variety of reading and instructional options such as authentic literature to develop comprehension and create motivation, decodable text to practice and apply phonics skills and high-frequency words, and additional literature resources to meet the range of children with diverse abilities. The framework for Houghton Mifflin Reading
includes oral language, knowledge of letter names, phonemic awareness, concepts of print, phonics, analogy, context, and instant word recognition. (Houghton Mifflin Reading © 2003)

Hiebert, Pearson, Taylor, Richardson, and Paris (1998) state that, “Oral language is the foundation on which reading and writing are built, and it continues to serve this role as children develop as readers” (Topic 1, p.1).

The importance of letter names was stated by Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) when they said:

“Among the readiness skills that are traditionally evaluated, the one that appears to be the strongest predictor on its own is letter identification. Just measuring how many letters a kindergartener is able to name when shown in a random order appears to be nearly as successful at predicting future reading as is an entire readiness test” (p. 113).

Phonemic awareness, the knowledge that spoken words can be understood as a sequence of sounds or phonemes, involves insights about oral language. Examples of phonemic awareness activities would be identifying and producing rhyme, identifying syllables in spoken words, identifying and blending onsets and rimes, and blending and segmenting phonemes. Phonemic Awareness activities help children who have not grasped the alphabetic principle or who do not apply it productively when they encounter unfamiliar words (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

Concepts of Print involves insights about written language. It includes knowing that printed English has a left-to-right orientation; that a printed word is preceded and followed by a space; that there are letters, words, and sentences in printed English; and
that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the number of printed words and the number of words that a reader reads aloud. Houghton Mifflin provides opportunities for instruction of concepts of print as well as activities that develop these concepts.

Phonics is learning to associate letters with the speech sounds they represent. Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson (1985) state that “classroom research shows that, on the average, children who are taught phonics get off to a better start in learning to read than children who are not taught phonics (p. 37).

Analogy focuses on recognizing a new word because it shares a word pattern with a known word. Context refers to the use of syntactic and meaning clues to help identify an unknown or difficult word in a text that is being read. For readers who have difficulties with phonics, their word recognition depends more strongly on the context. Instant Word Recognition is the ability to recognize words instantly, or by sight. Hiebert, Pearson, Taylor, Richardson, & Paris (1998) state that “Proficient readers recognize the vast majority of words in texts quickly, allowing them to focus on the meaning of text” (p.19)

In addition to the *Houghton Mifflin Reading* © program, I also incorporated interventions sent home to help with letter names, letter sounds, and sight word vocabulary. To help the students improve their letter names and sounds, I sent home learning tools by *Leap Frog School House* for them to practice at home. They each took home the “Letter Factory” Video to help them learn phonics and listening skills and the “Talking Words Factory” to help them learn how to blend consonant, vowel, and consonant words together. Additionally, they each took home the Leap Pad Personal Learning Tool with booklets to practice letter sounds, making words, and reading.
*Leap Frog* products are highly motivational to students. They use cartoon characters to teach the skills. They are also research-based and address the key components of early literacy. The foundation of the Leap Frog School House curriculum is phonemic awareness (Stanovich, 1993). The Letter Factory DVD teaches letters, phonics, and listening skills. The Talking Words DVD teaches word building, rhyming, and vocabulary. The Leap Pad Personal Learning Tool helps students gain exposure to print and reading activities, even before they are reading on their own using a multisensory system. The audio assistance in the Leap Pad decodes unfamiliar words. The child slides the electronic pen across the new word, and the Leap Pad blends the sounds and says the word. This product also encourages children to blend the sounds on their own, using the Leap Pad as a tool for feedback and self-correction. These types of experiences for children help them gain the optimal level of exposure and practice needed to become fluent readers. When reading with fluency is combined with a rich vocabulary, the student has the basis for building comprehension skills (Share, 1995).

When the Leap Frog DVDs and Leap Pad Personal Learning Tool are taken home, students make the school and home connection by practicing the skills with their parents or siblings. Researcher Robert Calfee (1997) emphasized the importance of the school and home connection when he stated: “it is important for both parent and teacher to agree upon the reading progress that each child is expected to make, so that there is a shared vision of outcomes.” (Vol. 127, pp.127-128). Henderson and Berla (1994) also discussed the importance of the school and home connection when they said: “when parents are involved, students have higher grades and test scores, better attendance, and
achieve more, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents’ education level.” (Sec. 1: 10).

To help the children with their sight word vocabulary, I incorporated an idea I learned from Donna Whyte (2004), a teacher I saw at the Southern California Kindergarten Conference. She calls the sight words “popcorn words”. She suggests highlighting the sight words in yellow and making the words look like popcorn, so that the students see these words “popping up” all over. In her book *Morning Meeting, Afternoon Wrap-Up*, Whyte suggests using yellow cellophane in a popcorn shape to place over the sight words.

I chose to put the sight words on yellow cardstock and put a popcorn shape around the word. When the students in my class were introduced to the new “popcorn word”, they took home that word and put it in their popcorn container which I gave them at the beginning of the year, to add to their other popcorn words. I also had the students use a yellow crayon to color over the sight words in shared writing activities such as the Daily News and writing about the student of the week. Additionally, when students took home consumable books to read, I had them color in the sight words in those books as well. The students even started to color in the sight words on their own in their journals, written homework, and stories they wrote.

*Writing in an Extended Day Kindergarten Class*

Research confirms that affect towards writing impacts students’ response to writing intervention; repeated practice in writing prevents work-avoidance; and scaffolding of instruction increases children’s learning (Berninger et al., 1995). Lucy Calkins, author of *The Nuts and Bolts of Teaching* (2003), states that “children’s abilities
across many disciplines will be judged through the medium of their writing” and that “writing gives children unbelievable power as readers, thinkers, and composers of meaning.”

The writing program adopted by the Las Virgenes Unified School District is called *Step Up to Writing*. This Program teaches each step in the writing process and also addresses instructional variables – explicit and systematic instruction, collaborative learning, and scaffolded teaching of the writing process. It is a multisensory approach, which uses common language and common high expectations for writing. This writing program incorporates visualizing the colors of a traffic signal and using symbols to organize writing. Green means state the topic and the symbol is the letter T. Yellow means be specific and the symbol is a star. Red means give examples and the symbol for this is a dash. Then green is used again to restate the topic (*Step Up to Writing*). In kindergarten, students are taught the green and yellow colors to organize their topic (green) and three sentences about the topic (yellow). One of the ways this is done is by having the students orally tell three sentences about a topic using one green Unifix Cube and three yellow Unifix Cubes for the sentences. The next step is to have them organize their ideas using an outline.

To model the process of *Step Up to Writing* throughout the day, I also used the *Step Up to Writing* color system when writing the schedule for the day on the board, and when doing shared writing for the Daily News at end of the day as well as writing about the Student of the Week.

Another writing strategy that was very motivating to the students is when I typed the story they had written so that their story looked like a book. They illustrated the
cover and then each sentence was illustrated on a separate page. They got to share their story with the class, and then the story was put into a notebook of all of their stories they had written during the year.

Additionally, an independent writing assessment was done in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. Figures 11 through 24 show the Fall, Winter, and Spring independent writing assessments for the five students in this case study. Figure 25 shows the Las Virgenes Unified School District Writing Rubric for the writing scores.

Another intervention I incorporated to help with writing was to place a three-fold standing chart for each student to see the letters. This was an idea I learned from Dr. Jean Feldman (2006) in her book *Tips, Tricks, and Terrific Ideas.* She called the chart a “Letter Office”. I added other features to their “office” such as the numbers 0-30, sight words, and a finger spacer in a pocket on the back of the “office” so students would remember to put two spaces in-between their words when writing.

*Math in an Extended Day Kindergarten Class*

The mathematics program adopted by the Las Virgenes Unified School District is *Harcourt Math.* *Harcourt Math* was developed to meet the goals and Standards of the California Mathematics Framework. Instructional materials and resources in the Harcourt Math Program focus on and are aligned with the Kindergarten State Standards. Other features of the program are that: (a) The program is organized into units to develop number sense, algebra and functions, measurement and geometry, statistics, data analysis, and probably strands. Mathematical reasoning is also included into each of the other strands. (b) Students learn mathematics by direct instruction, hands-on experiences, step-by-step models to build conceptual understanding, and many opportunities to practice
problem-solving skills. (c) There are resources included in the program that provide strategies and activities for meeting the needs of English Language Learners, Advances Learners, Early Finishers, and students with Special needs. There are also alternative teaching strategies and curriculum connections included in each unit. (Harcourt Math © 2002).

As a math intervention, I looked at which students needed more practice with mathematical skills such as number recognition and I sent home two sets of cards numbered from 0-30 for the students to play matching games. I also sent home Leap Frog math workbooks to go with the Leap Pads that the students used for language arts.

Physical Education in an Extended Day Kindergarten Class

The Las Virgenes Unified School District Physical Education program uses the 1994 Physical Education Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. It is a sequential, developmental, and age-appropriate program of instruction, which is designed to provide students with the knowledge and ability that is needed to maintain an active, healthy life-style. (California Physical Education Framework) Physical Education is also important because of its direct link with academic learning. The healthy, physically active child is more likely to be academically motivated, alert, and successful. Additionally, physical education promotes the social skills and cooperation that are increasingly viewed by educators today as essential for success in school. (California Physical Education Framework)

Physical education classes provide a natural environment for the development of personal and social skills transferable to other situations and learning in other subject areas. Examples of integration of Physical Education and other areas of the curriculum
are the following: (a) There is a natural correlation between cooperative learning activities related to understanding the place of rules and strategies in Physical Education and the teaching of civic values, right, and responsibilities in history. (b) There is a correlation between the Natural Sciences and Physical Education through concepts related to gravity, levers, motion, physics, anatomy, biomechanics, and exercise physiology. (c) The correlation between Home Economics and Physical Education is through the study of exercise physiology and nutrition. (d) History-Social Science correlate with Physical Education through an emphasis on guiding students to become active, productive members of a democratic society; work cooperatively in groups and teams; and develop an understanding of others through cross-cultural and multicultural games, dances, and other activities. (e) Language Arts is correlated with Physical Education when applying physical education experiences in written assignments and other activities requiring communication skills. (f) Mathematics and Physical Education are correlated through recording results and calculating probabilities, percentages, and averages related to physical activity or creating graphs to demonstrate measurements and comparisons of personal progress. (g) Visual and performing arts are correlated with Physical Education through a shared emphasis on aesthetic perception, creative expression, rhythm, tempo, and meter. (h) Lastly, Vocational Education is correlated with Physical Education through the study of careers in such areas as teaching, recreation, health fitness, dance performance and sports broadcasting. (*California Physical Education Framework*).
Summary

The additional two hours and forty minutes in the extended day kindergarten schedule gave me more time to teach reading, writing, and math using research based curriculum and to include intervention strategies for students who needed them. Additionally, the extra time gave the students more time for academic and social learning including Physical Education, lunchtime, and Plan, Do, and Review. At Plan, Do, and Review, students planned which center they wanted to go to, (they were able to choose between high interest centers such as art, drama, computers, building with blocks, math manipulatives, writing, reading the room, and writing the room), then they did their work, and ultimately, we reviewed what some students did. With half-day kindergarten, there was not usually any time left for reviewing what the students did. The next chapter will discuss the method of investigation I used in this study, a description of each of the participants, and an analysis of the data.
Chapter 3

Methods

Introduction

According to Creswell (1994), a case study is an appropriate method of investigation for exploring some phenomenon, which occurs within a period of time. In the case of this study, formative experiences of several, low performing students were explored as they were subjected to a series of instructional interventions. Several sources of data were used as sources of information about the case: (a) Parent interviews, (b) Data from the Las Virgenes Unified School District Kindergarten Language Arts and Mathematics Assessments, (c) Intervention Materials, and (d) my own observations.

Parent Interviews

In her book, A Path to Follow, Edwards (1999, pp. XXII, XXXIII, XIV) states that parent stories (narratives gained from open-ended conversations and/or interviews) constitute the best vehicle for organizing and conveying knowledge about people and their goals, motives, strategies, accomplishments, and difficulties. She also states that parent stories provide teachers with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the “human side” of families and children (i.e., why children behave as they do, children’s ways of learning and communicating, some of the problems parents have encountered, and how these problems may have impacted their children’s views about school and the schooling process).

The Las Virgenes Unified School District believes that the beginning of the kindergarten year is a time for the children to become familiar with their new surroundings. Hence, there was no Fall report card for students in kindergarten for the
Las Virgenes Unified School District. Instead of a report card in the Fall, I met with each of the parents in the class to discuss strengths, weaknesses, and goals for the students. I showed the parents their child’s three assessments, first independent writing sample, and then other work samples. I gave them a list of all of the sight words and explained that I would be sending home sight word flash cards throughout the year as I introduced the words to the class. It was also a time for the parents to ask questions in order to gather more information about their child. The usual amount of time that the Las Virgenes Unified School District recommends for teachers to conference with parents is 20 minutes. However, when I met with Danny, Matthew, Cameron, Susie, and Eddie’s parents, I spent an hour asking more in depth questions. I used a tape recorder to record our conversations, as suggested by Edwards, et. al (1999) in their book *A Path to Follow-Learning to Listen to Parents*. Appendix A lists the Edwards-Pleasants Parent Stories Questionnaire I used to ask the parents at the beginning of the year. Appendix B lists another group of questions I asked the parents, which discussed eight resources that the families may or not have (Payne, 1998, p. 7).

In the Winter, I discussed the report card with each of the parents. I was able to discuss their progress on the previous assessments, as well as progress in other areas of the curriculum.

The last conference was held the last few weeks of school when I discussed with the parents their child’s final report card for their kindergarten year. Four of the five students in this study showed enough progress to go to first grade. One student did not. I will discuss the reasons why later in this paper.
Assessment Data

In 2006, I had 18 Regular Education and two Special Education kindergarten students in the first extended day kindergarten program at Round Meadow Elementary School. In order to find out who were the five lowest performing students in the class, three assessments were given at the beginning of the year to each of the 18 Regular Education students in the class. These assessments included: (a) Naming the upper and lower case letters (Letter Name Assessment), (b) Saying the sound of each of the letters (Letter Sound Assessment), and (c) Identifying the numerals zero to thirty (Numeral Recognition Assessment). Table 1 shows the Fall 2006 Upper Case Letter Name Assessment Scores. Table 2 shows the Fall 2006 Lower Case Letter Name Assessment Scores. Table 3 shows the Fall 2006 Letter Sounds Assessment Scores, and Table 4 shows the Fall 2006 Numeral Recognition Scores. For the purposes of this paper, the five students in the study were called Danny, Matthew, Cameron, Susie, and Eddie.

Intervention Materials

Instructional interventions were used during the school day as well as at home. In the classroom, ability grouping as well as mixed ability grouping was used to present the curriculum. Ability grouping gave the five students in the case study the opportunity to learn the curriculum in a differentiated manner such as slower pacing and less amount of work than the rest of the class. When these students were in a mixed ability group, the higher achieving students were able to model for the lower achieving students such as good listening skills and how to access information.

Instructional interventions that were sent home with the students included: (a) The Leap Frog “Letter Factory” DVD to help the students with their letter names and sounds,
(b) The Leap Frog “Talking Words Factory” DVD to help them learn how to blend three letter words, (c) A Leap Frog “Leap Pad” to reinforce Language Arts and Math Skills taught in school, (d) Sight Words flash cards (called “Popcorn Words”) with a popcorn container to keep the card in, and (e) Two sets of numeral flashcards.
Chapter 4

Findings

Case Study 1 - Danny

Danny was the second oldest student in the class, starting kindergarten at five years, 11 months old. At the beginning of the year, Danny could not identify any letter sounds or sight words. He could only name three upper case letters, two lower case letters, and three numerals. Additionally, he was not able to write any letters independently. I chose Danny as one of the case studies because older students, like Danny, usually enter kindergarten with higher scores than those that have average or young birthdays. I wanted to explore what he was lacking and how I could help him succeed this year.

Danny was a premature baby, born at 25 weeks and weighed one pound, four ounces. He came home on oxygen and a lot of medication. He has two older siblings; a sister, 17 years old, and a brother, 15 years old. He also had a baby brother that died at birth. He was the second oldest student in the class, starting kindergarten at five years, 11 months old.

Danny’s family lived in an upper middle class home in Calabasas. His father was an Orthopedic Surgeon and his mother was a wardrobe consultant. His two older siblings attended private school. The family owned two timeshares in Mexico where they went for vacations, had a DVD in the car, and Danny had a toy corvette in his backyard.

Danny experienced a lot of fear about school. He was sheltered from pre-school or other young children for fear of sickness until he was four years old. The first pre-school his mother took him to was a private Catholic school, where he was petrified. He
would tremble and cry if she was one inch away. His mother was there everyday for two weeks, then she changed him to a developmental pre-school after a month. At the beginning of kindergarten, his mother stated that he was nervous about school and a bit insecure about leaving her. I remember the first day of kindergarten, She sat next to him, and did not leave his side. He asked her everyday whether she could stay with him at school. He was worried that the teachers and other children might be mean to him. It was not until the last few months of school that he looked forward to going to school. At the beginning of the year, Danny missed a lot of school. His mother told me that he didn’t want to come to school on Fridays because he was afraid of the puppet, “Zero the Hero” that I took out every 10th day of school. Since the 10th day of school was a Friday, he thought the puppet came out every Friday. Danny became close friends with one boy who was one of the youngest in the class. I later found out that the friend’s name was the same as a Danny’s baby brother who died. His mother said that he knew his brother was in heaven.

Danny was physically strong and extremely tough when it comes to pain and all that he had endured. When he was little, he had trouble crawling, and he didn’t talk until he was four years old. By five years old. He was physically coordinated and loved to play baseball with his older brother.

Both sides of the family lived close by. His mother’s parents lived down the street from Danny’s family, and his father’s parents lived nearby in West Hills. His father’s grandparents (they called them abuelos) spoke Spanish. Danny’s mother said that Danny could understand them, and answered them in English. The family went to visit his abuelos on most Sundays.
Danny’s big brother and his dad were his biggest role models. He liked to play with his brother and his brother’s friends. He also said he wanted to be a doctor like his dad. Both parents modeled eating dinner at home with the TV off and enjoyed cooking breakfast on the weekends.

Danny’s mother said that before kindergarten, Danny was frustrated because he wasn’t able to play games like “Sorry” with his family. She stated that since he started kindergarten, he asked them what the words said on the billboards and asked for a highlighter so he could highlight the “popcorn words” he found. His mother also stated that she was so touched by a Mother’s Day card he wrote for her this year and a note he wrote to his sister.

Findings for Research Question One.

Research question was stated as follows: How did the curricular resources affect Danny’s learning? Of the five assessments given, Danny showed the most improvement in letter sounds and lower case letter names, with 93% growth on each assessment. He showed the least improvement in number recognition. The parent interview gave me insight into what ways he was incorporating the curricular resources such as being able to play a game with the family and when he could write a card to his family.

Findings for Research Question Two.

Research question was stated as follows: How did Danny respond to the intervention strategies? Danny said that he watched the DVDs in the car and that he enjoyed using his Leap Pad in the plane and at the pool on his vacation. His mom also shared that he became excited when he saw a “popcorn word” and looked forward to highlighting it.
Findings for Research Question Three.

Research question was stated as follows: How did the Extended Day schedule affect Danny’s progress? Danny was fearful of school and just started to feel comfortable going to school by the end of the year. The extended day gave Danny more social and academic opportunities. He was able to have more time to interact both outside and inside with the other children, as well as to have more time to catch up with the time he lost in pre-school.
Case Study 2 - Matthew

Matthew was the fourth oldest student in the class, starting kindergarten at five years 11 months old. Matthew began the school year knowing no letter sounds, nine numerals, four sight words, 12 lower case letters, and 14 upper case letters. When he wrote independently in the Fall, he was only able to write one letter. I thought he would be a good student to study because he too, was an older student in the class who I thought would have had more skills.

Matthew’s family lived in a middle class neighborhood. His father was a small business owner who went to school at night for his MBA. His mother was a designer and illustrator. They both worked at home. He had one brother who was two and half years old. Matthew was on a permit to attend Round Meadow. His parents did not like his home school in the Los Angeles Unified School District because there were no trees, and it was mostly cement.

Previous to kindergarten, Matthew attended pre-school twice a week. He did not have a good experience there because he did not like his teacher. However, his parents stated that in kindergarten, he had no anxiety. My observations were that he was well behaved and a deep thinker. He took his time when doing his work and many times was the last to finish. He especially liked to draw and construct things at the Art and Building centers during Choice Time. He also tended to play with the same friend he knew from pre-school.

His father’s mother was a very religious follower of the Jehovah Witness religion. His father stated that he remembered going door to door and having doors shut on him. He felt guilty for trying to convince people to become followers of the Jehovah Witness
religion. He said that he felt separated from society and felt indifferent about holidays. His mother stated that as she was growing up, she went to church with different friends. Then when she got older, she had her own “spiritual thing.”

Matthew’s parents stated that he did not start talking until a little bit after two years old. At his two-year appointment to the doctor, he was saying “bo” for ball, “bu” for bus, and “du” for truck. A week after his visit to the doctor, he started saying words. Within a month, he was using full sentences. Although his speech was late, once he got it, it went fast. Throughout his kindergarten year, he was not able to pronounce l’s and r’s. He walked a little bit late, at fourteen months, but then he zoomed along. His parents said that he has been shown since pre-school how to hold his pencil but did not use the proper pencil grasp to write. I also observed his difficulty when holding a pencil. His parents stated that they had a pool where the family enjoyed swimming together. In April, Matthew started to take piano lessons and excelled. His parents felt that the piano helped with his confidence and that the piano teacher was very supportive with her praise of his accomplishments. They also stated that they both had martial arts backgrounds and that they were thinking of starting him in martial arts in the summer.

His father’s mother lived in Colorado. She came to live with the family for three months in the Spring and three months in the Summer. Matthew’s father had four brothers and one sister, although he said he didn’t see them very often. His mother’s father lived in Solvang and had a condo in Hawaii. Every other year they went with him to Hawaii where they went to the beach, rode the train, and cooked together.

Matthew’s mom stated that he completely immersed himself in something when he was really focused on it. She said his role models were King Arthur, Thomas the
Train, Bob the Builder, Peter from Narjana, and Pirates. Actually, his parents were his role models. They encouraged his interest in fantasy, castles, art, and constructing things. They also modeled cooking, gardening, reading, eating meals together, relaxing together and playing together as a family.

In Matthew’s family, the log chair was the time out chair. Also, since both parents worked at home, they never were a highly structured family. They stated that going to school was good for everybody in the family to give them structure.

Matthew’s dad stated that he felt Matthew didn’t have enough exposure to academics as other children because he didn’t attend pre-school every day. He also stated that the kindergarten homework was challenging for Matthew.

*Findings for Research Question One.*

Research question was stated as follows: How did the curricular resources affect Matthew’s learning? Matthew showed the most growth in letter sounds and writing. The least amount of growth he showed was in his lower case letter names. One of the reasons I feel that Matthew showed a big improvement in writing was that he was passionate about his interests and would have a lot to say about what he knew about them. Writing gave him a way to express his interests and to share it with the class.

*Findings for Research Question Two.*

Research question was stated as follows: How did Matthew respond to the intervention strategies? Matthew said he enjoyed the DVDs more than the Leap Pad.

*Findings for Research Question Three.*

Research question was stated as follows: How did the Extended Day schedule affect Matthew’s progress? The extended day schedule gave Matthew the opportunity to
not feel rushed when doing his work. He was a slower worker, and would probably have been very frustrated with less time to do his work.
Case Study 3 - Cameron

Cameron was the average kindergarten age for a student entering kindergarten at five years five months old. Cameron began his kindergarten year knowing all of his upper case letters and 20 lower case letters. However, he only knew two letter sounds and no sight words. He also recognized 14 numerals and wrote one phonetically spelled word, “dinosaur”, which he copied from the board when writing his Fall independent writing assessment. He was also a behavior problem from the beginning of the year. I felt that by choosing Cameron for this Case Study, I could give him intervention tools to help him and his family for his academic and behavioral success at school.

Cameron attended Round Meadow on a permit and lived in an upper middle class home in West Hills. His parents were older than the average kindergarten parent. His mother was 43 and his father was 51 when Cameron was born. Cameron’s father worked in the film library at Paramount Studios. He came home tired, due to the fact that he had Parkinson’s Disease. His mother worked as a Special Education teacher at a Middle School in the Los Angeles Unified School District and attended California State University Northridge to work towards her Masters Degree in Special Education. He had two sisters. His oldest sister was 24 years old. She was also a Special Education teacher who worked at Round Meadow. Like her mom, she also attended California State University Northridge to work towards her Masters Degree in Special Education. She lived three minutes away from the family. She helped take care of Cameron and her dad a lot. His other sister was 21 years old. She also worked and went to school. She was not as close with the family. She had a boyfriend and was in a long distance relationship, spending half of the time with her boyfriend. Cameron’s home learning environment was
relaxed. There was no structured bedtime. Cameron’s parents never enforced it. It has
gotten to the point that when he was tired enough, he would fall asleep.

Cameron’s mother was Catholic and his father was Episcopalian. Cameron’s
mother went to church when she felt the need and Cameron joined his mother when she
went. Cameron’s mother was planning to start him in classes for his communion. His
mother said that her daughters were more spiritual than their parents and that any religion
was acceptable in their family

Cameron was very loving and affectionate at home with his family. He could also
act like a comedian and be very silly. Since he was the youngest child, Cameron received
a lot of attention from all his family members. His mother was nurturing and affectionate,
whereas his father kept to himself more and did not give compliments often. Since his
father’s diagnosis of Parkinson’s Disease three years ago, there was big affect on the
family dynamics. Cameron’s father was hospitalized during the school year due to his
illness. He saw a clinical psychologist at University of Southern California. His mother
and oldest sister were seeing a family therapist. His mother said she was planning to take
Cameron to a play therapist in the summer. Cameron asked questions such as if he could
catch what his dad had.

When asked how he felt about school, Cameron said it was boring, and Pre-
School was fun. He liked to touch other children, talk, and make various noises that
would distract others during instructional time. He also bit his shirt and pulled on it. He
needed conflict resolution strategies throughout the year. For example, at Choice Time,
he had many conflicts with other students such as when they were building something
together with blocks or playing with the toy cars. I suggested a behavior plan for him at
the Fall conference. I also suggested to his mother that he might have ADHD, since it seemed very difficult for him to control his body all day. His mother did not agree with me. She said she did not see that at home. Cameron took home a daily folder that showed how his behavior was for the day. He was able to earn tickets for a daily chance to win a toy by earning a majority of happy faces in his folder. By the Winter conference, his mother asked to discontinue the behavior plan. She felt he was embarrassed being the only student who took home the folder. We agreed that I would communicate with her by phone if there was a need. As the year progressed, he continued to be disruptive. However, I tried to give him more opportunities to be successful, such as moving his seat on the carpet away from students he tended to have problems with, and giving him opportunities to move around as much as possible. As the year progressed, I observed that math skills such as addition and subtraction came easy to him, whereas writing was still a struggle for him. He liked to be one of the helpers when he was done with his math work to help others understand their work.

Cameron was also athletic. He played on a soccer team in the Fall and a baseball team in the Spring. The whole family went to watch him play. His mother played baseball and soccer with him on the weekends. The family took day trips on Sundays such as going to the Long Beach Aquarium. Cameron had always shown an interest in sharks. The family even had a season pass to the Aquarium. Since his father was older and ill, he was not able to play sports with him. His father tried to make an effort to take part in Cameron’s activities and schoolwork, but he was very tired by the time he got home and he often fell asleep by 6:30 or 7:00. So what he could do was limited. When
Cameron and his father were home alone at night while his mom and sister were school, Cameron and his father would lay on the couch and go to sleep.

Cameron’s parents, sisters, and his sister’s fiancé, were his support system. His oldest sister was especially close to him. Since she worked at Round Meadow School, she was the one that usually took him to and from school. She also came to visit his class when she could. He had a friend at home who he liked to play with. At school, he became friends with boys who shared his interest in sports. He went to the YMCA after school each day and liked to play with the bigger kids there. The family’s support system was his mother’s niece who lived in Chino. His sister’s fiancé was a big role model to Cameron. Cameron felt that he was a big brother to him.

Cameron attended pre-school at California State University Northridge from one and one half to five years old, while his mother and sister attended their university classes. They alternated taking morning and afternoon classes so they could each take care of Cameron.

Findings for Research Question One.

Research question was stated as follows: How did the curricular resources affect Cameron’s learning? Cameron showed the most growth in letter sounds and sight words. He showed the least growth in writing. Cameron came to school worrying about his father’s health almost every day of school. Additionally, with Cameron’s abundance of energy and lack of focus, he had difficulties staying on task during writing. I noticed that when doing addition and subtraction, however, he would stay on task and would be one of the first to finish.
Findings for Research Question Two.

Research question was stated as follows: How did Cameron respond to the intervention strategies? Cameron’s mother said he loved the DVDs, but the Leap Pad was cumbersome for him.

Findings for Research Question Three.

Research question was stated as follows: How did the Extended Day schedule affect Cameron’s progress? Cameron attended the YMCA everyday after school. If he were not in an extended day program, he would have been in the YMCA during that time also. The extended day schedule gave Cameron additional academic time to help with his academic needs, as well as time to shine and let out his energy with the extra PE time.
Case Study 4 - Susie

Susie was the sixth youngest student in the class, beginning kindergarten at five years, one month old. At the beginning of the year, she knew 14 upper case and one lower case letter name. She knew two letter sounds, recognized 13 numerals, four sight words, and was at the “random” stage of writing. At this stage of writing, she was able to write letters, but there was no connection between the letters and the sounds they made. Susie’s oral language was much higher than her written, and appeared to me to be higher academically than she showed in her assessments. I felt that including Susie in this case study would give her the extra tools she needed to feel successful.

Susie’s family lived in an upper middle class house in Calabasas. Her father was a Financial Manager, and was brought up Jewish. Her mother was self-employed and was brought up Christian. She had two brothers and two sisters. One brother was twenty years old, and the other brother was fourteen years old. One of her sisters was nineteen years old. Her other sister was her twin. Susie was the youngest twin by two minutes.

Susie’s parents described her as strong willed, confident, competitive, social, as well as someone who liked to be a leader. They also stated that Susie was someone who was analytical, cared about everyone, and tended to be a little “worrier.” An example of how she was strong willed, competitive, and worried at school was when she was waiting for a parent to help her at her table. Instead of waiting, she went over to another table to get help, even though she knew she was supposed to stay at her table. An example of her caring characteristic at school was when she was the first student in the class to offer her assistance to an autistic student in the class this year. Although she liked to be a leader, she began to be a follower when another girl in the class told her to do something that
was inappropriate. She got in trouble and learned that you don’t do something just because someone tells you to.

Susie’s parents said that she walked at a young age, probably because she saw the older siblings walking. Susie loved outdoor activities. She enjoyed playing sports with her family and with friends on sports teams. She also loved to go on the swings, ride her bike, as well as throw, kick and hit the ball like her older siblings, who were big athletes. Her twin sister was diagnosed with Diabetes at two years old. At school, her sister went to the health office each day to have her blood-sugar level checked before and after lunch. Susie frequently asked to go to the health office, when she did not have any serious health problems. Susie’s mother and I talked about it, and felt that she wanted the same attention that her sister was getting from the health clerk. Her visits to the health office lessened after we talked to her about the difference between serious health issues and issues that were not as serious.

Susie was very close to her grandparents, older brothers, and her sisters. Her grandparents and aunts lived close by. Mom also said that they had a very close group of friends. Her mom said that Susie was obsessed with social arrangements. She asked to have play dates everyday. Both parents were positive role models for a structured home life, which included routines, clear boundaries, and opportunities to learn independence. They were also consistent and supportive of each other. Susie knew that if either of her parents used her middle name, she was in trouble.

Susie’s parents said she asked a lot of questions and was very observant. For example, they stated that when they had conversations, she would hear everything. When reading books to both Susie and her sister, her parents said that they got frustrated. Susie
interrupted and wanted to tell how the story was going to end, whereas her sister listened well and didn’t interrupt. When her parents asked questions of both of them in the middle of a story, her sister had no problem remembering the story. However, Susie could only remember the story about half of the time. Her mother stated that Susie compared herself to her twin sister, who entered kindergarten with much higher skills, and sometimes gave up. Both girls attended a pre-school that introduced the names of the letters and how to write them, but not the sounds. Her parents said that she loved school, but at the end of the year, her mom said she asked, “Do I have to go to first grade?"

*Findings for Research Question One.*

Research question was stated as follows: How did the curricular resources affect Susie’s learning? Susie showed the most improvement in naming lower case letters and showed the least improvement in naming upper case letters. She also showed great improvement in her writing. Both parents attended all conferences and showed dedication to doing their part to help Susie feel successful. They knew how she compared herself to her twin sister, who was much higher academically than she was.

*Findings for Research Question Two.*

Research question was stated as follows: How did Susie respond to the intervention strategies? Susie’s parents said that she enjoyed the DVDs the best and watched them in the car. Another intervention was brought about by the interview with her parents at the beginning of the year. When I asked her parents about what kind of things they did to help Susie be successful in school, they realized that a big part of their help at home would be for one parent to work one on one with Susie, while the other
parent worked with her twin sister. Until that point, her parents worked with both girls when reading books and doing homework.

Findings for Research Question Three

Research question was stated as follows: How did the Extended Day Schedule affect Susie’s progress? The extended day gave Susie the extra time to practice the academic skills she needed to catch up on, as well as time to shine in the extra PE time.
Case Study 5 – Eddie

Eddie, the last student I chose for this study, was the youngest in the class. He started kindergarten at four years, nine months old. At the beginning of the year, he did not know any letter sounds or recognize any sight words. He recognized eight numerals, knew five upper case and five lower case letter names, and could not write anything for his Fall independent writing assessment. I felt that Eddie was a good student to study, since he was in need of the most interventions of all of the students in the class.

Eddie’s parents got divorced when Eddie was two and a half years old. His mother stated that they were a middle class family. Eddie had an autistic eight-year-old brother. They lived with their mother and their dad’s grandparents in Bell Canyon. His mother was a salesperson at a cooking store. She was also working on her business plan so she could be a Holistic Naturopath. She attended a non-denominational Christian church on Wednesday evenings and every other Sunday. Eddie’s father lived in the city of Aliso Viejo in Orange County. He worked with computers and did not attend church. Eddie and his brother saw their dad on the weekend a twice a month.

When Eddie’s parents divorced, the two boys and their mom moved to Michigan to live with their mother’s parents. They stayed there a year, then moved back to Bell Canyon to live with their father’s grandparents. His mother stated that his grandparents on his father’s side babied and spoiled him. She also stated that when the boys were with their dad, he was strict and structured. His mother said she was not as strict as his father, but she stated that she did stick to a routine and saw the need to “nip his misbehavior in the bud” such as when he said, “I’m not doing it.” His mother also stated that he loved school and that he had been in preschool since he was two years old. At that time, he
qualified for the three-year old program. In kindergarten, I observed that he demonstrated immature behaviors. For example, during instruction time on the carpet, he would touch other children. He would also roll around the carpet or play with his clothes. During small group instruction, he was easily distracted and would play with other students at that time as well. When he chose to go to the drama area at Choice Time, he would throw items. He also bit a student out of frustration.

Besides being the youngest in the class, Eddie was also small, and had to work hard to use his large muscles to do the exercises and follow directions for the Physical Education activities. He also struggled with small motor skills such as writing, drawing, cutting, and gluing. His mother stated that he wasn’t into organized activities yet. She said she was thinking of starting golf lessons for him like his brother. She said that she also played golf and had her own golf clubs. Additionally, Eddie stuttered. His mother said he received therapy when she and the boys moved to Michigan. She said his stuttering magnified when he was in stressful situations. Now she said he mostly stuttered when he got excited. I observed his stuttering throughout the kindergarten year and noticed that the stuttering lessened by the end of his kindergarten year.

Other than his parents, Eddie’s brother and grandparents in Bell Canyon and Michigan were a big support for him. His grandma in Bell Canyon baked cookies with him and read him stories every night. Eddie was also very close to his brother. His mother stated that he learned parallel play from his brother’s autistic mannerisms. His mother also stated that she wondered if he thought he should have friends, since he was so close to his brother. Additionally, she commented that she had a tough time with new people, and had not encouraged Eddie to have play dates. Eddie and his brother went to
stay with his grandparents on his mother’s side for five weeks last summer and also went
to visit their grandparents this summer. They attended a private day camp in Michigan
where they fished, went to the beach, boated, hiked, and played with other children.

Eddie’s role models had very different ways of relating to him. His mother stated
that her decisions got overruled by Eddie’s grandparents and that his dad stressed
homework too much. She also felt that Eddie’s grandma was too permissive and stated
that his grandpa didn’t join them at meals. Other than his parents and grandparents, other
role models Eddie had were his mother’s boyfriend, Sam, his dad’s girlfriend, Kim, and
aunts and uncles. Sam joined his mother and the boys on outings such as dinner out, trips
to Disneyland, or walks at night. Kim helped with his homework, cooked, and gardened
with him when he visited his father. He also saw aunts and uncles at family functions.

Eddie’s mother stated that he didn’t know what the word divorce meant. She said
that she never used the word “divorce” and as far as the boys were concerned, daddy had
a friend, mommy had a friend, mommy and daddy love each other, and that’s just the
way life was. His mother also stated that when she asked, “who’s the mama?, or used a
stern voice, he knew that she was angry.

Eddie attended Buttercup Pre-School. Buttercup was a school for children with
special needs and also enrolled typical students for models. Eddie’s brother attended
Buttercup to receive services for his autism. Eddie was assessed by the Buttercup staff
and determined that he initially needed speech, and later found that he did not need to
continue with speech.
Findings for Research Question One.

Research Question was stated as follows: How did the curricular resources affect Eddie’s learning? Eddie made the least academic progress of all of the five students I studied. He showed the most improvement in naming upper case letters and showed the least improvement in writing.

Findings for Research Question Two.

Research question was stated as follows: How did Eddie respond to the intervention strategies? Eddie was the only student who said he liked the Leap Pad and used it a lot. His mother said that his eight-year-old autistic brother got more out of the DVDs than Eddie. She explained that when it came to some things, they were on the same level.

Findings for Research Question Three.

Research question was stated as follows: How did the Extended Day Schedule affect Eddie’s progress? Eddie benefited from the extra time academically, socially, and physically. However, his academic skills were not high enough to be successful in First Grade. Additionally, Eddie was young, and his size was small. For all of those reasons, Eddie needed to repeat Kindergarten the following year.
Table 5

2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Upper Case Letter Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Fall 2006 Scores</th>
<th>Winter 2007 Scores</th>
<th>Spring 2007 Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Fall 2006 scores represent the base-line score for each student. Winter 2007 scores represent formative scores and Spring 2007 scores represent post-intervention measures. The total number of Upper Case Letter Names possible was 26.
Figure 5

2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Upper Case Letter Names
### Table 6

2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Lower Case Letter Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Fall 2006 Scores</th>
<th>Winter 2007 Scores</th>
<th>Spring 2007 Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>26</td>
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<td>Cameron</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Fall 2006 scores represent the base-line score for each student. Winter 2007 scores represent formative scores and Spring 2007 scores represent post-intervention measures. The total number of Lower Case Letter Names possible was 26.
Table 7

2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Letter Sounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Fall 2006 Scores</th>
<th>Winter 2007 Scores</th>
<th>Spring 2007 Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Matthew</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Susie</td>
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<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Fall 2006 scores represent the base-line score for each student. Winter 2007 scores represent formative scores and Spring 2007 scores represent post-intervention measures. The total number of Letter Sounds possible was 26.
Figure 7

2006-2007 Letter Sounds Assessments
Table 8

*2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Number Recognition*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Fall 2006 Scores</th>
<th>Winter 2007 Scores</th>
<th>Spring 2007 Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Fall 2006 scores represent the base-line score for each student. Winter 2007 scores represent formative scores and Spring 2007 scores represent post-intervention measures. The total number for Number Recognition is 31 numerals from 0-30.
Figure 8

2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Number Recognition
### Table 9

**2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Sight Words**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Fall 2006 Scores</th>
<th>Winter 2007 Scores</th>
<th>Spring 2007 Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Fall 2006 scores represent the base-line score for each student. Winter 2007 scores represent formative scores and Spring 2007 scores represent post-intervention measures. The total number of Sight Words possible is 35.
Figure 9

2006-2007 Scores for Sight Words
Table 10

2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Fall 2006 Scores</th>
<th>Winter 2007 Scores</th>
<th>Spring 2007 Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danny</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>2-</td>
<td>2-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Fall 2006 scores represent the base-line score for each student. Winter 2007 scores represent formative scores and Spring 2007 scores represent post-intervention measures. Scores were based on the Las Virgenes Unified School District Writing Rubric (Figure 20.) The highest score possible was 4.*
Figure 10

2006-2007 Assessment Scores for Writing
Figure 11. Matthew’s Fall Writing Sample.

(I know a lot about castles)
Figure 12. Matthew’s Winter Writing Assessment
I no ya lot about dragons and the kum dragons come in different colors.

My favorite dragon is a yuan. My other favorite is the chinese dragon.
(A rocket ship for Mars with cars coming to deliver food. Somebody’s waving from the rocket.)
Figure 15. Danny’s Spring Writing Assessment.
Figure 16. Cameron’s Fall Writing Sample.

Dinosaur

(I made a T-Rex. It says dinosaur)
Figure 17. Cameron’s Winter Writing Assessment.
Figure 18. Cameron’s Spring Writing Assessment.
Figure 19. Susie’s Fall Writing Sample.

تمارين الرفع والتدوير من خلال النصوص مع النصوص الأخرى والرسومات المرفقة.
Figure 20. Susie’s Winter Writing Assessment.
Figure 21. Susie’s Spring Writing Sample.
Figure 22. Eddie’s Fall Writing Sample.

(This is me, hiking. I am going up the hill.)
Figure 23. Eddie’s Winter Writing Assessment.
Figure 24. Eddie’s Spring Writing Sample.
### KINDERGARTEN - WRITING RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADVANCED</td>
<td>PROFCIENT</td>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>BELOW BASIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistently meets or exceeds standards</td>
<td>Frequently meets the standard</td>
<td>Progressing toward the standards</td>
<td>Standards are not yet demonstrated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### CONTENT
- Writes a statement using three or more phonetically spelled words
- Responds to assigned topic
- If picture is present it illustrates sentence
- Writes phonetically spelled words
- Responds to assigned topic
- If picture is present it illustrates sentence
- Attempts to write a word or words
- Unclear response to assigned topic
- If picture is present it responds to the assigned topic
- Picture
- Scribble only
- Random letters
- May not respond to assigned topic

#### ORGANIZATION
- Most syllables in the words are represented
- May use spaces between words
- May use a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence
- Uses lower case letters appropriately
- Uses some CVC words
- Uses a period at the end of a sentence some of the time
- Writing is legible
- Some syllables in the words are represented
- May mix upper and lower case letters
- Uses some CVC words
- Writes using left to right and top to bottom some of the time
- Writing is legible
- One letter, usually the first or last one heard, is used to represent most words
- Writes using left to right and top to bottom most of the time
- Not using left to right or top to bottom

*Assessment should be based on journals, prompts and other daily*

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**Figure 25.** Las Virgenes Unified School District Kindergarten Writing Rubric
Chapter 5

Discussion and Implications

Introduction

Research based curricular resources taught in the new Extended-day Kindergarten class along with parent interviews and intervention materials sent home helped the five students in this study demonstrate measurable progress. The discussion and implications for how the curricular resources affected student learning, how the students responded to the interventions, and how the Extended-day schedule affected student progress will be discussed in this section.

Discussion and implications for Research Question One.

Research question one was stated as follows: How did the curricular resources affect students learning? Five assessments were given and showed growth, however, the Writing Assessment scores did not show as much growth as the others. Reasons for this could be that there were only four scores possible in the Writing Assessment, whereas there were more scores possible in the other assessments. For that reason, it is important to look at the actual writing samples to see the progress of each of the students. In the following year, 2007-2008, the Las Virgenes Unified School District added another writing program to the Kindergarten and First Grade curriculum. Kindergarten and First Grade Teachers in The Las Virgenes Unified School District felt that the Step Up to Writing program was not geared as much for beginning writers. The writing program which was added the following year is called Units of Study for Primary Writing by Lucy Calkins (2003). This writing program includes a minilesson, time to confer with students as they write, and a reflective sharing session. If Units of Study for Primary Writing was
available for the students in 2006-2007, it could possibly have helped these students show more progress in their writing.

Each of the students demonstrated significant progress in language arts and math. Matthew and Susie made the most progress of the five students in this study, Eddie made the least progress, and Cameron and Danny were in the middle. Matthew and Susie did not have a lot in common. However, they both had parents who demonstrated their unity when both parents attended their students’ conferences. Although Matthew’s family was less structured than Susie’s, both parents were supportive of each other and of their children. Edwards (1999, p.3) states that “Parent involvement matters for any kind of school program success and for any individual child’s school achievement, especially in reading and language arts.”

Matthew did not begin kindergarten with as many curricular resources as other students in the class. Although Matthew was the fourth oldest student in the class, he did not have as much pre-school experience as most of the other students, having attended pre-school twice a week. His parents described him as a late bloomer, talking and walking a little bit later than the average child. Another factor affecting his adjustment to kindergarten was that his family was not highly structured before he started kindergarten. He was the older of two children, and both his parents worked at home. His father volunteered weekly and stated that going to school was good for everybody in the family to give them structure. Once Matthew became familiar with the kindergarten routine, he continued to show significant progress throughout the year.

Susie’s strengths were her oral language and her large motor skills. She was the sixth youngest in the class and the youngest in a family of seven. Susie was brought up
in a very structured home. Being the twin of a sister who had diabetes and who was much higher academically than she was, seemed to be a big obstacle for her. I think the communication between her parents and myself were a big factor in helping her make the excellent progress this year. Her parents and I discussed how Susie needed extra attention from the school nurse after watching her sister visit the nurse twice a day to check her blood-sugar level. We also discussed and implemented the successful separation of the girls while helping them with homework or reading books to help Susie catch up.

Eddie, who made the least progress, was the youngest student in the class. This factor already put Eddie in an “at risk” category for retention. Eddie’s home life was not typical, in that his parents were divorced and he lived with his mother, his autistic brother, and his grandparents on his father’s side. His father lived in Orange County. He and his brother saw their father twice a month on the weekends. The expectations were different at each home. His mother said that his father was very strict. Eddie’s father thought that Eddie wasn’t working hard enough, and asked me for extra work for him to do over the summer. When he was at his grandparents’ house, his grandmother spoiled him. Eddie had difficulties with small motor skills such as cutting, coloring, and writing. He also had difficulties with large motor skills during Physical Education. Eddie was not an attentive listener and would play with his clothes or cover his head with his clothes. His mother volunteered in the classroom weekly, and saw how he struggled with the kindergarten curriculum. She was in agreement that he needed another year of kindergarten.
I believe Cameron’s scores reflected the serious illness of his father which affected his whole family and the fact that he was the youngest in a family of older parents and sisters in their 20’s. At the beginning of the year, I thought he demonstrated qualities of a child with Attention Deficit with Hyperactivity Disease (ADHD). He constantly moved around when he was supposed to be sitting, touched other children, made distractive noises, and would clown around. His mother told me that he did not behave like that at home. Being the youngest in the family, he received a lot of attention from his family. There was also not a lot of structure in his family, such as no bedtime rules. Although Cameron made good progress, I feel his father’s illness greatly affected his academics as well as his behavior during the year.

Danny entered kindergarten as the second oldest in the class. He made good progress, but was hindered by his premature birth needing oxygen and medication as a baby. Fearing sickness from other children, his mother sheltered him from other children until he was four years old. He had less than one year of pre-school before kindergarten and entered fearful of his teacher and the students. Having said that, he was an attentive listener, and blossomed emotionally as well as academically through the year.

Discussion and Implications for Research Question Two.

Research question was stated as follows: How did the students respond to the intervention strategies? Four of the five students said that they liked the DVDs the best out of the materials sent home; although Eddie, the youngest student, said he liked the Leap Pad the best. The implication for this response is that the DVD’s were high interest and at the right instructional level for the four students who liked it the best. Since the
students also had the opportunity to look at the DVD’s in the car, it was another way to practice learning the letter names, letter sounds, and blending letters to make words as they were traveling in the car.

Although the Leap Pad was also high interest, the Language Arts and Math books I included were probably too easy for the four students who liked the DVD, whereas, the books were at Eddie’s instructional level. In the future, I will need to check the books that go with the Leap Pad more thoroughly, to make sure it is at the right instructional level for the students.

All of the students enjoyed taking home and practicing their “popcorn words”. One of the reasons why I think it was so successful was because I gave the “popcorn words” to all of the students in the class. They didn’t feel different from any other student when the words went home. We practiced recognizing the sight words in class and also played games with them, which the students could practice at home.

Although the parents and students did not comment on the number flashcards, I think they forgot the cards were there. I placed the cards in a pocket of the bag that held the Leap Pad. Another note to remember for next time will be to make sure everyone knows what is inside the bag they are taking home.

The parent interviews were also an important intervention strategy which gave both myself and the parents time to discuss many aspects of their child and their backgrounds. The parents told me how they appreciated the time I took to listen to them and to prepare the materials for their children so they could practice the skills at home.

Discussion and Implications for Research Question Number Three.
Research question was stated as follows: How did the Extended Day schedule affect student progress? Sally Hampton wrote in an article entitled The Forgotten “R”: Writing: “The most precious commodity schools can provide learners is the gift of time in the presence of knowledgeable adults” (2006, p.38). The extended day schedule gave each of the students that gift time so that they could receive instruction that was less hectic and geared to the students needs. Although each of the six assessments given to the five students in this study showed significant progress, the assessments that showed the most growth were Lower Case Letter Names and Number Recognition. The implication is that the extra instructional time in Language Arts and Math were the most effective for improving student learning for naming lower case letter and recognizing numerals zero to 30. I also feel that the extra time in Physical Education helped the students to be more alert so they could do their best in their other subjects at school.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore how the curricular resources affected student learning, how the students responded to the intervention strategies, and how the extended-day schedule affected student learning. The findings of this study were the following: (a) The assessments given to the five students that showed the most growth were Naming Lower Case Letters and Number Recognition. (b) The interventions that most students liked were the Leap Frog DVDs, and The Leap Frog DVDs seemed to be the most helpful and of interest to the students. (c) The additional time in Language Arts and Mathematics with the extended-day schedule was shown to be the most effective for
improving the Lower Case Letter Names and Number Recognition. Upper Case Letter Names, Letter Sounds, Writing, and Sight Words also showed significant improvement.

*Implications for Administrators*

Edwards (1999, pp. XIV, XV) states, “one of the toughest issues facing today’s schools is parental involvement. Productive collaboration between parents and schools requires more than PTA meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and yearly open houses. Schools must redefine their responsibilities to ensure that such collaboration is established. If teachers use the idea of parent stories at the beginning of the year and throughout the year, they will have a path to follow.” I found that by using Edwards’ parent stories questionnaire, I had a path to follow which enabled me to find out so much more about my students that I ever would have in the usual 20-minute conference. Although it would not be reasonable to expect teachers to spend an hour or more to ask each of the parents in their classes all 50 questions in the questionnaire, I think it would be helpful to encourage teachers to ask these questions of the parents of their at-risk students. It would help the teacher have a better understanding of his/her students, as well as contributing to a major part of the process of Response to Intervention. If a teacher would need to refer a student to the Student Study Team at the school, the information from the parent interview, along with assessment results and sample work from the student would help to give substantive background information. It would be especially helpful for Kindergarten teachers, since they are the first teachers to get to know the students and their families as they begin their school experience.
A second recommendation for administrators is to encourage teachers to use graphs for meetings with parents and for meetings such as Student Study Team. I found that it is not difficult to learn, and it gives a good visual picture of the data. Classes in Microsoft Excel should be offered to teachers if they do not already know how to make graphs.

Another recommendation for administrators is that they provide funds so that teachers could send home intervention materials. When parents can be involved with their student’s work at home, they have a better understanding of what their child needs to practice. Most parents purchase workbooks, which are not motivational to the students. When teachers can send home intervention materials that are motivational and target the specific needs of the students, there is a better chance of seeing progress.

A third recommendation for administrators is that they consider the benefits of Extended-day Kindergarten. Since I found that the majority of information about extending the traditional half-day kindergarten schedule was mostly about full-day programs, studies such as this could help teachers and administrators learn more about the benefits of extended-day schedules for student remediation. I feel the extra time for academic as well as social skills have been an advantage to the students who have been in an extended-day schedule. One of the biggest things to consider about changing to an extended-day schedule is if there is enough space so that there is one teacher per classroom, rather than two teachers sharing a classroom. If a school does not have enough space, then it is not possible. Another consideration is how the teachers feel about not sharing a classroom. Some teachers do not want to change from having another teacher in the classroom to help. Other factors include whether an Instructional Assistant
would be available to help during small group instruction, whether extra materials would be needed, and how the parents feel about changing to an extended day program. The administrator would need to see if all of these factors would fit into the school budget. At Round Meadow Elementary, the Kindergarten teachers and parents were in favor of the Extended-day schedule, the extra classroom space was available, and the PFA agreed to pay for the instructional assistants.

I highly recommend the Extended-Day Kindergarten schedule, and I am glad my school was able to make it happen.

2007-2008 Follow-Up

Cameron’s First Grade teacher said that he is in the middle academically, but continues to be a behavior problem. Danny and Susie are in the same class. Their teacher said that they are making good progress. Susie continues to be a little higher academically than Danny. Susie didn’t remember saying that she didn’t want to go to First Grade. Matthew’s teacher said that he is in the low-average group and that he still works slowly. She also said that making new friends is still hard for him. Eddie repeated kindergarten and is in my class again. He is now doing average kindergarten work.
References


San Diego Union Tribune.


Moore, J. (2002, April 4). Kindergarten classes growing up – County educators lean toward nation’s trend of full day of learning, Ventura County Star, p. A01.


Texas: aha! Process, Inc.


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Appendix A
Edwards-Pleasants Parent Stories Questionnaire
Edwards (1999)

*Parent/Child Family Routines and Activities*

1. How did you structure your child’s day as she/he was growing up? What routines were followed?
2. What is a normal weekday routine for you and your child? What is a normal weekend like?
3. What do you and your child enjoy doing together?
4. What does your family enjoy doing together?

*Child Literacy History*

5. Tell me about your child at age 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. What interesting things did he/she do at these ages? Or, what unique qualities stand out in your mind about your child during early childhood? What is interesting to you about your child now?
6. Tell me of your observations of your child’s beginning learning efforts. Or, tell me about early milestones, like sitting-up, walking, talking. Were any of these delayed?
7. All children have potential. Did you feel that ____ had some particular talent or “gift” early on? If so, what was it? What did your child do to make you think that he/she had this potential? Were there specific things you did as a parent to strengthen this talent?
8. What do you think you child might be when she/he grows up? Does your child know you think she/he will do this one day? Do you and your child talk about this talent?
9. Are there circumstances at home I should know about in school that may interfere with your child’s learning at school?

*Teachable Moments*

10. Have you done anything around the house that your child saw or participated in that may have helped him/her learn something when she/he was younger? What was that “something”?
11. What are some of the ways that your child may have learned simply by watching you do something?
Homelife

12. How do you discipline your child? Does it work? Do you have certain “buzz words” that you use to get your child’s attention?
13. Tell me about your relationship with your child.
14. Are there any problems at home that might affect your child’s interest in learning?

Educational Experiences

15. Does your child visit the public library? How often? Does he/she have a library card?
16. What type of summer activities does your child participate in?
17. Does your child participate in activities outside of school on a weekly or monthly basis? Is so, what?

Parent’s Beliefs about Their Child

18. What does your child want to be when he/she grows up? Do you believe he/she will reach that goal? What might prevent him/her from reaching their goal?
19. How does your child feel about school?
20. Is there something about your child that might not be obvious to the teacher, but might positively or negatively affect his/her performance in school if the teacher knew? If so, what would that something be?

Child’s Time with Others

21. Who are the significant people in your child’s life?
22. How much time would you say your child spends with other children? With other adults? How is this time usually spent?
23. Within the past week or two, what are some specific interactions that your child has had with you, his/her siblings, or adults that stick out in your mind? In the years past, what are some specific interactions that stick out in your mind?
Parent/Child/Sibling Relationship

24. What do you like about being a parent?
25. How do you view your role this year as a kindergarten parent?
26. What would you like to have happen you’re your child in school this year?
27. What kinds of things do you do to help your child to be successful in school?
28. Do you and your family make things together at home? What kinds of projects have you done? What was this experience like?
29. Are both you and your spouse involved in your child’s school learning? If so, how?

Parents’ Hobbies, Activities, and Interests in Books

30. What activities/hobbies do you participate in as an individual? With your spouse or friends? As a family?
31. What kinds of books/magazines do you read? Did you read much when you were growing up? What kinds of books/magazines did you read as a child when you were growing up?

Parent/Teacher Relationship

32. What do you think I could do to help you with your child’s learning experiences at home?
33. What method of communication work best for you? In what ways do you usually communicate?

Parent’s School History –Ideas about School

34. If you could let me know one thing that one of your own teachers did that strongly influenced you negatively or positively what would it be?
35. What do you remember about your own efforts to read and write? Was it difficult for you to learn to read? How did you learn to read?
36. Did your teacher(s) include or ask for your opinions and/or suggestions in designing what they taught? If so, provide some examples. If not, discuss why your teacher(s) chose not to include your opinions and/or suggestions.
37. Did you enjoy school? If not, when did you begin to dislike school? Can you remember what caused you to feel this way?
38. Can you describe your favorite teacher? What did you dislike about him/her?
39. Can you describe your least favorite teacher? What did you dislike about him/her?
40. Can you describe your elementary, middle, or high school principal?
41. Can you describe the contact you’ve had with your elementary school principal?
42. Everybody has hopes and dreams when they are young children. As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? Did that change over the years? Have your realized your childhood goals for your future?
43. Can you describe “something” about your home learning environment that you feel might be different from the learning environment of the school?
44. Can you describe “something” about your home learning environment that you would like the school to build upon because you feel that this “something” would enhance your child’s learning potential at school?