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THE EFFECT OF INTERACTIVE HOMEWORK ON DIBELS PERFORMANCE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

in

The School of Human Ecology

by
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B.S., University of Southern Mississippi, 2002
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Abstract

Homework is a common practice in most kindergarten classrooms. There are varying opinions on the purpose of homework, the frequency in which homework should be given, the duration of time kindergarten-aged students should spend on homework, and how the use of homework impacts student performance. The DIBELS (Good & Kamanski, 2003) is an assessment tool that measures student performance on early literacy skills and identifies students who are at-risk for failure to read. The proposed study will incorporate recommendations for creating developmentally appropriate homework that addresses skill deficiencies identified by the DIBELS to determine the impact of homework on DIBELS scores.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of Problem

Hong, Milgram, and Rowell (2004), define homework as “the process that occurs when a learner begins, continues to work on, and complete school assignments at home or in another out-of-school setting” (p. 198). Homework is defined by Merriam Webster as an assignment given to a student to be completed outside the regular class period (2009). Everyday, students all across America are given homework just as it is defined above. The literature reveals that there are many different purposes for homework.

Van Voorhis (2004) describes a large list of homework purposes and sorts them into three categories: 1) instructional; 2) communicative; 3) political. The first category is homework for instructional purposes. Instructional purposes would consist of student practice, students complete assignments that have them practice skills that were taught in the classroom. Another instructional purpose is preparation. Students are given assignments to help them prepare for the next class period. An additional purpose for homework is participation. The next category is homework for communicative purposes, which includes parent-teacher communication. Parent-teacher communication is a common purpose for homework. It is important for parents to be aware of what their children are learning and home assignments are a way to achieve this function. The last purpose for homework is political; to fulfill mandated policies of the school, district or state.

Homework remains the subject of many discussions among parents and teachers during conferences. When asked, many parents have expressed concerns and challenges when doing homework with their children (Kohn, 2006). While some parents believe homework is necessary

for their children, others do not see the need for it. Concerns noted by parents include interference with family time and general concerns about homework quality (Kohn, 2006; *Metlife Survey*, 2007). Parents have reported that they feel pressured to help their child get the homework done and to get it done correctly. Teachers could provide students with meaningful and enjoyable homework assignments, as an alternative to providing parents with tips and suggestions that get their children through homework assignments.

Justification

The Louisiana Law, R.S. 17:182, and the Reading and Math Initiative developed by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (SBESE) require that all students are given a reading assessment to identify students who are at risk for reading failure. The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS - Good & Kaminski, 2003) is one of the approved assessments. DIBELS is a tool that measures early literacy development. This assessment identifies students who need additional support in order to achieve the benchmark goals. These benchmark goals are the minimum target for students to become readers. In addition to identifying students who are at-risk, the DIBELS (Moats, 2003) provides ongoing progress monitoring and intervention for students to ensure their success. If teachers use the results from this test, as the research recommends, the information can help evaluate students' development and help develop instructional objectives (Good, Gruba & Kaminski, 2001).

For kindergarten, the DIBELS test includes five one-minute measures used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills (Good & Kaminski, 2003). The measures were developed upon the essential early literacy domains discussed in both the National Reading Panel (2000) and National Research Council (1998) reports. There has been thorough research on each of these measures and they have demonstrated to be reliable and valid indicators of early literacy development and later reading proficiency (Moats, 2001).

The MetLife Survey (2007) was the twenty-fourth in a series of surveys put out by MetLife. Parents, teachers and students were surveyed about homework issues. This survey reports that some parents view homework as a time to connect with their child, but also reports there are parental concerns about the quality of homework. Many parents believe the majority of homework assignments are busywork.

Conceptual Framework

Trahan and Lawler-Prince (1999), suggest a number of strategies for implementing parent partnerships: communicate with parents, provide parent education, survey parents, and have families keep home learning logs. Epstein (1995) developed a six -part framework to help educators develop family partnerships in education: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community. Schools can draw from research to develop strategies for involving parents in their child's education. One way to involve parents in their child's learning includes assigning of interactive homework.

Interactive homework is a type of homework that provides parents a positive interaction with their children. Epstein and Van Voorhis (2001) describe interactive homework as a way for students to share what they are learning with family members, friends, peers, or others in the community. This type of homework actively involves children and provides a better chance of them actually retaining the skills (Bailey, 2006). Cotton and Wiklund (1989) reported that the most effective forms of parental involvement are when the parents are working directly with their children on learning activities at home.

Interactive homework fits within a DAP framework. In a DAP approach to learning (see Copple & Bredekamp, 2009, for a description), children are constructing their own experiences and knowledge by actively exploring their environment with materials and interacting with others (White & Coleman, 2000). DAP should be considered when sending homework activities for young children at home.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine if providing DIBELS-specific interactive homework activities will help improve students' performance on DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003). In light of recommended practice for homework, parents will be an active part of the process (Epstein, 1995; Prince & Trahan, 1999). Skills from the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest of the DIBELS will be used as a basis for creating homework that is interactive, and encourages parent involvement. Additionally, student progress on Nonsense Word Fluency will be monitored throughout the study to measure the effectiveness of the interactive homework intervention on students' progress as measured by the DIBELS.

Limitations and Assumptions

A limitation of the proposed study is that it will be conducted in one kindergarten classroom in one elementary school. It is assumed that the homework given will be developmentally appropriate for the students.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

There is a need for parents to reinforce the developmental needs of the child at home, while at the same time, supplementing skills that are learned at school (Ruble, Walters, Yu, & Setchel, 2001). *The MetLife Survey* (2007) has reported that more than 80 percent of both teachers and parents believe homework is important or very important. Although, teachers and parents share this perception, homework assignments are still a concern for many parents and teachers (*MetLife Survey*, 2007).

Parental Involvement

Rose, Gallup & Elam (1997) reported a lack of parental involvement in many schools. Since this time, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was passed. The federal law was created in order to ensure stronger accountability for results, more freedom for states and communities, proven education methods, and more choices for parents (*Four Pillars of NCLB*, 2000). NCLB defines parental involvement “as the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities” (*Parental Involvement: Title I, Part A*, 2004).

Studies have reported positive effects when parents become engaged in their child’s learning, including: earning higher grades and higher test scores; enrolling in higher-level programs; attending school regularly; and graduating from high school (Prince & Trahan, 1999; Bailey, Silvern, Brabham, & Ross, 2004; Hednerson & Mapp, 2002). Today, most schools encourage parents to get involved because of the NCLB and increased parent involvement leads to student success (Rose, et al., 1997). Schools are encouraging parental involvement by creating programs such as Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTO), Family Literacy and Math

Nights, Muffins for Moms and Donuts for Dads. However, the above-mentioned strategies occur infrequently; homework occurs on a regular basis and is an ideal forum for parental involvement.

Learning at home has been recognized as an important component in the teacher-parent partnership and has been defined as the provision of information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning (Epstein, 1995). Learning at home is most commonly practiced during the school year through the homework activities that teachers send home with students.

Trahan and Lawler-Prince (1999) report, that parents want to be active in the education of their child and they enjoy spending time working with their children on learning activities at home. However, some studies have shown that parents' help during homework can be harmful (Cooper, Lindsay, & Nye, 1998; Prince & Trahan, 1999). Harmful effects happen when parents have to become a teacher. Parents lack of knowledge in content areas of the homework assignments or lack knowledge about child development, are reasons they should be the student's partner during homework rather than the teacher.

Teachers and Parents Perceptions about Homework

Parents have reported that they try to improve or do the homework for the child (Cooper, Lindsay, & Nye, 1998; Prince & Trahan, 1999). When parents complete homework for their children, the children are not getting the practice that is needed. If homework is frustrating for a child, parent-child interactions during homework can produce negative attitudes towards school (Cooper, et. al., 1998). Teachers can help by providing homework instructions for parents to ensure that their involvement does not produce a negative effect on students' achievement.

Research reveals purposes for homework are: to provide students with practice of basic skills, to prepare students for future lessons, and to encourage students to participate in learning (Brock, Lapp, Flood, Fisher, & Han, 2007). If communication is continuous and parents and

teachers agree on the purpose of homework, this will help create a better working relationship for providing students with a great foundation in their education (Katz, 1996).

A survey was given to prekindergarten, kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade teachers at a public elementary school at the end of the school year assessing their opinion regarding the use of homework (see Appendix A). Eighty-eight percent of the surveyed teachers stated that the main purpose of homework was to reinforce skills at home that were learned at school. Teachers added comments on additional purposes of homework, which included providing a home-school connection, involving parents in their child's learning, informing parents of what their child knows, and teaching students responsibility and good study habits. In addition to a teacher survey, kindergarten parents at two elementary schools were given a survey on their opinion regarding homework (see Appendix B). The majority of parents (83%) strongly agreed that "the purpose of homework is to reinforce skills" that have been taught during the school day. Furthermore, 83% of parents strongly agreed "homework assists in the 'home/school' connection by keeping [them] informed about what [their] child is learning during the school day." These surveys demonstrate that parents and teachers have the same ideas and expectations for homework, which also corresponds with the research based purposes (Scott, 2008).

Many parents are comfortable with the amount of assigned homework their children receive (The MetLife Survey, 2007). In addition, half of the parents surveyed actually have rules for their children and how and when homework should be completed. The majority of parents surveyed reported that homework provides time that they can spend with their child, but that the quality of homework could be improved.

Hoover-Dempsey, Battiato, Walker, Reed, DeJong, and Jones, (2001) state that when parents interact with students during homework it positively impacts outcomes of at risk students. Students' achievement, knowledge, self-confidence, and students' behaviors are all influenced by parental involvement during homework (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Given

that parental involvement during homework has proven to be beneficial for student achievement, homework can be utilized by teachers to help parents become involved in their child's education.

Recommended Practices for Homework

Kindergarten is the first experience most children have with homework. Most students do not get to choose when or where, to do their homework, nor do they get a choice about the type of homework they are doing (Hong et al., 2004). During these early years, if students are not provided with meaningful homework assignments, it could affect their love of learning (Whyte, 2006). Research has found a converse relationship in the amount of homework and a student's disposition toward homework (Cooper et al., 1998); that is, the more homework a student has in elementary school, the less likely they are to enjoy learning.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) recommends that teachers recognize children's natural curiosity and use this to help them gain new skills (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). The design of interactive homework capitalizes on children's curiosity by creating homework that challenges children (Bailey, et al., 2004, Epstein, et al., 2002). Traditional homework falls within the framework of developmentally inappropriate practices (DIP) that are more likely to be uninteresting and unchallenging or are so difficult and frustrating that they undermine children's intrinsic motivation to learn (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Research has shown that DAP is more effective than DIP and that children in classrooms that use DIP exhibit more stress behaviors (Van Horn, Karlin, Ramey, Aldridge, & Snyder, 2005). It seems logical to use interactive homework as a more developmentally appropriate alternative to fulfill the purposes of homework.

There are many articles and books giving suggestions about making homework more developmentally appropriate and meaningful for students. Kohn (2006) offers suggestions for teachers on how to make homework more constructive. His advice to teachers is 1) 'to design what you assign', that one size doesn't fit all; 2) to involve parents; and 3) to stop grading

homework. Research suggests that student completion of homework increases when teachers design homework to achieve a specific goal or purpose (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001). An example would be focusing the homework on letter recognition when this concept is being introduced at school. Homework assignments should provide interaction between parents and children and should actively involve parents in homework; this leads to increased student performance in school (Bailey, et al., 2004). It has been suggested that one way to help with homework is for teachers to provide homework workshop sessions for parents to help their students succeed (Bailey, et al., 2004).

The National Network of Partnership Schools (Johns Hopkins University, 2006) created a model for involving parents in their child's schoolwork. The Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) Interactive Homework project focuses on making homework a three-way partnership between the student, parent, and school. The goal of the TIPS Interactive Homework project is to 1) build student's confidence by requiring them to a) show their work, b) share ideas, c) gather reactions, d) interview parents, or e) conduct other interactions with a family member, 2) link schoolwork with real-life situations, 3) help parents understand what children are learning at school, 4) encourage conversation between parents and children about schoolwork and progress, and 5) enable parents and teachers to communicate about children's work, progress, or problems (Van Voorhis and Epstein, 2002). This program is unique because it focuses on the link between school and home and can be used with any curriculum by following their guidelines (see Table 1).

Research cautions against homework assignments that contain too much repetition, as this can be overloading and boring for students; thus, practice of skills previously done in class should be limited in assignments (Van Voorhis, 2004). Van Voorhis' research revealed an online homework guide that suggested homework not to exceed 30 minutes in grades K-3. This guide

was developed by the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the National Education Association (NEA).

Hong, et al. (2004), present a homework approach that was developed based on research to help students to achieve academic success. They recommend that when assigning homework that students learning preferences be considered. The article states that student preference for learning is not more valuable than a student's learning needs, but that if student's preferences are

Table 1

Guidelines for Creating Interactive Homework	
Author	Recommendation
Bailey, et al., 2004	Provide parent-child interaction
	Parents should listen to their child; discuss a topic with their child, complete a checklist
	Students should read to or perform an activity for parents; discuss a topic with their parent; complete a journal or written activity about topic
Epstein, et al., 2002	Select one skill for each week; adapt and develop activities to match the curriculum; Teachers comment on activities; teachers respond to questions
Kohn, 2006	Design what you assign; one size does NOT fit all; involve parents; stop grading homework
Heitzmann, 2007	Target students' learning styles; relate to standards
Van Voorhis, 2004	Eliminate too much repetition, or overloading; do not to exceed 30 minutes of homework in grades K-3.

considered when assigning homework, that their probability of success in academics is increased. Therefore, homework should target students learning styles and abilities while also relating to state standards. (Heitzmann, 2007)

Summary

Previous research suggest that involving parents in their child's education yields positive outcomes for children (Bailey, 2006; Epstein, 1995; Epstein, et al., 2002; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Heitzmann, 2007; Kohn, 2006; Johns Hopkins University, 2006; Prince & Trahan, 1999; Van Voorhis, 2004); teachers can transform assignments to create time for parents and students to interact and connect while also reviewing or practicing the skills they are learning in the classroom.

The homework in this study will be developed while considering all of the above-mentioned recommendations. Assignments will be tailored to student needs as identified by the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003), will involve parents, will be interactive in nature, and will be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes. This will ensure that students are not overloaded or getting bored with the activity. This study will provide parents' information about the skills taught at school through the interactive assignments that students and parents will accomplish together. The interactive design of the homework assignments in this study will serve as a way for the parents to become involved in the homework process while hopefully providing a positive effect on the students' achievement on the DIBELS.

Chapter 3

Method

Setting & Participants

The present study took place in a public elementary school kindergarten classroom in the south. The target classroom consisted of 22 typically developing students, 10 female students and 12 male students. The classroom staff consisted of one classroom teacher. All students were assessed using the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003) in the fall and winter; approximately 36% of students did not meet *benchmark* for kindergarten. The winter DIBELS assessment was used as the qualifying criteria for participation in this study and was conducted approximately two weeks prior to data collection. Students categorized as benchmark received a raw score of 13 or higher; students categorized as strategic received a raw score in between 5-12; students categorized as intensive received a raw score in between 0-4. Raw scores for each student were recorded.

During winter DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003) testing, inter-observer reliability was calculated by two trained DIBELS test administrators. When both test administrators observed a behavior or did not observe a behavior, their agreement was scored as 100%; when one test administrator observed a behavior and the other did not, their agreement was scored as 0. Inter-observer agreement was calculated on all eight of the participants and averaged 94% (range, 85 - 100).

Eight kindergarten-aged students, three girls (Morgan, Brelynn, & Ruth Lilly) and five boys (Skylin, Trent, Kade, Nathan, & Tyler), were targeted for this study based on the results of their winter DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003) assessment (see description below in Instrumentation). One student (Nathan) was identified as intensive and seven students (Brelynn, Ruth Lilly, Morgan, Trent, Skylin, Kade, & Tyler) were identified as strategic. These students

were selected because they had the lowest scores on the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest. One student, Trent, received speech therapy twice per week throughout the duration of the study; none of the other students were eligible for special education services or any other additional educational services.

Instrumentation

In kindergarten, the DIBELS assessment (Good & Kaminski, 2003) focuses on four literacy skills: 1) initial sound fluency, 2) letter naming fluency, 3) phoneme segmentation fluency, and 4) nonsense word fluency. Students are identified as meeting benchmark (at low risk for reading failure), strategic (at some risk for reading failure), or intensive (at risk for reading failure).

Specifically, the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest of the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003) was used. This subtest focuses on measuring student's ability to correctly pronounce individual sounds, called phonemes. Benchmark for Nonsense Word Fluency in the spring assessment of the kindergarten year is a score of 25 or more correctly pronounced phonemes.

Experimental Design

A single-subject research design was used to collect data using the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest of the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003). The number of correctly pronounced phonemes was recorded during progress monitoring three times per week throughout the baseline and intervention conditions of the study. Single-subject designs are most useful in designs measuring a specific behavior of an individual. The goal of single-subject designs is often to enhance the functioning of the individual by targeting a specific area (Alberto & Troutman, 2006), such as phoneme identification. Single-subject designs require the measurement of behaviors during a baseline condition and again when an intervention is applied. When intervention results in enhanced functioning, an observable and measurable improvement in functioning, it is considered to have clinical significance (Alberto & Trouman, 2006).

Multiple-baseline designs measure the impact of intervention using cohorts. In this study, students were assigned to cohorts based on their DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003) score; students with the lowest scores in the subtest of Nonsense Word Fluency were in the earlier cohorts. Cohorts were also impacted by the stabilization of a student's baseline data, no student moved into intervention until their baseline was stable. Cohort One included Morgan and Skylin, Cohort Two included Trent, Cohort Three included Brelynn, Kade, and Ruth Lilly, and Cohort Four included Nathan and Tyler. One benefit of using a multiple baseline design is that withdrawal of treatment is not necessary in order to demonstrate experimental control. Experimental control is demonstrated by implementing the intervention across students at different periods in time and receiving the same outcome. (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007).

Observation Procedure

The teacher progress monitored to collect data for the targeted students to determine their gains in their Nonsense Word Fluency. This progress was tracked using the Progress Monitoring kit (Good & Kaminski, 2003). The progress monitoring kit provided students with a similar reproduction of the DIBELS test (Good & Kaminski, 2003). The test administrator (teacher) followed the DIBELS directions for test administration. The test took approximately two minutes to administer (Good and Kaminski, 2003).

Behavior Definitions

The study used the definitions provided by the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003) to measure child performance on early literacy skills (Appendix C). Students are given a score and then put in a category: benchmark (low risk); strategic (at some risk); or intensive (at-risk). During the test, students were to produce as many letters sounds (phonemes) as possible within the one-minute time frame. Students received one point for each correctly pronounced phoneme and 3 points if the whole word was read correctly. Repeated phonemes and insertions were not penalized; however, it affected the students' score by using a portion of the students' one-minute

time allotment. Students were not penalized for dialect and articulation pronunciations. A three-second rule allowed the observer to prompt student to move to the next phoneme if they were unable to produce the present phoneme.

Experimental Conditions

Baseline. Baseline condition consisted of students receiving in-school intervention based on their identification; benchmark (no intervention), strategic (small group in-class teacher instruction), or intensive (out-of-class instruction). The teacher conducted progress monitoring (see Observation Procedure, above) in class, one-on-one, an average of three times per week. Students in the target kindergarten classroom received traditional (paper & pencil) homework 4-days per week, averaging 20-minutes per night, as outlined by the school's homework policy (Appendix D). This traditional homework consisted of skills such as letter writing practice, name writing, language and math activities. Data was kept on student's rate of completion.

Baseline data was collected for each student until a stable pattern of correctly pronounced phonemes occurred in the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest of the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003). When a stable baseline was observed, the intervention was introduced with each student.

Interactive Homework Intervention. Interactive homework replaced the traditional homework, but the frequency (4-days per week) and the duration (20-minutes) of the homework activity remained the same. Consistent with developmentally appropriate practice (Coppie & Bredekamp, 2009) interactive homework provided students with the opportunity to do hands-on learning at home and construct their own knowledge about the skills, while also sharing what they are learning with others. The major materials (letter, word, and picture cards, game boards, etc.) needed for the activity, were provided; however, minor materials (pencil, paper, etc.) were not included and sometimes requested for use.

Each interactive homework assignment included a detailed description of the activity with step-by-step instructions and extension activities that reinforced the early literacy skills that

the parents could use with their child for additional practice (see Appendix E). The interactive homework required a parent and student signature; this signature was used as a measure of treatment integrity (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007) to ensure that the interactive homework was being completed. To track students' gains in Nonsense Word Fluency subtest of the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003), the progress monitoring continued three times during the week, during the interactive homework intervention. Completion rates for interactive homework as compared to traditional homework are included in Table 1.

Interactive Homework Intervention + Parent Training. Based on the treatment integrity during the interactive homework intervention, an additional intervention for students who did not make significant gains was introduced. Parent conferences were held where the teacher explained the importance of the interactive homework as it related to their child's skill development. One-on-one training on implementing interactive homework was conducted. The same progress monitoring procedures that were described in baseline and interactive homework intervention were continued during the interactive homework intervention + parent training.

Reliability

Inter-observer agreement is the assessment of data consistency from different observers (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). Literature suggests that inter-observer agreement assessments be performed on at least 20% the observation sessions with inter-observer agreement of 80% or greater (Kazdin, 1982; Cooper, Heron & Heward, 2007). Reliability was collected on 28% (36 of the 129 observations) of all observation sessions. Reliability was calculated using the formula of dividing the smaller number by the larger number (Kazdin, 1982). When both test administrators heard a phoneme or did not hear a phoneme their agreement was scored as 100%; when one test administrator heard a phoneme and the other did not, their agreement was scored as 0.

Reliability for correct phoneme pronunciation was 97% (range, 85 - 100).

Parent Survey

At the conclusion of the study, parents were given a survey on their overall satisfaction with the traditional homework and the interactive homework. This six-item survey asked parents to place a check mark next to each descriptor that applied to the homework experience for each type of homework. Seven of the eight participating students' parents returned the survey.

Chapter 4

Results

The DIBELS is an early literacy skills assessment used to measure a student's progression toward reading (Good & Kaminski, 2003). This assessment identifies students who are at risk of reading failure and recommends intervention for identified students. This study examined the effects of DIBELS-specific interactive homework of students' performance on the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest of the DIBELS.

Figure 1 shows results for Cohort 1. During baseline, Morgan averaged 14 (range, 9-18) correctly pronounced phonemes; she showed a slight decrease during the interactive homework intervention (12, range 9-15). During baseline, Skylin averaged 16 (range, 13-18) correctly pronounced phonemes; he showed a slight increase during the interactive homework (17, range, 11-21). Results of the treatment integrity for implementation of the interactive homework showed that neither Morgan nor Skylin were completing homework regularly (68% and 73%, respectively) (see Table 2). A second intervention was introduced (see Experimental Conditions) which resulted in both students completing the most correctly produced phonemes. During the Interactive Homework Intervention + Parent Training Morgan averaged 20 (range, 14-31) and Skylin averaged 25 (range, 20-28).

Figure 1 shows results for Cohort 2. During baseline, Trent averaged 14 (range, 7-18) correctly pronounced phonemes; he showed an increase during the interactive homework intervention (22, range, 17-28).

Figure 2 shows results for Cohort 3. During baseline, Brelynn averaged 13 (range, 11-17) correctly pronounced phonemes; she showed a slight decrease during the interactive homework intervention (12, range 9-15). Results of the treatment integrity for implementation of the

Table 2

Percentage of Completed Homework Assignments

Student	Traditional Homework	Interactive Homework
Cohort 1		
Morgan	83%	68%
Skylin	86%	73%
Cohort 2		
Trent	92%	90%
Cohort 3		
Brelynn	54%	57%
Kade	80%	64%
Ruth Lily	95%	94%
Cohort 4		
Nathan	100%	100%
Tyler	95%	63%

interactive homework showed that Brelynn was not completing homework regularly (57%) (see Table 2). A second intervention was introduced with Brelynn (see Experimental Conditions), which resulted in a slight increase in her score. During the Interactive Homework Intervention + Parent Training Brelynn averaged 14 (range, 13-14). During baseline, Kade averaged 26 (range, 24-33) correctly pronounced phonemes; he showed an increase during the interactive homework

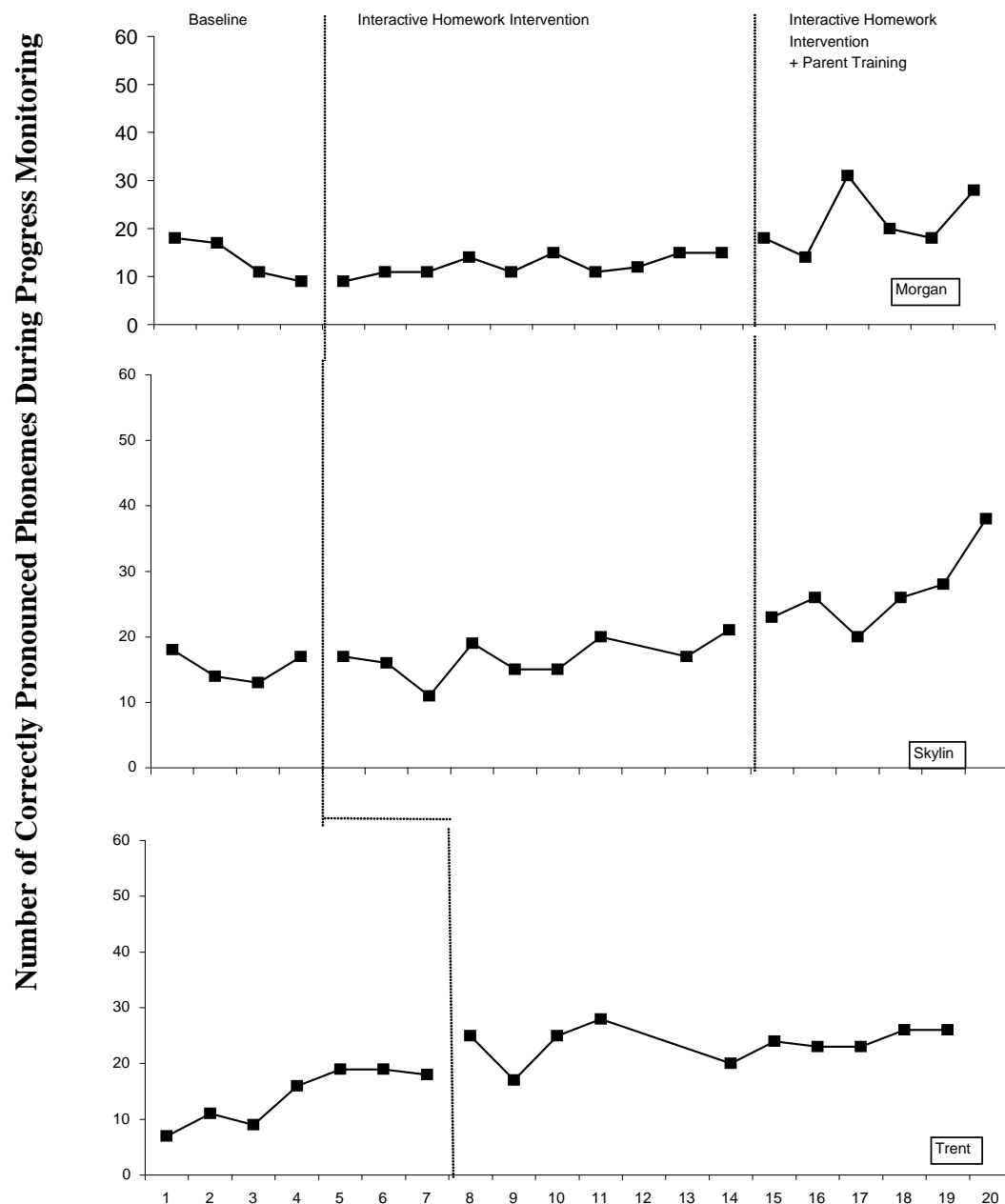


Figure 1. Number of Correctly Pronounced Phonemes during Progress Monitoring

(37, range, 25-49). During baseline, Ruth Lilly averaged 19 (range, 10-24) correctly pronounced phonemes; she showed an increase during the interactive homework (23, range, 18-32).

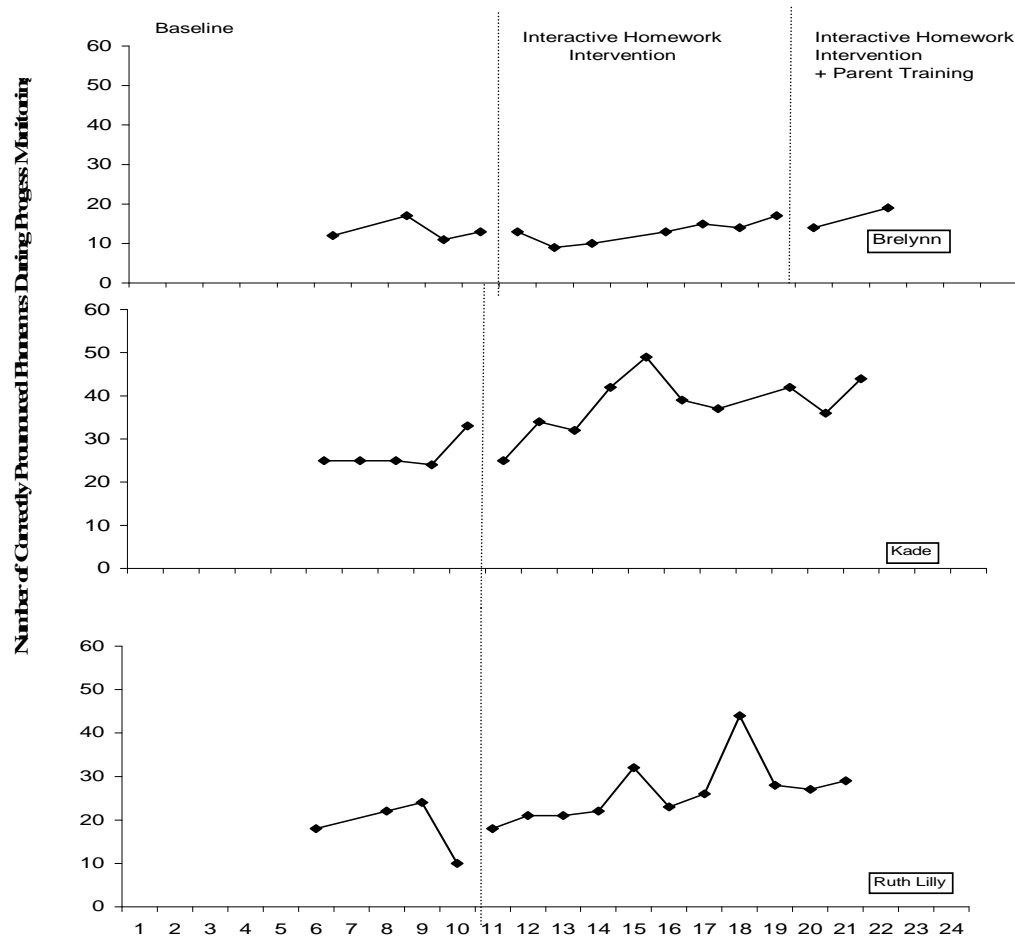


Figure 2. Number of Correctly Pronounced Phonemes during Progress Monitoring

Figure 3 shows results for Cohort 4. During baseline, Nathan averaged 23 (range, 16-29) correctly pronounced phonemes; he showed an increase during the interactive homework intervention (33, range 21-40). During baseline, Tyler averaged 18 (range, 13-21) correctly pronounced phonemes; he showed an increase during interactive homework intervention (21, range 17-26).

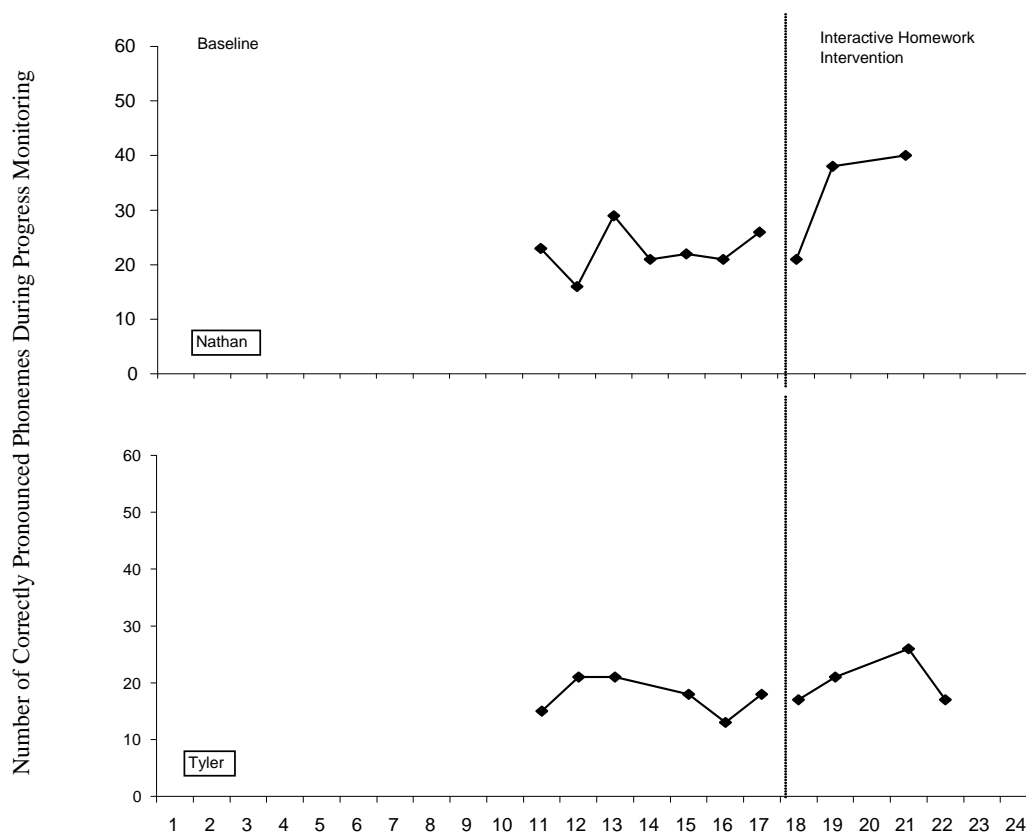


Figure 3. Number of Correctly Pronounced Phonemes during Progress Monitoring

At the end of the intervention, each child made progress toward meeting the spring assessment benchmark of 25 for Nonsense Word Fluency. Seven out of the eight students reached their highest scores post-intervention, and reached the spring goal of 25 at least once throughout the study. The final average for four students was at or above the spring goal.

Parent Perceptions of Homework Survey. At the conclusion of the study, a survey was sent home to parents asking them to compare their experience and their child's experience with traditional homework versus interactive homework (see Appendix F). Parents' responses are reported in Table 3 (see below). 100% of the parents reported that both traditional and interactive homework covered skills that the children will use everyday. More parents reported that the

interactive homework was able to be completed within the 15-minute time frame, 86% as compared to 57%. More parents reported that the interactive homework was more enjoyable than the traditional homework, 71% as compared to 57% for traditional homework.

Table 3

Survey Results for Parent Perceptions about Homework

Question	% Reported for Traditional	% Reported for Interactive
The skills covered in homework are skills my child will use everyday.	100%	100%
My child is able to complete within 15 minutes.	57%	86%
My child does not appear frustrated.	57%	57%
My child enjoys homework.	57%	71%
I see value in what my child is learning	86%	86%
I think the skills in homework are generalizable to my child's life.	71%	71%

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine if providing interactive homework activities that focused on skills from the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest of the DIBELS (Good & Kaminski, 2003) would improve students' performance on the Nonsense Word Fluency subtest of the DIBELS. In light of recommended practice for homework, the interactive homework required parents to become an active part of their child's homework (Epstein, 1995; Prince & Trahan, 1999). Previous research suggests that when parents and students interact during homework it positively impacts outcomes for at-risk students (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). While all students' scores in Nonsense Word Fluency increased throughout this study, the increases are not strong enough to suggest that gains made by students were attributable to the interactive homework intervention alone.

Treatment integrity was an issue in this study for three students. These students' rates of homework completion were consistent across the baseline (traditional homework) and the intervention (interactive homework) conditions. The lack of completion during the interactive homework may be the result of an order effect; if parents did not view the traditional homework positively, they may have formed the opinion that the homework was not valuable, no matter what the format. Although the interactive homework was designed to be more meaningful for the student and the parents, parents may have already been biased against it based on their initial exposure to the traditional homework. Another explanation may be that the interactive homework was sent home with children who have working parents. Families that have two working parents may have limited time for homework and preparation for some of the interactive homework activities (e.g., having to hang words around the house) may have taken more time than the traditional homework activities. This is consistent with previous research, which

suggests that some parents are concerned about homework taking away from family time (Kohn, 2006). These families may have rushed through the assignments, therefore diminishing the positive parent-child interaction that was targeted.

Consistent with the parent survey (Scott, 2008), for those students whose parents received parent training (Morgan, Skylin, Brelynn), completion rates and scores improved following this second intervention. These improvements may be due to clearly defined parent-teacher communication regarding the expectation for completion of homework, whereas there was no communication during the traditional homework regarding incomplete assignments.

Baseline data revealed an upward trend for several of the students (Trent, Kade, Ruth Lilly, Nathan). This could have been the result of the in-school interventions that were in place as a result of the winter DIBELS assessment. Although students made gains across the intervention conditions, these results must be interpreted in light of the combined treatment effect of the interactive homework intervention combined with each student's in-school intervention.

Clinical Implications

Previous research suggests that homework is a concern for many parents (Kohn, 2006; MetLife Survey, 2007). Increases were seen for all children at the conclusion of the study, although results were modest for four of the children. However, results did not demonstrate that the intervention had an adverse affect on student progress. Of the parents that completed the homework with their child regularly, parents and students expressed positive comments regarding the interactive homework. The positive comments were written on the homework from parents stating that they enjoyed certain activities. Parents of children who did not regularly complete the interactive homework had similar completion rates during the baseline traditional homework, and did not express negative comments regarding the interactive homework.

Results of the present study are consistent with previous research suggest that involving parents in their child's education yields positive outcomes for children (Bailey, 2006; Epstein, 1995; Epstein, et al., 2002; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Heitzmann, 2007; Kohn, 2006; Johns Hopkins University, 2006; Prince & Trahan, 1999; Van Voorhis, 2004); all of the children showed gains in their DIBELS scores and surveyed parents reported the interactive homework positively.

Future Research

Future research could examine completion rates of interactive homework when it is introduced at the onset of the school year early in a child's academic career. This may improve the rate of homework completion. Additional research is warranted to investigate a wider variety of skills in an interactive homework format.

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Appendix A

Parent Survey

Please complete the following survey thoroughly and honestly. Please do not write your name on this survey. All surveys will remain anonymous.

<u>Function</u>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills my child has been taught during the school day.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Homework assists in the 'home/school' connection by keeping me informed about what my child is learning during the school day.	1	2	3	4	5
3. There are nonacademic benefits to daily homework (responsibility, discipline, etc).	1	2	3	4	5
4. Homework has helped increase my child's academic standing.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Organization and time management are important skills my child has learned from having daily homework.	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Attitudes</u>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Competing homework with my child is very important to his/her educational development.					
2. There should be a nightly time limit put on homework.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My child should be able to complete their homework independently.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Homework is always completed first after school.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Failure to do homework should have a negative impact on my child's grades.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My child's class/school has a fair homework policy.	1	2	3	4	5
7. A monthly calendar is effective in helping my child complete his/her homework daily.	1	2	3	4	5
8. A weekly calendar is effective in helping my child complete his/her homework daily.	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Behaviors</u>	1	2	3	4	5
1. I make time each night to assist my child with the completion of homework.					
2. My child does complete his/her homework daily.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My child does not complete his/her homework daily.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My child has an assigned area for homework.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Other distractions (work, other children, etc) keep me from helping my child to complete his/her homework daily.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am capable of helping my child with all of his/her homework.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My child completes his/her daily homework with no assistance	1	2	3	4	5
8. My child struggles with his/her daily homework.	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5

Return to Shelley Scott, 6612 Audusson Dr., Greenwell Springs, LA 70739

Appendix B

Teacher Survey

Please answer the questions by typing in the corresponding numbers in the blanks below. Then you can copy and paste into an email to send back to me.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4

1. Homework is beneficial for students.
2. Homework improves student learning.
3. Homework is a waste of time.
4. I give homework because my administrator expects it.
5. I give homework because parents expect it.
6. Failure to do homework should have a negative impact on my students' grades.
7. I don't like giving homework.
8. If I would prefer not giving homework.
9. I would prefer only assigning homework when needed.
10. I don't know the purpose of homework. AGREE DISAGREE

If you disagree with this statement please fill in the blank. The purpose of homework is to _____.

ANSWERS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Appendix C

DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency Directions for Administration and Scoring

DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency¹

Directions for Administration and Scoring

Target Age Range

DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency

Beg	Mid	End	Beg	Mid	End	Beg	Mid	End	Beg	Mid	End	Beg	Mid	End	Beg	Mid	End	Beg	Mid	End
Kindergarten			First Grade			Second Grade			Third Grade			Fourth Grade			Fifth Grade			Sixth Grade		

Nonsense Word Fluency is intended for most children from mid to end of kindergarten through the beginning of second grade. It may be appropriate for monitoring the progress of older children with low skills in letter-sound correspondence.

Description

DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) is a standardized, individually administered test of the alphabetic principle, including letter-sound correspondence and the ability to blend letters into words in which letters represent their most common sounds (Kaminski & Good, 1996). The student is presented an 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper with randomly ordered VC and CVC nonsense words (e.g., *sig*, *rav*, *ov*) and asked to produce verbally the individual letter sound of each letter or verbally produce, or read, the whole nonsense word. For example, if the stimulus word is "vaj" the student could say /v/ /a/ /j/ or say the word /vaj/ to obtain a total of three letter sounds correct. The student is allowed 1 minute to produce as many letter sounds as he/she can, and the final score is the number of letter sounds produced correctly in one minute. Because the measure is fluency based, students receive a higher score if they are phonologically recoding the word and receive a lower score if they are providing letter sounds in isolation. The NWF measure takes about 2 minutes to administer and has over 20 alternate forms for monitoring progress. The one-month, alternate-form reliability for NWF in January of first grade is .83 (Good et al., in press). The concurrent criterion-validity of DIBELS NWF with the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-Revised Readiness Cluster score is .36 in January and .59 in February of first grade (Good et al., in press). The predictive validity of DIBELS NWF in January of first grade with (a) CBM ORF in May of first grade is .82, (b) CBM ORF in May of second grade is .60, (c) Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery Total Reading Cluster score is .66 (Good et al., in press). The benchmark goal for Nonsense Word Fluency is 50 correct letter sounds per minute by mid first grade. Students scoring below 30 in mid first grade may need intensive instructional support to achieve first grade reading goals.

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Materials

Practice items, student copy of probe, examiner copy of probe, clipboard, stopwatch, and colored scoring pen.

Directions for Administration

1. Place the practice items in front of the student.
2. Place the examiner probe on clipboard and position so that the student cannot see what you record.
3. Say these specific directions to the student:

Look at this word (point to the first word on the practice probe). ***It's a make-believe word. Watch me read the word: /s/ /i/ /m/, "sim"*** (point to each letter then run your finger fast beneath the whole word). ***I can say the sounds of the letters, /s/ /i/ /m/*** (point to each letter), ***or I can read the whole word, "sim"*** (run your finger fast beneath the whole word).

Your turn to read a make-believe word. Read this word the best you can (point to the word "lut"). ***Make sure you say any sounds you know.***

CORRECT RESPONSE:	INCORRECT OR NO RESPONSE:
If the child responds with "lut" or with all of the sounds, say	If the child does not respond within 3 seconds or responds incorrectly, say
<i>That's right. The sounds are /l/ /u/ /t/ or "lut."</i>	<i>Remember, you can say the sounds or you can say the whole word. Watch me: The sounds are /l/ /u/ /t/</i> (point to each letter) <i>or "lut"</i> (run your finger fast beneath the whole word). <i>Let's try again. Read this word the best you can</i> (point to the word "lut").

4. Place the student copy of the probe in front of the child.

Here are some more make-believe words (point to the student probe). ***Start here*** (point to the first word) ***and go across the page*** (point across the page). ***When I say, "Begin," read the words the best you can. Point to each letter and tell me the sound or read the whole word. Read the words the best you can. Put your finger on the first word. Ready, begin.***

5. Start your stopwatch.

6. Follow along on the examiner copy of the probe and underline each letter sound the student provides correctly, either in isolation or read as a whole word. Put a slash (/) over each letter sound read incorrectly.
7. At the end of 1 minute, place a bracket (]) after the last letter sound provided by the student and say, "Stop."
8. These directions can be shortened by beginning with Number 4 for repeated measurement when the student *clearly* understands the directions and procedure.

Directions for Scoring

1. *Discontinue Rule.* If the student does not get any sounds correct in words 1–5, discontinue the task and record a score of zero (0).
2. *Correct Letter Sounds.* Underline the *individual letters* for letter sounds produced correctly in isolation and score 1 point for each letter sound produced correctly. For example, if the stimulus word is "tob," and the student says /t/ /o/ /b/, the individual letters would be underlined with a score of 3.

Word	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
tob	"t...o...b"	<u>t</u> <u>o</u> <u>b</u>	3/3
dos	"d...o...s"	<u>d</u> <u>o</u> <u>s</u>	3/3

3. *Correct Words.* Use a single underline under multiple letters for correct letter sounds blended together and give credit for each letter-sound correspondence produced correctly. For example, if the stimulus word is "tob," and the student says, "tob," one underline would be used with a score of 3.

Word	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
tob	"tob"	<u>t o b</u>	3/3
dos	"d...os"	<u>d o s</u>	3/3

4. *Partially Correct Words.* If a word is partially correct, underline the corresponding letters for letter sounds produced correctly. Put a slash (/) through the letter if the corresponding letter sound is incorrect. For example, if the word is "tob," and the student says "toab" (with a long o), the letters "t" and "b" would be underlined, and the letter "o" would be slashed for a score of 2.

Word	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
tob	"toab" (long o)	<u>t</u> / <u>o</u> <u>b</u>	2/3
dos	"dot"	<u>d</u> <u>o</u> /	2/3

5. *Repeated Sounds*. Letter sounds given twice while sounding out the word are given credit only once. For example, if stimulus word is "tob," and the student says /t/ /o/ /ob/, the letter "o" and the letters "ob" are underlined. The student receives only 1 point for the letter sound "o" even though the correct sound was provided twice (a total of 3 for the entire word).

Word	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
tob	"t...o...ob"	<u>t</u> <u>o</u> <u>b</u>	<u>3</u> /3
dos	"d...o...s...dos"	<u>d</u> <u>o</u> <u>s</u>	<u>3</u> /3

6. *Three-Second Rule (Sound by Sound)*. If the student is providing individual letter sounds and hesitates for 3 seconds on a letter sound, score the letter sound incorrect, provide the correct letter sound, point to the next letter, and say "What sound?" This prompt may be repeated. For example, if stimulus word is "tob," and the student says /t/ (3 seconds), prompt by saying, "/o/ (point to "b") What sound?"

Word	Student Says	Prompt	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
tob	"t" (3 sec.)	/o/ (point to "b") What sound?	<u>t</u> o b	<u>1</u> /3
dos et	"d...o" (3 sec.)	/s/ (point to "e") What sound?	<u>d</u> <u>o</u> s e t	<u>2</u> /5

7. *Three-Second Rule (Word by Word)*. If the student is reading words and hesitates for 3 seconds on a word, score the word incorrect, provide the correct word, point to the next word, and say, "What word?" This prompt can be repeated. For example, if stimulus words are "tob dos et," and the student says "tob" (3 seconds), prompt by saying, "dos (point to "et") What word?"

Words	Student Says	Prompt	Scoring Procedure
tob dos et	"tob" (3 sec)	"dos (point to "et") What word?"	<u>t</u> <u>o</u> <u>b</u> dos e t
tuf kej ik	"tuf" (3 sec)	"kej (point to "ik") What word?"	<u>t</u> <u>u</u> <u>f</u> kej i k

8. *Sound Order (Sound by Sound)*. Letter sounds produced in isolation but out of order are scored as correct. For example, if stimulus word is "tob," and the student points to and says /b/ /o/ /t/, all letters would be underlined, with a score of 3. The purpose of this rule is to give students credit as they are beginning to learn individual letter-sound correspondences.

Word	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
tob	"b...o...t" (point correctly)	<u>t</u> <u>o</u> <u>b</u>	<u>3</u> /3
dos	"o...d...s" (point correctly)	<u>d</u> <u>o</u> <u>s</u>	<u>3</u> /3

9. *Sound Order (Word by Word).* Blended letter sounds must be correct and in the correct place (beginning, middle, end) to receive credit. For example, if stimulus word is “toh,” and the student says “bot,” only the “o” would be correct and in the correct place, for a score of 1.

Word	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
tob	“bot”	t <u>o</u> b	<u>1</u> /3
ik	“ki”	i <u>k</u>	<u>0</u> /2

10. *Insertions.* Insertions are not scored as incorrect. For example, if the stimulus word is “sim,” and the student says “stim,” the letters “s,” “i,” and “m” would be underlined and full credit would be given for the word with no penalty for the insertion of /t/.

Word	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
tob	“stob”	<u>t</u> <u>o</u> <u>b</u>	<u>3</u> /3
dos	“dots”	<u>d</u> <u>o</u> <u>s</u>	<u>3</u> /3

11. *Dialect and Articulation.* The student is not penalized for imperfect pronunciation due to dialect, articulation, or second-language inferences. This is a professional judgment and should be based on the student’s responses and any prior knowledge of their speech patterns. For example, a student may regularly substitute /th/ for /s/. If the stimulus word is “sim,” and the student says “thim,” the letter “s” would be underlined and credit for a correct letter-sound correspondence would be given.

Word	Student Says	Scoring Procedure	Correct Letter Sounds
sim	“thim” (articulation error)	<u>s</u> <u>i</u> <u>m</u>	<u>3</u> /3
rit	“wit” (articulation error)	<u>r</u> <u>i</u> <u>t</u>	<u>3</u> /3

12. *Self-Corrections.* If a student makes an error and corrects himself within 3 seconds, write “SC” above the letter sound or word and count it as correct.
13. *Skips Row.* If a student skips an entire row, draw a line through the row and do not count the row in scoring.

Pronunciation Guide

Different regions of the country use different dialects of American English. These pronunciation examples may be modified or distinguished consistent with regional dialects and conventions. See the "Directions for Scoring" section for clarification. The letters "x" and "q" are not used. The letters "h," "w," "y," and "r" are used only in the initial position. The letters "c" and "g" are used only in the final position.

Letter	Sound	Example
a	/a/	bat
e	/e/	bet
i	/i/	bit
o	/o/	top
u	/u/	hut
b	/b/	bat
c	/k/	tic
d	/d/	dad
f	/f/	fan
g	/g/	pig
h	/h/	hat
j	/j/	jet
k	/k/	can
l	/l/	lot
m	/m/	man
n	/n/	not
p	/p/	pan
r	/r/	ran
s	/s/	sat
t	/t/	top
v	/v/	van
w	/w/	wet
y	/y/	yak
z	/z/	zipper

DIBELS Nonsense Word Fluency Assessment Integrity Checklist

Directions: As the observer, please observe setup and directions, time and score the test with the examiner, check examiner's accuracy in following procedures, and decide if examiner passes or needs more practice.

Fine	Needs Practice	✓ box to indicate Fine or Needs Practice				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>1. Performs standardized directions verbatim:</p> <p><i>Look at this word. It's a make-believe word. Watch me read the word: /s/ /t/ /m/, "sim." I can say the sounds of the letters, /s/ /t/ /m/, or I can read the whole word, "sim."</i></p> <p><i>Your turn to read a make-believe word. Read this word the best you can (point to the word "lut"). Make sure you say any sounds you know.</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin: 10px 0;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: left; padding: 5px;">CORRECT RESPONSE</th> <th style="width: 50%; text-align: left; padding: 5px;">INCORRECT RESPONSE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;"><i>That's right. The sounds are /t/ /u/ /t/ or "lut."</i></td> <td style="padding: 5px;"><i>Remember, you can say the sounds or you can say the whole word. Watch me: The sounds are /t/ /u/ /t/ or "lut." Lets try again. Read this word the best you can.</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Here are some more make-believe words. Start here and go across the page. When I say, "Begin," read the words the best you can. Point to each letter and tell me the sound or read the whole word. Read the words the best you can. Put your finger on the first word. Ready, begin.</i></p>	CORRECT RESPONSE	INCORRECT RESPONSE	<i>That's right. The sounds are /t/ /u/ /t/ or "lut."</i>	<i>Remember, you can say the sounds or you can say the whole word. Watch me: The sounds are /t/ /u/ /t/ or "lut." Lets try again. Read this word the best you can.</i>
CORRECT RESPONSE	INCORRECT RESPONSE					
<i>That's right. The sounds are /t/ /u/ /t/ or "lut."</i>	<i>Remember, you can say the sounds or you can say the whole word. Watch me: The sounds are /t/ /u/ /t/ or "lut." Lets try again. Read this word the best you can.</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Responds to correct and incorrect responses appropriately.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Holds clipboard and stopwatch so child cannot see what he/she records.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Starts stopwatch after saying "Begin."				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Waits 3 seconds for child to produce letter sound or word. After 3 seconds, tells correct sound or word and asks child to try the next sound or word. If child does not respond, asks child to move on to the next sound or word.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Underlines letter sounds produced correctly alone or in context, and slashes incorrect letter sounds.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Follows Discontinue Rule if child does not get any correct letter sounds in first five words.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. At the end of 1 minute, places a bracket () after the last letter sound provided and says, "Stop."				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Records the number of correctly produced letter sounds.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10. Shadow score with the examiner. Is he/she within 2 points on the final score?				

Appendix D

Traditional Homework Example

Wednesday

I counted to 20!
(try it backwards!)

N

n

C

C

☐

Yes

☐

Almost

☐

No

Parent,
Please initial
here.

Thursday

can

tan

pan

cat

pat

mat

Write numbers 1-20.

Parent,
Please initial
here.

Appendix E

Interactive Homework Example

Monday

Vowel Stars

Students combine vowels with consonant combinations to make words. Place the Vowel Stars face down in a stack at the center. Provide the student with paper and dry erase marker. The student selects the top card and writes a vowel in the blank using the marker. Say the sounds of each letter, blend them, and read the word orally (e.g., "/d//i//g/, dig"). Determine if it is a real word or a nonsense word. If it is a real word, student records it on the paper and says a sentence with the word. Parent will extend the student sentence (e.g., a student says, "I can dig." Parent says, "I can dig a big hole in the sand.") The student wipes the vowel off and writes another one. Continue until all cards are used.

Have extra time? Need more of a Challenge? Try the Extension and Adaptations.

Extensions and Adaptations

Students make stars with other consonants for the parent to do.

Parent Signature

Child Signature (print)

Tuesday

CVC Word Hunt

Write CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words on index cards or small slips of paper. While your child is busy or not home, tape them around the house. Say a word and have your child go on a word search. Students should say the sounds of the letters and read the word. Student keeps cards as they are found.

Possible words to use: cat, cot, cap, hat, him, hot, fat, sat, sit, mat, map, pat, pot, pit, tap

Extensions and Adaptations

Play again but switch roles.

Have your child record the words as they are found.

Have your child use the words in sentences. Have your child write the sentences.

Parent Signature

Child Signature (print)

Appendix F

Homework Comparison

Fill the top checklist out about the previous homework. Fill the bottom one out about the current homework.

Parent Perceptions about Homework

Parents please fill this out and send it back to school. Please check all that apply.

- ☐ The skills covered in homework are skills my child will use every day.
- ☐ My child is able to complete within 15 minutes.
- ☐ My child does not appear frustrated.
- ☐ My child enjoys homework.
- ☐ I see the value in what my child is learning.
- ☐ I think the skills in homework are generalizable to my child's life.

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Vita

Shelley M. Scott was born in Memphis, Tennessee and moved to Mandeville, Louisiana at the age of four. She attended Mandeville High School and graduated in 1998. After attending the University of Southern Mississippi, she graduated in 2002 with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. After graduating she worked in Hattiesburg, Mississippi teaching sixth grade.

Two years after graduating, she moved back to Louisiana to continue her teaching career with kindergarten students in East Baton Rouge Parish. After one year of teaching kindergarten she began working on her Masters at Louisiana State University in 2006, while still continuing her job as a kindergarten teacher. She is currently teaching kindergarten for the Central Community School System.