Dialogic Reading Using Social-Emotional Themed Storybooks: Impact on Preschoolers’ Emergent Literacy and Emotion Knowledge

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

The current study examined the efficacy of a reading intervention designed to simultaneously enhance the vocabulary and social-emotional skills of preschoolers. Specifically, a six-week reading intervention was implemented with Head Start children. This study examined the impact of the reading intervention on children’s vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and social competence. Approximately half of the children participated in the intervention at school and at home, while the other half participated in the intervention at school only. Results indicated that participants in both groups had improvements in vocabulary and emotion knowledge scores, although this varied depending on classroom. Given the small sample size, the results cannot be generalized beyond the sample of participants.
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Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................ ii
Vita .................................................................................................................................................. iii
List of Tables ................................................................................................................................ iv

Chapter 1: Introduction .............................................................................................................. 1
  Statement of the Problem ........................................................................................................ 1
  Purpose of the Study ................................................................................................................ 3
  Significance of the Study ......................................................................................................... 4
  Research Questions ................................................................................................................ 4
  Definition of Terms .................................................................................................................. 5

Chapter 2: Literature Review ...................................................................................................... 7
  Literacy ....................................................................................................................................... 7
    Emergent Literacy ................................................................................................................... 7
    Home Literacy ....................................................................................................................... 10
    School Literacy ..................................................................................................................... 11
    Early literacy and academic outcomes ............................................................................... 13
    Dialogic Reading ................................................................................................................... 17
  Social-Emotional Development ............................................................................................. 26
    Development of emotional learning .................................................................................... 28
    Social-emotional skills and academic outcomes ............................................................... 31
    School Readiness .................................................................................................................. 33
    Social-emotional interventions ............................................................................................ 35
  Integrating literacy and social-emotional skills .................................................................... 39
  The Current Study .................................................................................................................. 46

Chapter 3: Methodology .............................................................................................................. 49
  Research Design ....................................................................................................................... 49
  Data Collection ....................................................................................................................... 50
    Participants ............................................................................................................................ 52
  Intervention ............................................................................................................................... 57
  Instruments ................................................................................................................................ 63
    Language Skills .................................................................................................................... 63
    Emotion Knowledge ............................................................................................................. 63
    Social Competence ............................................................................................................. 64
  Data Analysis ........................................................................................................................... 66
Dependent variables .................................................................................................................. 66
Independent variables ............................................................................................................. 66
Descriptive Statistics .................................................................................................................. 67
Validity ....................................................................................................................................... 69

Data Analysis .............................................................................................................................. 69

Chapter 4: Results ...................................................................................................................... 71
Research Questions .................................................................................................................... 71
Data Analysis ............................................................................................................................. 73
Research Question One .............................................................................................................. 73
Research Question Two ............................................................................................................ 75
Research Question Three ......................................................................................................... 78

Chapter 5: Discussion ................................................................................................................ 84
Summary of Results ................................................................................................................... 85
Discussion and Implication of Results ....................................................................................... 88
Limitations and Directions for Further Research ...................................................................... 92

References: ................................................................................................................................. 96

Appendix A: Book List for School Intervention ........................................................................ 115
Appendix B: Teacher Book Guide ............................................................................................. 116
Appendix C: Preschool Book Reading Log .............................................................................. 118
Appendix D: Book List for Home Intervention ......................................................................... 119
Appendix E: Parent Book Guide ............................................................................................... 120
Appendix F: Parent Book Log ................................................................................................... 122
List of Tables

Table 1. Demographic Information across Classrooms ..................................................68

Table 2. Comparison of Vocabulary Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the Home + School Condition (N=12) ..................................................................................74

Table 3. Comparison of Vocabulary Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the School Condition (N=11) ..............................................................................................................74

Table 4. Comparison of Vocabulary Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the Home and School Condition (N=12) ..................................................................................75

Table 5. Comparison of Emotion Knowledge Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the Home and School Condition (N=12) ........................................................................76

Table 6. Comparison of Emotion Knowledge Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the School-only Condition (N=11) ..........................................................................................77

Table 7. Comparison of Emotion Knowledge Pre-test and Post-test Scores across Classrooms ..................................................................................................................78

Table 8. Comparison of Protective Factors, and Behavior Concerns between School-only Intervention and Home and School Intervention (N=23) ........................................79

Table 9. Comparison of Protective Factors and Behavior Concerns Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the Home and School Condition (N=12) ................................................80

Table 10. Comparison of Protective Factors and Behavior Concerns Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the School-only Condition (N=11) ..............................................................80

Table 11. Comparison of Protective Factor Levels across Classrooms ................................81

Table 12. Comparison of Behavior Concerns Levels across Classrooms ..........................82

Table 13. Comparison of Protective Factors and Behavior Concerns Pre-test and Post-test Scores by Class ........................................................................................................83
Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Young children’s social-emotional and emergent literacy skills are important determinants of academic success, however, many children begin school lacking these critical skills. Children are increasingly attending preschool programs prior to kindergarten entry. Unfortunately, research has found significant variability in the quality of literacy instruction provided in preschool programs (Conner, Morrison, & Slominksi, 2006) with overall low quality of language and literacy instruction, but moderate to high quality classroom climate and teacher sensitivity (Justice, Mashburn, Hamre, & Pianta, 2008).

In general, preschool teachers are supportive of literacy goals (Powell, Diamond, Bojeczyk, & Gerde, 2008) and believe literacy instruction should occur daily, but research indicates relatively low rates of evidence-based literacy practices, such as repeated shared book reading (Hawken, Johnston, & McDonnell, 2005). Powell and colleagues (2008) found teachers have differing views on the relation of literacy to other goals, with teachers predominantly viewing social-emotional development as a prerequisite to literacy development.

Children’s home literacy experiences also vary in frequency and quality. Shared
book reading is a relatively common experience for young children. However, parents usually don’t engage in interactive book reading to the extent necessary to maximize the impact on children’s language. Children’s language abilities are related to their response to formal reading instruction (Lonigan, 2006), reading comprehension (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002), and social competence (McCabe, 2005).

Increasing the quality of shared booking reading experiences at home and school can enhance preschoolers’ emergent literacy skills, particularly their language skills (Fletcher & Reese, 2005). Extensive research has been conducted on training parents and teachers to use dialogic reading, which is an interactive shared book reading technique developed by Whitehurst and colleagues (1988) designed to enhance children’s active involvement with storybooks to promote their language development (Mol, Bus, de Jong, & Smeets, 2008). Experimental research has found dialogic reading consistently produces gains in children’s language (Arnold, Lonigan, Whitehurst, & Epstein, 1994; Reese, Sparks, & Levy, 2010) and it has been identified as an evidence-based early literacy intervention (Justice & Pullen, 2003).

It is predicted that children’s language abilities impact their emotion knowledge, regulation, and expression, as well as their academic outcomes (Denham & Brown, 2010). Emotional competence is an important determinant of children’s school readiness and social competence. Children develop emotional competence through adult modeling, coaching, and reaction to emotional expressions (Denham & Burton, 2003). Gottman, Katz, and Hooven (1997) propose parents have differing responses to children’s emotions: dismissive or disapproving, “coaching”, and accepting of emotions but low in coaching skills. Children of parents who “coach” or are aware of their emotions and label
and validate the child’s emotions, have increased emotion knowledge (Denham, 1998) and teacher-rated social competence (Gottman et al., 1997). However, many parents and teachers aren’t trained in how to maximize children’s social-emotional development.

Recent research has examined the impact of shared book reading on the development of social-emotional skills (Currenton & Craig, 2011). Children’s literature often focuses on social interactions, which allows for adult-guided discussion of social-emotional situations (Aram & Aviram, 2009). Shared book reading with discussion of the emotional content is related to children’s emotion knowledge and emotion understanding (Denham & Auerbach, 1995) and children’s emotional role-taking abilities (Garner, Jones, Gaddy, & Rennie, 1997). More recently, dialogic reading using social-emotional themed books have been proposed as a way to enhance children’s emotion vocabulary (Doyle & Bramwell, 2006). Mincic (2009) found limited support for combining dialogic reading techniques with social-emotional themed books to enhance children’s literacy skills, and emotion knowledge in a Head Start population. Terry (2011) also found limited support for combining dialogic reading with emotion-themed books in a home-based Head Start population. The challenges of completing research with a Head Start population have been well documented. Specifically, Whitehurst, Epstein, and colleagues (1994) and Lonigan and Whitehurst (1998) found significant variability in Head Start parent and teacher compliance with reading intervention.

**Purpose of the Study**

The study of children’s emergent literacy skills and social-emotional skills has increased in the past few decades. Researchers and practitioners are increasingly
recognizing the importance of both for children’s academic and social success. While there are several evidence-based interventions to separately address literacy skills and social-emotional skills, there are limited interventions focusing on both. Shared book reading interventions, such as dialogic reading, have demonstrated efficacy, when implemented at home and school, in increasing children’s emergent literacy skills, particularly their vocabulary skills. However, there is limited research on the impact of dialogic reading techniques on children’s social-emotional skills. Universal social-emotional programs have increased preschool children’s prosocial behaviors; however, these programs can be time-consuming and costly. Research is needed to examine the effectiveness of interventions simultaneously enhancing children’s vocabulary and social skills. It is particularly important to identify effective, resource-efficient, and time-efficient interventions so larger numbers of children can benefit.

Significance of the Study

This study examined an intervention addressing emergent literacy skills and social-emotional skills, since both are crucial for later success. Although dialogic reading techniques have been widely researched and implemented, there is limited research on the efficacy of combining dialogic reading with social-emotional themed books. This study was designed to increase the literature on the effects of using dialogic reading to simultaneously enhance children’s vocabulary and social-emotional skills.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of an interactive shared book reading intervention at increasing the vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and
social skills of preschool children. This study implemented the intervention and answered the following questions:

**Research Questions One:** Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s vocabulary, as measured by the TOPEL, more than dialogic reading at school-only?

**Research Question Two:** Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s emotion knowledge, as measured by the AKT, more than dialogic reading at school-only?

**Research Question Three:** Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school have positive effects on children’s social competence, as measured by the DECA-2, more than dialogic reading at school-only?

**Definition of Terms**

1. **Emotion competence** – the child’s ability to apply knowledge of emotion in their efforts to regulate their emotional experiences and negotiate social exchanges (Saarni, 1990). Emotional competence is made up of emotion expression, emotion understanding, and emotion regulation.

2. **Emotion expression** – ability to comprehend and label emotions (Garner, et al., 1997). This is the sending of the affective message (Denham & Burton, 2003).

3. **Emotion knowledge** – the ability to recognize and label feelings of self and others, relate emotions to situations, understand the cause of emotions, and recognize the difference between felt emotions and emotional displays (Denham, 1998).

4. **Emotion regulation** – the most complex component of emotional competence (Brassard & Boehm, 2007), defined as “consisting of the extrinsic and intrinsic
processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions, especially their intensive and temporal features, to accomplish one’s goals” (Thompson, 1994, pg. 28).

5. **Social competence** – the ability to integrate cognitive, affective, and behavioral states to achieve social goals (McCabe & Alamura, 2011).
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Young children’s early literacy skills and social-emotional skills have been prevalent topics within the research community. While children’s literacy skills have been a focus for several decades, there has been a recent increase in the interest of social-emotional skills as they relate to literacy. Despite the increased focus and the relationship between early literacy skills and social-emotional skills on later academic outcomes, little research has focused on interventions combined to simultaneously enhance both skills in early childhood.

This chapter discusses the relevant literature on literacy and social-emotional development during the preschool years. First, there will be a discussion about literacy during preschool. Second, there will be a discussion of social-emotional skills during preschool. Finally, a review of the literature relevant to the relation between literacy skills and social-emotional skills will be presented.

Literacy

Emergent Literacy

Learning to read is an important developmental milestone for children. Children that begin school lacking prerequisite reading knowledge are at greater risk of later reading difficulties (Storch & Whitehurst, 2001). Extensive research has been conducted regarding children’s emergent literacy and how to enhance these skills during the
preschool period. Considerable research has focused on the benefits of shared storybook reading during early childhood. Many young children in the United States are read to frequently and some experts believe shared book reading is critical for the reading success of children. Shared book reading, or storybook reading, broadly refers to an adult reading the book text to a child or a group of children. Shared book reading may involve some type of discussion or more structured components, such as dialogic reading (Hindman, Conner, Jewkes, & Morrison, 2008). Some research has linked shared book reading to the development of children’s emergent literacy skills (Gest, Freeman, Domitrovich, & Welsh, 2004).

While various definitions of emergent literacy exist, it is often refers to a child’s development of prereading skills, typically comprised of the child’s language comprehension skills and print/decoding skills (Kadavarek, & Justice, 2002). Emergent literacy skills develop during the preschool period, prior to any formal instruction and provide the foundation for children’s future reading and writing abilities (Gest et al., 2004). Evidence suggests emergent literacy is a multidimensional construct with an implied developmental continuum between prereading and reading (Storch & Whitehurst, 2001).

Whitehurst and Lonigan (1998) propose that emergent literacy is made up of at least two domains: inside-out skills and outside-in skills. Inside-out skills refer to the child’s phonological awareness and letter knowledge, while outside-in skills refer to the child’s language skills and conceptual knowledge. These skills develop through different experiences and have varying roles in the development of later reading skills. Development of outside-in skills is associated with shared book reading, particularly
interactive shared book reading, such as dialogic reading.

The emergent literacy perspective views preschool literacy related behaviors as an important factor in the developmental continuum of literacy learning (Connor et al., 2006). Stable relationships between children’s skills upon entering school and later school success have been found (Storch & Whitehurst, 2001) making emergent literacy skills an important determinant of children’s early school success, particularly reading success (Senechal & LeFevre, 2001).

Four domains have been identified as important for the development of early literacy: phonological awareness, orientation to print, story comprehension, and motivation for reading (Sonnechschein, & Munsterman, 2002). Phonological awareness refers to children’s sensitivity to the components of sounds and can be enhanced by exposure to linguistic routines, such as nursery rhymes, which increase familiarity with phonological patterns. Orientation to print includes children’s familiarity with written conventions and their functions, and can be enhanced by strategies used in print referencing interventions. Story comprehension occurs when children derive appropriate meanings from text and can be facilitated by adult-led discussion of story concepts. Children’s motivation for reading is a newer concept and refers to interest and attitudes about reading and is believed to be a result of prior reading experience. Sonnechschein and Munsterman (2002) found preschool children who were read books by people who displayed high levels of affective behaviors, such as being attentive to the child’s level of engagement, were more interested in reading.

Research on acquisition of emergent literacy skills in early childhood indicates children learn best when they are exposed to frequent, informal and meaningful
interactions with literacy related concepts and activities. Children learn more advanced
congcepts when they are interested and engaged and when a more capable and
knowledgeable adult guides their knowledge acquisition (Justice, Chow, Capellini,
Flanigan, & Colton, 2003). This relates to Vygotsky’s concept of zone of proximal
development, which states that children can engage in more complex behaviors with an
adult than they can on their own (Anderson, Anderson, Friedrich, & Kim, 2010).

**Home Literacy**

Preschool children are frequently read to at home and at school. Often, children’s
first exposure to shared book reading occurs in their home. Shared book reading is a
component of the broader concept of a family’s home literacy environment which also
includes variables such as: parental encouragement and value of reading, parental
modeling of reading, parental attitudes toward education, and library use (Phillips &
Lonigan, 2009). A significant portion of research on home literacy environments has
focused on shared book reading or storybook reading, which refers to an adult reading
text to a child while possibly engaging the child in some type of discussion of the story or
related ideas (Hindman, et al., 2008). Shared book reading can also include more
structured types of reading, such as dialogic reading, which can occur at home and
school. Extensive empirical research has been conducted to determine the association
between shared book reading and children’s literacy related outcomes with most research
linking shared book reading to language development (Fletcher, & Reese, 2005).

Shared book reading is a common occurrence in many families. Studies
examining the frequency of book reading with young children at home, found reading
frequency varies according to family ethnicity, parental education, parental beliefs, socioeconomic status, and child variables. Fletcher and Reese (2005) reported reading frequency from a nationally representative sample of parents with children under the age of three and found reading frequency increases as children get older, with 22% of parents reportedly reading to children under twelve months, and 45% of parents reading to children at age two. Differences were found among frequency of reading and socioeconomic status. Higher SES parents and mothers with higher educational attainment report more frequent reading with their young children. Parental stress and daily hassles were negatively associated with the frequency of reported maternal reading. Consistent with these findings, in their meta-analysis of shared storybook reading from 1960-1993, Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) found that depending on the research study, 43 to 75% of parents of preschoolers report reading to their child on a daily basis. They further elaborated that approximately half of low-income preschoolers were read to daily.

A study of reading behavior in low income families concluded that most preschool children enjoy being read to, are motivated to be read to, and initiate book reading (Bracken, & Fischel, 2008). Child reading interest is believed to be an important factor in relationship between early shared book reading and later literacy outcomes. Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) suggest children interested in reading may engage in more reading and literacy related activities than their less interested peers, which could allow them to become better readers. Some evidence suggests that the amount of preschool book exposure is related to child interest (Ortiz, Stowe, & Arnold, 2001).

**School Literacy**
A significant portion of preschooler’s literacy experiences occur at school, but, like home literacy, there is substantial variability in the frequency and quality of literacy experiences, particularly shared book reading. Although teachers are trained in literacy methods and have a variety of books and other materials (Hindman, et al., 2008) research has found the overall quality of language and literacy instruction is low in most preschool classrooms (Justice, et al., 2008).

Several recent studies have examined how preschool children spend their time at school and the quality of instruction they receive while at school. Early and colleagues (2010) reported on classroom observations of 2061 children in 652 preschool programs in 11 states and found the day is roughly divided among free-choice, teacher-directed activities, and meals/routines. Their findings indicate children spend most of their time in language and literacy social activities and less time in math and gross motor activities.

Justice and colleagues (2008) examined the quality of language and literacy experiences of at-risk preschoolers in 135 publicly funded preschools and found despite efforts to improve the quality of language and literacy instruction in preschool, the overall quality was low. In general, the classroom climate and teacher sensitivity were moderate to high. However, they found few teachers provided instruction using evidence-based strategies to enhance language development. Specifically, few teachers were observed to ask open-ended questions, repeat and extend children’s utterances, and model advanced vocabulary.

An investigation of vocabulary and emergent literacy in 156 preschool children found substantial variation in literacy activities among classrooms (Connor et al., 2006). The authors found children’s vocabulary growth was associated with the amount of
meaning-focused activities, such as book reading. On average, children spent almost 15 minutes per day in language and literacy activities, mostly in teacher-child managed literacy activities. Teacher instruction only made up a small portion of the day. They found the time spent on vocabulary activities was zero to four minutes, with an average of eight seconds per day.

Hawken and colleagues (2005) surveyed Head Start teachers regarding their views and practices related to early literacy. They found overall, 90% of Head Start teachers believe literacy instruction should occur daily. A majority of teachers reported engaging in repeated readings only once or twice per month. The authors concluded repeated readings are an underused strategy and Head Start teachers may benefit from additional information and training on the benefits and use of repeated readings.

Overall, parents and teachers appear to be interested in engaging children in early literacy experiences, such as shared book reading. However, there is significant variability in the frequency and quality of children’s early literacy experiences, particularly shared book reading.

**Early literacy and academic outcomes**

Decades of research have linked shared book reading in preschool to the development of language (Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003). Shared book reading is an important activity because it introduces young children to more sophisticated vocabulary than is typically used in conversation (Evans & Shaw, 2008). Experimental research indicates a positive correlation between frequency of shared book reading and children’s vocabulary (Blewitt, Rump, Shealy & Cook, 2009; Raikes & Rodriguez, 2006). Fletcher
and Reese (2005) specified shared book reading is most effective within the child’s zone of proximal development. This occurs when interactions occur at a slightly higher skill level than children’s current skills and is believed to produce quicker skill development.

The benefit of shared book reading may impact children differently based on the child’s individual skill level. Studies have found home and school reading interventions have enhanced benefits for children with lower initial skill level (Jordan, Snow, & Porche, 2000). Correlational evidence suggests, children with lower language skills demonstrate greater gains when adults engage them in less challenging book discussions, while children with more advanced vocabulary benefit from higher-level discussion at the beginning and end of reading (Reese & Cox, 1999). Most studies do not include measures of children’s initial skill levels, which may explain why some research has identified only small effects of shared book reading (Evans, Shaw, & Bell, 2000; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994).

Meta-analysis and review findings from the mid-1990s found similar results regarding the benefit of parent-child book reading, however the researchers interpreted the results slightly differently. Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) evaluated the outcomes of 31 research studies, including 20 correlational studies and 11 intervention studies and found shared book reading accounted for approximately 8% of the variation in children’s early literacy achievement, which the authors considered “unexpectedly modest” and stated “for now, we think some parents would be reassured to know that there is no clear indication that literacy development depends crucially on shared reading experiences in the preschool years.” (p.295). Bus, van Izendoorn & Pellegrini’s (1995) meta-analysis included many of the same studies as Scarborough and Dobrich and also found shared
book reading explains 8% of children’s early literacy outcomes, but concluded ‘book reading is as strong a predictor of reading achievement as phonemic awareness.’ (p. 17).

More recently, Mol, Bus, and de Jong (2009) conducted a meta-analysis of thirty-one studies examined effectiveness of interactive book reading by educators on the vocabulary and print knowledge of young children. The authors found when teachers were trained to actively engage children before, after, and during book reading, a moderate effect was found for children’s oral language skills. Specifically, interactive reading explained 6% of the growth in children’s oral language skills. Consistent with previous researchers, the authors suggest both quality and frequency of classroom book reading is important. Greater outcomes were found when experiments were highly controlled and implemented by researchers, indicating the need to determine factors that would allow for successful intervention implementation in the natural classroom setting.

DeBruin-Parecki (2009) suggests that engaging in interactive reading behaviors, such as questioning and responding, relating the stories to the child’s life, and monitoring the child’s understanding and adjusting accordingly, to enhance children’s engagement in reading. Evans and Shaw (2008) summarized experimental studies that found gains in children’s vocabulary as a result of storybook reading that included some combination of the following factors: repeated readings occurring at least three times, text included a novel word multiple times, novel words were clearly illustrated in the picture and pointed to by the reader, novel words were important to the text, novel word meaning was clear from the context, picture, or explanation, child repeated the word, retold the story, and/or engaged in activities related to the word meaning.

Extensive research indicates the preschool period is significant due to the
development of critically important early literacy skills (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998; Lonigan, 2006), which impact the child’s later academic performance, particularly reading performance. Oral language has been the focus of numerous research studies and interventions. A child’s oral language refers to the compilation of the child’s vocabulary and their ability to use words to understand and convey meaning (Lonigan, 2006). Lonigan reported empirical research which indicates children’s oral language, phonological processing skills, and print knowledge in preschool are strongly predictive of their ability to respond to formal reading instruction in kindergarten through third grade.

In their longitudinal study, Storch and Whitehurst (2001) followed 626 children from preschool until fourth grade. Their code-related skills, such as print knowledge, print concepts and phonological awareness, and their oral language skills were measured in preschool. Decoding skills and reading comprehension were measured in grades one through four. Results indicated a strong connection between preschool code-related and oral language skills and their skills in elementary school. Later elementary reading comprehension skills were significantly influenced by preschool oral language skills. Specifically, children with better oral language skills in preschool had greater reading comprehension abilities in elementary school.

The National Reading Panel (2005) conducted a meta-analysis and indicated early measures of reading, (e.g., decoding) are the best predictors of children’s later reading abilities. They also found children’s oral language skills, such as listening comprehension, understanding syntax, and definitional vocabulary were more strongly associated with children’s decoding and comprehension than their expressive or receptive
vocabulary.

Many children enter kindergarten lacking the necessary prerequisite skills to respond to formal literacy instruction (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998), which is a concern because children’s reading trajectories are relatively stable. Researchers and practitioners agree on the need to focus on the prevention of reading difficulty and prevention should begin at birth and continue until children reach kindergarten (Hawken, Johnston, & McDonnell, 2005).

**Dialogic Reading**

**Description.**

Dialogic reading was developed by Whitehurst and colleagues (1988) and focuses on teaching adults behaviors to facilitate child interaction and engagement in storybook reading. Dialogic reading techniques were designed to use with children ages two to six and were developed based on three principles: teaching adults to use techniques to encourage child discussion of pictures, adult informative feedback to elaborate on child response and provide corrective modeling, and teaching adults to be responsive to their child’s developing abilities (Mol, Bus, DeJong, & Smeets, 2008). Techniques were developed based on the theory that allowing children to practice using language, receive feedback regarding language, and engage in developmentally appropriate conversations would enhance their language development (Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003). Dialogic reading techniques can be used in the classroom or at home (Morgan & Meier, 2008).

Implementations of dialogic reading techniques are determined by the child’s age and developmental level. Parents and teachers are taught standardized prompts designed
to enhance children’s oral vocabulary and listening comprehension. When used in the classroom, teachers read a book to a small group of children and on the second and third reading of the book, they implement specific techniques which can be remembered by their acronyms: PEER (prompt, evaluate, expand, and repeat) and CROWD (completion questions, recall questions, open-ended questions, wh-questions, and distancing). At home, parents implement the same techniques one-on-one with their child. In both settings, children are given frequent opportunities to respond and to tell the story in their own words after hearing the story repeatedly (Morgan & Meier, 2008). When reading with younger children and those with less developed vocabulary skills, focus is primarily on having the child describe objects, actions, and events. With older children or children with more developed vocabulary skills, there is more focus on the whole narrative and on relating the book to the child’s life (Lonigan, 2006).

**Training.**

Adults are typically trained on dialogic reading techniques using a commercially available video. Whitehurst in collaboration with Pearson Early Learning published three instructional videos on dialogic reading techniques called *Read Together Talk Together* (Blom-Hoffman, O’Neil-Pirozzi, & Cutting, 2006). There are separate videos for parents of children ages two to three, for parents of children ages four to five, and for teachers of children ages four to five. Each video provides a rationale for encouraging interactive reading, explains the dialogic reading techniques, and shows a model of ethnically diverse adults and children reading. The video includes a “quiz” which shows the dyad implementing the technique incorrectly and asking participants what could have been done differently (Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003).
Video training has numerous advantages, including cost efficiency, trainer time efficiency, consistency of intervention training, and opportunities for participants to observe model behavior (Blom-Hoffman, et al., 2006). Arnold and colleagues (1994) found two-year old children demonstrated greater gains in expressive and receptive vocabulary when their parents were trained using the video compared to children whose parents were trained using a trainer. In their study of the acceptability of the video among parents and pediatric health care staff, Blom-Hoffman and colleagues (2006) data showed high acceptability.

While video training has numerous advantages, it can be challenging to ensure parental completion of training. When Whitehurst, Epstein, and colleagues (1994) conducted a group parent training at Head Start, only 52% of parents attended the parent meeting. They ultimately had 89% of parents complete the training since the researchers paid Head Start staff $25 to complete individual trainings with parents at a separate time.

**Research Outcomes.**

Dialogic reading is the most widely researched and validated early reading intervention (Whitehurst & Longian, 1998) and has been identified as an evidence-based intervention because it consistently produces gains (Justice & Pullen, 2003). Efficacy of dialogic reading has been investigated using experimental and control group design using standardized language measures (Arnold, et al., 1994; Whitehurst, et al., 1988). Overall results indicate gains in language for children in daycare, low-income households, middle-income households, and in Head Start classrooms. In a meta-analysis of sixteen studies examining the impact of home-implemented dialogic reading on children’s expressive vocabulary, Mol and colleagues (2008) found dialogic reading interventions
explained 8% of the variance in children’s expressive vocabulary outcomes. Storybook reading exposure and child’s active involvement combine to promote language development. The authors suggest quality of book reading experiences are as important as frequency for determining children’s language development.

Meta-analysis results (Mol, et al., 2008) indicate differential impact of dialogic reading depending on child’s age and risk status. Children ages four and five benefited less from dialogic reading compared to children ages two to three. The authors suggest adults may not make modifications so the techniques are appropriate for the developmental reading level of older children.

Results of the meta-analysis are limited because many of the studies did not include data describing demographic information of the control group and intervention group or information regarding reading frequency in both groups, which would need to be similar to make accurate comparisons. Also, for many studies, participation was voluntary so these parents may have been more willing than the general population to implement the strategies. This review only included the impact of home interventions and in some studies, dialogic reading was implemented at home and at school so school implementation may have impacted children’s outcomes.

Justice and Pullen (2003) evaluated outcomes of dialogic reading interventions in schools, including two studies implemented with low-income preschoolers, and suggested dialogic reading demonstrates probable efficacy in enhancing emergent literacy in preschool children, particularly when combined with phonological awareness curriculum. Reese, Sparks, and Leyva (2010) evaluated outcomes from dialogic reading studies including home and school components and found conditions including parent
training produced the strongest intervention effects.

Whitehurst, Arnold, and colleagues (1994) implemented a dialogic reading intervention in a low-income preschool, comparing school intervention, with combined preschool and parent intervention, and with a control group. The sample included 73 three-year-old child participants that were randomly assigned within classrooms to one of the three conditions. Parents and teachers were trained through videotape. Children completed pre-testing, post-testing, and a follow-up assessment six months later. Intervention was conducted for six weeks. During the intervention period, teachers were asked to read to children in a small group for at least ten minutes daily. Parents and teachers were asked to complete a daily log sheet indicating which book was read and when reading occurred. Results indicated that children in the intervention condition demonstrated statistically significant improvement in expressive language skills, with children in the combined treatment condition demonstrating significantly better outcomes compared to both control group and school-only intervention children.

Lonigan and Whitehurst (1998) studied the effects of dialogic reading on the language skills of 91 low-income preschoolers at daycare and at home. They included a school-only, home-only, home + school, and control group. Findings indicated a significant impact on children’s expressive language with children in the home-only condition scoring significantly higher than the other three conditions. The effect size for the home + school condition was almost double the other conditions. Child language gains varied as a function of daycare compliance. The authors concluded that both parent-led and teacher-led interventions can have a positive impact on preschool children’s language skills, but parent-child conditions may have a stronger impact on children’s use
of descriptive language and teacher-child conditions may have a stronger impact on vocabulary acquisition.

It is likely dialogic reading interventions in the home produce stronger effects on children’s vocabulary than school conditions because it’s difficult for teachers to engage each child individually to the extent necessary to produce the maximum gains (Reese et al., 2010). However, dialogic reading interventions at school support curriculum literacy goals and have a positive impact on children’s language.

A recent meta-analysis by Mol, Bus, and DeJong (2009) examined the impact of implementation of interactive reading in educational settings on children’s vocabulary and print knowledge. They found 8% of the variance in children’s expressive vocabulary could be accounted for by implementation of an interactive reading program. Children participating in interactive reading programs gained 28% more language than their peers in the control group. Researcher intervention implementation produced stronger effects than teacher implemented interventions. They found children’s skills improved when read to in large or small groups. It also noted that studies including strict dialogic reading techniques produced lower effects than less standardized interventions. The authors suggest this may be due to increased opportunities to coach teachers, discuss and solve specific problems, and adapt the program to the classroom’s specific needs. They suggest monitoring teachers may provide more opportunity for the teacher to internalize the program principles and adapt the training techniques. Overall, the authors concluded the quantitative summary of research shows interactive reading is beneficial in the classroom.

Evidence for long-term benefits of dialogic reading has been found for parents and children. A large scale longitudinal study by Whitehurst and colleagues (1999) found
children who participated in a dialogic reading intervention throughout their year at Head Start has positive impact on their emergent literacy skills through the end of kindergarten. More recently, Huebner and Payne (2010) conducted a two-year follow-up study with parents trained in dialogic reading techniques. They found trained parents engaged in significantly different reading behavior than untrained parents. After controlling for child age, maternal education, and frequency of home reading, two years later they found that children of trained parents were more actively involved in the reading session, and trained parents used an average of 90% more interactive behaviors than untrained parents.

**Fidelity.**

Dialogic reading produces the greatest effect on children’s language when it is implemented with fidelity (Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003), which may explain Mol and colleagues (2009) findings that researcher implemented interventions produced stronger effects than teacher implemented interventions. Whitehurst, Arnold, and colleagues (1994) conducted a six-week intervention with low-income three-year olds in a daycare center and noted there was substantial variability in the fidelity of intervention implementation by parents and teachers. At school, children’s number of reading sessions ranged from 4.57 to 22.75 ($M = 16.63, SD = 8.24$). At home, the number of reading sessions ranged from 8 to 53 ($M = 34.58, SD = 13.46$).

Lonigan and Whitehurst (1998) also conducted a six-week intervention with low income preschoolers with a combination of home and school conditions, and they also found significant variability in compliance with the intervention. They found that reading sessions occurred relatively frequently at two of the four participating centers, with
children participating in an average of 17.4 reading sessions (SD = 5.63). However, the other two centers had relatively low rates of intervention compliance, with children participating in an average of 6.8 reading sessions (SD = 5.94). Significant variability was also found in the home conditions, with parents reporting reading to their children on average of 28.2 sessions (SD = 9.63, range = 12 to 52). Only 60% of parents returned the reading logs.

They reported teachers might have difficulty reading in small groups when there are only two adults in the classroom. Teachers might also have difficulty integrating small-group readings into their curriculum and they may find it difficult to ask open-ended questions during small-group readings (Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003). In an attempt to increase fidelity, Whitehurst, Epstein and colleagues (1994) added hints for “wh” prompts and hints for recall questions within the books provided for Head Start teachers. Parents were provided with a book guide, which explained the story and included hints for introducing the story and reading the book. Teachers were also provided with a book guide, in addition to extra materials for classroom activities related to the book. Parents were asked to complete a survey to assess intervention compliance. After sending the survey twice, offering a free book, mailing the survey, and calling the nonresponders, the researchers received 63% of the surveys. Teacher’s intervention compliance ranged from 61 – 95% of available intervention days.

Research has also found parents have difficulty implementing the intervention with fidelity, which is consistent with previous findings of variability within home literacy environments. Whitehurst, Epstein, and colleagues (1994) found children’s gains in language were related to the frequency of dialogic reading implementation at home.
Zevenbergen and Whitehurst (2003) report many parents might believe reading is important but daily tasks and stress interfere with their ability to implement the intervention. Low adherence to intervention procedures may also occur because parents don’t understand how to implement the techniques.

In a recent study, DeLoatche, Bradley-Klug, Ogg, Kromrey, and Sundman-Wheat (2015) examined ways to increase Head Start parental involvement in early literacy activities at home. In their study, parents in the intervention group participated in a 75-90 minute intervention training and then completed a nine-week literacy intervention with their children at home. Parent participants were asked to complete 27 lessons in 15-to-20 minute sessions, which included using flashcards to teach alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness. A researcher called parents each week to remind them to complete the intervention and to answer questions. Parents completed an average of 92.67% of the lessons. The authors concluded that training parents to be actively involved in the development of their children’s literacy skills could be an effective way to increase parent involvement, and since the activities are completed at the parent’s convenience in their home, it may help overcome some barriers reported by low income parents, such as time and energy.

**Summary.**

Dialogic reading is a structured interactive intervention designed to enhance the benefits of shared book reading. Studies of dialogic reading indicate it is possible for an intervention to change the quality of parent and teacher reading behaviors, which facilitates children’s language development, particularly expressive language, of young children (Fletcher & Reese, 2005) which is important because of the relation between
early literacy skills and later academic achievement. However, literacy skills are not the only determinant of children’s academic success. Recent research has linked children’s social-emotional competence to academic and social outcomes.

**Social-Emotional Development**

Research literature has recently increased the focus on children’s social-emotional skills due to the conceptual and empirical linkage to school readiness and adjustment (Denham & Brown, 2010). The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has identified specific social-emotional skills that are crucial for success in various social roles and life tasks. The essential skills include: knowing yourself and others; making responsible decisions; care for others; and knowing how to act (Elias, 2006). Denham and Weissberg (2004) further clarified essential skills related to children’s social-emotional outcomes, including emotional expressiveness, self-management, and social awareness.

Brassard & Boehm (2007) report social competence and emotional competence are directly related to each other and are predictive of academic and interpersonal success. However, separating a child’s emotional competence from their social competence is difficult because most behaviors necessary to maintain social interactions and relationships involve emotional competence, such as emotional expressiveness, understanding of emotion, emotional regulation, or some combination (Denham & Burton, 2003). A child’s emotional expression, or their ability to express their emotions appropriately, is a critical component of successful social interactions. The type, frequency, and duration of the child’s emotional expressions are often used to judge their
Brassard and Boehm (2007) identified three key aspects of preschoolers’ emotional competence: emotion knowledge, emotional expressiveness, and emotional regulation. Emotion knowledge or emotion understanding, increases preschoolers’ ability to accurately perceive social cues and to respond appropriately to the situation. Emotional expressiveness is important for the initiation and maintenance of relationships because of the role it plays in understanding the self and others. Finally, emotional regulation, which is the most complex component, involving the child’s ability to use monitor, evaluate, and modify their emotional reactions based on the situation.

A model of affective social competence was proposed by Halberstadt, Denham, & Dunsmore (2001), because children’s skills in experiencing and expressing emotions, as well as recognizing emotions, are key components to successful social interactions. The authors defined affective social competence as, “the efficacious communication of one’s own affect, one’s successful interpretation and response to others’ affective communications, and the awareness, acceptance, and management of one’s own affect” (pg. 80). Within this model, the authors view affective social competence and general social competence as overlapping constructs.

The model is comprised of three integrated components, the child’s ability to: send emotional messages, receive emotional messages, and experience emotions. These are elements of the lowest prism of the model of social-emotional competence, which includes emotional expression and understanding, as well as emotional and behavioral regulation, social problem-solving, and social and relationship skills (Denham, 2006).

Within each component are four progressive abilities: awareness, identification,
working within a social context, and management and regulation, which are essential to successful interactions. As children mature and gain experience with emotions and social interactions, the four abilities develop in sequence (Halberstadt, et al., 2001).

It is predicted that understanding of emotions enhances preschoolers’ social relationships by allowing them to react appropriately to others. While children lacking this skill are at increased risk for displaying aggressive behavior (Denham, 2006). Denham and colleagues (2003) report aspects of social competence work together to allow preschoolers to access their personal and environmental resources. Within the concepts of emotional competence, they view emotional expression as the central aspect, followed by emotion knowledge. Teachers rate children who understand emotions higher on social competence. Based on the results of their study, the authors suggest the emotional competence acquired by children at ages three and four become stable and it would be beneficial to teach children about feelings at ages four and younger.

Children typically develop self-awareness between the ages of three and five, which allows them to have greater understanding of the feelings of others (Kostelnick, Whiren, Soderman, & Gregory, 2009) and increasing recognition that people display different emotions and may react differently to the same situation (McCabe & Altamura, 2011). Preschool children typically develop the ability to recognize emotions and simultaneously experience more than one emotion (Denham, 1998).

**Development of emotional learning**

Children are socialized in emotions through social learning such as: modeling, coaching, and contingency (Denham & Burton, 2003). Modeling refers to how parents
and teachers express their own emotions. Coaching refers to how these adults teach or don’t teach children about emotions. Contingency refers to how these adults react to the emotional expression of others (Denham & Burton).

Denham (1998) proposes there are four ways in which parents influence their child’s expression of emotions. First, parents unconsciously teach children which emotions are acceptable and under what conditions. Parents also model specific emotions. Additionally, parents demonstrate how they respond to certain emotions. Finally, parents create an affective home environment.

Gottman, Katz, and Hooven (1997) defined meta-emotion, which is parent’s feelings about feelings as “parents awareness of their specific emotions, their awareness of these emotions in their child, and their coaching of the emotions in the child” (pg. 6). Their research found families respond to their child’s sadness or anger in three ways: dismissing or disapproving, “coaching family”, and accepting of emotions but low in coaching. Families that are dismissing or disapproving of children’s emotions are uncomfortable with the child’s emotional expression and frequently will frequently distract the child to move away from emotional displays.

The coaching family is involved with the child’s feelings and views the child’s feelings as a teaching opportunity. These parents are aware of their child’s emotions, and respond to low-intensity emotions rather than waiting for emotional reactions to escalate (Gottman, et al. 1997). In it’s simplest form, parents provide a verbal explanation of the emotion and the relation to an event (Denham & Burton, 2003). Parents may also help label the child’s emotions, while empathizing or validating and help the child with problem solving.
The third type of family accepts the child’s negative emotions, but doesn’t provide coaching. They allow the child to experience the emotions, without providing limits or problem solving. They think it’s important for the child to express what they’re feeling, but don’t see the need to be involved with helping the child cope or to discuss emotions (Gottman, 1997).

Denham (1998) found children’s knowledge of the feelings of self and others increased when parents were coaches. Gottman et al., (1997) examined the impact of having an emotion-coaching parent at ages four to five on the child’s outcomes at age eight. They found children of emotion coaching parents had higher teacher ratings of social competence, were more competent in play situations, and have higher academic achievement (even after controlling for IQ).

A study examining the relation of parental socialization of emotions to preschool children’s emotional competence and general social competence found children with more affectively positive parents displayed more positive emotions towards their peers. Denham, Mitchell-Copeland, Standberg, Auerbach, and Blair (1997) interpreted their findings as indicating parental modeling of expressive style and emotional responsiveness to their child’s emotions are predictive of their child’s emotional competence and overall social competence in preschool.

Recently, Havighurst, Harley, and Prior (2004) developed a parenting program, Tuning in to Kids, focused on emotion coaching. The program is based on the belief that improving parents’ ability to respond supportively to children’s emotional experiences and use of coaching techniques to help children manage emotions, will allow children to develop skills essential to the understanding and regulation of emotions. Parents
participate in a six-session parenting program that teaches awareness and coaching of emotions, beginning with lower intensity emotions, such as sadness, worry, and disappointment. Upon completion of the intervention, parents report an increase in encouragement of their child’s emotional expressiveness, increase in use of emotion-focused approaches, and decrease in critical and dismissive reactions to their child’s emotional expressions (Havighurst et al.; Havighurst, Wilson, Harley, Prior, & Kehoe, 2010).

Havighurst et al., (2004) noted that school-based social-emotional interventions have begun to apply the principles of emotion socialization and coaching. This is likely due to the increasing recognition of the importance of social-emotional skills for children’s academic success. However, Ahn and Stifter (2006) report little research has focused on teacher’s emotional socialization with children and suggest the need for teacher training on how to socialize preschoolers on positive and negative emotions. In their study, they found that early childhood teachers are focused on helping students develop emotional regulation however, they don’t often validate children’s expression of negative emotions, which is necessary for development of emotion regulation.

**Social-emotional skills and academic outcomes**

Young children’s social and emotional competence plays an important role in their future outcomes, particularly social and academic outcomes. Social and behavior skills are linked to children’s academic success (Bracken & Fishel, 2007). Social and emotional skills are referred to as the part of education that links academic knowledge with the social skills necessary for successful school and relationship outcomes because
emotions affect how and what we learn (Elias, 2006).

Several recent studies have examined the relationship between children’s social and emotional skills and their academic outcomes, with findings confirming a link between children’s social-emotional skills, particularly emotion knowledge, and their academic outcomes (Denham & Brown, 2010). Eisenberg and colleagues (2005) propose children’s verbal abilities and emotion knowledge are predictive of their emotion regulation, which are predictive of social competence, which would support the child’s academic motivation and skills. Leekes, Paradise, O’Brien, Calkins, and Lange (2008) found children’s emotion knowledge, but not their emotion regulation, was related to their preschool academic achievement. They report children’s emotional control and understanding are a stronger predictor of early social and academic outcomes than their cognitive processes.

A study of Head Start children’s emotion knowledge found a relationship between emotion situation knowledge and later classroom adjustment (Shields, et al., 2001). Garner and Waajid (2008) found preschool children’s emotion understanding was directly related to their performance on standardized school competence measures. Izard and colleagues (2001) demonstrated the long-term impact of young children’s emotion knowledge when they examined the relationship between emotion knowledge and social and academic outcomes in elementary school children. They found that children’s emotion knowledge at age five was predictive of their social and academic outcomes at age nine.

Bracken and Fishel (2007) investigated the social and behavior skills of children at the beginning and end of Head Start. They found a high negative correlation between
social and behavioral skills, which are related to school success. They also found the child’s sociobehavioral profile was significantly related to their language, literacy, and math skills. Children with low risk of social and behavior problems performed significantly better than children in the higher risk group on measures of oral language, early reading, and early math skills in the spring.

Overall, findings suggest that children’s ability to detect and label emotions impacts their positive social interactions, while deficits in these skills contribute to social and learning problems (Denham, 2006). Children displaying higher rates of prosocial behavior have better interactions with peers and adults. Early childhood teachers view children’s social behaviors as critically important for their success in school. Researchers are increasingly recognizing the importance of social competence to children’s readiness for kindergarten (Denham et al., 2003).

**School Readiness**

A child’s transition to kindergarten requires them to adapt to numerous changes, including a change in physical environment, culture, and relationships (Ladd et al., 2006). Some researchers believe children’s ability to cope with these changes impacts how well they bond with their school, adapt to their new role as a student, and participate in classroom activities (Ladd, Birch, & Buhs, 1999). Raver (2002) argues children’s social and emotional development strongly relates to their kindergarten readiness and to their later learning and achievement. Based on a review of research, Raver concluded emotional and behavioral problems have a negative impact on children’s school success, with emotionally well-adjusted children having a greater chance of school success.
Research has demonstrated the association between social and emotional skills and academic success. For example, Ladd et al. (1999) found children with more social emotional competence at kindergarten entry were more successful at adjusting to school and had improved grades and achievement.

Consistent with these arguments, recent research indicates kindergarten teachers agree social and emotional competence is critical for academic success. In general, teachers tend to view social and emotional factors as being more critical than pre-academic skills for school readiness (Snow, 2006). A recent study conducted by Lin, Lawrence, and Gorrell (2003) found kindergarten teacher’s primary concerns are related to children’s social behavior in school. A majority of teachers rated a child’s ability to tell their wants or needs, to be non-disruptive, follow directions, and take turns and share to be very important skills. Very few teachers rated academic skills, such as counting or alphabet knowledge, as being very important or critical. Results indicate teachers view social and academic components as interrelated, with social factors preceding children’s academic competence.

Consistent with Lin et al., (2003) findings, Lane, Givner, and Pierson’s (2004) study found a majority of teachers identified social skills as critical for classroom success, with equal importance given to children’s self-control and cooperation skills. Other research conducted with teachers and parents of preschoolers agreed three social skills are critical for kindergarten success: following directions, controlling temper during conflict situation with adults, and controlling temper during conflict situation with peers.

In a study of a national sample of kindergarten teachers, Rimm-Kaufman and colleagues (2000) reported that 16% of children had difficulty entering kindergarten, and
an additional 32% of children had minor adjustment problems. Teachers specifically noted students had difficulty getting along with peers, following directions, cooperating, and were lacking pre-academic skills. Almost half of teachers reported at least half of their class had problems that interfered with their adjustment to the demands of kindergarten. These findings indicate that kindergarten teachers perceive high rates of children entering school with problems that impact their academic success.

As a growing body of research emphasizes the importance of children’s adjustment to kindergarten being related to their basic social interaction skills, it can be argued that it would be beneficial for children to be taught basic social skills and prosocial interactions prior to kindergarten entry (Ladd, et al., 2006). The relationships children build with peers and teachers are related to the child’s ability to regulate their emotions and these relationships can enhance or harm their academic success (Raver, 2002).

Social-emotional interventions

To increase children’s chance of academic success, universal social-emotional programs are increasingly implemented prior to kindergarten entry. Universal programs are relatively low cost and reduce classroom chaos so the classroom is more conducive to learning, and can focus on teaching children knowledge of emotions and behavioral and emotional self-control (Raver, 2002) which can enhance their relationships and likelihood of successful transition to kindergarten and later academic success. Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of over 200 universal social emotional learning programs implemented in grades kindergarten
through twelve and found participants had significantly improved social emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance.

Universal social emotional prevention programs for preschool frequency focus on teaching emotion recognition skills (Trentacosta & Fine, 2010) because preschoolers with knowledge of emotions are better able to react appropriately to others, which enhance positive social interactions and decreases risk of aggressive behavior. Lack of knowledge of emotions is related to behavioral and learning problems (Denham, 2006). Children with emotional and behavioral self-control demonstrate increased socioemotional competence, which enhances school learning (Denham) because children have to regulate emotions during daily school routines (Raver). Two universal social emotional prevention programs frequently implemented in preschool classrooms, Second Step and PATHS, are discussed below.

**Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum**

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum is a universal prevention program created by the Committee for Children. There are four levels of the program: preschool/kindergarten; grades 1 to 3; grades 4 to 5; and middle school. Each level has two primary goals: reducing the development of social, emotional, and behavior problems while promoting children’s social competence by teaching empathy, emotional management and social problem-solving (Committee for Children, 2009).

Second Step curriculum includes a strong focus on teaching children to understand and appropriately express emotions while accurately perceiving social situations and demonstrating prosocial behaviors (Committee for Children, 2009). Lessons are designed to teach children skills to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior
(Frey et al., 2000), which is accomplished through teaching units on empathy, emotional management, which includes impulse control and anger management; and social problem solving (Committee for Children, 2009). There are 25 lessons typically taught by the teacher once or twice per week for twenty minutes and incorporated throughout the school day to promote generalization of skills (Alvarez & Anderson-Ketchmark, 2009).

Second Step is widely implemented in the United States and Canada (Frey et al., 2000) but few studies have been conducted regarding effectiveness, particularly in preschool populations (McMahon, Washburn, Felix, Yakin, and Childrey, 2000). In a review of Second Step, Alvarez and Anderson-Ketchmark (2009) reported it is listed on several national evidence-based program websites with primary strengths including the focus on enhancing prosocial skills; ease of program implementation; and level of student engagement.

McMahon and colleagues (2000) examined the effectiveness of Second Step in low-income urban preschool and kindergarten classrooms. They found preliminary support for the use of the program in low-income urban early childhood populations, with observational data indicating a significant reduction in problem behaviors such as verbal aggression, physical aggression and disruptive behavior. Kindergarten children demonstrated higher levels of disruptive and aggressive behavior compared to preschool children and had a greater reduction in these problem behaviors. Children’s interview scores also improved which the authors interpreted as indicating student learning of program concepts. Overall, the researchers concluded their study provided support for the implementation of the Second Step program to reduce problem behaviors by teaching social skills to low-income urban children.
Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies (PATHS)

PATHS (Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies) is a universal program designed to promote the social and emotional competencies of children while reducing externalizing behaviors. PATHS was designed as a multi-year prevention program for use in elementary school, however, it has been recently modified to include a preschool curriculum (Domitrovich, Cortes, & Greenberg, 2007).

The PATHS program is taught by classroom teachers three to five times per week and is integrated into the daily curriculum. PATHS is based on the ABCD (affective, behavioral, cognitive, dynamic) model of development which believes in the necessity of accounting for emotions, thoughts and communication in order to understand the behavior of self and others, and to understand interpersonal interactions (Kam, Greenberg, & Kusche, 2004). The PATHS program is also based on the belief that children’s emotional development precedes most forms of cognitive development, so enhancing emotional development is critical so PATHS has an intentional and intensive focus on identifying and labeling emotions (Greenberg, 2006). The curriculum provides instruction in multiple domains with significant support for children’s self-regulation abilities (Domitrovich et al., 2007).

PATHS is frequently implemented in elementary schools and has been modified for use in preschool. Field tests of the program have been conducted with general education students and special education students in rural, suburban and urban schools and findings suggest children experience improved social competence, improved understanding and recognition of emotions, and significant reduction in internalizing behaviors, but not in externalizing behaviors (Joseph & Strain, 2003). Kam et al. (2004)
conducted a long-term study of the effectiveness of PATHS on the adjustment of school-age children with special needs. Special education classes were randomly assigned to intervention or control conditions and children with various special needs, primarily learning disabilities and mild cognitive impairments, were taught the PATHS curriculum with units on self-control, feelings, and problem-solving. Findings indicate significant reduction in teacher reports of internalizing and externalizing behaviors and in self-reports of depressive symptoms, greater knowledge and understanding of emotions in self and others and a greater likelihood of providing nonconfrontational solutions to problems. Results indicate PATHS curriculum can be effective when administered in special education.

Domitrovich and colleagues (2007) conducted a randomized clinical trial of the implementation of PATHS in Head Start classrooms. They found children who received the PATHS curriculum experienced greater emotion knowledge and receptive emotion vocabulary; they were more accurate in their identification of facial expressions and in identifying situations that elicit different emotions; and they were less likely to misidentify emotional expressions as angry. Parents and teachers reported children were better adjusted and displayed significantly higher rates of prosocial behavior, emotional regulation, and social skills with peers. Although PATHS participation did not impact children’s problem-solving abilities, the authors suggest the findings indicate Head Start teachers can effectively implement the program in one year and have a significant impact on children’s emotion knowledge, self-regulation and social skills.

Integrating literacy and social-emotional skills
Traditionally, shared book reading has been regarded as a way to promote children’s language and literacy skills, but several recent studies have examined the role shared book reading plays in the development of social-emotional skills (Currenton & Craig, 2011). This is important because of the relationship between social-emotional skills and literacy (Hansen & Zambo, 2006). Parental reading and encouragement of literacy-related activities is related to children’s social functioning (Farver, Xu, Eppe, & Lonigan, 2006). Further, social and emotional problems are often associated with language problems (McCabe, 2005) and shared book reading is one way to promote language development.

Aram and Aviram (2009) proposed that shared book reading may not only contribute to preschool children’s language development, it may also contribute to social-emotional development. The authors note that books written for young children often focus on social interactions, which provide the opportunity to discuss emotional states and social situations. Doyle and Bramwell (2006) report social-emotional themed books frequently present adults and children interacting and solving problems. Well-chosen books can provide cues to help children understand emotional consequences (Zeece, 2000) and can help children realize they’re not alone in their feelings (Zambo, 2007).

Bibliotherapy techniques focus on discussion of social-emotional themed stories, including addressing specific emotional problems and teaching social-emotional skills (Heath, Sheen, Leavy, Young, & Money, 2005) and are similar to the interactivity in dialogic reading. Montgomery and Maunders (2015) meta-analysis provided empirical support for the use of bibliotherapy with children and adolescents ages 5 to 15. Further, children’s books with social-emotional themes are often a component of empirically
supported universal preschool social emotional programs (e.g. PATHS; Domitrovich et al., 1999).

A study of parent and child reading behavior conducted by Denham and Auerbach (1995) found mothers who explained the book character’s emotions, repeated their child’s emotion language, questioned their child about the book content, and used emotion language to guide behavior, had children with greater emotional expressiveness abilities. Parental use of questioning was positively correlated with the child’s ability to use emotion language and predicted the child’s emotion understanding.

Bhavnagri and Samuels (1996) examined the effects of children’s literature and activities to their peer relationships. In their study, the experimental group read stories with embedded peer interaction concepts. For one academic year, children read, discussed and engaged in activities related to peer interactions. These children earned significantly higher scores on measures of social cognition of peer relationships, and on relationship enhancing, assertive, and effective skills. Results suggest following participation in a children’s literature intervention, these children were able to engage in higher levels of relationship-enhancing strategies.

Garner, Jones, Gaddy, and Rennie (1997) examined the conversations low-income mothers engaged in with their children while looking at wordless picture books. The authors found children had greater understanding of emotional situations when their mother’s used empathy related statements while looking at the book. They found children’s emotional role-taking abilities were enhanced when mother’s explained the cause and consequences of emotions. They concluded when mothers encourage children to focus on the feelings of others, the child learns how to display appropriate emotions.
and understand the role of others.

A study of shared book reading at home with kindergarten children found the frequency of shared book reading was associated with the child’s language skills, while mother’s ability to choose books was related to the child’s empathy and social-emotional adjustment (Aram & Aviram, 2009). Curenton and Craig (2011) found parent-child frequency of shared book reading and age at which reading began was associated with increased child prosocial skills. The frequency of parent-child book reading was positively correlated with the child’s prosocial skills. Children who began experiencing shared book reading at a younger age also had better prosocial skills. They also found mother’s used more positive emotion talk during shared book reading than during oral narratives.


Mincic (2009) replicated Whitehurst and colleagues (1994, 1999) procedures by training teachers to use school-based dialogic reading procedures. However, the dissertation used emotion-laden storybooks to simultaneously enhance preschool children’s vocabulary and social-emotional skills. Participants included 27 Head Start teachers and 114 children. Teachers in the intervention group were trained to use dialogic reading techniques while reading the provided twelve emotion-focused storybooks.
Teachers in the control group were trained on the importance of reading to children and were provided with the same twelve emotion-focused storybooks, but were not taught to implement the dialogic reading techniques.

Participating children completed the Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPEL) and Affect Knowledge Test (AKT) with the researcher to assess their vocabulary and emotion knowledge. Children’s social skills were assessed with the Minnesota Preschool Affect Checklist (MPAC), which consists of live observation and coding of social skills and behaviors.

Teachers were asked to complete a reading log each time they read a book. Overall, teachers completed 84.4% of the assigned readings. Classrooms completed a mean of 60.77 (SD = 15.30, range = 26-73) of 72 readings, which included 36 readings for two groups of children per classroom. Children completed a mean of 25.72 (SD = 7.25, range = 6-36) of 36 possible readings.

Regression-based analysis did not support the effectiveness of the intervention for enhancing children’s literacy skills, emotion knowledge, or social skills. This may be due to within and between-classroom variability, the ineffectiveness of the combination of dialogic reading at enhancing these skills, lack of teacher fidelity in intervention implementation, or teachers in the control group discussed emotional storybook content with children to the effect that intervention effects were reduced. However, MANOVA results indicate children in the intervention group displayed greater vocabulary skills and greater productiveness during classroom activities compared to children in the control group.

Teachers’ skills in discussing emotions significantly predicted post-intervention
vocabulary skills. Teachers’ skills in discussing emotions, the frequency of children’s storybook reading participation, and duration of storybook readings were significant predictors of children’s vocabulary skills, emotion knowledge, and classroom social skills regardless of the child’s pre-intervention scores and experimental group assignment. Children’s affective perspective-taking skills and emotion knowledge skills were related to the discussions of emotion-focused storybook content, rather than the teacher’s storybook reading skills.

Teachers demonstrated positive attitudes toward intervention implementation, including confidence in their ability to implement the program based on the training provided, and the belief that the intervention was effective and beneficial for children’s social-emotional development. Qualitative data indicated teachers felt reading each storybook three times in one week was too often and it would be helpful to have classroom volunteers to assist the other teacher with classroom activities while they’re implementing the intervention. Despite these limitations, overall, teachers were supportive of the intervention.

Terry (2011) investigated a six-week dialogic reading intervention with thirty-three home-based Head Start families. The families were randomly assigned to the traditional dialogic reading group or the dialogic reading plus emotion skills group. The families in the dialogic reading plus emotion skills group were trained to nurture the child and to discuss emotions during reading.

Initially, 39 parents consented to participate in the study, and 33 families completed the study. Each family was enrolled in the Home-Based Head Start program, which included weekly home visits from Head Start staff. Throughout the course of the
study, four families withdrew from the Head Start program, another child could not be located to complete the post-test, and another child had a disability that prevented completion of the assessments. There were 16 participants in the Dialogic Reading only group and 17 participants in the Dialogic Reading plus Emotion Skills group.

The study consisted of a pre-post test experimental design. Children’s print concept knowledge was assessed using the Preschool Word and Print Awareness, which is an informal measure. Their emotion skills were assessed using the Affect Knowledge Test (AKT).

The parents in both conditions were trained to use dialogic reading techniques through a fifteen-minute instructional video during one in-home session. Parents then viewed an additional five-minute video that included an adult and preschooler reading together. The parents in the two conditions viewed different videos; with parents in the Dialogic Reading plus Emotion Skills group viewing a video of a book with emotional content. This group also received an additional fifteen minutes of training designed to teach about displaying nurturing behaviors during reading. An additional training was completed two weeks into the intervention. All parents were videotaped while reading to their child and were provided with feedback on their use of dialogic reading techniques. Parents in the Emotion Skills group were also provided with constructive feedback on their use of nurturing behaviors while reading.

Following the training, parents implemented the intervention at home during their regularly scheduled home visit with Head Start staff. Further, each family was assigned to a member of the research team to provide additional support as needed. Each week the family was provided with four books and asked to read each book three times. The
parents were also provided with an audio recorder to record three reading sessions per week. The average number of reading sessions recorded in the Dialogic Reading only group was 9.12 (range: 1 to 36, SD = 8.69) and 11.59 in the Dialogic Reading plus Emotion Skills group (range: 0 to 22; SD – 5.91). Results indicated no clinically significant difference between the two groups in terms of children’s print concepts or emotion knowledge. Additionally, no effects were found for parents’ reading related behaviors, including verbal prompts, use of dialogic reading techniques, and displayed warmth.

The Current Study

Children’s literacy and social-emotional skills are critical for success in kindergarten and in later years, thus, preschool is an optimum time to enhance these skills. Preschool children frequently engage in shared book reading experiences at home and school. The impact of shared book reading on children’s emergent literacy skills can be enhanced by instructing adults to use interactive techniques, such as those implemented in dialogic reading procedures (Whitehurst, Epstein, et al., 1994).

Children’s emotional competence consists of three emotional skills: emotional expression, emotion understanding, and emotion regulation (Denham, 1998, 2005). Emotional competence is closely linked to social competence. Children’s social-emotional competence is enhanced through socialization processes, such as adult modeling and coaching of emotional responses (Denham, 1998). Using Gottman’s emotion coaching is a way for parents and teachers to enhance children’s social and emotional competence.
The purpose of this study is to fill a gap in the literature by extending the findings of previous literature that supports the use of dialogic reading to enhance vocabulary. Specifically, this study used social-emotional themed storybooks for the dialogic reading intervention to simultaneously enhance preschool children’s literacy and social-emotional skills. This study partially replicated methods previously implemented by Whitehurst, Epstein, and colleagues (1994), Whitehurst and colleagues (1999), Mincic (2009), and Terry (2011) with the goal of enhancing children’s vocabulary, which is one of the three key predictors of literacy acquisition (Lonigan, 2006), and children’s social competence, using social-emotional themed books. Consistent with Mincic’s study, Gottman and colleagues (1997) emotion coaching techniques was integrated with Whitehurst, Epstein and colleagues (1994) dialogic reading techniques. Mincic’s (2009) previously trained Head Start teachers to use dialogic reading with social-emotional themed books, while Terry (2011) previously trained Head Start parents to use dialogic reading with social emotional themed books. In this study, both Head Start parents and Head Start teachers were trained to implement the intervention.

Although previous researchers (Whitehurst, Epstein et al., 1994) have documented the challenges of intervention compliance with this population, Head Start parents were included in this study due to Whitehurst, Epstein, and colleagues (1994) finding that classroom based intervention alone did not increase Head Start children’s language skills. They hypothesized that children from low income families may need more individualized reading interactions than can be provided in a group setting, particularly students in the late preschool years. Reese and colleagues (2010) meta-analysis provided further support for the decision to include Head Start parents in the
current study as they found that dialogic reading interventions that included parents had the strongest effects on children’s skills.

The following research questions were examined:

**Research Questions One:** Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s vocabulary, as measured by the TOPEL, more than dialogic reading at school-only?

**Research Question Two:** Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s emotion knowledge, as measured by the AKT, more than dialogic reading at school-only?

**Research Question Three:** Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school have positive effects on children’s social competence, as measured by the DECA-2, more than dialogic reading at school-only?
Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Design

A quasi-experimental research design with the manipulation of a single independent variable on two levels was proposed for this study. Specifically, the original goal was to use a pre-test/post-test control group design with random assignment of four intact preschool sites to either the treatment or control group. This design was chosen because the preschool children were already assigned to a preschool classroom and the intervention was to be partially implemented by the classroom teacher, which precluded the feasibility for random assignment of individual children to the treatment or control group. As the study aimed to determine the effectiveness of an intervention, it was important to assess children’s skills pre-and-post intervention. It was intended that preschoolers in the two treatment group sites would receive the dialogic reading intervention at both home and school, while the preschoolers in the control group would receive the typical preschool curriculum.

Due to a variety of factors as further outlined below, this study consisted of three intact preschool classrooms implementing the intervention; control group data was collected but was too limited to allow for meaningful analysis, therefore it is not included in the study. The design was complicated by unexpected variability in center compliance and parent compliance, which resulted in having to examine the effect of the intervention
in two conditions: School-only, and Home + School. Approximately half of the preschool participants received the intervention at home and school, while the other half only received the intervention at school.

**Data Collection**

**Data Collection Procedures**

The implemented procedures were similar to those of other researchers in this area (Mincic, 2009; Terry, 2011; Whitehurst, Epstein et al., 1994; Whitehurst et al., 1999;).

The following timeline occurred:

- IRB approval (May 2015)
- Contacted and met with Head Start sites (May 2015)
- Recruited children to participate (beginning of June 2015)
- Collected pre-intervention data (mid-June)
  - Conducted individual child assessments
  - Met with parents to explain the paperwork
  - Met with teachers to explain the paperwork
- Conducted training meetings with teachers and parents (mid-June 2015)
- Implementation of intervention (end of June through beginning of August 2015)
  - School and Home intervention
  - School-only intervention
- Collected post-intervention data (beginning of August 2015)
- Conducted follow-up meeting with teachers (mid-August 2015)
A relationship with the Head Start director was established in spring 2015. The Head Start Director and Education Director chose four sites to participate in the study based on year-round enrollment. The researcher contacted the sites in the spring 2015 to ascertain their willingness to participate in the intervention. All four sites indicated willingness to participate and the researcher secured approval through the university’s review board in May 2015.

In June 2015, the sites were assigned to either the experimental or control group. The researcher met with Head Start Site Directors and Case Managers at each site to describe the intervention and answer questions. The Site Directors and Case Managers initially presented a verbal description of the intervention to teachers. They also provided a verbal description and brief written description of the intervention to parents. If parents were interested in participating, the Site Directors, Case Managers, or teachers provided them with the parental consent form and encouraged parents to contact the researcher with questions.

After parental consent was received, the researcher began meeting with children from the experimental and control group to administer standardized assessments of vocabulary and emotion knowledge. The approximate time of completion for pre-test measures was 20 minutes per child.

Parents of participating children were sent packets with two questionnaires. The estimated time of completion was 15 minutes. The questionnaires asked questions about the home literacy environment, and child’s social competence. Parents returned the completed questionnaires to the preschool in the provided envelope. The completed packets were placed in a predetermined location for the researcher to collect the
The teacher was provided with a packet for participating children in their class. The teacher was asked to complete two questionnaires per child, which provided information about the child’s social competence and their typical response to scenarios. The estimated time of completion was 15 minutes per child.

Upon receipt of parent and teacher consent forms; separate parent and teacher group training meetings occurred for the intervention group. Following training, the participants began six weeks of the dialogic reading intervention. Each week, the researcher went to the intervention sites to pick up the books and to drop off the books for the following week. The researcher also met with the teachers to answer any questions. Due to variability in child drop off and pick up times, the researcher was unable to meet with parents weekly. However, parents were provided with researcher contact information each week and were encouraged to ask questions.

Following the last week of intervention, the vocabulary and emotion knowledge measures were administered to the children and parents and teachers completed the measure of social competence. The researcher met with teachers upon completion of the intervention and data collection procedures to informally discuss acceptability of the intervention and to answer questions.

Participants

This study sample consisted of parents, teachers, and preschool children from Head Start centers in a large metropolitan area. The sample was a convenience sample with random assignment of each site to the intervention or control group. The Head Start
Director chose four sites that had year-round enrollment and low literacy rates. The sample was recruited from year-round intact Head Start preschool classrooms/sites. Initially, four sites, with a total of five classrooms were included in the study.

Each site had a full-day program, where children could attend a maximum of eleven hours per day. Enrollment in each classroom was limited to seventeen students. Consistent with Head Start eligibility criteria, children were primarily from low-income families. In order to meet eligibility criteria for the full-day, year-round program, children had a parent either working or enrolled in school. Each classroom had a lead teacher, teacher assistant, and classroom aide. The center director and case manager were also on site at least halftime.

Participants included teachers, parents, and children. Initially, the sample included 35 children and seven teachers. The final sample consisted of 23 children in the intervention group and five teachers.

Children

Initially, a total of 35 children were included in the research. The final sample consisted of 25 children with 23 children in the intervention group. The Home + School condition included 12 children, and the School-only condition included 11 children. Two children were in the control group.

The Head Start program enrolls children age three to five (range: 36 months to 71 months). Overall, mean age of the child participants was 56.48 months (range: 41 to 68 months). Mean age for children assigned to the Home + School group was 55.42 months, and mean age for children in the School-only group was 57.64 months. The sample consisted of 8 males (34.8%) and 15 females (65.2%).
Parent

Twelve children had parents (52%) complete and return the parent demographic questionnaire. As reported on the returned parent demographic questionnaire, 100% had earned a high school degree or equivalent, 91% had completed at least some college, with 33% having completed a bachelor’s degree.

Parents also provided information regarding the home literacy environment. As reported on the returned questionnaires, parent’s reported reading for pleasure an average of 60 minutes per week. They read to their child an average of 15 minutes per day. A majority of parents reported they began reading to their child in infancy (range: before birth to 18 months). Parents further reported owning an average of 50 children’s books (range: 10-20 books to 75+ books).

Teacher

A total of five teachers were included in the intervention; this included the Lead Teachers at each site, and the Teacher Assistant and Teacher Aide at one site. Five teachers in three classrooms completed the intervention. Two teachers, one Lead Teacher and one Classroom Aide, completed the demographic form. All teachers were fluent in English, with English as their primary language. All teachers were African American. The Lead Teacher reported 20 years of experience with Head Start programs, while the Classroom Aide reported one year of experience with Head Start programs.

Intervention Sample

There were initially a total of four Head Start sites and five classrooms across the four sites. Sites 1 and 2 with a total of three classrooms participated in the intervention and the control groups were at sites 3 and 4 across two classrooms. During the last week
of intervention, Site 2 was notified that their center would be permanently closing in two weeks. This resulted in staff and student absences during the post-test period. In the middle of the intervention period, Site 4 closed, without the knowledge of the researcher and the participants were not available to complete post-tests.

Within each of the three intervention classrooms, eight to eleven children were initially recruited. Consent was received for a total of 30 children in the intervention group. Of the parents that provided consent, 19 attended parent training, which made the children eligible to participate in both the classroom-based and home-based intervention. The remaining 11 were placed in the School-only condition, as their parents didn’t attend parent training, which made the children ineligible for participation in the home component. Throughout the course of the study, five children withdrew from the Head Start program (Two were in the Home + School intervention and 3 were in the School-only intervention group).

**Classroom 1 – Site 1 (C1S1)** C1S1 had one classroom with 17 children enrolled in May 2015. Initially, 10 parents (59%) provided consent for their children to participate; of those 10 parents, six parents (60%) completed the parent training. Thus, there were 10 children participating in the intervention initially, six in the Home + School condition and four in the School-only condition. Throughout the study, two children from the Home + School intervention group withdrew from the Head Start program, and another child missed several weeks of school and therefore post-testing could not be completed. Within the school-only intervention group, one child withdrew from the Head Start program. The final sample from C1S1 included six children (Home + School = 3 children; School-only = 3 children).
**Classroom 2 – Site 2 (C2S2)** In Classroom 2, there were 17 children enrolled and nine parents (52%) provided consent for their children to participate in the intervention and eight of the parents attended the parent training. However, one parent that completed training did not take any of the books home during the intervention and therefore the child was included in the school-only condition. The final sample from C2S2 included nine children (Home + School = 7, School-only = 2).

**Classroom 3 – Site 2 (C3S2)** In Classroom 3, 17 children were enrolled in May 2015, and 11 parents (65%) initially provided consent for their children to participate in the intervention. Five parents completed the parent training, although one child didn’t have any pre-test or post-test data due to frequent absences; another child withdrew from the program; and another child did not take any of the books home throughout the intervention and was therefore included in the School-only group. The final sample from Class 3 included eight children (Home + School = 2, School-only = 6).

**Control Sample**

Initially, the control group consisted of five children from two sites (Sites 3 and 4). Site 3 had two children in the control group. Site 4 had three children in the control group, although the data from one child was not useable due to severe language and behavioral limitations related to a diagnosis of autism that impacted the child’s ability to participate in the pre-testing. Further hampering data collection, Site 4 closed during the intervention period, without warning to the researcher; therefore, the remaining two children from the control group were unavailable for post-testing.

Site 3 received consent for two children to participate. The children completed pre-tests and post-tests with the researcher. The teacher indicated she completed pre-test
rating scales, however, the researcher did not receive them. One parent completed pre-test rating scales.

Due to the small sample size in the control group and incomplete data, the data from the control group was not included in the study.

**Intervention**

**Teacher Training**

Because a portion of this study is a replication of previously implemented procedures, the research procedures for teacher training were designed to resemble Mincic (2009), Whitehurst, Epstein et al. (1994), and Whitehurst et al. (1999). Teachers were told the research was examining the impact of interactive shared book reading on preschool children’s vocabulary and emotion knowledge. Upon completion of the teacher training, teachers received a $25 gift card for their participation.

Teachers met with the researcher for one group meeting prior to intervention implementation. The meeting was intended to last approximately 45 to 60 minutes, which allowed time to view the training video and to answer questions. Teachers viewed the dialogic reading instructional video for preschool teachers, and discussed emotion-coaching strategies. Teachers were provided with a folder, which contained a handout on dialogic reading, a handout on emotion coaching, a handout on implementation procedures, and a calendar of the intervention timeline.

The researcher also met individually with each teacher to answer specific questions and to assist the teacher with how to implement the procedure within the time constraints of the classroom. The researcher also visited the classrooms weekly.
throughout the intervention to answer questions and provide feedback.

Site 1 Training

Consistent with the Stony Brook Emergent Literacy Curriculum indicating that at least two adults are present during dialogic reading (Whitehurst, Epstein, et al., 1994), the Lead Teacher, Teacher Assistant, and Classroom Aide were all present during the training. The training was completed in the classroom during the children’s naptime.

Site 2 Training

At Site 2, the Lead Teachers from the classrooms met with the researcher for training. Following their training, the teacher assistants from each classroom met with the researcher for an overview of the intervention. Site 2 determined that the Lead Teacher would be the only one implementing the intervention.

Parent Training

It was intended that all parents that provided consent for their child to participate in the intervention would complete the parent training, either through attending the scheduled group parent training or by meeting with the researcher individually. If parents were unable to attend the meeting, the researcher offered to meet with them individually.

Of the 30 parents that provided consent for their child to participate in the intervention, 53% \((n = 16)\) attended the group parent training, and an additional 10% \((n = 3)\) completed an individual training with the researcher within the first few weeks of the intervention period. Therefore, a total of 63% \((n = 19)\) of parents were eventually trained to complete the intervention at home. However, only 46% \((n = 14)\) of parents that initially provided consent actually completed the intervention at home. Of the 19 parents that completed the parent training, 14 (73%) completed the intervention at home
throughout the entire intervention period. The remaining parents either withdrew their children from the Head Start program during the intervention ($n = 3$); or did not take books home during the intervention ($n = 2$).

Parents of children in the Home + School condition also completed a 60 minute group training. Parents were scheduled to view the commercially available, 15-minute instructional dialogic reading training video for parents (Pearson Early Learning, 2002) and discuss Gottman’s emotion-coaching strategies. Parents were provided with a folder, which included handouts on dialogic reading, emotion coaching, intervention procedures, and researcher contact information.

Parent group trainings were scheduled at the end of the day at the Head Start center. This was designed to allow for parents to attend the meeting before picking up their child. During the trainings, parents were also provided an opportunity to ask questions. The researcher was available following the group training to answer specific questions the individual parents may have had.

**Site 1 Training**

Although parent training was scheduled at the end of the day, during Head Start center hours, due to limited staff availability to watch the children, the children attended the parent training also. Food and drinks were provided. The parents viewed the dialogic reading training video online and discussed emotion-coaching strategies.

**Site 2 Training**

Both of the classrooms at Site 2 participated in the training together. Head Start staff was with the children in the classroom during the training. Parents were only able to view approximately five minutes of the fifteen-minute dialogic reading video due to
internet connectivity issues. In that group, the researcher modeled the dialogic reading procedures. Parents were provided with the same folder of information as provided to parents at site 1. The dialogic reading handout also included the link to view the video online.

**Child Measures**

**Site 1**

The children at site 1 completed pre-test and post-test measures in an empty classroom that was across the lobby from their typical classroom. Due to Head Start policies and procedures, the door was left open and staff walked by frequently to use the lounge area.

**Site 2**

The children at site 2 completed pre-test measures in an office where the Case Manager and Site Director worked. It was also the space where meals were prepared and where parents signed in at drop-off or pick-up. The lead teacher was also present during the pre-testing. Due to staff absences, one pre-test session included the lead teacher and other preschool students.

The week of the scheduled post-testing, Site 2 was notified that their site would be closing in two weeks. That week there were multiple staff absences, which required the two classrooms to combine on certain days. Head Start policies and procedures require a staff member to be with the researcher and child. Due to staff absences, there were not enough staff members available to supervise the initial day of scheduled post-testing. Therefore, post-testing was rescheduled to begin the following day. However, on subsequent days of post-testing, due to ongoing staff absences that did not allow for Head
Start staff supervision in the office area, the post-tests were completed at a table in the play area within the classroom.

**Intervention Implementation**

Implementation of the intervention at school was intended to occur in groups of four to six students. The use of small groups of children to participate in the intervention was ideal because it would allow the child the opportunity to benefit from discussion while still receiving individualized attention related to their developmental level. It has been previously recommended that dialogic reading occur in groups of four to six students (Whitehurst, Epstein et al., 1994).

Further, since Whitehurst, Epstein, and colleagues (1994) reported that classroom-based intervention alone did not significantly increase children’s language skills and hypothesized that children from low income families may need more individualized reading intervention than can be provided in a small group setting. Therefore, although parent involvement in a Head Start population can be a challenge (Whitehurst et al., 1998) the home-based intervention component was added to investigate whether there was an additive impact on children’s skills when they received individualized intervention at home.

**Procedures**

Prior to the intervention, during teacher training, each teacher was provided with a folder including guidelines for weekly book readings, a calendar, and additional resources about dialogic reading and emotion coaching.

During the intervention, each week, the teacher was provided with a book (see Appendix A); a book guide (see Appendix B), which included the dialogic reading
prompts and sample questions to ask specific to the provided book; and a book log (see Appendix C), which included participating children’s names and areas to document when the book was read and which children participated. The book log was completed to monitor compliance with the intervention, child participation rates, and child/teacher level of interest/engagement in the book reading. Teachers were asked to read each book at least three times in small groups of four to six children.

During the intervention, each week, parents and children in the Home + School condition were provided with a folder that included a book (see Appendix D), book guide (see Appendix E), and book log (see Appendix F). The front of the folder contained researcher contact information should the parent have any questions. Parents were asked to read the book at least three times, complete the book logs, and return the folder to school with their child.

Books were chosen according to Dialogic Reading guidelines, including: commercially availability, demonstrated potential for vocabulary growth, and illustrations that support the text (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). Some books focused specifically on general emotion knowledge, including labeling emotions with illustrations of corresponding facial expressions (e.g., *The Way I Feel, Glad Monster, Sad Monster*), specific feelings, such as anger, happy, scared; and social and relational skills (see Appendices A and D). A majority of the books included characters experiencing emotions, which allowed for discussion outside of the text. In consideration of parental education levels, books that were sent home included less complex text compared to the books read at school.
Instruments

Language Skills

The Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPEL)

The Test of Preschool Early Literacy (TOPEL; Lonigan, Wagner, Torgeson, & Rashotte, 2006) was used to assess children’s baseline literacy skills. The TOPEL consists of three subtests: print knowledge, definitional vocabulary, and phonological awareness. However, since previous empirical research has indicated that dialogic reading primarily impacts children’s oral language skills (Mol et al., 2008), only the Definitional Vocabulary subtest of the TOPEL was administered. The Definitional Vocabulary subtest consisted of 35 items, which required the child to identify and describe important features of an object in a picture. This provided a standard score reflecting the child’s competence in definitional vocabulary. Administration took approximately 15 minutes. The TOPEL was standardized on over 800 preschool children and has demonstrated good reliability and validity, in the .90 range (Lonigan, et al., 2006). This is also the same measure that was used in Mincic’s (2009) study to evaluate definitional vocabulary skills.

Emotion Knowledge

Affect Knowledge Test (AKT)

Children completed the Affect Knowledge Test (AKT; Denham, 1986), which is an assessment of children’s ability to recognize and label basic emotions. The AKT is a structured measure of affective labeling and affective perspective taking, which consists of three subtests measuring expressive emotion knowledge, receptive emotion...
knowledge, and affective perspective-taking. To assess expressive emotion knowledge, children were asked to label happy, sad, scared, and angry emotion faces. Receptive emotion knowledge was measured by asking the child to identify, which felt face feels like each of the four emotions named by the examiner. Expressive and receptive emotion knowledge together provided a representation of the child’s affective labeling capabilities. To measure affective perspective-taking abilities, the child listens to brief vignettes and then labels the puppets emotions. Prior to administration of the AKT teacher complete a brief questionnaire indicating how the child typically responds to various situations. On each question, children can earn up to two points. They are awarded two points for correctly identifying the emotion; one point for identifying the correct valence but incorrect emotion (i.e. “crying” for sad). The AKT took approximately 15 minutes to administer.

Based on a review of reliability studies (Denham, Caverly, et al., 2002), Denham and Burton (2003) indicate internal consistency and test-retest reliabilities are good, with a range from .60 -.85 depending on the specific scores created. They further indicate the AKT appears to be ecologically valid, because it is performed during play situations and requires little child verbalization. There is a small to moderate correlation with other measures of social-emotional learning.

Social Competence

**Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Preschool Program, Second Edition (DECA-P2)**

Parents and teachers completed the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Preschool Program, Second Edition (DECA-P2; LeBuffe & Naglieri, 2012), which is a
standardized, norm-referenced measure of social emotional skills and protective factors for preschool children ages three to five. It has 38 items and asks the parent or teacher to rate the frequency of the observed behavior or characteristic on a 5-point scale ranging from “never” to “very frequently.” Administration takes approximately 5-10 minutes.

The DECA-P2 includes two scales: Total Protective Factors (TPF) and Behavior Concerns (BC). The TPF includes three subscales: initiative, attachment/relationships, and self-regulation, which provide information on the child’s social competencies. The BC scale measures challenging behaviors the child may demonstrate. T-scores are reported for each scale and subscale. The protective scales include the following descriptive categories: Strength (60 and above), Typical (40-59), and Area of Need (40 and below). The behavioral concerns scale includes the following descriptive categories: Typical (less than 60), and Area of Need (60 and above).

In a review, Denham and Burton (2003) indicate the original DECA (LeBuffe & Naglieri, 1999) is theoretically and psychometrically sound. It includes the same underlying theory at the AKT, which is the measure the children completed. The DECA-P2 was standardized on 3,553 preschool children that were representative of the US population. The DECA-P2 technical manual indicates high test-retest reliability for both parents and teachers. Parent reliability for protective factors was .88, and was .78 for Behavioral Concerns scale. Teacher reliability was .95 for Total Protective Factors and .80 for Behavioral Concerns. Interrater reliability for protective factors ranged from .51 (parent raters) to .72 (teacher raters). Criterion validity was established by examining accuracy of prediction of children in the clinical or nonreferred sample. It correctly classified 69% of children. Construct validity was obtained as the DECA-P2 has strong
validity with the total score for Conners Early Childhood and the Preschool Emotional and Behavioral Rating Scale (LeBuffe & Naglieri, 2012).

**Data Analysis**

**Dependent variables**

The dependent variables that were measured in this study were preschool children’s vocabulary skills, emotion knowledge skills, and social competence. Measurement of the dependent variables occurred through direct assessment of the child’s skills, and parent and teacher report.

The researcher using the Definitional Vocabulary subtest on the TOPEL, which is a standardized measure and reports standard scores, to directly assess children’s expressive vocabulary. The researcher used the AKT to directly assess children’s emotion knowledge skills. Parents and teachers completed the DECA-2, which is a rating scale to gather information about the child’s social competence, which includes a protective factors scale and behavior concerns scale.

**Independent variables**

The independent variables were impact of the dialogic reading intervention implemented at school or home plus school on children’s vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and social skills. The intervention was the use of dialogic reading with social-emotional themed books. The dialogic reading intervention at school was a small-group intervention, with four to six preschool children, lasting approximately twenty minutes, three times per week over a six-week period. The dialogic reading intervention at home occurred with the parent and child, lasting approximately twenty minutes, at
least three times per week for six weeks.

Descriptive Statistics

The final sample included 23 child participants. Within the final sample, 12 children (52.2%) were within the Home + School condition, while 11 children (47.8%) were within the School-only condition. C1S1’s final sample included six children (26.1%), C2S2 included nine children (39.1%), and C3C2 included eight children (34.8%). Of the participants, 15 were female (65.2%) and eight were male (34.8%). The average number of school reading sessions across participants was 11.26 (SD = 3.7, range: 2 – 17). The average number of home reading sessions was 12.5 (SD = 5.6, range: 2-19). Additional demographic information is presented in Table 1.
Table 1

*Demographic Information across Classrooms*

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-only</td>
<td>N=3</td>
<td>N=2</td>
<td>N=6</td>
<td>N = 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention Reading Sessions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>M = 13.5 (SD = 2.7)</td>
<td>M = 11.33 (SD = 4.8)</td>
<td>M = 9.5 (SD = 1.9)</td>
<td>M=11.26 (SD = 3.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>M = 8.67 (SD = 2.1)</td>
<td>M = 12.2 (SD = 5.9)</td>
<td>M = 19 (SD = 0)</td>
<td>M=12.5 (SD = 5.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sites 3 and 4 have similar demographics to Sites 1 and 2. Due to the low participation rates and unexpected closing of Site 4, this data was not included in the study.
Validity

Internal Validity. In this study, internal validity refers to whether dialogic reading at home and at school actually changes (increases) children’s vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and social competence, or is this change due to other factors.

External Validity. Due to the limitations of this study, the results cannot be generalized beyond the study sample. Future studies should include a larger sample and a control group.

Data Analysis

Due to the small sample size of this study, the data collected from the instruments were analyzed using non-parametric tests. Parametric statistics are the preferred method of analyzing experimental data since non-parametric statistics aren’t as sensitive and therefore are more likely to fail to detect real differences between groups (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007).

Mann-Whitney U-Test

The Mann-Whitney \( U \)-Test evaluates data from two separate samples to determine if there is a difference between treatments for the two populations. It is considered an alternative to an independent samples t-test, however, it compares two distributions, rather than comparing two means (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007).

Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test

Gravetter and Wallnau (2007) indicate that the Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test is used to evaluate data from a repeated measures experiment. It evaluates the absolute value of a difference between two treatments when an individual in the sample has been
measured twice.

**Kruskal-Wallis Test**

The Kruskal Wallis test is similar to the Mann-Whitney $U$-Test except it allows for the evaluation of differences between three or more conditions using data from an independent measures design. It is an alternative to a single factor analysis of variance (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007).
Chapter 4: Results

Research Questions

The following research questions were initially examined:

1. Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s vocabulary, as measured by the TOPEL, more than dialogic reading at school-only?

2. Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s emotion knowledge, as measured by the AKT, more than dialogic reading at school-only?

3. Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school have positive effects on children’s social competence, as measured by the DECA-2, more than dialogic reading at school-only?

Following initial examination of the original research questions and due to unforeseeable challenges that impacted the sample size necessitating the use of non-parametric statistics, which have reduced sensitivity, the following research questions were modified and then examined:

1. Does the dialogic reading intervention increase participant’s vocabulary as measured by the TOPEL?
   a. Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase
participant’s vocabulary more than dialogic reading at school-only?

b. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores for participants in the Home + School and School-only conditions?

c. Do the vocabulary scores of participants vary by classroom?

d. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores for participants in each classroom?

2. Does the dialogic reading intervention increase participant’s emotion knowledge, as measured by the AKT?

a. Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s emotion knowledge more than dialogic reading at school-only?

b. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test emotion knowledge scores for participants in the Home + School and School-only conditions?

c. Do the emotion knowledge scores of participants vary by classroom?

d. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test emotion knowledge scores for participants in each classroom?

3. Does the dialogic reading intervention have positive effects on participant’s social competence, as measured by the DECA-2?

a. Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s social competence more than dialogic reading at school-only?

b. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test social
competence scores for participants in the Home + School and School-only conditions?

c. Do the social competence scores of participants vary by classroom?

d. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test social competence scores for participants in each classroom?

The results of these analyses are presented in the following sections.

**Data Analysis**

**Research Question One**

Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s vocabulary as measured by the TOPEL? Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s vocabulary more than dialogic reading at school-only?

To address this research question, Mann-Whitney tests were used to determine whether there was a significant difference in the median vocabulary post-test scores between the participants in the Home + School condition and the participants in the School-only condition. Significance was determined at the .05 level. The results indicated that vocabulary post-test scores in the School-only condition ($Mdn = 105.0$) did not differ significantly from the Home + School condition ($Mdn = 108.0$), $U = 52.0$, $p = .41$, $z = -.86$, $r = -.18$.

Since initial results indicated there was not a statistically significant difference between conditions, additional analyses were completed to address the following questions: Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores for participants in the Home + School and School-only conditions? Do the
vocabulary scores of participants vary by classroom? Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores for participants in each classroom?

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were carried out to compare the pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores within the Home + School condition and School-only condition. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Results are presented in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

For participants in the Home + School condition, the post-test levels of vocabulary were significantly higher than that of the pre-test (Table 2).

Table 2

*Comparison of Vocabulary Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the Home + School Condition (N=12)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>99.5</td>
<td>108.0</td>
<td>-2.16</td>
<td>.03*</td>
<td>-.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.

Similar results were found for participants in the School-only condition. More specifically, post-test levels of vocabulary were significantly higher than pre-test levels (Table 3).

Table 3

*Comparison of Vocabulary Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the School Condition (N=11)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>105.0</td>
<td>-2.85</td>
<td>.00*</td>
<td>-.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.
Kruskal-Wallis tests were carried out to compare the vocabulary scores of participants among the three different classrooms. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Findings indicate that there was not a significant difference in vocabulary scores among the three classrooms $H(2) = .60, p = .74$

Finally, Wilcoxon signed rank tests were carried out to compare the vocabulary pre-test and post-test scores for participants in each of the three classrooms. As presented in Table 4, for participants in C1S1, there was not a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores. As for C2S2 and C3C2, the post-test scores on the measure of vocabulary were significantly higher than the pre-test scores.

Table 4

Comparison of Vocabulary Pre-test and Post-test Scores across Classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1S1</td>
<td>102.5</td>
<td>108.5</td>
<td>-1.16</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>-.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2S2</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>103.0</td>
<td>-2.55</td>
<td>.01*</td>
<td>-.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3S2</td>
<td>97.5</td>
<td>105.5</td>
<td>-2.39</td>
<td>.02*</td>
<td>-.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.

Research Question Two

Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s emotion knowledge more than dialogic reading at school-only? Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test emotion knowledge scores for participants in the Home + School and School-only conditions? Do the emotion knowledge scores of participants
vary by classroom? Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test emotion knowledge scores for participants in each classroom?

Mann-Whitney tests were used to determine whether there was a significant difference in emotion knowledge post-test scores between the participants in the Home + School condition and the participants in the School-only condition. Significance was determined at the .05 level. The results indicate that there was no statistically significant difference between the levels of emotion knowledge of the School-only condition (\(Mdn = 30.0\)) and the Home + School condition (\(Mdn = 32.0\)), \(U = 51.0, p = .34, z = -.94, r = -.19\).

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were carried out to compare the pre-test and post-test emotion knowledge scores within the Home + School condition and School-only condition. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Results are presented in Tables 5 and 6, respectively.

As presented in Table 5, for participants in the Home + School condition, the post-test levels of emotion knowledge were significantly higher than that of the pre-test levels.

### Table 5

*Comparison of Emotion Knowledge Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the Home and School Condition (N=12)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotion Knowledge</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>-2.55</td>
<td>.01*</td>
<td>-.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.
Similar results were found for the participants in the School-only condition and are presented in Table 6. Specifically, post-test levels emotion knowledge were significantly higher than pre-test levels.

Table 6

Comparison of Emotion Knowledge Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the School-only Condition (N=11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotion Knowledge</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>-2.20</td>
<td>.03*</td>
<td>-.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.

Kruskal-Wallis tests were carried out to compare the emotion knowledge scores among the three different classrooms. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Findings indicated that there was not a significant difference among the three classrooms in the emotion knowledge scores, $H(2) = .41, p = .81$.

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were carried out to compare the emotion knowledge pre-test and post-test scores for participants in both conditions in each of the three classrooms. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Results for the three classrooms are shown in Table 7.

For participants in the C1S1 and C3S2 there was no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores on emotion knowledge. As for C2S2, the post-test scores on the measure of emotion knowledge were significantly higher than the pre-test scores.
Table 7

Comparison of Emotion Knowledge Pre-test and Post-test Scores across Classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1S1</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>-1.83</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2S2</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>-2.12</td>
<td>.03*</td>
<td>-.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3S2</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>-1.86</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.

Research Question Three

Does the dialogic reading intervention have positive effects on participant’s social competence, as measured by the DECA-2? Does the addition of dialogic reading at home and school increase participant’s social competence more than dialogic reading at school-only? Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test social competence scores for participants in the Home + School and School-only conditions? Do the social competence scores of participants vary by classroom? Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test social competence scores for participants in each classroom?

Mann-Whitney tests were carried out to determine whether or not there was a significant difference in social competence, which consists of the protective factors and behavior concerns, post-test scores between the participants that received the intervention at school and those that received the intervention both at home and at school. The scores
for Protective Factors and Behavior Concerns were each rank-ordered and the Mann-Whitney U-Test was used to compare post-test scores. Significance was determined at the .05 level. The results in Table 8 indicate that there was no statistically significant difference between the two conditions on this variable.

Table 8

*Comparison of Protective Factors, and Behavior Concerns between School-only Intervention and Home and School Intervention (N=23)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protective Factors</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-1.61</td>
<td>-.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Concerns</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>-.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were carried out to compare the protective factors and behavior concerns pre-test and post-test scores within each of the School-only and Home + School conditions. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Results for the Home + School condition and the School-only condition are presented in Tables 9 and 10 respectively.

As shown in Table 9, there was no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the Home + School condition for protective factors and behavior concerns.
Table 9

Comparison of Protective Factors and Behavior Concerns Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the Home and School Condition (N=12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protective Factors</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>-.92</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>-.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Concerns</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 10, similar results were found for the participants in the School-only condition; there was no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of protective factors and behavior concerns.

Table 10

Comparison of Protective Factors and Behavior Concerns Pre-test and Post-test Scores in the School-only Condition (N=11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protective Factors</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>-.87</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>-.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Concerns</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>-1.30</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>-.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kruskal-Wallis tests were carried out to compare the protective factors and behavior concerns among the three different classrooms. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Findings indicated that there was a significant difference among the three classrooms in the levels of protective factors, $H(2) = 11.12, p = .00$ and behavior
concerns, \( H(2) = 6.13, p = .04 \).

Mann-Whitney tests were used to follow-up the significant difference found in the levels of protective factors and behavior concerns. Results are shown in Table 11 and Table 12. As evident from Table 11, there was a statistically significant difference in the level of protective factors between C2S2 (\( Mdn = 65.0 \)) and both C3S2 (\( Mdn = 45.0 \)) and C1S1 (\( Mdn = 50.0 \)). For the behavior concerns (Table 12), C2S2 (\( Mdn = 50.5 \)) had significantly lower levels of behavioral concerns than C3S2 (\( Mdn = 57.0 \)).

Table 11

*Comparison of Protective Factor Levels across Classrooms*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>( U )</th>
<th>( p )</th>
<th>( z )</th>
<th>( r )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1S1</td>
<td>C2S2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>.01*</td>
<td>-2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1S1</td>
<td>C3S2</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2S2</td>
<td>C3S2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>.00*</td>
<td>-2.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.

Table 12

*Comparison of Behavior Concerns Levels across Classrooms*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>( U )</th>
<th>( p )</th>
<th>( z )</th>
<th>( r )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1S1</td>
<td>C2S2</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>-.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1S1</td>
<td>C3S2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2S2</td>
<td>C3S2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>.03*</td>
<td>-2.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.
Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were carried out to compare the protective factors and behavior concerns pre-test and post-test scores for participants in both conditions in each of the three classrooms. Significance was determined at the .05 level. Results for the three classrooms are shown in Table 13.

For participants in all three classrooms, there was no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores on the protective factors and behavior concerns scales.
Table 13

Comparison of Protective Factors and Behavior Concerns Pre-test and Post-test Scores by Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Pre-test Median</th>
<th>Post-test Median</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1S1</td>
<td>Protective Factors</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behavior Concerns</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>-1.46</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2S2</td>
<td>Protective Factors</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>-1.46</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behavior Concerns</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3S2</td>
<td>Protective Factors</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>-.45</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behavior Concerns</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>-.85</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>-.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.
** indicates this couldn’t be calculated due to missing information
Chapter 5: Discussion

Emergent literacy and social emotional skills are both crucial for children’s academic success. Although dialogic reading techniques have strong empirical support for increasing the emergent literacy skills of young children (Mol et al., 2008), there is limited research on the efficacy of using dialogic reading techniques with social-emotional themed books to simultaneously improve vocabulary and social-emotional skills (Mincic, 2009, Terry, 2011).

The present study assessed the efficacy of a six-week dialogic reading intervention with social-emotional themed books designed to enhance preschooler’s vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and social competence. The original study was designed to partially replicate and expand on previous research, which has documented the efficacy of training parents and teachers to implement dialogic reading to increase preschoolers’ vocabulary (Whitehurst, Epstein et al., 1994; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). While previous studies have trained Head Start teachers (Mincic, 2009) and Head Start parents (Terry, 2011) to implement dialogic reading with social-emotional themed books, no previous research has trained both parents and teachers to simultaneously implement this intervention. Due to lack of research in this area, in addition to Whitehurst and colleagues (1994) previous findings that a treatment condition involving a home
component further enhanced vocabulary, the original study intended to train parents and teachers to implement the intervention and then compare the impact of the intervention at home and school with a control group. However, due to variables beyond the control of the researcher, including unexpected variability in center compliance and parent compliance, the study compared the impact of dialogic reading intervention at home and school with dialogic reading intervention at school-only. The research questions addressed whether the intervention had an impact on preschoolers’ vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and social competence. Due to the small sample size, analysis was limited, however, results did indicate the vocabulary scores and emotion knowledge scores increased for some participants. Additionally, data was analyzed by classroom to provide additional information regarding intervention outcomes.

In this chapter, the study results are summarized and interpreted. Next, the implications of the study are discussed. Finally, the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are discussed.

**Summary of Results**

A six-week dialogic reading intervention with social-emotional themed books was implemented with twenty-three Head Start children, with twelve children in the Home + School condition and eleven children in the School-only condition. The three research questions addressed whether the addition of a dialogic reading intervention at home, in addition to school, had an impact of preschoolers vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and social competence. Due to the small sample size, non-parametric tests were used to examine the following for each variable: comparison of post-test scores between the
Home + School and School-only groups; comparison of the pre-test and post-test scores by group and by classroom; and comparison of the results of the Home + School and School-only condition in each classroom. Given the use of non-parametric tests, which are not as sensitive as other statistical tests, no indication of causation can be made when examining the results for any variable.

The first research question addressed whether the intervention increased preschooler’s vocabulary. Results indicated that the difference in vocabulary post-test scores between participants in the Home + School condition and the School-only condition were not significant. However, the post-test vocabulary scores of participants in both the Home + School and School-only conditions were significantly higher than pre-test vocabulary scores. When the vocabulary scores among the three classrooms were examined, no significant difference was found, indicating that the vocabulary scores among participants in each classroom were comparable. When the pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores were compared for participants in each of the three classrooms, results indicated that C1S1 participants did not have a significant difference in scores, while the other two classrooms had a significant difference in pre-test and post-test vocabulary scores.

The second research question addressed whether the dialogic reading intervention with social-emotional themed books increased participant’s emotion knowledge. Results indicated there was not a statistically significant difference between the emotion knowledge post-test scores of participants in the Home + School and School-only conditions. However, when the participant’s pre-test and post-test scores of emotion knowledge were compared, participants in both conditions had statistically significant
improvements in emotion knowledge scores. When emotion knowledge scores were compared among the three classrooms, a significant difference was not found. Finally, when participants’ pre-test and post-test emotion knowledge scores were compared within each classroom, results indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference in the pre-test and post-test emotion knowledge scores for participants in C1S1 or C3S2. However, the post-test scores for participants in C2S2 were significantly higher than pre-test scores.

Finally, the third research question addressed whether the intervention increased participants social competence. The results indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference between the social competence scores of participants in either condition. Similarly, there also was not a statistically significant difference between participant’s pre-test and post-test social competence scores. However, there was a statistically significant difference between the levels of social competence for participants in C2S2 when compared to the other two classrooms. Results indicated that participant’s in C2S2 had significantly higher levels of protective factors compared to participants in the other two classrooms, and significantly lower levels of behavior problems compared to participants in C3S2.

In summary, results indicated no significant differences between the post-test scores of the Home + School and School-only conditions in terms of vocabulary, emotion knowledge, or social competence. Although differences between groups weren’t found, when the post-test scores for both groups were compared to their pre-test scores, they both performed significantly higher on post-test measures of vocabulary and emotion knowledge. There was not a significant difference for either group on the pre-test and
post-test measures of social competence. When this finding was examined more closely, results indicated that increases in vocabulary and emotion knowledge scores were not consistent across classrooms. Specifically, C1S1 did not have a significant change in pre-test and post-test scores on any of the variables. C2S2 had a significant increase in vocabulary and emotion knowledge. A significant increase was found for C3S2 vocabulary scores only. When the three classrooms were compared on each variable, results indicated that C2S2 had significantly higher ratings of social competence, including higher levels of children’s protective factors compared to the other two classrooms and lower levels of behavior problems compared to C3S2.

**Discussion and Implication of Results**

Based on the available data from the current study, results did not indicate that the addition of the dialogic reading intervention at home had an additional impact on participants’ vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and social competence. However, results did indicate that participants in two classrooms (C2S2 and C3S2) experienced significant increases in vocabulary scores during the intervention period, and participants in C2S2 also experienced significant increases in emotion knowledge scores. It’s important to note that given the small sample size and study limitations, this increase cannot be definitively attributed to the intervention.

While two classrooms (C2S2 and C3S2) had significant improvements in vocabulary scores during the intervention period, one classroom (C1S1) did not experience a significant change. Previous research on dialogic reading has found significant improvements in preschoolers’ vocabulary, particularly in conditions
involving parent training (Whitehurst, Epstein et al., 1994). Several factors could explain this lack of change with this group of participants. First, C1S1 had the fewest participants complete the intervention \((n = 6)\) and had an attrition rate of 40%, which was larger than the other two sites. Specifically, C2S2 had no attrition, while C3S2 had an attrition rate of 27% \((n = 3)\). Further, participants in the School + Home condition in C1S1 had the lowest average number of home reading sessions \((M = 8.67)\) compared to the other two sites \((C2S2 M = 12.2; C3S3 M = 19)\). Additionally, this was the only classroom in which the intervention was implemented by all three classroom teachers. Although each teacher was provided with a weekly book log so it could be determined which teacher implemented the intervention, the site only completed one log weekly and did not indicate which teacher read the book. Finally, there may have been a significant intervention effect that could not be detected due to the use of non-parametric tests. The small sample size did not allow for the use of the preferred method of parametric statistics, and non-parametric tests are not as sensitive and are therefore more likely to fail to detect real differences between groups (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007).

When examining the demographic information among the three classrooms, C2S2 had the largest number of preschoolers in the Home + School condition \((n = 7)\), suggesting higher levels of parent participation, since parents had to complete parent training in order for their child to be eligible to participate in the Home + School condition. Further, this was the only classroom in which all participants completed pre-test and post-test measures of vocabulary and emotion knowledge, indicating that no participants withdrew from the Head Start program during the course of the study. The other two classrooms had students that either withdrew from the Head Start program or
were not available for post-testing due to absences. Based on teacher ratings, the participants in this classroom had higher levels of protective factors than participants in the other two classrooms and lower levels of behavior concerns compared to participants in one of the classrooms. Median ratings for C2S2 on the Total Protective Factors scale were a T-score of 65, which indicates a strength, or high levels of protective factors, while median ratings for the other two classrooms were within the typical or average range. While median ratings for C2S2 on the Behavior Concerns scale were significantly lower than C3S2, both classes levels of behavior concerns were within the “typical” range, indicating overall low levels of behavior concerns.

Additionally, only C2S2 had a significant increase in emotion knowledge scores. This may be related to the teacher reporting participants’ high levels of protective factors, which could make them more responsive to a short-term intervention. This variability in outcomes could also be partially due to a difference in teacher’s skills in discussing emotions since Mincic (2009) found that teacher’s skills in discussing emotions impacted children’s vocabulary and emotion knowledge. The current study did not evaluate or observe teacher’s skill in discussing emotions. This variability in outcomes across classrooms could be partially due to teacher skill differences in discussing emotions. Overall teacher differences could have impacted the outcomes. Teacher quality plays an important role in child success. The teacher in C2S2 could have a higher skill level in various areas, including interpersonal skills, communication skills, and organizational skills, which further enhanced the intervention outcomes for children in this class.

Although C2S2 had significantly higher levels of protective factors compared to the other two classrooms and lower levels of behavior concerns than one classroom, a
significant difference in pre-test and post-test levels of social competence was not found for any of the classrooms. Several explanations could account for this lack of change. The median scores for pre-test measures of protective factors and behavior concerns were within the average range, suggesting that this was not an area of significant concerns for participants before the intervention began. This would leave limited room for change. Also, social competence was not observed or measured directly; it was assessed through teacher observations of behaviors indicated on a rating scale. Emotion knowledge scores, which were directly assessed by the researcher, increased for some participants. This may be at least partially explained by emotion knowledge being a lower level skill of social-emotional competence (Denham, 2006). More intense intervention may be needed to have an impact on social competence, which also includes the higher-level skills of emotion management and regulation (Halberstadt et al., 2001).

Parent training is another factors that could have contributed to the variability in outcomes among the sites. At Site 1, the parents viewed the video and had their children attend the training. At Site 2, technology issues prevented the completion of video training, therefore the researcher modeled the dialogic reading techniques. The children at Site 2 were with Head Start staff during the training. Their children may have distracted the parents at Site 1 during the training, which may have also limited their questions and engagement with the researcher. The parents at Site 2 were more interactive than the parents at Site 1 and asked questions. This may be partially attributed to the larger number of parent participants at the Site 2 training. Additionally, the parents at Site 2 observed the researcher encountering technology difficulties and this may have endeared them to her and increased the personal connection making them more likely and
willing to complete the intervention.

Limitations and Directions for Further Research

There were several notable limitations to the study. First and foremost, is the use of a small convenience sample of intact preschool classrooms. Although the classrooms were randomly assigned to conditions, the generalizability of findings are limited to the sample. In an attempt to limit the effects of the use of a convenience sample, Head Start sites were randomly assigned to the experimental or control group, however, the small number of participants did not allow for meaningful examination of the data from the control group. There were also only a small number of participants in the intervention. While it is recommended that dialogic reading interventions are implemented in small groups, the number of participants was too limited to adequately address the effectiveness of the intervention. The sample was limited to children of parents that provided consent. When parents provided consent, they agreed to participate in the parent training and to complete behavior ratings and the intervention at home. While Head Start staff and teachers were involved in the recruitment of participants and in the parental completion of ratings scales, it was challenging to gain parent participation and follow through with the intervention. Further, parents were asked to complete home literacy environment surveys, only 52% were completed and returned.

Parents self-reported on the home literacy environment and both parents and teachers reported on the fidelity of intervention implementation. As the researcher was unable to determine the accuracy of their statements or level of compliance, there is a possibility of over reporting the rates of shared book reading activities due to social desirability. It is also a concern that due to time constraints, teachers and parents did not
fill out the reading logs at the time of storybook completion, or they may not have completed them at all. It is easy for parents and teachers to get caught up in daily routine activities and not to have a chance to complete the paperwork, whether or not they implemented the intervention.

Teachers and parents completed one training session before implementation of the intervention. Consistent with other research in this area (Mincic, 2009; Terry, 2011) training primarily focused on dialogic reading techniques and included limited training on emotion coaching implementation. Teachers and parents may have needed additional opportunities for instruction on how to implement the dialogic reading and emotion coaching techniques to incorporate them into reading and daily routines. Additionally, the intervention dosage may not have been strong enough to produce effects. Previous dialogic reading research has demonstrated positive effects with a six-week intervention (Whitehurst, Arnold et al., 1994); however, with the addition of the social-emotional component, a longer, more intensive intervention may be necessary to produce results.

Since participants completed pre-test measures and post-test measures six weeks a part, testing is also a limitation. The child participants completed the vocabulary and emotion knowledge measures with the researcher. Results indicated an increase in vocabulary and emotion knowledge scores for some children; however, this may have been due to familiarity with the test items. Parents and teachers were asked to complete measures of social competence. Since parental completion of the rating scale was limited, the parent results were not analyzed or included in the study. However, teachers were asked to complete ratings on children six weeks a part. Their ratings also could have been
impacted by familiarity with the items.

In order to sufficiently determine whether dialogic reading with social-emotional themed books has an impact on preschooler’s vocabulary, emotion knowledge, and social competence, future studies should include a large sample of preschoolers, which would allow for the addition of a control group. Since previous research has found researcher intervention implementation produced stronger effects than teacher implemented interventions (Mol et al., 2009), it would be beneficial if a researcher initially implemented the intervention to determine if this type of intervention has efficacy at simultaneously improving vocabulary and social-emotional skills.

It would also be beneficial for the intervention to last for a longer time period, with additional opportunities for parent and teacher training. Specifically, parent and teacher training could occur before the intervention, with an additional training in the midst of the intervention. Further, the fidelity of the intervention should be directly monitored, through researcher observation, to ensure parent and teacher compliance with the training techniques. Finally, in future studies, preschoolers’ levels of social competence should be directly observed by the researcher rather than relying solely on parent and teacher report.

In summary, the current study indicates that the vocabulary and emotion knowledge scores increased for some participants following participation in the intervention. Although the study had numerous limitations, the participants in C2S2 appeared to benefit most from the intervention, which could have been related to a combination of teacher quality, parent involvement, and child characteristics, in addition to the intervention. Further research can focus on identifying which factors are crucial for
intervention success.
References:


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Kotaman, H. impacts of dialogical storybook reading on young children’s reading attitudes and vocabulary development. Reading Improvement, 55-61.

Lagutta, K.H., & Wellman, H.M. (2002). Differences in early parent-child conversations about negative versus positive emotions: Implications for the development of


McCabe, P.C., & Altamura, M. (2011). Empirically valid strategies to improve social and


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reading to children the key to early literacy development? *Canadian Psychology, 49*, 82-88.


**Appendix A: Book List for School Intervention**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Publication Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glad Monster, Sad Monster</td>
<td>Ed Emberley and Anne Miranda</td>
<td>LB Kids</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands are not for Hitting</td>
<td>Martine Agassi</td>
<td>Free Spirit Publishing</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words are not for Hurting</td>
<td>Elizabeth Verdick</td>
<td>Free Spirit Publishing</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voices are not for Yelling</td>
<td>Elizabeth Verdick</td>
<td>Free Spirit Publishing</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llama Llama Time to Share</td>
<td>Anna Dewdney</td>
<td>Viking Books for Young Readers</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Worst Day of My Life Ever</td>
<td>Julia Cook</td>
<td>Boys Town Press</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Teacher Book Guide

Teacher Book Guide for: Hands Are Not for Hitting

By Martine Agassi

Introducing the story for the first time

- Read the title of the book from the cover while pointing to each word with your finger. Have the children repeat the title of the book
- Point to the cover and ask the children what they think is happening in the picture and how each child feels

Reading the story for the first time

- This is a book with fewer words per page and repetition that allows for interaction and demonstrations, but on the first reading, focus mostly on reading and ask a few questions throughout the book
- Read the story and ask questions such as:
  - “What is happening in this picture?”
- If the children seem interested, talk about the details in the pictures.

Recalling the story

At the end of the book, ask the children to recall things such as:
- When do we use our hands for?

Reading the book again and again

- Give more open-ended prompts on each page (ex. “What is happening on this page?”)
- Ask questions about what makes the children feel mad/upset, what they do when they're upset,
- Ask questions about how they feel when others hit them
- Let the children try to complete the sentence. Read most of the sentence and let them say the last word, or pause and let them try to say the last rhyming word. If they don’t know the word right away, read the sentence and have them repeat it.

Descriptions and examples of Dialogic Reading strategies (CROWD and PEER) and Emotion Coaching strategies

<p>| Completion Prompts | Fill-in the blank questions | Leave off the last word in a sentence and let the children try to provide the word. If they can’t guess the word right away, read the |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Recall Prompts</strong></th>
<th>Questions that ask your child to remember a detail from the book</th>
<th>“What can we do to calm down when we’re angry?” “What do we use our hands for?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open-ended prompts</strong></td>
<td>Statements/questions that encourage your child to talk about the book</td>
<td>“Tell me about what is happening in this picture? “What do you think would happen if the boy keeps hitting his friends?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wh- prompts</strong></td>
<td>Who, what, where, when, why questions</td>
<td>“What can we use our hands for? What can we do when we feel angry? What are good ways to calm down?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prompt</strong></td>
<td>Encourage your child to name items in the book and talk about the book</td>
<td>“Look at this picture, what do we call that?” “When do you feel this way? What did you do to feel better?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate</strong></td>
<td>Statements that positively reinforce correct answers or correct child’s incorrect responses</td>
<td>“Yes, that’s right………..”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expand</strong></td>
<td>Repeat what the child says and give additional information</td>
<td>“yes, the boy looks frustrated. His arms are crossed.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Repeat</strong></td>
<td>Encourage your child to repeat your expanded response</td>
<td>“now you tell me…. .”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotion labeling</strong></td>
<td>Define/identify the emotion of your child</td>
<td>“The boy looks angry and the girls look confused.” (point out facial expression and body movements that let you know how the child is feeling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discuss cause of emotion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Why do you think he feels this way? “What other things make people feel grumpy or mad?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Preschool Book Reading Log

Teacher Name _____________________________________________________

Book Read: ___________________________________________________________________

Participating Children:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Name</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thurs</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Your opinion of this week’s book:

1 2 3 4 5

didn’t like at all Didn’t like, didn’t dislike Very much liked

Notes/Comments about this week’s book:

Your opinion of children’s level of engagement during book reading

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all Engaged at times Very much engaged
### Appendix D: Book List for Home Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Publication Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Way I Feel</td>
<td>Janaan Cain</td>
<td>Parenting Press</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today I Feel Silly</td>
<td>Jamie Lee Curtis</td>
<td>HarperCollins</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day</td>
<td>Judith Viorst</td>
<td>Atheneum Books for Young Readers</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llama Llama Mad at Mama</td>
<td>Anna Dewdney</td>
<td>Viking Books for Young Readers</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wemberly Worried</td>
<td>Kevin Henkes</td>
<td>Greenwillow Books</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns to Listen</td>
<td>Howard Binkow</td>
<td>Lerner Publishing Group</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Parent Book Guide

Book Guide for:
The Way I Feel
By Janan Cain

Introducing the story for the first time

• Read the title of the book from the cover while pointing to each word with your finger. Have your child repeat the title of the book
• Point to the face on the cover and ask your child, “How do you think the person feels?”

Reading the story for the first time

• Read the story and ask questions such as:
  o “What is happening in this picture?”
  o What do you think he/she is so angry/sad etc. about?
• Or before you identify the emotion on the page, ask your child how the person feels. And ask, “How can you tell the person feels sad/angry etc.?”

Recalling the story

At the end of the book, ask your child to recall things such as:

• What made the person feel scared?
• What feelings did we read about in the book?

Reading the book again and again

• Give more open-ended prompts on each page (ex. “What is happening on this page?”)
• Ask questions about when your child has felt that way (ex. Have you ever felt sad? What makes you feel sad? What do you do when you’re angry?)
• Let your child try to complete the sentence, ex. on the last sentence on the scared page, read “hold me close and turn out the ___” and then point at the last word (“light”) and let your child try to complete the sentence

Descriptions and examples of Dialogic Reading strategies (CROWD and PEER) and Emotion Coaching strategies
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Prompts</th>
<th>Fill-in the blank questions</th>
<th>“When we feel sad, sometimes we ___?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recall Prompts</td>
<td>Questions that ask your child to remember a detail from the book</td>
<td>“What was the girl disappointed about?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-ended prompts</td>
<td>Statements/questions that encourage your child to talk about the book</td>
<td>“Tell me about what is happening in this picture?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh- Prompts</td>
<td>Who, what, where, when, why questions</td>
<td>“What makes you feel angry?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Prompt            | Encourage your child to name items in the book and talk about the book | “Look at this picture, what do we call that?”
|                   |                                | “Have you ever felt that way? What did you do to feel better?” |
| Evaluate          | Statements that positively reinforce correct answers or correct child’s incorrect responses | “Yes, that’s right, a lot of people are scared of snakes.” |
| Expand            | Repeat what the child says and give additional information | “Yes, when people are angry, they might yell. Also, their bodies get tense and their heart starts beating faster.” |
| Repeat            | Encourage your child to repeat your expanded response | “now you tell me….” |
| Emotion labeling  | Define/identify the emotion of your child | “The boy looks excited.” (point out facial expression and body movements that let you know the boy is excited) |
| Discuss cause of emotion |                                | “Why does he feel this way?” |
Children Name ____________________________

Book Read: ________________________________

Days and times book was read (please read at least 3 days)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start time</td>
<td>End time</td>
<td>Start time</td>
<td>End time</td>
<td>Start time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start time</td>
<td>End time</td>
<td>Start time</td>
<td>End time</td>
<td>Start time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your opinion of this week’s book:

1 2 3 4 5

didn’t like at all Didn’t like, didn’t dislike Very much liked
Notes/Comments about this week’s book:

Your opinion of children’s level of engagement during book reading

1  2  3  4  5
Not at all  Engaged at times  Very much engaged

What did your child like most about the book: