PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT HOME
AND ITS IMPACT ON READING

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine whether parental involvement at home contributes to a child’s reading success regardless of the parent’s English proficiency. The methodology employed was descriptive research utilizing a home survey and a standardized reading assessment. Parents’ home literary environment and participation with students reading activities were surveyed by questionnaire to determine if they helped to impact students’ reading levels. The study examined the literary environments and activities of students who speak English as a second language (ESL) compared to English-only (non-ESL) speaking students. Students’ reading levels were determined with the Silvaroli Classroom Reading Inventory and were then compared to the survey responses to see if there was any relationship between parental involvement at home and reading achievement.

The study did show that parents’ home involvement in certain areas does have a positive impact on a student’s reading success, while other areas did not appear in this study to have a noticeable effect on reading success.
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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Many schools are investing time and money in the development and implementation of parent school participation programs. Parent school participation programs provide opportunities for parents to be involved in some aspect of their children’s education at the school site. They can be such activities as a parent student science night or a parent helping out in the classroom during school hours. These well-meaning programs are based on research which tends to support the hypothesis that parental involvement is essential to a student’s academic success. Although research does support positive parental involvement (Comer, Davies, Epstein, cited in Waterman & Zellman, 1998), most research reveals that parent involvement in the children’s home environment has a greater impact on student academic achievement than parent participation in school (Wang, cited in Finn 1998; Waterman & Zellman, 1998).

The study focuses on the effects of parent involvement in the home as it relates to a student’s reading success. Home literary environment and activities were surveyed by questionnaire to determine if they helped to impact students’ reading levels. It was expected for the study to show that parents involvement at home in their children’s reading had positive impacts on their children’s reading success regardless of the parent’s English proficiency. The study looked at the
literary environments and activities of students who speak English as a second language (ESL), primarily Spanish, compared to English-only (non-ESL) speaking students.

Development of the Problem

Research indicates that parental involvement in children's education has positive effects on behavior, dropout rates and academic achievement (Comer, National Center for Education Statistics, Kohl, Muller, Reynolds, Stevenson and Baker, Cited in Waterman & Zellman, 1998). This understanding has led many schools to implement parent school participation programs. Schools may be misdirected in their efforts to promote parent involvement in their children's education as it is not clear if school participation programs achieve the same results that occur naturally from good parenting (Finn, 1998; Waterman & Zellman, 1998).

Waterman and Zellman (1998) conducted a study of second and fifth grade students and their families to examine the impact of parenting style and enthusiasm on students' academic performance in comparison to school involvement. The findings showed that how parents interact with their children is more important to children's academic success than how much time parents participate in school activities (Waterman & Zellman, 1998).

Three types of parental involvement at home were identified as consistently affecting academic performance; 1) organizing and monitoring their child’s time, 2) helping with homework, and 3) discussing school issues with their child. Parents reading to their child and their child reading to them was also identified as an indicator of academic success for younger children (Finn, 1998). Some researchers credit parental involvement for a student’s academic success.
despite the adversities of poverty, minority status, or limited second language proficiency (Masten, Peng & Lee, cited in Finn 1998).

Parents are more likely to become learning role models and participate in their children's education when they see themselves as effective learners. FLAME, a family literacy program, which stands for Family Literacy: Aprendiendo (Learning), Mejorando (Bettering), Educando (Educating), teaches and encourages Hispanic parents how to use reading and writing with their children regardless of their own literacy level. At the end of the two year study FLAME reported that more parents began to be positive literary role models and children benefited from imitating their parents' behavior (Rodriguez-Brown & Li, 1999).

Need for the Study

No studies were found that compared parents' involvement at home of ESL students and non-ESL students and the impact on reading. This study is needed to reinforce the effectiveness and need for using school’s resources for program development in the area of family literacy programs that promote and educate parents on how to create a literary environment at home. Research confirms the relationship between parental involvement at home and reading success (Kupetz & Green, Mavorganes, cited in Hepworth, 1998). Literacy development is essential for the academic success of all students. Poverty, minority status or limited second language proficiency can present students with a literacy disadvantage upon entering school. To decrease the literacy gap and aid students in reaching their full academic potential, schools are relying on parents for assistance. Schools have embraced the claims that parental participation is the part of the solution. Time and money is being spent on program
development to encourage parents to participate in their child’s education at school. Educators’ good intentions have overlooked the research that suggests that parental involvement at home has a greater impact on a children's academic achievement than does parental school participation (Wang, cited in Finn, 1998; Waterman & Zellman, 1998), especially in the area of reading (Keptz & Green, Mavorgenes, cited in Hepworth, 1998).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine whether parental involvement at home contributes to a child’s reading success regardless of the parent’s English proficiency.

**Research Question**

What is the impact of parental involvement at home on reading?

**Significance of the Study**

Students may benefit academically if schools developed programs aimed at promoting parental involvement at home rather than in school participation programs that are less effective. Time and money could be better spent to educate and encourage parental involvement at home through family literacy programs. Perhaps better use of a school’s limited financial and personnel resources would be to promote and educate parents on how to effectively participate in their children’s education at home. With the many demands on a parent’s time, home involvement offers a more realistic and doable option for many parents than school participation programs.
CHAPTER 2
THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Chapter two focuses on five areas of parent involvement in the home. The first area to be reviewed is the historic relationship parents have had in the education of their children as it relates to home and school involvement. Secondly, the chapter looks at what researchers have to say on the impact parent involvement has on academic achievement. Thirdly, it examines how parents and children can work together at home to create a reading environment that promotes good reading skills and attitudes. The fourth area looks at the negative effects the media, primarily television, has had on children's reading skills and what parents can do to help. The last section takes a look at successful family literacy programs and why they have been successful in promoting literacy for adults and children.

Historical Review of Parent-School Relations

Rural America: Parents' involvement in their children's formal education has fluctuated over the past two centuries with the economic history of this country. Initially, rural schools outnumbered urban schools. During the 1700s, political and religious conflict, a growing economy, and free land allowed young families and individuals to move out on their own creating a mostly rural society. Most of the country's population lived on family owned farms and were self-sufficient. Families living in isolated rural areas became responsible for the socialization and education of the children. Public schools were initially legislated in Massachusetts in the seventeenth century but were an unrealistic option for
many rural families until years later. Parents had tremendous influence and control over these early rural schools. They dictated the teachers, the curriculum, and how teachers could and could not behave outside of the classroom (Fuller & Olsen, 1998).

**Industrial Revolution:** As the United States became more industrialized in the mid-1800s, a mass migration from rural to urban areas occurred. The country became more industrialized, urbanized, and prosperous. With the advent of mandated public schools the federal government took over the primary responsibility of educating our nation’s children. The government believed that females, especially immigrants, were not able to properly educate their children to become effective citizens for a democratic society. The Horace Mann’s Common School was created for the purpose of Americanizing all citizens. The role of parents shifted from being actively involved in running the school to that of guest of the school. Gradually the responsibility of dealing with the schools shifted from fathers to mothers. Because of the low status of women, mothers had little power in the education of their children (Fuller & Olsen, 1998).

**World War I and the Great Depression:** World War I and the Great Depression brought other changes that affected the family and the role they played in their children’s education. During this time many women entered the work force to provide for their families and later to support the war effort. To help care for the children of these working mothers the Works Progress Administration, a government program, funded nursery schools. The Lanthan Act War Nurseries provided child care for parents who were part of the war effort and the Kaiser Child Care Centers provided twenty-four hour daycare for working mothers. When the war ended the men returned to the work force, the women returned home and the child care centers closed (Fuller & Olsen, 1998).
1950s to 1970s: During the 1950s -1970s mothers continued to be the parent most likely to interact with the school. A large number of mothers from ethnically racially diverse groups and/or low-income families were part of the work force and were unable to attend afternoon school meetings. Parent involvement in the schools became primarily an activity of white, middle class women. This sent a negative statement to minorities and poor people on how the school valued their involvement. At this same time the government began its War on Poverty. Head Start, a preschool program that included parent involvement, provided disadvantaged children the opportunity to get a head start before entering school (Fuller & Olsen, 1998).

1980s-1990s: Parental involvement in the schools took on a new interest in the 1980s. Site-based management prompted more parent involvement in some schools. Impressive results on the positive impact of parent involvement on student achievement were demonstrated by numerous research studies published in the 1980s (Decker & Gregg, 1994).

In 1990 President George Bush and the nation’s governors adopted a national agenda for education reform. This was later expanded under the Clinton administration. One of the goals that was part of Goals 2000 focused on the importance of parent involvement. It reads, "Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children" (U.S. Department of Education, cited in Decker, Gregg, 1994 p. xii). The United States Department of Education issued a report in 1994 entitled, Strong Families, Strong Schools, based on information compiled from research done over the past three decades showing a strong correlation between children's learning and family involvement. Although documentation supporting the
benefits of parent involvement has existed for years, interest in school reform has sparked a recent rebirth of school initiated parental involvement programs in an attempt to improve student academic achievement (Decker & Gregg, 1994).

**Parental Involvement**

Not too long ago, many parents and educators shared the opinion that once children entered school it was up to professional teachers to educate them. Few believed that parents had the skills to assist in the learning of modern day curriculum (Decker & Gregg, 1994). In a 1984 research study three family behaviors were identified that directly relate to student achievement: (1) parents that have high expectations for their children, (2) frequent parent and child interaction, and (3) parents who see themselves as teachers (cited in Decker & Gregg, 1994). Researcher and director for the Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children’s Learning at Johns Hopkins University, summarizes the results of many studies over the last decade.

One major message of the early and continuing studies is simply and clearly that families are important for children’s learning, development, and school success across the grades. The research suggests that students at all grade levels do better academic work and have more positive attitudes, higher aspirations, and other positive behaviors if they have parents who are aware, knowledgeable, encouraging, and involved. (Decker & Gregg, 1994, p. 3)

A study on parent attitudes toward parent involvement with their children’s education was conducted in metropolitan areas in six states. The parents participating in the study indicated the following in order of importance:

1. They wanted to spend time helping their child get the best education.
2. They wanted to cooperate with their child’s teacher.
3. They believed they should ensure that their child did their homework.
4. They wanted the teacher to give them ideas about how to help their child with reading at home. (cited in Decker & Gregg, 1994, p. 5)
All parents desire for their children to succeed at school, but some parents are more successful than others in promoting their children’s academic success. To examine the impact of parenting style and enthusiasm on children’s academic performance in comparison to school involvement, a study was conducted of second and fifth grade students and their families. The findings showed that how parents interact with their children is more important to a children’s academic success than how much time parents participate in school activities (Waterman & Zellman, 1998).

Three types of parental involvement at home were identified that consistently affect academic performance: (1) organizing and monitoring their child’s time, (2) helping with homework, and (3) discussing school issues with their child. Parents reading to their child and their child reading to them was also identified as an indicator of academic success for younger children. Some researchers credit parental involvement for a student’s academic success despite the adversities of poverty, minority status, or limited second language proficiency (Maten, Peng & Lee, cited in Finn, 1998). One researcher found a small, but statistically significant correlation of student achievement with parents’ attendance at school programs, conferences, and extracurricular activities. However, other researchers have found little or no relationship between academic achievement and parental visits to school, volunteer work, or attendance at school events. Finn (1998) states that research indicates that parental involvement at home and at school are not equal in importance in promoting academic achievement. Parental involvement at home is among the most important influences on academic performance. While parent attendance at school events and volunteering is admirable it requires time commitments that single or working parents may not be able to make (Finn, 1998).
Dr. Joyce Epstein (1998), author and researcher, states that school guided parent involvement at home improves student achievement, attitudes, homework, aspirations and report card grades. She offers sixteen suggestions to parents and teachers on how to improve parents’ academic involvement at home.

1. Ask parents to regularly read to their children and/or listen to their children read aloud.
2. Lend books, workbooks and other materials to parents.
3. Ask parents to take their children to the library.
4. Ask parents to get their children to talk about what they did in class.
5. Give an assignment that requires the children to ask their parents questions.
6. Ask parents to view a specific television program with their child and discuss it.
7. Suggest ways for parents to include children in their own educationally enriching activities.
8. Send home suggestions for games or group activities related to school learning.
9. Suggest how parents might use home materials and activities to stimulate their children’s interest in curricular subjects.
10. Establish agreements with parents to supervise and assist children in completing homework.
11. Help parents provide appropriate rewards and/or penalties based on school performance and/or behavior.
12. Ask parents to observe the classroom with particular attention to teacher strategies.
13. Provide parents with hands-on learning to build their techniques for teaching, for making learning materials or for planning lessons.
14. Give a questionnaire or other form of feedback to parents to help them evaluate their children’s progress.
15. Ask parents to sign homework to ensure its completion.
16. Ask parents to provide practice drills in spelling and math, and to help with workbook assignments without doing the work themselves. (Epstein as cited in Lustberg, 1998, p. 7, 9, 10)
Parents, Children and Reading

Reading to Children: In 1983 the National Academy of education and the National Institute of Education created a Commission on Reading. The commission issued a report in 1985 entitled Becoming a Nation of Readers. The report’s findings declared: “The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children” (Trelease, 1989).

A Connecticut study was conducted to determine the impact reading aloud to students has on students’ reading achievement. Independent readers were hired to visit six diverse schools and read for twenty minutes three times a week for twelve weeks to fourth and sixth graders. Control groups were also established of fourth and sixth graders who did not receive the extra reading. The findings showed significant improvements in reading attitudes, independent reading, and comprehension skills among the classes that received the attention of the independent readers (Trelease, 1989).

In another study called the Haringey Project, two classes of children in different schools regularly took reading books home over a two year period. Their parents were encouraged to listen to them read aloud at home. After two years the students’ reading scores were compared to those of students in classes who were not encouraged to read aloud at home. The test results were considerably higher for students in the classrooms that encouraged at home reading (Hannon, 1987). A study done by the National Center for Family Literacy showed that students who read eleven or more pages each day for school or homework have higher average reading proficiency scores than those who read less than five pages a day (National Center for Family Literacy, 1999).
Home Environment: The home environment can be the source of three broad categories of literacy experiences: (a) experiences in which children interact with adults in writing and reading, (b) experiences in which children explore printed materials on their own, and (c) experiences in which children observe adults modeling literate behavior (Dale, Thomas, LeFevre, Senechal, 1998). In their book, Beginning Literacy and Your Child published by The International Reading Association, Steven and Linda Silvern state that children who are able to read easily are not necessarily brighter or more mature than other children, but come to school with more experiences with printed text. Literacy, like walking and talking, develops slowly through countless experiences with books and writing tools. Parents are a vital link in providing children with these experiences. Children imitating their parents reading is a rich source for reading development. All types of printed material, newspapers, magazines, environmental print such as cereal boxes, store and street signs provide children with opportunities to gain reading concepts (Silvern & Silvern, 1990). According to the National Center for Family Literacy a child’s average reading proficiency increases as the number of different types of reading material at home increased (National Center for Family Literacy, 1999).

Parents who read to their children provide the sounds of written language, demonstrate how to handle a book and how to turn its pages, and help to develop the concept that text and pictures make sense. Kindergartners and first graders who have been read to come to school knowing how to hold books upright and turn the pages from front to back. Parents can encourage reading at home by establishing a reading routine such as a nightly bedtime story. In addition to a set reading time, when possible parents can try to read to their children whenever their children ask them to. This reinforces the idea that
reading is a good way to spend their time. When parents and children read together it creates an emotional relationship toward each other and reading that lasts a lifetime (Silvern, & Silvern 1990, p. 9; Hepworth, 1989).

**Home and Public Libraries:** Harvard professor Jeanne Chall's research showed that the lack of a home library was a critical factor in the reading gap between low income and middle class children. Her study showed that these two income groups were at the same reading level in second grade but by fourth grade the low income group was at a lower reading level primarily because the low income children did not have enough books at home to practice with (cited in Trelease, 1989). Over the last two decades there has been a decline in reading materials in the home according to the National Center for Family Literacy. The National Assessment of Educational Progress has showed a direct correlation to academic achievement and the number of reading materials in the home. States where homes have more reading materials generally have higher average reading proficiency scores (National Center for Family Literacy, 1999). Parents can establish home libraries inexpensively by purchasing books from garage sales, thrift shops and used bookstores (Trelease, 1989).

The public library is a great source for material yet less than ten percent of Americans are regular patrons. Jim Trelease (1989) hits at the heart of many parents' good intentions on taking their children to the library. He often asks parents this rhetorical question to get them thinking about the message they send to their children about the importance of reading, "Would you estimate that you've taken your child to the shopping mall ten times more often that to the library or one hundred times more often? What does this say to your child about your priorities in life?" Unfortunately these children will someday reflect the priorities of their parents (Trelease, 1989).
Effects of Television and Computers on Reading

One way in which parents can have a positive effect on their children's reading and academic success is by limiting the number of hours a day they spend using various media. Excessive television viewing and computer use hinders the development of children's ability to concentrate, to read, to write and to demonstrate any of the communication skills necessary to be literate. These medias are passive activities that require little interaction, thought, concentration, or imagination. They provide a diversion while limiting children's involvement in real life activities and hindering personal and academic growth (Winn, 1985).

Statistics: The results of a recent study conducted by the Kaiser Foundation found that children watch more than nineteen hours of television a week. Most television viewing is done alone in their rooms, unsupervised by parents. Children spend ten hours a week listening to music by themselves. Time spent playing video games is approximately twenty minutes a day and children spend only eight seconds a day online. Overall children under eight years of age spend nearly thirty-eight hours a week consuming some type of media. Children eight years and older spend forty-five hours a week (Holland, 1999). They spend twelve times as much time watching television as they do reading (National Center for Family Literacy, 1999). According to the Center for Media Education children who watch four or more hours of television a day spend less time on homework, are poorer readers, interact poorly with peers, and have fewer hobbies than children who watch less television (Center for Media Education, 1999). In 1991 the United States had the second highest percentage of thirteen year old students who watch the most hours of television among fifteen countries (National Center for Family Literacy, 1999).
Television and Reading: When children read they create images in their mind, their own inner television programs. The result nourishes the imagination. Television provides a set image and does not allow for creativity. Bruno Bettelheim, an author and parent said it best, "Television captures the imagination but does not liberate it. A good book at once stimulates and frees the mind" (cited in Winn, 1985, p. 58, 59). Reading demands complex mental manipulations where as television is passive and requires little concentration.

Children read fewer books when television is available to them. In 1980 the California Department of Education polled 233,000 sixth graders. Seventy percent reported that they rarely read for pleasure, but 70% admitted to watching four or more hours of television a day (Winn, 1985). Television is not only reducing the time children engage in reading but it is affecting their comprehension skills. Children who spend many hours watching television do not have the concentration required for reading comprehension. Television provides limited opportunities to learn to focus attention sharply and sustain concentration (Winn, 1985). According to Winn, author of The Plug in Drug, researchers have identified four stages of reading development; prereading, initial decoding, increasing fluency and reading for knowledge and information. Winn noted that researchers found that if the home environment encouraged reading then the child had a better chance of progressing through the first three reading stages without difficulty. However, if the home environment did not encourage reading and relied upon television for entertainment, information, interaction and activity then the child was apt to struggle through the reading stages (Bachen, 1982, as cited in Winn, 1985). Jim Trelease, author of The New Read-Aloud Handbook sums up the effects of television, "...television has become the most
pervasive and powerful influence on the human family and, at the same time, the major stumbling block to literacy in America" (Trelease, 1982, p. 117).

**Supporting Research:** In an early Canadian study children's reading test scores were compared in towns with and without television. Children in Notel, the town without television, scored considerably higher than the other two towns that had television. When Notel finally received television and the children were tested again two years later their test scores had dropped to the level of the other two towns that had previously had television (Trelease, 1982). Another study completed in the 1970s compared sixth graders who came from homes where the television was constantly on and sixth graders whose television was turned on less frequently. Their reading scores showed that two thirds of the students from homes with constant television scored at least one year below grade level and the other group scored at grade level or above (Winn, 1985). Similar results occurred in a 1980 study conducted by the California Department of Education. The state tested and surveyed all the state's sixth and twelfth graders. Student's scores were correlated with the number of hours they spent watching television. Findings concluded that the more television watched the lower the test scores (Trelease, 1982).

**Computers and Reading:** Computers, like television, provide little opportunity for children to use and develop their cognitive skills. The computer user is guided by noise, motion, and color, not imagination. Feedback is prepackaged and there is minimal social interaction with others (Healy, 1998). Children who spend a lot of time using a computer are being programmed to prefer it to reading a book. Visual media are less abstract than written text because things are depicted rather than described and require less mental effort (Healy, 1998). Even educational programs can be detrimental to children's development when
they become substitutes for play or socializing or when used more than fourteen hours a week (Trelease, 1982).

**Family Literacy Programs**

Family literacy programs were first recognized in the mid-eighties as successful programs in promoting literacy for all ages. Family literacy programs focus on parents and children simultaneously, providing basic literacy training for adults and children (Education Department, 1993). Dorothy Strickland, author of the 1996 article *Meeting the Needs of Families in Family Literacy Programs*, has this to say about family literacy programs, "In its broadest sense, family literacy encompasses both the research and the implementation of programs involving parents, children, and extended family members and the ways in which they support and use literacy in their homes and in their communities" (cited in Strickland, 1996, p. 1). Virtually all of family literacy programs have been targeted toward low income populations in which literacy achievement has consistently been below that of the middle income population.

At the federal level, family literacy programs are tied to The Adult Education Act (Titles II and III), The Library and Construction Act (Titles I and VI), The Head Start Act, The Family Support Act of 1988 (Title IV-A), and several programs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, including Chapter 1; Even Start; Title VII Bilingual Education; and Title III, Part B, the Family School Partnership Program. (Strickland, 1996, p. 3)

Most literacy programs have been concerned with three areas as defined in 1989 by the National Center for Family Literacy. They are: 1) the low level literacy skills possessed by a large percentage of adults; 2) the growing number of children living in impoverished, disadvantaged homes who are failing in school; and 3) the rapid increase in the level of literacy required for employment (cited in Strickland, 1996). In 1993 the New Jersey’s Council on Adult
Education and Literacy expressed concern that family literacy programs were getting a reputation for only being applicable to low socioeconomic and minority groups. This they felt was not the case. Members of the New Jersey Council acknowledged the need to concentrate limited resources on families in greatest need, but added:

The Council differs with the National Center's view of Family Literacy policy by concluding that the encouragement and promotion of family literacy must go beyond those families who are perceived as at risk. The Council strongly believes that family literacy programs are not required by disadvantaged families alone, but are important for all families. (Strickland, 1996, p.4)

Since 1989 the National Center for Family Literacy has evaluated all aspects of most family literacy programs to determine their effectiveness against other adult and child literacy programs. Their findings indicate that family literacy programs are more effective than traditional stand alone approaches to adult and early childhood education programs (National Center for Family Literacy, 1999). Parental involvement is the key to the success of these programs. As parents and children improve their literacy ability, lifestyle changes in most cases are occurring as well. These changes in attitude and practice help to promote long term independent maintenance of these newly acquired skills. In a five city study the National Center for Family Literacy found that at the time families exited the programs parents were providing a wider range of reading and writing materials at home for their children, they were taking their children to the library twice as often as before, and they bought or borrowed books for their children every one to two weeks, a 40% increase than when they entered the program. Parents also read or looked at books with their children on a daily basis, their children requested to be read to more often and reading of children's books or magazines increased by 40%. Children saw their parents engaging in
a wider range of reading and writing activities at home which led to imitation
(National Center for Family Literacy, 1999).

The National Center for Family Literacy conducted follow up studies of 200
families in four states to determine the long term effects of family literacy
programs. One to six years after these families had attended the family literacy
programs, 43% were employed compared to 14% before attending the programs,
51% of the adults had received a high school equivalency certificate, and 13%
were enrolled in higher education or training programs. Dependence on public
assistance was reduced by 50% and 80% of the children were rated at or above
grade level by their classroom teachers (National Center for Family Literacy,
1999).

School Based Family Literacy Programs; Pulaski and FLAME: The Pulaski
family literacy program at Pulaski Elementary School in Savannah, Georgia, was
implemented in 1993 when it was discovered that 45% of the kindergartners had
no one at home reading to them on a daily basis. The objectives of the program
are:

(a) to increase students’ reading achievement,
(b) to improve both parents’ and students’ attitudes toward reading,
(c) to increase parental involvement in the school,
(d) to increase the amount of quality time families spend together,
(e) to foster home school connections, and
(f) ultimately to create lifelong readers who stay in school and become
productive citizens who believe in their own self-worth.
(Come & Frederieks, 1995, p. 567)

Parents were involved in the planning of the program. Five workshops were
held during the first year. Many of the workshops focused on strategies for
reading aloud, reading motivation, storytelling, and how to discuss a story with
your child. Since access to books is a critical factor in early literacy
development, the teachers at Pulaski Elementary School loaned books to
children to take home and share with their parents. One parent commented, "...that since her son started bringing a book home every day the family now sits down together after dinner to read his book instead of turning on the television" (cited in Come & Fredericks, 1995, p. 569). Since this program has been implemented it has sparked an interest by parents to expand the family literacy programs to include an intergenerational reading component in which elderly people from a nearby retirement home visit the school weekly and read to students as well as to incorporate and encourage other types of community involvement (Come & Fredericks, 1995).

**FLAME, Family Literacy: Apreniendo (Learning) Mejorando (Bettering), Educando (Education)** is a family literacy program developed to provide literacy training to parents not yet proficient in English so they can help their children's literacy learning at home. Hispanic families are concerned about their children's academic success, but are often unfamiliar with the American educational system. Their lack of English proficiency can lead to feelings of ineffectiveness when helping with homework or dealing with the school. Language proficiency is not to be confused with parental competency. (Rodriguez-Brown & Li, 1999; Fuller & Olsen, 1998). The program objectives are:

1) to increase the ability of Hispanic parents to provide literacy opportunities for their children;
2) to increase parents' ability to act as positive role models;
3) to improve the Hispanic parents' skills so that they can more effectively initiate, encourage, support, and extend their children's literacy learning; and
4) to increase and improve relationships between Hispanic families and the schools. (Rodriquez-Brown & Li, 1999, p. 43)

**FLAME has two instructional components, Parents as Teachers and Parents as Learners.** Sessions for Parents as Teachers are offered every two weeks for thirty weeks a year. During these sessions parents learn different ways to share
books with their children regardless of their own literacy level. They learn how to develop their children’s literacy skills through songs and games. Parents as Learners meet twice a week for two hours per class during the school year. They have the choice between English as a second language classes or GED basic skills classes. A two year study was done to determine the effectiveness of the FLAME program. The data showed that at the end of two years the parents who participated in the program read more frequently to their children. Parents were also writing more at home which prompted children to imitate their writing behaviors. The findings from this study suggest that a family literacy program such as Project FLAME can increase Hispanic parents’ ability to provide literacy opportunities for their children, increase their ability to act as positive role models, improve Hispanic parents’ skills, and increase and improve relationships between Hispanic families and schools (Rodriguez-Brown and Li, 1999).

Summary

Historically parents have always been involved to varying degrees with their children’s education. Early rural American families had virtual control over the schools, teachers and curriculum. With the government mandate of public schools, the role of parents in education changed. It became the opinion of many parents and educators that once children entered school their education was the responsibility of professionally trained teachers. More recently, educators have begun to recognize the importance and benefit of parental involvement on students’ academic achievement. However, there are those who do not see school and home parental involvement equal in their effectiveness.
This chapter examined research that primarily points to the impact and success of parental involvement in the home.

Parents can have a large impact on their children’s reading success by reading to them and listening to them read. Parents who are readers themselves provide an important literary role model and environment for their children that fosters reading. Another way parents can help their children become better readers is by limiting the number of hours children spend watching television. Excessive television watching hinders the development of imagination, concentration and cognitive skills required for reading. Some schools and communities have implemented family literacy programs that provide literacy training for adults and children to improve literacy use in their homes. These programs provide the skills needed for parents to be good literacy role models for their children and to encourage their children’s reading at home.

Descriptive research methods provided the best way in which to examine the parental involvement at home and the impact it had on the children’s reading at home. A survey and standardized assessment were used to produce data representative of the group being studied.

Descriptive research allowed the researcher to study the relationship between the parent and the children's reading at home.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine whether parental involvement at home contributes to a child’s reading success regardless of the parent’s English proficiency.

Research Design

The descriptive research method provided the best way in which to examine the parents’ involvement at home and the impact it had on the children’s reading. A survey and standardized assessment were used to produce data representative of the group being studied. Descriptive research allowed the researcher to study the relationship between the parents and the children’s reading in an uncontrolled, real life environment. Descriptive research also provided a manageable format in which to compare students who speak English as a second language (ESL) and students who speak English-only (nonESL) who were reading at grade level to ESL and nonESL students who were not reading at grade level and examine potential variables related to parental involvement at home that may have had an effect on the students’ reading levels (Merriam & Simpson, 1995).
Source of the Data

The children in the study attended Avondale Elementary School in Avondale, Arizona. All eighteen children are students in the same second grade, self-contained, English as a second language (ESL) classroom. The children range in age from seven to eight years old. Eight of the eighteen children are classified by the Avondale School District as ESL and their primary language is Spanish. The remaining ten children speak English-only. No other known ethnic groups are represented (Chapela, 2000).

The study sample was determined by the Principal of the Avondale Elementary School. Student selection was based on the criteria that the students of the families participating in the study had to be from the same second grade, self-contained, ESL classroom with nearly equal number of ESL and non-ESL students (Beason, 2000).

The sample group is representative of the population at the Avondale Elementary School, not necessarily that of the district or city. The Avondale Elementary School is a kindergarten through second grade school and is the only elementary school in the district to offer ESL and bilingual classes for grades kindergarten through second grade. There are eight ESL and four bilingual classrooms at the kindergarten level with no English-only classrooms. At the first and second grade level there are six ESL, four bilingual and three English only classrooms for each grade (Wemple, 2000).

Assumptions and Limitations

The researcher was a second grade elementary teacher for two years in the Cartwright School District. Of the two years spent teaching in a self-contained
classroom, one was spent as an ESL teacher. During the year as an ESL teacher the researcher observed that of the five top readers in the class, four were classified as ESL students and only one student was a native English speaker. The four ESL students who were reading at or above grade level appeared to have parents that made reading and education a priority in their homes. Most of their parents spoke little or no English. This observation led the researcher to question if these students were exposed to factors in the home that aided their success as readers regardless of their parents’ English proficiency, and became the motivation for this research study.

The researcher assumes that the parents of the children participating in the Avondale Elementary School study honestly answered the questions to the home survey regarding their home environment and parental involvement. A standardized reading assessment was used to determine the reading level of the students. Variations among survey responses for on or above and below grade level reading ranged from one percent to eighty-eight percent. For analysis purposes, a percentage of twenty-five or greater is assumed to be a relevant difference worthy of evaluation. Unexpected results could be due to an assumption error that the parents were inaccurately reporting subjective information. The descriptive research method lacks predictive ability, allowing the researcher to report only what is discovered without making generalizations (Merriam & Simpson, 1995).

Instrumentation

Survey: The home survey questionnaire was designed by the researcher. There were eleven questions that focused on six specific areas: 1) literary environment including types of reading materials in the home and the frequency
of parents’ reading habits; 2) parent-child reading relationships; 3) public library use; 4) television and computer use; 5) homework habits; and 6) response to children’s graded school work. The survey is presented in Appendix A. These six areas were chosen based on the previous research information discussed in the literature review in chapter two. These areas of parental involvement at home were identified by the research as influencing children’s academic success. The home survey questions were reviewed and approved by Ottawa University faculty. The only identified problem encountered with the survey was question number 8 a and 8 b. Two parents left question 8 a unanswered and four left question 8 b unanswered. This two part question addressed the issue of homework routines. It was not determined if the question was either overlooked, or the parents did not understand what the question was asking them and they chose to leave it unanswered. When compiling the data for the home survey only the information from completed questions was included.

Reading Assessment: The Classroom Reading Inventory by Nicholas Silvaroli (1997) was used to determine each student’s reading level. The Classroom Reading Inventory, a version of an informal reading inventory, is an individual testing procedure that assists in identifying a child’s reading skills. The reading inventory is made up of two main components, word recognition and comprehension. The first main component is word recognition which is subdivided further into two subcomponents. The first subcomponent is a word list, categorized by grade level, comprised of the most commonly used words in the English language. This list is used to identify a child’s ability to recognize and decode words. Each grade level word list has twenty basic sight words. A child must score at least 75 percent on the word list for a given grade level to be considered at that level of ability.
The second subcomponent is word recognition within story context. The child reads a brief story categorized by grade level appropriateness. To receive a grade level score for this subcomponent the child must be assessed at the instructional level for that story according to the number of word miscues.

Independent, instructional and frustration guidelines have been predetermined for each story by the Classroom Reading Inventory. At the second grade reading level an independent reading level refers to a child reading with a 97 percent or greater accuracy. To be considered at the instructional level a child must read with at least 92 percent accuracy. If a child reads below 92 percent accuracy he or she is considered to be at the frustration level.

The second main component assesses a child's comprehension skills by having the student answer five questions related to the story they read as part of the word recognition section. For a child to receive a grade level score on the story comprehension the child must be assessed at the instructional level for that grade level story according to the number of questions answered correctly. To be at the independent comprehension level a child must answer at least 80 percent of the story questions correctly and at least 60 percent correctly for instructional. Below 60 percent is considered to be at the frustration level.

A child's over all reading level is then determined by the researcher examining the results of all assessment components. For the purposes of this study a child was identified to be on or above grade level only if he or she scored at or above grade level in all three components. This means for the child to be considered reading on grade level he or she read the second grade word list with at least 75 percent accuracy, read the second grade story for word
recognition with at least 92 percent accuracy and answered the story comprehension questions with at least 60 percent accuracy (Silvaroli, 1997).

**Procedure**

After the home survey was designed and approved, a permission slip and parent letter were given to the parents to explain the purpose of the study and to request their assistance and cooperation with the study. Both documents were then translated into Spanish. The parent letter, home survey, and permission slip were then distributed to the children in the class on a Monday morning. The children were instructed to take the parent letter, home survey, and permission slip home for their parents to read and complete, returning the home survey and permission slip to school no later than Wednesday of that week. Prior to the parent letter, home survey, and permission slip going home, the classroom teacher had notified the parents that the class had been asked to participate in a research study and that they would be receiving additional information. Upon return of the completed home survey and permission slip, the children received a full size Snickers candy bar. For the parents' time and cooperation in completing the home survey and for giving permission for their child to participate in the study they could request to receive a copy of their child’s reading assessment level and a condensed version of the home survey findings.

On the following day fifteen completed home surveys and approved permission slips were returned out of nineteen sent home. Reading level assessments were administered that same day. A desk and two chairs were placed outside the classroom door in a relatively quiet hall corridor. The researcher sat on one side of the desk and the child sat on the opposite side of the desk with a folder placed between the two of them. Before beginning the
assessment each child was given three Skittle candies, referred to as smart pills, and then explained what was expected. The child was given a copy of the reading assessment and the researcher had a copy in which to mark miscues, correct and incorrect comprehension answers. The child was advised that if he or she did not know a word or the answer to a question that that was acceptable and they were to inform the researcher that they did not know by simply saying skip or I don’t know. When each reading assessment was completed the child was allowed to go to a treasure box, a tub filled with a selection of various small toys, and choose a treasure for participating in the assessment. Each reading assessment took approximately ten to twenty-five minutes depending on the child’s reading level. By the Wednesday deadline all but one of the surveys and permission slips had been returned and the reading assessments were completed for all eighteen children. The classroom teacher was very cooperative and supportive in allowing the researcher to pull students for assessment during class instruction time.

**Method of Analysis**

To determine if each child was reading on grade or below grade level the researcher assigned a number to each child and designed a table in which to record the results for each of the Silvaroli assessment components: word list, word recognition in story context and comprehension. An A represented at or above grade level, a B represented below grade level. To organize the data from the home survey and reading assessment the researcher recorded the survey answers and reading score for each child on a chart with the child’s assigned number, a box for each survey question response and an A or B indicating reading level. Then, using a copy of the home survey, the total
number of responses was tallied for each of the eleven questions, categorizing them into two groups, children reading on or above grade level and children reading below grade level. Once this was done for all eighteen participants, the process was repeated by recording and tallying the responses for the ESL students onto only one copy of the survey and onto another for nonESL students. With the raw numbers now compiled the researcher went back to the survey copies and figured percentages for each tallied response and reading level. On three separate pieces of paper responses were recorded when identified as having a 25 percent difference between on grade level and below grade level. This was done for each home survey question and for each student classification of ESL, nonESL, and total class. The percentages were then compared and analyzed to determine any conclusions.
CHAPTER 4
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents data gathered by submitting a home survey (Appendix A) to parents of eighteen second grade ESL and nonESL students. The home survey examined parents’ home literary environment and participation with students’ reading activities to determine if they helped impact students’ reading levels. Students’ reading levels were assessed using the Silvaroli Classroom Reading Inventory (Silvaroli, 1997) to determine if a child was reading at or below grade level. The number of parent responses to the survey equals the number of students tested (18). The findings are presented as raw scores and as relevant findings demonstrating greater than 25 percent differences.

Demographics

Nineteen questionnaires were sent to parents of nine ESL students and ten nonESL students. Eighteen responses were returned for a 95 percent return. Of the 95 percent returned responses, 44 percent were classified as speaking English as a second language and 56 percent spoke English only. Only 12 percent of the ESL students and 60 percent of the nonESL students were reading at or above the second grade level at the time of the study. Eighty-eight percent of the ESL students and 40 percent of the nonESL students were reading below the second grade level at the time of the study. The demographics for the students in this study are as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Respondents = 18</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Sample</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>44 %</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>56 %</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>56 %</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>44 %</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Classification:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>44 %</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-ESL</td>
<td>56 %</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Level for ESL:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Grade Level</td>
<td>12 %</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Grade Level</td>
<td>88 %</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Level for Non-ESL:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Grade Level</td>
<td>60 %</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Grade Level</td>
<td>40 %</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Level for Total Class:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Grade Level</td>
<td>39 %</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Grade Level</td>
<td>61 %</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings and Results

Statistical findings for each of the eleven questions of the survey are presented in the following sections by percentage and absolute number.

Students reading at or above second grade level are represented by the number within the parentheses in the row following the letter A. Students reading below second grade level are represented by the number within the parentheses in the row following the letter B as determined by the Silvaroli Classroom Reading Inventory. The total number of parental responses for each category is listed under PR and is equal to the total number of students listed under TS.

Percentages are derived for each possible response for each question based on the total students per classification (TC, NESL and ESL) and per reading level.
On question number eight all parents did not respond. For questions ten and eleven parents could select more than one answer.

Total class is represented by TC (18 students), English-only students are represented by NESL (10 students) and students who are classified as English as a second language are represented by ESL (8 students).

**Raw Scores and Percentage Totals for Questions One Through Eleven:**

1. **How often do you read for pleasure?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>18% (2)</td>
<td>73% (8)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>17% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL A</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **What kinds of reading materials do you have in the home? (circle all that apply)**

NEWSPAPERS MAGAZINES BOOKS INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA

**OTHER**

Numbers one, two, three, four, and five represent total quantities of reading materials circled by parental respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>One</th>
<th>Two</th>
<th>Three</th>
<th>Four</th>
<th>Five</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>42% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>27% (3)</td>
<td>27% (3)</td>
<td>37% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>50% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>50% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **How often do you read to your child?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DAILY</th>
<th>WEEKLY</th>
<th>MONTHLY</th>
<th>NEVER</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>72% (5)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>36% (4)</td>
<td>55% (6)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td>17% (1)</td>
<td>66% (4)</td>
<td>17% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>50% (2)</td>
<td>50% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **How often does your child read to you or someone else in the family?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DAILY</th>
<th>WEEKLY</th>
<th>MONTHLY</th>
<th>NEVER</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>55% (6)</td>
<td>36% (4)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>67% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>75% (3)</td>
<td>25% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL A</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. **How often does your child visit the public library?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WEEKLY</th>
<th>MONTHLY</th>
<th>YEARLY</th>
<th>NEVER</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
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<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>18% (2)</td>
<td>18% (2)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>55% (6)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td>17% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>25% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>25% (1)</td>
<td>50% (2)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. On the average, how many hours a day does your child spend watching TV?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-1 HRS.</th>
<th>1-2 HRS.</th>
<th>3-4 HRS.</th>
<th>5 PLUS HRS.</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC B</td>
<td>27% (3)</td>
<td>27% (3)</td>
<td>37% (4)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL B</td>
<td>25% (1)</td>
<td>75% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESL A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL B</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. On the average, how many hours a day does your child spend playing video/computer games?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-1 HRS.</th>
<th>1-2 HRS.</th>
<th>3-4 HRS.</th>
<th>5 PLUS HRS.</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC B</td>
<td>73% (8)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL B</td>
<td>100% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL A</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL B</td>
<td>58% (4)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Which of the following homework routines apply to your child?

   Homework is completed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AFTER SCHOOL</th>
<th>AFTER DINNER</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC B</td>
<td>56% (5)</td>
<td>44% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>17% (1)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL B</td>
<td>67% (2)</td>
<td>33% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL A</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL B</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. How often do you as a parent check your child’s daily homework to determine if it has been done correctly?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ALWAYS</th>
<th>USUALLY</th>
<th>SOMETIMES</th>
<th>SELDOM</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73% (8)</td>
<td>18% (2)</td>
<td>9% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL</td>
<td>67% (4)</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>75% (3)</td>
<td>25% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>72% (5)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. If your child brings home a graded paper that meets your expectations of your child's ability, how do you acknowledge his/her accomplishment? (circle all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Verbal</th>
<th>Reward</th>
<th>Privileges</th>
<th>Display Work</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbal Praise</strong></td>
<td>86% (6)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>43% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Reward</strong></td>
<td>73% (8)</td>
<td>55% (6)</td>
<td>18% (2)</td>
<td>18% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Privileges</strong></td>
<td>100% (6)</td>
<td>17% (1)</td>
<td>33% (2)</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Display Work</strong></td>
<td>50% (2)</td>
<td>75% (3)</td>
<td>25% (1)</td>
<td>25% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. If your child brings home a graded paper that **does not** meet your expectations of your child's ability, how do you assist him/her? (circle all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>One on One</th>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>TS</th>
<th>PR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work One on One with Child</strong></td>
<td>71% (5)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>57% (4)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conference with Teacher</strong></td>
<td>91% (10)</td>
<td>18% (2)</td>
<td>27% (3)</td>
<td>18% (2)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extra Practice</strong></td>
<td>83% (5)</td>
<td>17% (1)</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>50% (3)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>100% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>50% (2)</td>
<td>25% (1)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESL</strong></td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-ESL</strong></td>
<td>86% (6)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>29% (2)</td>
<td>14% (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Relevant Findings Analysis of Results for Questions One Through Eleven:**

For findings to be considered relevant by the researcher there had to be a difference in parental responses by at least 25 percent between students...
reading at or above second grade level, represented by the letter A, versus students reading below second grade level, represented by the letter B.

The following charts demonstrates 25 percent or greater differences among parental responses between student groups A (on or above grade level) and B (below grade level) for TC (total class), NESL (English-only) and ESL (English as a second language) categories for questions one through eleven.

In question one there is a positive relationship between students’ reading achievement and the parents’ reading habits. Students whose parents read for pleasure on a daily basis were more likely to be reading on or above grade level regardless if they were nonESL or ESL. There was a difference of 71 percent for responses from parents reading daily between ESL students reading at grade level and ESL students not reading at grade level.

1. How often do you read for pleasure?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DAILY</th>
<th>WEEKLY</th>
<th>MONTHLY</th>
<th>NEVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question number three showed how many parents read to their children. The findings indicate that parents of nonESL students who read to their children daily have a significantly greater number of students reading below grade level, while parents of ESL students who read to their children weekly had 50 percent more students reading on or above grade level, which is consistent with previous research.

The analysis of question two demonstrates that the number of different types of reading material in the home also showed a positive impact on reading achievement for both nonESL and ESL students. For nonESL students who had only one type of reading material in their home there was a 50 percent larger number of students reading below grade level. ESL students who had at least
three types of reading materials in their home had a 71 percent greater number of students reading at or above grade level.

2. What kinds of reading materials do you have in the home? (circle all that apply)

NEWSPAPERS  MAGAZINES  BOOKS  INTERNET  ENCYCLOPEDIA

OTHER

Numbers one, two, three, four, and five represent total quantities of reading materials circled by parental respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>One</th>
<th>Two</th>
<th>Three</th>
<th>Four</th>
<th>Five</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question number four demonstrates how often a book needs to be read to a parent or someone else in the family. This activity had the most consistent impact on ESL students. The survey indicated that ESL students who read aloud to someone daily had a 71 percent greater number of students reading on or above grade level; while ESL students who only read aloud to someone weekly had a 43 percent greater number of students reading below grade level. The analysis of question number three shows how often parents read to their children. The findings indicate that parents of nonESL students who read to their children ‘daily’ have a 33 percent greater number of students reading below grade level; while parents of ESL students who read to their children ‘weekly’ had 57 percent more students reading on or above grade level, which is contrary to expectations.
3. How often do you read to your child?

DAILY  WEEKLY  MONTHLY  NEVER

TC  A
    B

NESL  A
    B  33%

ESL  A  57%
    B  29%

The analysis of question number four demonstrates how often a child reads to a parent or someone else in the family. This activity had the most positive impact on ESL students. The survey indicated that ESL students who read aloud to someone daily had a 57 percent greater number of students reading on or above grade level, while ESL students who only read aloud to someone weekly had a 43 percent greater number of students reading below grade level.

4. How often does your child read to you or someone else in the family?

DAILY  WEEKLY  MONTHLY  NEVER

TC  A
    B

NESL  A
    B  42%

ESL  A  57%
    B  43%

The analysis of question number five demonstrates that visiting the public library showed some startling results. Of ESL students who had never visited the public library there was a 57 percent greater number of students who read
below grade level. ESL students who visited the public library at least monthly
had a 71 percent greater number of students reading on or above grade level.

5. How often does your child visit the public library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WEEKLY</th>
<th>MONTHLY</th>
<th>YEARLY</th>
<th>NEVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question six examined the effects of television viewing on children’s reading. Surprisingly this study showed no strong relationship between the number of hours children watches television and their reading achievement. It is worthy to note that for ESL students who watched 1-2 hours of television there was a 86 percent greater number of students reading on or above grade level and a 43 percent greater number of students who read below grade level if they watched 3-4 hours of television a day. On the other hand nonESL students who watched 3-4 hours of television a day had 25 percent greater number of students reading on or above grade level indicating reverse correlation.
6. On the average, how many hours a day does your child spend watching TV?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>0-1 HRS.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 HRS.</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL</td>
<td>0-1 HRS.</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 HRS.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>0-1 HRS.</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 HRS.</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question number seven demonstrated that the findings on video/computer game use was similar to television viewing and did not show any negative impact on reading levels except as the 1-2 hours area. NonESL students who played video/computer games 1-2 hours a day had a 50 percent greater number of students reading on grade level, while ESL students who played the same number of hours had a 86 percent greater number of students reading on or above grade level. These variations seem large but in the unexpected direction at the 1-2 hour area.

7. On the average, how many hours a day does your child spend playing video/computer games?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC</td>
<td>0-1 HRS.</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 HRS.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL</td>
<td>0-1 HRS.</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 HRS.</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>0-1 HRS.</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 HRS.</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question eight shows no relevant findings for part (a) as it relates to homework routine based on 25 percent separation point. For ESL students, studying after school showed 50 percent of the students reading on or above grade level, while studying after dinner showed 50 percent of the students reading below grade level.

8. Which of the following homework routines apply to your child?
   Homework is completed:

   a) AFTER SCHOOL  AFTER DINNER  OTHER

   TC  A
   B

   NESL  A
   B

   ESP  A  50%
   B  50%

   However, part (b) of question eight indicated unusual findings related to the frequency of homework. In this study, students, primarily ESL, who did their homework at least four times a week demonstrated an 80 percent greater number of students reading below grade level, whereas ESL students who did their homework less than three times a week had a 100 percent greater number of students reading on or above grade level and non ESL students who did their homework less than three times a week had a 50 percent greater number of students reading on or above grade level. These findings were the opposite of what would be expected.
b) 4 TIMES A WEEK  3 TIMES A WEEK  TIMES A WEEK

TC
A  50%
B  29%

NESL
A  50%
B  50%

ESL
A  100%
B  80%

Question nine also dealt with homework, and again the results were not what one would expect them to be. The greatest effect was noted for ESL students: 72 percent greater number of students who read below grade level parent’s check their child’s completed homework daily, where as ESL students who were reading on or above grade level had 86 percent greater number of students if their parents only checked their homework sometimes.

9. How often do you as a parent check your child’s daily homework to determine if it has been done correctly?

ALWAYS  USUALLY  SOMETIMES  SELDOM

TC
A
B

NESL
A
B

ESL
A  86%
B  72%

Question ten and eleven dealt with how parents acknowledge their children’s performance on graded school work. There was a 50 percent greater number of nonESL students who were reading on or above grade level that received verbal praise from their parents and 71 percent greater number of ESL students who
received verbal praise and were reading below grade level. The findings reversed themselves when it came to physical rewards. There was a 58 percent greater number of nonESL students who were reading below grade level and a 57 percent greater number of ESL students who were reading on or above grade level.

10. If your child brings home a graded paper that meets your expectations of your child's ability, how do you acknowledge his/her accomplishment? (circle all that apply)

   VERBAL PRAISE   PHYSICAL REWARD   SPECIAL PRIVILEGES
   DISPLAY WORK     OTHER

   Verbal  Reward  Privileges  Display Work  Other
   TC     A    25%
          B
   NESL   A  50%   25%
          B  58%
   ESL    A  57%
          B  71%

   Question eleven's findings had a 86 percent greater number of ESL students that read below grade level who received one-on-one assistance from parents when they had academic problems on graded school work. There was an 86 percent greater number of ESL students who read on or above grade level and whose parents marked other and a 25 percent greater number of nonESL students who read on or above grade level and whose parents marked other. Most of the parents who marked other indicated that they discussed the problem with their child to find out what they didn't understand, they asked the child what was going on when the task was assigned, discussed with the child what was acceptable and unacceptable and one parent took away special privileges.
11. If your child brings home a graded paper that **does not** meet your expectations of your child's ability, how do you assist him/her? (circle all that apply)

**WORK ONE ON ONE WITH CHILD**

**CONFERENCE WITH TEACHER**

**EXTRA PRACTICE**

**OTHER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One on One</th>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC A</td>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESL A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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The overall findings showed that parental involvement at home has a positive impact on ESL students' reading performance. About half of the survey responses indicated no positive effect on children's reading performance.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine whether parental involvement at home contributes to a child's reading success regardless of the parent's English proficiency.

The literature reviewed in chapter two examined six key areas: 1) literary environment including types of reading materials in the home and the frequency of parents reading habits, 2) parent-child reading relationships, 3) public library use, 4) television and computer use, 5) homework habits, and 6) response to children's graded school work. This supporting research was found in professional journals, books, internet sources and personal communications.

The methodology employed was descriptive research utilizing a home survey for parents and a standardized reading assessment for students. Home literary environment and activities were surveyed by questionnaire to determine if they helped to impact students' reading levels. The study looked at the literary environments and activities of students who speak English as a second language (ESL) and English-only (nonESL) speaking students. Students' reading levels were determined with the Silvaroli Classroom Reading Inventory and were then compared to the survey responses to see if there was any relationship between parental involvement at home and reading achievement.

The study did show that parents' home involvement in certain areas does have a positive impact on a student's reading success, while others did not appear in this study to have a noticeable effect. However, other research
studies reviewed in chapter two indicate that parental involvement at home can have a strong impact on children’s reading and academic achievement.

**Conclusion**

Questions one through five and eleven of the home survey indicated a strong positive relationship between parental involvement at home and a child’s reading success regardless of the parent’s English proficiency. Parent literary modeling (question 1) and reading material in the home (question 2) were strong indicators for both nonESL and ESL students for reading success. Reading to a child (question 3), having the child read aloud to someone else (question 4), visiting the public library (question 5) and how parents react to a child’s academic difficulties (question 11) all had strong effects on ESL students’ reading achievement. These findings were in accordance to the positive impact of parental involvement in the home as evidenced in the literature review of chapter two.

Questions six through ten of the home survey did not indicate the expected positive results. Television viewing (question 6), computer/ video games (question 7), homework routines (questions 8 & 9) and parent acknowledgment of positive accomplishments (question 10) did not appear in this study to have a noticeable positive impact on reading success. A further explanation for this discrepancy could be that parents of children who are doing academically well in school might not monitor the activities of their children as much as they would if they were academically challenged. Not having to monitor students who are doing well, would prejudice the results for at home routines, although a change in the child’s and parent’s at home routines could prove to provide an even better academic achievement environment.
Recommendations

Parental involvement at home is important for the reading success of all students regardless of the parent’s English proficiency. It is recommended that parents be educated on how to provide an academically stimulating reading environment for their children.

In areas with high ESL ratios, it would be advisable to initiate family literacy programs that benefit both adult and child, similar to project FLAME as indicated in the literature review. These types of family literacy programs offer adult ESL classes and/ or GED classes along with literacy sessions on various topics that give parents the tools to support their children’s literacy development regardless of their own English proficiency. Parents are instructed on how to read to their children more effectively and talk with their children about books. They are taught how to use songs, games and other activities to improve their children’s literacy skills and awareness. The purpose of these programs is not only to improve the literacy skills of both adult and child but to instill in the parents that they are the first and most important teacher in their children’s lives. As parents they can and do make a difference in their children’s learning.

In addition to establishing family literacy programs, the problem of acquiring appropriate reading material for both adults and children needs to be addressed. One of the most valuable and little used resources is the public library. It is recommended that the school and public library work together to promote the reading resources available to the families of the school and community. One way this could be accomplished would be for the school and public library to sponsor a special reading event in conjunction with the kindergarten round-up. Each child and their parents would be invited and encouraged to visit the public library for a special storytime event and to receive a library card. Throughout
the school year, the school could help promote and inform families of special events or activities taking place at the public library. Teachers should be encouraged to take their classes on field trips to the public library and invite parents to go along. School libraries could also open their doors to parents and allow them to check out books during school hours.

Another way to encourage reading and help families obtain affordable reading material is for the school to sponsor a schoolwide book exchange. Students bring two books to school, they can exchange one book for a book to keep and the other book they donate to their classroom library. Children can learn a lesson in generosity through these book exchanges as well as receive books for their own home libraries.

Teachers can help promote parent-child reading by sending blank calendars home on the first day of each month. When a parent reads a book with a child, the parent writes the name of the book on the calendar indicating the day they read it. When parent and child have read together for 15 minutes a day for 20 days, the child returns the calendar to the teacher and he or she is rewarded with a certificate to show that they and their parents are partners in reading.

The difference between a good reader and a poor reader is often the result of a child’s literary role models and environment in the home. Schools can have a greater impact on children’s academic achievement if they invest time and money in promoting and training parents on how to be effectively involved in their children’s education at home. No matter what a parent’s social, economic or language proficiency, they have the potential for making a difference in their children’s education and lives.
REFERENCE LIST


Center for Media Education. 10 Key Facts About Children And TV. http://www.cme.org/cta/tv-facts.html.


APPENDIX A

PARENT LETTER

HOME SURVEY
February 7, 2000

Dear Parents/Guardians,

My name is Michelle Isaacson and I am currently working on my master's in education at Ottawa University. I am seeking information to complete a thesis, and I hope you will assist me. The purpose of my thesis is to determine whether parental home involvement contributes to a child’s reading success. You can assist by completing the attached questionnaire and by allowing your child’s reading level to be assessed through a standardized reading assessment called the Silvaroli.

All scores and survey information is confidential and no names will be used in my final report. The results will be made available to the principal and classroom teacher for normal school purposes. Reading assessment scores will not be used for grades.

Please complete and return the attached home survey and permission slip to your child’s classroom by **Wednesday, February 9th**. If you wish to receive a copy of the results of your child’s reading assessment and a copy of the results of this study please include your name and address on a return business envelope and return it with the questionnaire and permission slip to your child’s classroom. Thank you for your time and cooperation. I believe the findings of this study will benefit the students who attend Avondale Elementary School.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Isaacson
1. How often do you read for pleasure?
   DAILY  WEEKLY  MONTHLY  NEVER
   ALWAYS  USUALLY  SOMETIMES  OCCASIONALLY

2. What kinds of reading materials do you have in the home? (circle all that apply)
   NEWSPAPERS  MAGAZINES  BOOKS  INTERNET  ENCYCLOPEDIA
   OTHER (specify) ____________________

3. How often do you read to your child?
   DAILY  WEEKLY  MONTHLY  NEVER

4. How often does your child read to you or someone else in the family?
   DAILY  WEEKLY  MONTHLY  NEVER

5. How often does your child visit the public library?
   WEEKLY  MONTHLY  YEARLY  NEVER

6. On the average, how many hours a day does your child spend watching TV?
   0-1 HRS.  1-2 HRS.  3-4 HRS.  5 PLUS HRS.

7. On the average, how many hours a day does your child spend playing video/computer games?
   0-1 HRS.  1-2 HRS.  3-4 HRS.  5 PLUS HRS.
8. Which of the following homework routines apply to your child? 
   Homework is completed: (circle all that apply in a & b) 
   
   a) AFTER SCHOOL   AFTER DINNER   OTHER (specify) ________________
   b) 4 TIMES A WEEK  3 TIMES A WEEK  LESS THAN 3 TIMES A WEEK

9. How often do you as a parent check your child’s daily homework to determine if it has been done correctly?
   ALWAYS    USUALLY    SOMETIMES    SELDOM

10. If your child brings home a graded paper that meets your expectations of your child’s ability, how do you acknowledge his/her accomplishment? (circle all that apply)
    
    VERBAL PRAISE   PHYSICAL REWARD   SPECIAL PRIVILEGES
    DISPLAY WORK    OTHER (specify) ________________

11. If your child brings home a graded paper that does not meet your expectations of your child’s ability, how do you assist him/her? (circle all that apply)
    
    WORK ONE ON ONE WITH CHILD   CONFERENCE WITH TEACHER
    EXTRA PRACTICE    OTHER (specify) ________________

Student’s Name: _______________________________________

Please check and sign

____ I give permission for my child to be given the Silvaroli standardized reading assessment to determine my child’s reading level.

____ I would like to receive a copy of my child’s reading assessment scores and a copy of the results of this study. (provide self-addressed envelope)

____ I do not give permission for my child to be given the Silvaroli standardized reading assessment.

__________________________________________  ____________
Parent/Guardian’s Signature                   Date