

**HOW HOME LITERACY SKILLS LEAD TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

by

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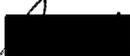
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CERTIFICATION OF THESIS/PROJECT CAPSTONE WORK

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## HOME LITERACY SKILLS

### HOW HOME LITERACY SKILLS LEAD TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

#### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect family has on emergent literacy skills of children and how that can effect academic achievement within the classroom. A qualitative research design was used to examine what home literacy practices parents engage in with their first grade child, how these practices lead to academic achievement and how parents' ethnicity or socio-economic status can effect parental involvement outside of school. The researcher held focus groups for students and surveyed parents about their home literacy environment. The purpose of this research was to understand which students were practicing literacy strategies in their home and which specific strategies they were using. The researcher adapted and modified the questions for the focus group from [Readtosucceedbuffalo.org](http://Readtosucceedbuffalo.org) and used Survey Monkey as a reference and a framework to survey the participants in this study. Results of this research state that parents who are involved in their child's education, come from rich home environments, and who encourage their child to read and practice necessary literacy skills while at home correspond to those students are engaged during class instruction, enjoy reading and writing and are in an on-level or beyond reading group in the classroom. This research also found that students who come from low socio-economic homes, have little to none parent involvement and cannot afford literacy materials such as books, games and technology tools correspond to those students who lack the necessary literacy skills, and who fall in the approaching reading level group in the classroom. All parents and students who participated in this research study had positive attitudes towards home literacy environment. This research concludes with recommendations on how

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parents can become more involved and what strategies they can use to help their child become a successful reader and learner.

*Keywords:* Family Involvement, Emergent Literacy Skills, Literacy Strategies

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## **Introduction**

### **Problem**

The purpose of this literature review is to investigate the effect family has on emergent literacy skills of children. Traditionally in schools families keep in close contact with their children's teachers because home-school communication is essential (Al-Qaryouti 2015). Students benefit from having their families more involved inside and outside of the classroom. It is important that students learn the fundamental literacy skills at a young age in order to be able to develop high-level reading and writing skills. Literacy at a young age can be challenging and even confusing for students. Students need proper knowledge as well as encouragement along the way to ensure a successful future. The English language arts Common Core standards have the highest expectations for students in New York State (National Governors 2010). Students are expected to know their basic colors and letters before coming to kindergarten to be on track to succeed in school.

The idea for this research stems from my experience working as a Preschool teacher in a Universal Prekindergarten classroom. A UPK is funded by public schools within New York State and was created by the New York State Education Department. Children must be eligible to participate in this program and it is not mandatory. The program starts in September just as every other grade and the students must at least be four years old. The children must also live in the same school district as the UPK that they are attending. The UPK program that I taught provided a safe and stimulating environment for children. Through the use of educational games and hands-on activities, which foster social interactions with peers, the children acquire literacy skills. In addition, social skills are enhanced and skills are further developed through reading, literacy activities, and outside play. However, children who are exposed to their colors, numbers,

and letters from simply watching television are gaining some of the needed skills to succeed in school.

### **Purpose**

I would like to discover if a student's home literacy environment impacts a student's academic achievement. There are multiple studies that show the significance of home literacy environment for children's reading achievement (Baroody 2012). The home literacy environment includes parents and guardians teaching children reading skills at home. Many studies show the Significance of children interacting with their parents at home and experiencing literacy skills will lead to academic achievement (Baroody et al., 2012).

Fortunate students who are raised in a household with a greater socioeconomic status achieve more than students who come from a lower socioeconomic status (Bracken 2008). All causes involved in this study include parental attitudes towards literacy, literacy activities performed by families along with formal reading instruction in school and parental reading behaviors. Children will be more equipped for school and changeover efficiently through the school and home discourse. The more involved a parent is in their child's education the more successful the child will be. Home literacy environment does have a huge impact on both an emergent reader and a struggling reader. I will touch on the home literacy environment as well as factors that influence it such as literacy skills, rich home environments, parent involvement, ethnicity and socio-economic status.

### **Significance**

This work is important to find out if home literacy practices effects academic achievement. Myself as an educator will be one person who benefits from this study. I will be

able to get to know my students more by understanding their home life and how it affects their literacy skills in my classroom. Parents can benefit from this study by becoming more aware of their students education and playing a role in helping build their reading and writing skills. Students may also benefit from this study. They may become more aware of literacy that is taking place at home such as seeing their parents/guardians reading for enjoyment at home or wanting to read with their families outside of school. It's important for educators to know about their student's life. If I have struggling readers in my room I want to find out the problem and come up with the best possible situation. A student's academic achievement can simply be worked on by practicing certain reading and writing skills, not only just in school but at home as well. My students will need to read and write throughout their entire life, not only in school. The sooner they are introduced to literacy strategies and skills the more comfortable they will become.

The questions this review seeks to answer are as follows 1. What home literacy practices do parents engage in with their first grade children? 2. How do these practices lead to academic achievement? 3. How do parent's and student's perception of ethnic and SES background affect parental involvement in home literacy practices?

## Literature Review

### Home Literacy Environment

Rich research has provided awareness into the significance of home environments for children's reading literacy development (Cohen 2011). Children's initial literacy skills lay the groundwork of the learning-to-read process before they are exposed to formal schooling.

Literacy practices include extensive range of family activities, such as parent-child storybook and picture book reading, exposure to literacy, as well as opportunities for literacy connections between the family members. Parents can upkeep their children if they are involved in literacy-related activities with them (Leseman & de Jong, 2001). To reassure that children can explore literacy at home they must have access to certain material such as books and print resources that are needed to help understand literacy. Specifically, it is necessary that books are available in a household and that of their interest along with their reading level, even if that includes picture books to begin with. It is important for all children to be able to use illustrations to help them read. They need to be able to hold a book while turning the pages when it is appropriate. They must also know that we read from left to right. Parents who have positive attitudes towards reading activities will have a greater impact on the Home Literacy Environment. Positive attitudes can be developed when reading at home in a safe comfortable environment if parents and guardians are participating in literacy activities with their children (Stephenson 2008). Positive effects can be expected from homes with a rich literacy environment, with respect to early language skills and emergent literacy, which in turn support the development of reading capabilities. Learning the basics of reading at home will not only help children in their early years of their life but it will allow them to be able to catch on faster when they start the process

of reading in school. The parental role model is especially important in motivating students and influencing attitudes to reading and learning.

Typically when children struggle in younger grades it is due to the fact that they were not exposed to any prior literacy concepts before entering school (Stephenson 2008). Motivation plays a huge role in a student's success within a classroom. If parents are not providing a safe comfortable environment at home where their child can read and learn then it will be difficult for them to want to learn because they will not want to read for pleasure. If teachers notice students who have lower motivation in the classroom and find these problems right away then they will be able to find ways in which they can target these specific problems and contribute to their students' success (Neumann 2009).

Cunningham points out three ways to conceptualize the home literacy environment, which are labeled: the limiting home literacy environment, the passive home literacy environment, and the active home literacy environment. The limiting home literacy environment refers to the socio demographic characteristics of parents and the home have been shown to be correlated with children's literacy and language development, such as parents' level of education, school experiences, or household income. Cunningham reports a greater likelihood that children who have reading difficulties also will have parents with below average literacy levels.

The second component, passive home literacy environment, correlates to parents' reading behaviors, such as personal enjoyment of reading and time spent in reading, have been related to positive reading outcomes for children. Parents who read and write regularly may have larger vocabularies and children who see their parents reading are more apt to engage their parents in

conversations about the materials by asking questions, and acquiring richer vocabulary from these interactions.

The third component is active home literacy environment. Those parental efforts include directly engaging a child in activities designed to foster literacy and language development. Studies of early literacy development conclude “the frequency of joint book reading has a positive effect on child literacy and language development” (p. 209). Parental reading beliefs about their role in the development of their children are related to children’s literacy and language outcomes. Cunningham found that “parental beliefs were highly predictive of both the degree to which parents exposed their children to joint book reading and the quality of parent-child interactions while reading books.”

According to Heath (2008), Social interaction supports literacy development as children interact and socialize with others. Children who live in a home where literacy is used and looked at typically interact and socialize with their parents daily about reading or writing. Children with parents who do not interact with them outside of school involving their education typically do not have a rich literacy environment and are lacking that interaction that is needed. Cohen and Cowen (2011) stated “If children are not literate, they cannot succeed in school, in our society, or participate in our democracy as effective citizens, as literacy is the key to personal, professional, and global growth in our world” (p. 4).

### **Emergent Literacy Skills**

Before going into kindergarten, children need to know their colors and the letters in the alphabet. While enrolled in a pre-K, it is expected that children are being exposed to their colors and alphabet on a daily basis to prepare them for school. Preschool children who have enjoyed a

home literacy environment, and have already experienced literacy from an early age, enter school with a head start in reading literacy (Diamond 2013). The basic principles of the knowledge of literacy are phonological awareness, phonics and understanding the importance of literacy in general. The earlier children begin to learn about the importance of literacy, phonological awareness and phonics the better off they will be and will have a better chance of succeeding in school (Diamond 2013). Then children who are not exposed to these principals.

Emergent literacy is a term that is used to explain a child's knowledge of reading and writing skills before they learn how to read and write words. It signals a belief that, in literate society, young children—even one- and two-year-olds—are in the process of becoming literate. Some basic emergent literacy skills consist of building vocabulary, letter recognition phonological awareness, print motivation, print awareness and narrative skills.

The implementation of family literacy programs, especially for families with low academic background, could be one way to help reduce social disparities (McElvany, & Artelt 2009). Children who reside in a home where education is respected will learn their colors, numbers and letters in the alphabet before entering pre-kindergarten program. Children who reside in a home where education is not a priority fall behind those students and do not enter pre-kindergarten with the knowledge of letters, colors, and numbers. This poses a challenge for the teacher as they are dealing with varying abilities of those pre-kindergarten children in the classroom.

### **Rich Home Environment**

Children who live in a home where education is appreciated will have the needed academics and skills to succeed. Goodman (2001) states that in order to be able to function

successfully in a society and its culture, children need to develop a wide range of language competencies and they need to use that language effectively in a variety of settings. Children in a HLE are suffused in rich social and language interactions all of the time. Children who lack needed skills to succeed in school are typically the children that do not live in a rich home literacy environment. For example, some students come from households in which their parents are not as educated as others. They may have never been exposed to reading at home or seeing anyone read or write at home for enjoyment. It is noticeable within the classroom, which students come from a HLE because those who do not may start to get frustrated if they cannot read or write on the same level as their peers (Farvar 2013). Parents should be engaging their children in reading and writing activities as well as supporting their children academically by playing games and reading to them.

Parents should allow their children to watch them read for pleasure, because then they will want to do the same. Parents should help their children with larger vocabulary to help build their vocabulary knowledge while in school. Children who are from a 'literate society' learn custom beliefs and skills that will recur repeatedly through the life of the mainstream children (Ricci 2011). The more exposed children are to reading the more they will love to read and learn by comprehending the text. Vygotsky believed that parents, caregivers, peers, and the culture at large are responsible for the development of higher order functions (Ricci 2011). The availability of materials, activities at home, parent attitude and visits to their child's class can play a huge role in children's academic achievement. The role of technology at homes and kindergartens such as child's learning style, parent's knowledge of child development and the availability of related outside resources available to families should be considered. In McGee (2008), the sociocultural learning theory states that

“Nearly all children grow up experiencing many kinds of language in their home communities, especially instrumental and social language, but some children have far fewer experiences than other children with academic forms of spoken and written language like those that will experience in school.” (p. 38).

A strategy that is used in a rich home environment is shared reading. Shared readings provide struggling readers with necessary support. It can build sight word knowledge and reading fluency and allows students to enjoy materials that they may not be able to read on their own (Farvar 2013). It also ensures that all students feel successful by providing support to the entire group. Parents first introduce the story by discussing the title, cover, and author/illustrator. They then can ask their children to make predictions regarding what they think the story might be about. While doing this they can pause and ask to make predictions. Parents will then stop and ask questions throughout the story. Many parents that were asked about shared readings say that they also re-read the story and allow their children to retell and read independently as well. Parents will also read stories aloud to their children while using appropriate inflection and tone. They may also ask brief questions to determine students' comprehension level.

Parents should let their children turn the pages. Besides, being enjoyable, these strategies help more active children stay focused on the book. Majority of parents stated that they take their children to the library to check out books. Most popular Children's books are available at the local library. This is an affordable way to give your child access to a wide range of books. Taking your child to the library also turns reading into a special occasion. Edwards, C. M. (2014) investigated literacy behaviors of both mothers and children. This included the examination of phonological awareness and written language awareness that dealt with, home literacy environment observation, shared reading observations and parent questionnaire. The results

indicate that these mothers engaged in several emergent literacy behaviors with their children during shared-reading interactions. Their children also exhibited some of these behaviors (Edwards 2014).

### **Parental involvement**

Barker and Scher (1998) believe the more children are exposed to reading at home the more the students' interest in reading will grow allowing them to be attentive in the classroom. It will also help them succeed with language comprehension, expressive language skills and their overall reading achievement. It was revealed that students who saw their parent reading for pleasure enjoyed reading as well. Parental involvement begins in infancy in the home, as all children have different initial exposures to what they come to school knowing (Taylor 2011). A parent's role very early in a child's academic career is to provide ample opportunities for authentic literacy experiences. These include meaning conversations and interactions among themselves and their child. Parents should model reading and writing for a purpose. By creating these literacy experiences early in a child's academic career, they are showing their support and interest in the child's academics, hence, the sociocultural theory beings to shape this importance (McElvany 2009).

Larson and Marsh (2005) believe that sociocultural learning theory describes the "child as an active member of a constantly changing community of learners in which knowledge constructs and is constructed by larger cultural systems" (p. 100). Literacy, as a tool, is informed by social, cultural, and historical differences amongst members of diverse communities. Furthermore, this theory describes the process of human development by participating in sociocultural activities in communities that are continuously changing, which thereby shapes

curriculum and classroom learning. Social interaction supports literacy development as children interact and socialize with others. According to Goodman (2001), children learn literacy concepts in the same way that they progress in significant learning; they understand literacy as they vigorously contribute in a literate society. Through modeling and instruction, adults are able to give children ways of taking information from books in a natural setting in school and applying it to everyday life such as going to the bank.

Objectives and goals of parents are often used interchangeably or described together. Taken together, objectives and goals mirror how parents believe their child will execute problems in school, in the present and in the near future. This seems to be a common thread in many parent involvement studies and is commonly indicated to have an encouraging connection to educational success. For instance, parental necessities/hopes is the greatest measurement in the Fan and Chen (2001) meta-analysis studying results on hypothetical realization. In this particular study, the findings showed that parental expectations show positive effects on student achievement. These findings were determined based off of the participation papers and articles that were reviewed and used within this study. Baker and Soden (1998) noted that parents, who have high desires and hopes, normally are those who also have effective parenting styles. For example, Baker had said, “reasonable stages of parental funding and guidance are encouragingly associated to academic achievement.” Kurdek (1995) looked at the association among parental regulation, in comparison to 6<sup>th</sup> grade student’s academic achievement through their student reports. The findings presented a strong connection between parental supervision (moderate levels) and high levels of achievement, which were taken from their grade point average. Low achievement had a strong connection with low levels of parental supervision. Chen noted that if children and parents have a destructive relationship then that also can factor in to the students

overall achievement. When this is the case sometimes parents will try to support their children more if they start to become concerned with the underachievement of their child. This shows that student's academic performance can peruse parents to implement specific strategies. After analyzing this study I noted a lot of associations between parent involvement and academic achievement which include, parent involvement, parent-teacher communication, parents checking homework, home supervision along with setting rules (Shute 2011).

Reading outside of school mirrors parental molding and encouragement of children's reading along with the delivery of a motivating literacy setting, has displayed a helpful connotation with academic achievement (Shute 2011). An interesting finding from this study had consisted of student's performance compared to having rules set within the home. This specific study focused on having rules such as doing chores in the house, rules on TV limits, rules with friends and completing homework. The findings showed that students who have a positive relationship to achievement are those students who do have specific rules at home. These students are helping out around the house, not watching as much TV, have specific rules when going out with their friends, maintain their grade average and complete their homework. Something else that I found very interesting was that if parents are regularly checking their child's homework then that can lead to a negative effect on the students' academic achievement. Most parents tend to check homework regularly if their child has academic problems. So this leads to homework being checked by parents a positive instead of a negative cause of academic achievement (Shute 2011).

As distinguished, the information represents those children's insights around parental; involvement variables seem to be enhanced analysts of student success as parents' insights (Chen 2008). Also, many of the reports display that parent involvement and its likely effect on

realization failures as children advance throughout school. There are some potential reasons for this waning: (a) middle school and high schools develop more complicated, challenging programs that can frighten parents; (b) there are less school opportunities to include parents during the middle school high school years; (c) parents might apply increasingly fewer encouragement throughout their juvenile teenagers as they convert to being more self-governing. Students start to break away from their parents, as they get older, leaning more towards their peers for guidance and encouragement.

Groups of peers can also positively or negatively effect how students perform in school. (Chen 2008). Shute (2011) stated “children are passionately devoted to their guardians (along with their parents being emotionally attached to their children) are reliant on them for fortification and upkeep, and discover talents within their internal environment that might be valuable outside of it; these evidences are not interrogated” (p. 461) Many studies did not focus on the fact that guardians play a huge part in determining their youth's life, such as picking out the neighborhood in which they will grow up in, selecting the school they will attend, the house they will live in and most importantly the cultural group they will withstand. The conclusion of this study proved that both peers and parents have huge influence on juveniles' educational achievement. Children, as they get older can choose the peers that they interact with, giving their parents a limited influence when it comes to relationships. Whether these relationships positively or negatively affect that child's life will reflect on the child's academic achievement (Shute 2011).

What does appear, considerably more so than parental contribution at the school or in numerous organizations, is the amount to which parents and guardians discuss with their child about what is currently happening in school, show interest in their child, and vigorously watch

their child's performance and behavior (Burcu 2009). Schools ought to apply plans to inspire parent and child discourse in primary grade levels, and make intensive strengths to uphold these lines among parents and children during the child's schooling livelihood. If essential, in times of difficulty, one could even reason that resources dedicated to creating or preserving parent-school relationships should be entertained into databases to adoptive and encourage parent-child interactions. This is a way in which upcoming investigation, program designers, and teachers should devote energy and time if parent participation is truthfully to help recover the outlooks, performance, and behavior of children.

### **Socio-economic status affects home literacy environment**

The extensive home environment facts are often related to socioeconomic status (SES), which is usually dignified by occupation, education and income. It is proven that the average reading performance of children from working class families is below that of children from middle class homes. (Kirby & Hogan, 2008). In one study by Kirby and Hogan (2008) socio-economic status was estimated from the highest level of education achieved by the mother and father of 49 children participating in this study. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the aspects of the family literacy environment and socio-economic status to a child's early reading development. Among other findings, Kirby and Hogan found, with this purpose in mind, the homes of good and poor readers differed in many characteristics, including several aspects of numbers of books in the home, home literacy, and mother's education. Weigel and Martein (2010) stated when parents value literacy they will read books to their children. When literacy and language activities are used in a home regularly and when children have supportive parents and guardians then children's literacy abilities are greater as are their motivations to read. Before and after entering school, deprived children may have limited access to materials and home

learning opportunities. Their caregivers may face numerous challenges in addition to economic disadvantage such as low levels of education. Single-parent households, depression within the family and having multiple jobs where they are not always able to assist their children with their learning are examples of challenges many families face (DeBruin-Parecki & Squibb, 2011). Children who live in low socio-economic home environments also do not experience a rich literacy environment with books, trips to the library, a parent reading to them every night, or perhaps a parent teaching them their letters of the alphabet or counting to ten. Children with these disadvantages are likely to have more problems learning how to read than children who come from average or wealthy households (Cunningham, 2009).

Household SES is positively connected with attending integrative and normal schools, and destructively connected with attending special schools. Parents and guardians from an upper class family are more vigorously involved in supporting the growth of their children, which adds to their higher school accomplishments (Zhang et al., 2011). School success plays an essential role in the structure of educational morals so they particularly support children in learning. Parents and guardians with low SES have been discovered to be more compliant and obedient, to have lower social goals. Studies have also revealed that socioeconomic status has an unswerving influence on a child's intellectual functioning. Particularly, linguistic is one of the rational domains most affected, as there is a strong and constructive correlation between family income, status of the family and reading and oral ability. The reason of insignificant performance in low socioeconomic homes is generally associated with disapproving environments (Katarzyna et al., 2012). An analysis containing over 22,000 students across the U.S. was done to determine the connection among perceptive capability and ecological issues. Throughout documents and evidence gathered from school personal and a broad skills achievement test, it was found that for

students who fell on the higher end of the socioeconomic scale, their scores were higher by over three points. This study also showed that minority students score was reduced by nearly six points verse non-minority students (Stull, 2013). Stull explains, that even though we do not have a say in how families raise their children and what their socio-economic status is that we can still learn how family socioeconomic status affects academic achievement (pg. 64).

Children who are raised in deprived areas, who struggle with English, have disabilities, and speech impairments are at risk of being unqualified for their schools curriculum and might fall behind quickly (Stull, 2013). American children have the highest rate of poverty in the world, which leads to lower educational chances and more health problems. Educational learning gaps are crafted to be more difficult to overcome; this leads to a high drop out rate. Disturbingly, students who come from a lower socio-economic background have a higher drop out rate. With that said 60-70% of students in poorer districts are failing to graduate (American Psychological Association, n.d.). Students remove themselves from school as a consequence to if they feel like they are in a safe learning environment in school due to their socioeconomic status. A lot of students are scared of any type of harassment and frequently will have a low attendance rate because of this. Students also create aversive associations with students and teachers because often no one interferes in these rough circumstances of harassment or discrimination.

### **Ethnicity**

Some concerns are that students who have difficulties with phonological awareness and English oral language and skills were found to be children who come from Spanish speaking households (Farver, Lonigan, & Eppe, 2013) This study looked at children's literacy skills in both English and Spanish to investigate the pattern among these skills and their families' home

language and literacy practices. There were no significant cross-linguistic relations between any aspect of the English home literacy environment and children's Spanish pre-literacy skills. Given the importance of oral language and vocabulary in promoting children's literacy, these results indicate that parents can support this skill in both languages, but their relative impact seems to be within rather across language.

Even in other countries such as Turkey in the districts of Palandöken and Yakutiye studies are taking place on family involvement in education, considering the different rationales, problems and solutions for these participants (Kocyigit, Sinan, 2015). The questions were based on family educational activities, family communication activities, family involvement in-class and out-of- class activities, home visits, and the involvement of families during the administrative and decision-making processes. Outcomes for parents stated that nine parents said they attended personal meetings. Six parents stated that they also attended educational meetings and three parents stated they also attended conferences. One parent even stated "We have many responsibilities in our families. We can't always establish communication with the school. The way we choose to communicate is what's best for our family" (Kocyigit, p.145).

Educational breaks are mainly due to imbalanced chances to learn, ethnic labels, cultural conflict between the environments at school verse at home, and incomplete contact to applicable resources. Often cultural and ethnic labels interfere with equivalent opportunities. For instance, minority students, often from poorer families, are deliberated as "low ability" and appointed to remedial classes, while European students, most often from a richer family, are considered "gifted and talented" and are offered to take high education class such as an accelerated program (Bryman, 2006). Schools districts in lower income areas are less likely to offer things like after school tutoring, libraries within the school, efficient teachers who can mentor and have small

class sizes which allow more one-on-one with the student and teacher. Bryman noted that this is probably why European backgrounds score much higher than students of other backgrounds such as Native American and Latino.

One of the prominent theories concerning African American academic achievement comes from the work by Ogbu and Simmons (1998). The authors state that academic performance is the direct result of African American students' internalization of perceived societal expectations. Ogbu and Simmons theorize that in order to preserve their identification to the Black community, African American students must remove themselves from any domain that is traditionally considered White. According to the authors, academic success is a domain typically associated with Whites, thereby forcing African Americans to choose between academic success and their Black identity. The authors posit that African American students choose to maintain their Black identity at the cost of academic success. Some studies suggest that even when monitoring for other variables like race and poverty, high schools with higher White student percentages have students who have greater aspirations to go to college (Yun & Kurlaender, 2004). Other studies examining populations across academic grades support this result through findings stating that schools with larger populations of ethnic students demonstrate lower levels of achievement (Horn, 2007; Herman, 2009; Lee, 2007; Taylor & Harris, 2003). Furthermore, for African American students, there is evidence to suggest that having a larger percentage of ethnic or African American peers in the classroom negatively affects their academic performance (Harris 2003). In terms of White student achievement, most of the studies found indicated little to no effect of ethnic composition or peer group influence on academic achievement (Harris 2003).

The main student conclusion challenging people fascinated in Indian instruction is the low-test scores they receive. Many Native American children have different beliefs and expectations within their home. These differ from teacher and school authorities expectations. Many Native American families will teach their children to be respectful and have a positive attitude. Things such as poverty, urban industrial society is not really talked about. They often do not really talk about language differences, all of these different expectations lead to having a low performing rate and lower test grades (Harris 2003, p. 299). Involvement in organizations as well as connections with school personal outside of the classroom can really help students feel better about their school and more connected.

These relationships are very significant in keeping a student's achievement from being negatively affected by feelings of inaccessibility. Reassuring Native American students to look for groups they would feel comfortable joining. This would allow them to build a support group who they can share feelings, fears, and frustrations with (Harris 2003). Indian students are a seldom studied but deserve to get more of our attention if their communities advance. Cultivating the stages of education of present generations of Indian students is the only way to guarantee that upcoming generations have a chance of evolving from poverty, insignificant health problems and banishment. This accountability falls not only on Native American supervisors and teachers but on the overall population as well.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Children's writing and alphabetic skills were examined on children who were at risk of academic failure because they came from poor families, spoke a language other than English at home, or had an identified disability. While children who had an IEP had, on average, slightly

lower levels of achievement than their peers; the pattern of associations among variables was similar for all children. Specific studies examined home literacy environments; children's interest in reading and emergent literacy skills of school-aged children with Down syndrome. School-aged children with DS and typical children were exposed to more literacy-rich home environments and had greater interest in reading. School-aged children with Down syndrome also outperformed the typical group on letter and sight word knowledge and familiarity with print conventions.

In the empirical study “Parents’ involvement in inclusive education...” Horvat (2003) argues why a parent’s involvement pattern is an inspiring issue for psycho-educational growth of students with disabilities and special needs and clearly linked with student's social, emotional and academic success in school. It was clearly observed that students with special needs documented that their crucial parents are involved to promote a positive academic outcome. Horvat (2003) also said that data and research children of parents with a great interest in education would do much better than children of parents who are not involved academically. Involving parents of students with special education needs in their child’s learning is a positive strategy that needs to be used to advance that child’s academic achievement. It has been a recent upholds of policy makers to enforce that school personal should make great efforts to really increase parental involvement.

The empirical study “Parent and guardian involvement and their child’s academic performance: Various mediational examination” argues that Parent and guardian participation positively associates with a child’s school performance. The findings showed a statistically meaningful connotation among parent/guardian involvement and a child's academic success, in addition to the effect of the child's intelligence. A multiple intervention model specified that the

child's insight of mental capability fully facilitated the relation among parent and guardian participation and the child's functioning on a homogenous achievement test. The superiority of the student-teacher connection fully resolved the relation among parent and guardian participation and educators scores of the child's classroom educational performance (Topor 2010).

In special education these authorities are moderately detailed. If parents come from a higher socio-economic status than they will be able to afford specific needs for their child such as expensive rehabilitation, and hire advocates for their child to make sure they are meeting his or her specific needs. Inclusive classrooms are starting to become very popular. This is because many people believe that even if a child has a disability, that child should still attend the school that is closest to their home (Norwich 2008). Many researchers are influenced that such a clarification is more superior than inclusion classrooms, as it allows parents and guardians to choose arrangements of education, which meet the specific, needs and wants of their children and guarantee full educational assistances. Topor says,

“The instrument of parental and guardian guidance on school successes of students with disabilities is examined poorly. Noticeable applicants for variables connected with children’s school success contain parents’ socioeconomic rank, their education level, family income, as well as their involvement and certain mental appearances.”(Pg.1615)

Four factors from this study that effect the success of disabled students: Family members knowing the diagnosis and accepting it, family involvement in school performance, specific discipline strategies of parents in the home, and the child’s position in the household. These outcomes may show socio-economic status, level of education and being able to specific

problems and really be involved in their child's life to help with the learning process of intellectual disabilities. (Norwich 2008). About one-third of all children recognized as having a disability come from low-income households that do not have confirmation of a specific disability, but just score low in classroom achievement tests.

### **Common Core State Standards**

The CCSS anchor the document and define general, cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for students. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards, retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades, and work steadily toward meeting the more general expectations described by the CCSS standards. By emphasizing required achievements, the Standards leave room for teachers, curriculum developers, and states to determine how those goals should be reached and what additional topics should be addressed. The Standards do not mandate such things as a particular writing process or the full range of metacognitive strategies that students may need to monitor and direct their thinking and learning. Educators are free to provide children with whatever tools and knowledge their professional judgment and experience identify as most helpful for meeting the goals set out in the Standards. Because of the CCSS students are faced with more challenging work. For example, students in first grade need to be able to read at a first grade level and comprehend what they are reading. Students are asked to pull text evidence from a book that was read independently or in a group setting and either write specific details about what was just read, create a graphic organizer focusing on setting, characters and events or write about the main idea of the story. All of these tasks depend on each student's literacy skills. If a student cannot read from left to right fluently, know their letter sounds, or sound out words then these students will struggle within a classroom.

There are only partial explorations signifying that applying common standards will be an applicable improvement instrument. Certainly, there are plentiful and recognized pictures of the alterations among state standards and countless differences between state ability levels (Bandeira 2009). Between these documents, the inquiry hardly concentrated is whether there is any verification signifying that the present assorted group of standards or their blend into a sole set assistance, problems, or has no outcome on learning. The answer to this is not easy but is very significant. This plan also suggests a congregation of new restructurings to be applied concurrently. Additionally, social along with economic change, such as the decline and capital rescissions, blend through the nation and through states too, and it becomes a lot more challenging to separate the results of altering standards. (Bandeira 2009)

### **Conclusion**

The questions of “what home literacy practices do parents engage in with their children and how do these practices lead to academic achievement?” has been answered. Parent-Child Reading Interaction was a small yet significant predictor of children's receptive vocabulary, story and print concepts, and general literacy skills. All studies agreed that children from high-risk backgrounds showed poorer literacy outcomes than low-risk students, through three family factors, school socioeconomic status, parents’ phonological awareness, and family history. Many children fail to acquire literacy skills despite adequate intelligence and opportunity.

The more parents and guardians are involved in their child’s academic life the more successful they will be. Even though parents do have the opportunity to impact their child’s academic achievement through their own guidance and encouragement it is still not traditionally believed that they do so. Studies discovered ordinary relations between numerous parent

participation variables and student academic accomplishments, with very reliable associations being described for parents and guardians asking their children about school, holding high hopes for classroom grades and scores, and parents having a very strong, consistent parenting style. Citing the incapability of correlational studies to regulate causality, these researchers predict that the influence of parent involvement on academic achievement is fairly uncertain.

## **Methodology**

The following mixed methods study examined the effectiveness of specific home literacy skills to academic achievement on the participation of my approaching, on level, and beyond students in a classroom setting. This particular study investigated the literacy proficiency of all students within the classroom with various ethnic backgrounds, depending on there at home literacy skills and strategies, if any. This study was conducted in a Western New York State public school district. As a current teacher in this school district, I chose to investigate this school, due to my awareness of various students within the approaching, on level and beyond reading levels within my classroom. Data collection was accomplished through use of surveys administered to the students' parents/guardians and focus groups. This data was then analyzed and documented accordingly. Implications of these findings will be included at the end of this investigation.

## **Design**

This study took place over the course of eight weeks in an urban community within Cattaraugus County. The survey portion of the study is quantitative while the focus group portion is more qualitative in nature, so I will be using a mixed method design for this study. Mixed methods research is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analyzing and integrating quantitative and qualitative research, using surveys and focus groups. Specifically, this study will follow an explanatory design. I explained what is going on throughout this research so that readers can connect ideas to understand cause and effect. A quantitative method (survey) was administered first to parents/guardians, followed by a qualitative method (focus group).

**Setting**

This school district is located in a charming, picturesque village protected by wooded hills with the Cattaraugus Creek running through the center of the business district. It consists of 2,000 acres of wilderness, hiking trails and waterfalls. It is a small, transient community in Western New York, and also includes the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation.

**Community.** The area is a market region for approximately 20,000 people. Right in the village the population is about 2,709 and growing. The Iroquois traveled to the area and lived along Cattaraugus Creek. Other tribes lived in the area around this time, with the Erie people, being defeated, driven out, and/or assimilated within the Iroquois Confederacy and the Seneca people arriving later. The racial makeup of the village was 62.47% White, 0.49% African American, 41.54% Native American, 0.35% Asian, 0.21% from other races, and 1.20% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 1.41% of the population. There were 1,161 households out of which 27.4% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 40.1% were married couples living together, 12.5% had a female householder with no husband present, and 42.5% were non-families. Thirty six percent of all households were made up of individuals and 17.7% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.26 and the average family size was 2.98. The median income for a household in the village was \$29,565, and the median income for a family was \$39,094. Males had a median income of \$32,279 versus \$25,281 for females. The per capita income for the village was \$16,323. About 9.5% of families and 14.4% of the population were below the poverty line, including 20.2% of those under age 18 and 9.5% of those ages 65 or over.

**School setting.** There are 1,207 students within this school district. This consist of their elementary school grades Pre-K through 4th, and a combined middle and high school. Specifically, in the elementary there are about 4 to 5 classrooms per grade, each having anywhere from 17-25 students in a room. The average graduation rate for this school district is 72%. Students' who receive free or reduced lunch are 41.7%. The average teacher salary is about \$65,000. Our school district has a literacy intervention team. Normally, one specialist would pull my tier 3 students for a half hour each day, another specialist will pull my tier 2 students for that time as well. This year during the 2016-2017 school year we implemented something new. Only my tier 2 students get pulled and I am left with my tier 1, highest students and tier 3, lowest students during that time. During out centers rotation I ask for volunteers. Parents have the chance to come help out in the classroom during our reading and writing time. One center may be a parent close reading with a small group of students or working on a worksheet with blending words/ rhyming words. Another program offered through this district is something called the "PAW Program." This is a calendar that gets sent home at the beginning of each month. We give this to our students and parents as a reading incentive. Each night students are to read 20 minutes a night with a parent or guardian. The parent/guardian will then initial that box for that night. Once the entire calendar is filled in the students will earn "paw rewards" that they can spend in the gift shop. This program is set up by the PTA and is optional.

### **Participants**

Participants of this study include 9 out of my 18 students in my first grade classroom. This will consist of 3 males and 4 females in total and the parents/guardians of these children. Two students are Native American, one is African American and the rest are Caucasian. Of these participants 2 of them receive free or reduced lunch and receive a bag of food every Thursday to

take home with them for the weekend through our helping hands program at our district. The participants within the classroom ranged in ages between 6 and 7 years old and they were selected because I wanted to study students from my approaching reading level (lowest), on level reading for the grade level, and beyond reading level (highest). These reading levels are based on the student's benchmark scores. I believed these students would benefit from literacy strategies at home as well as in school, especially during our literature centers when I get to work more one-on-one with these students.

### **Data collection**

Students took a benchmark exam, which are short assessments that are administered throughout the school year that give teachers immediate feedback on how students are meeting academic standards. This test measures the student's growth and design curriculum to meet individual learning needs. As previously stated, this research will follow an explanatory mixed-methods approach. Instruments used to conduct this study include both a survey for parents/guardians and a focus group consisting of 9 students. These instruments are used to measure the ethnic identity of participants, at home literacy practices, such as reading and writing outside of the classroom.

**Survey.** One of the instruments used in this study is a survey. A survey is a means of asking questions to collect data from a sample that represents a specific population (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). The results of a survey provided information about some aspect of the target population. The survey I am using was adapted from survey monkey. This survey was previously used at a different school district and I found the questions to be appropriate for what this study is intending to do. After reading the results of this study, I found it to be very effective

with determining home literacy practices at home. I changed some of the questions by simplifying them and making them work for my participants. It has 13 questions, made up of multiple choice questions, Likert scale questions and dichotomous questions.

**Focus Group.** A focus group is a type interview that verbally asks a series of questions to small group of people (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Interviews allow a researcher to determine how a participant feels or thinks about something. This focus group allowed the researcher to uncover factors of ethnic identity that cannot be measured through the survey. By conducting an interview in a focus group format, the participants are able to hear one another's answers to the researcher's questions. Given the setting of this particular research, participating in a focus group among peers will potentially allow the participants to feel more comfortable in responding to the researcher's questions.

This particular focus group interview consisted of 8 questions. The questions are developed based on a review of literature about ethnic identity, connection between language and linguistics and overall literacy practiced at home and within our classroom. These questions were semi-structured and open-ended. By doing this, the participants have more freedom and ability to describe in great details their personal opinions. Furthermore, this allowed the researcher to modify or ask more questions based on the direction of the focus group. Focus group conversations were recorded and then transcribed to ensure validity. Within the focus group I focused on three main topics, reading habits, personal thoughts of reading and things that we can change.

**Procedure**

This study involved research with 9 out of 18 students and 5 parents/guardians, all having various ethnic backgrounds within a Western New York State school district. The research has both qualitative and quantitative tendencies. Quantitative aspects can be found in the survey while the focus group questions allow for a more qualitative approach to research.

For the focus group I began with setting ground rules with my students. I let everyone know that there are no right or wrong answers, your answers can differ from your other classmates, one person can talk at a time, everything is confidential. I started by asking general questions to begin with to get the students thinking. I then got into more specific questions that focus on literacy, reading and writing. I asked questions that were not planned that were needed.

**Obtaining consent.** Before research can be conducted, permission must be acquired. Per the regulations of the school of investigation, administrative consent must first be obtained from the school principal. Once approval is obtained, the researcher must present her intended study to the research institution of the college for which this study is being conducted. When the researcher receives this permission, she is then at liberty to enter the school and conduct research. As the majority of participants will be under the age of 18, both student and parental consent will be required for this research. Upon administration of the student consent forms; students who mark yes on their willingness to participate in the study (through the survey and/or focus group) will be given two parental consent forms. One copy of the form will be kept by the parent/guardian and other will be turned in with a parent/guardian signature. All consent forms (both signed and unsigned) will be collected.

**Administration of surveys.** Once all consent forms were collected, students took home a survey for their parents/guardians to fill out. Through correspondence with the school administration, a secured date, time, and location was determined for the completion of the survey. All surveys will be collected and kept confidential.

**Administration of focus groups.** I had a total of three focus groups. My first group was my approaching reading level students within the classroom. My second group was my on level reading students and the third group was students who are beyond the 1st grade reading level. I started the focus groups at 10:40 am and circulated each group during our centers time. I conducted the focus group one group at a time. Each group had 20 minutes, so it took 1 hour in total for all three groups. The first two groups include two students while my last group had three participants. The same questions were asked during each session. As previously stated, the focus groups were recorded in a secure location.

### **Data Analysis**

The 13 questions asked in the survey allowed me to know if students are reading and writing at home. I am now able to know exactly who works with their children outside of school and for how long. I learned what strategies they are using, if any. It informed me of their home situation such as their spoken language, education level and number of people in the household. The survey was sent home to parents and guardians and consisted of 9 multiple-choice questions (check all that apply). Two Dichotomous Questions, which consist of two questions only, and 2 likert scaling questions.

With regard to the focus group, data is being analyzed through the use of coding. Codes give meaning to data (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). During the transcription process of the

focus group, the researcher will determine overall themes (codes) found in the interview. All aspects of the interview fall under a specific theme. These themes give meaning to participant responses and their views of ethnic identity.

### **Validity Consideration**

The combination of research based focus group questions with this survey resulted in valid research results. Every participant was administered the same survey and asked the same focus group questions. I also asked additional questions that come to mind at the time.

It was a potential issue that not many students will participate in this study. Whether it is from student disinterest, failure to hand in consent forms on time, or lack of parental permission, there is a risk of a low number of participants, which ended up consisting of 5 out of my 18 students participating.

My role as a teacher is very important when it comes to the validity of the results within this study. There are many things that can influence the validity that I will need to control so that I can ensure that nothing will affect it. I made sure that the length of the focus groups was only 20 minutes each. Each group had the same amount of time so that speed is not an issue. Within those 20 minutes, the group that was with me in the focus group was the only ones in the room. I made sure the noise level was kept low and I explained everything beforehand so that there was no confusion or distractions. The focus group questions were not above their comprehension level. I wanted to make sure that they were appropriate questions that they can understand. I also made sure that the students were in heterogeneous groups to so that the validity is more reliable. Another thing I focused on was having the focus group on a day in the middle of the week because I have noticed within my classroom students are more likely to be absent on Mondays or

Fridays. I had several reminders for the students of our focus group because I do not want anyone being absent the day of.

## Results

The purpose of this study was to collect data on students who learned literacy skills at home prior to and while attending school in their home. The data was collected in a First grade general education classroom in Cattaraugus County. In addition, the purpose of this study was to see if family involvement affects student's academic achievement. This study was guided by the following questions: What home literacy practices do parents engage in with their first grade children? How do these practices lead to academic achievement? How do parent's and student's perception of ethnic and SES background affect parental involvement in home literacy practices?

### Literacy Practices at Home

In total, eighteen students were asked to participate in my focus groups. Out of my eighteen students in my classroom, nine students participated in this study. I split my focus groups up into three sections. My first focus group included two students who were in my "beyond" reading level for first grade, these students are the most advanced in the class. My second focus group included three students who are in the "on level" reading group. The third focus group that I held consisted of four students who are in my "approaching" reading group, who are my lowest students in my classroom. Below is a table explaining how I labeled each students that participated in my focus groups (See Table 1).

First my students were asked about their reading habits. I wanted to know who read at home such as books, magazines, and newspapers and on the Internet. My four low students (student 1,2,3, and 4) all stated that they did not read at home, from my three on-level students (student 5, 6, 7) one said that they read at home, the other students said only a few times a week

and the last student said they sometimes read when they are at home. Both of my “beyond” students (students 8 and 9) said that they read every night.

Table 1

*Students’ Academic Achievement Levels*

| Students               | Academic level   |
|------------------------|--|
| Student 1, 2, 3, and 4 | “Approaching students”<br>(Low reading levels, below the 15 <sup>th</sup><br>percentile for first grade achievement. |
| Student 5, 6, and 7    | “On level students”  |
| Student 8 and 9        | “Beyond students”<br>Reading at a second grade level   |

I then wanted to ask students what they are currently reading or what the last book they have read was. Student 1 said that the last book he read was *Jurassic Park* and that it was a long time ago. Student 2 said that he doesn’t remember but it had to share it with his sister. Student 3 said they cannot afford books and student 4 stated that she reads only the reading packets that I send home for homework because they do not have any other book in their home.

All three of these students are my lowest in my classroom and seem to not be exposed to literacy practices outside of school. Students 5, 6, and 7 all had similar responses saying that they read their favorite books, things that interest them such as, Mind craft and comics. Students 8 and 9 said that they read a new book every day and are able to rent them from the library. They even stated that they read on their parent’s tablets and I-pads along with comic books, magazine, and books. Student 9 continued to say “I read the newspaper with my mom on the weekends.” I then ended my questions about reading habits with “Are you ever encouraged to read at home?”

Students 1, 2 and 3 said they are sometimes encouraged to read, and student 4 said that his parents forget to remind him to read. Students 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 all said yes. Students 1, 2 and 3 said that reading is not cool while students 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, said it is cool to read.

After analyzing this data I was able to answer the questions of, what home literacy practices do parents engage in with their first grade children. My data showed that students who are at a lower reading and writing level are not practicing in any literacy activities or strategies outside the classroom, they are not reading at home, most of them cannot even recall the last book that they have read and are typically not encouraged to read in general. One student even stated that they do not have books at home and that the books they do have are old and she has to share with her older sister.

### **Academic Achievement**

I wanted to find out if students home literacy skills affects their academic achievement. To understand a little more about how students feel about reading I came up with five questions to ask my students to figuring out their reasoning of their high, on level or low reading levels within the classroom. I started off by saying; on a scale of 1-10 how much do you like to read? Now this question doesn't entail that the student is actually reading it just shows their interest in wanting to read. Student 1, 2, 3 and 4 all said between a 9 and a 10. I thought this was interesting seeing that these were the three students who have the lowest reading score, do not read on a daily basis at home and may not even own a book of their own. As a teacher I was very ecstatic that even though these specific students really struggle with reading and do not get to engage in it as much outside of school that they are still motivated to want to read and have not shut down. Their lack of reading skills could stem from other variables as well, things that are out of their

control such as their home environment, socio economic status and even their parents educational level which I will talk more about later when we get to the parents surveys.

Students 5, 6 and 7 had rated reading as one of their interest on a scale of 1-10 a five and a six. These numbers didn't surprise me as much because these students are able to read all of the first grade decodable books that they are given during our centers time. They sometimes get tired of reading because they say they "read at home then come to school and read". Their reading levels reflect this very much. These students are at home practicing their letter sounds, word blends and phonics outside of school with their parents or guardians and then when they are in school they are able to read at a normal first grade level. These students may not be able to read fluently all the time but when they struggle they use the basic literacy strategies to help themselves such as finger spelling and sounding out. These students within the classroom also point out things in the book when they are reading. They will say things such as "Hey in the word bent the 'nt' is an end blend" or "the word edge has the consonant cluster 'dge' in it." They are able to use these strategies they learned in the classroom, practice them at home and then apply them when reading.

Students 8 and 9 rated reading on the scale and nine and a ten. I again was not surprised with these scores. These two students are at a second grade reading level in first grade. They really enjoy reading and even want to help others. When I ask them what they do for fun on the weekends they say "Mom took me to the library to get a ton of books." The other student said that she read a book to her dad every night before bed. Reading is strongly enforced in these households. These students are expected to read when they are at home and clearly have enough practice. They said that they love reading and watch their siblings, parents and grandparents read. Because of the literacy skills being taught at home as well as in school these students are

able to read independently during out centers times. They are interested in various genres of books because of their exposure to the library and being read to as a child, and even reading to their parents.

I then wanted to dig a little bit deeper to understand why and how literacy practices are negatively and positively affecting their success in the classroom. I decided to ask the students if they thought reading was difficult for them and why? Student 1 stated that “Yes reading is difficult, there are too many long words on the paper” Student 2 stated that “Yes, I can’t read hard words” and student 3 said “ Yes, sometimes what the words sound like aren’t what they really mean” and students 4 replied with just a “yes.” I noticed that “yes” was a pattern for these students who all happen to be very low readers that really struggle with basic but necessary reading skills. Student 5 replied no but student 6 replied, “Only if there are big words that I do not know.” This statement is very true because even though they are capable of reading, even my on level students will struggle from time to time with words that they are not familiar with. They normally can figure out these hard words but with a little practice and patience of sounding out and finger spelling them on their own. Student 7 replied that words are only difficulty to read if they are too small to see. Students 8 and 9 replied that reading is not difficult to them. I also asked all of the students if they though reading are important to them. Students 1 and 2 replied “yes and no.” That reading is sometimes important to them. Students 3, 4, 6, 6, 7, 8, and 9 said that “yes” reading is important to them.

I also asked my focus group “if we were to have a reading party, what would you want it to be like?” student 1 said that he would want it to be all about marines, dinosaurs or planets, anything that they are interested in, they would also tell their friends that there would be food at the party as well. Student 2 was very similar and said things that she likes such as cats, magic

and things about pets and that they would try to bring pets to the party as well for students to pet and learn about. Student 3 was very interesting and said that they would tell each student that they could bring any book that interested them and invite everyone in their class so that everyone had a chance to come to the reading party. Student 4 said that they would tell their peers that they would be able to read in pairs or with a partner. They also said they would make the reading party mandatory but allow them to bring books of their interest. Student 5 and 6 said that everybody would read their favorite books, “comic books” or “super hero books” and they would be able to eat good food while they read. Students 7, 8, and 9 said that they would make it fun for everybody else and read books that they enjoyed. They would also make it mandatory that these students bring a book to read. They also said that they would bring a book to read to the students to grab their interest.

Another question I asked them to understand their academic achievement was to allow them to be the teacher, I asked them how they would encourage their students to read in their classrooms. Student 1 said that they would tell their students that if they didn’t read they would be in trouble but if they did read they would get a reward. This answer reflects on actual things that were said to the student in his home. He said that he is not encouraged to read at home but when he does he gets a treat, or rewarded. Student 2 had a great idea and said that before they read she would ask her students what they like to read and get books that they enjoy. This student is one of my lowest students but I have noticed within the classroom that when I allow her to choose her own book such as *Cat in the Hat*, she doesn’t struggle as much when reading it. Student 3 said, she would ask them nicely to read, and tell them that it is good for them. I found it very interesting that all of my lowest students knew this much about reading such as “read books of your interest, get rewarded after reading, and it’s good for you” yet they are less likely

to read within the classroom or when they are at home. Student 4 said that he would force his students to read. This answer could reflect on how his parents act when he needs to read.

Typically if a child is forced to read then they are less likely to want to read. This student will always think that reading is a punishment and not allow himself to enjoy it or do it for pleasure if it's a chore. Student 5 stated that he would provide books for the students, he said that not everybody has books so he wanted to make sure everyone would get one and was able to read with the rest of the classmates. Student 6 said that she would go to the store or library and get a bunch of different books and bring them to class so that they would have options on what they read. Student 7 said that he would read to the class. He said sometimes people don't like to read but they liked to be read to. When I asked him how he liked being read to he said that he is able to understand the story better and can imagine in his head what is happening. Student 8 went a little further with her answer and said that she would have a discussion with her students and inform them that they can learn new things by reading and have them come up with ways to make reading fun. I was not surprised with this answer due to the fact that this is the highest reader in my class. She explained that on the weekends she goes to the library with her family and that she always sees her siblings, mother and father reading in the house. She also said that when she gets to see them reading that she wants to read. I found it fascinating that she said she still remembers her grandparents and parents reading to her when she was younger and she started reading at age three. She said, "Reading is fun, I was never forced to read I've always wanted to." I learn something new every time I read a book." My last student, student 9 said that he would reward the students in the room with treats and skip over the students who were not reading. He said that before he allowed the class to read he would start by showing the class his favorite books and then ask them what types of books they enjoy.

### Ethnic and SOS Background

For the second part of this study I focused on the parents and guardians of my students. Out of eighteen parents and guardians that were asked to participate in this survey, 7 signed consent forms willing to participate. I sent home a letter telling the parents and guardians the purpose of this study, how the data would remain confidential and that the participation in this survey is completely voluntary. After sending home the actual surveys I only received 5 out of the 7 back. These surveys consisted of 7 questions, all having to do with their literacy practices at home with their children. I also included questions that asked their age, gender, date of birth, ethnicity, and education level to learn more about the person taking this survey.

Table 2

#### *Demographics of survey participants*

|                            | Age | Gender | DOB        | Ethnicity       | Education           |
|----------------------------|-----|--------|------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Parent 1<br>(High student) | 39  | Female | 03/18/1977 | Hispanic        | High school diploma |
| Parent 2<br>(High student) | 40  | Female | N/A        | White           | Bachelor's Degree   |
| Parent 3<br>(On level)     | 35  | Female | 11/25/1981 | White           | Bachelor's Degree   |
| Parent 4<br>(On level)     | 45  | Male   | 07/20/1971 | White           | High school diploma |
| Parent 5<br>(Low student)  | 37  | Female | N/A        | Native American | GED                 |

All of these participants were in the same age range from 35-45 years old, all having different ethnic backgrounds and educational levels. Almost all of these participants were females besides one and none of these participants had an educational level higher than a bachelor's degree. They did however all graduate from high school or went back to get their GED. The charts below will show the patterns in the participants answers based off of the seven questions I asked them about literacy in their home.

Below, Figure A shows in a typical week, how often someone (outside of school) read with their child for 15 minutes or more. This bar graph shows that out of the 5 parents who participated, 2 parents or guardians rarely read to their child for 15 minutes or more each day. One parent sometimes reads for 15 minutes or more to their child or has someone else do it. Another parent said some day's themselves or someone else in the household reads to their child. The final parent said their child is read to everyday.

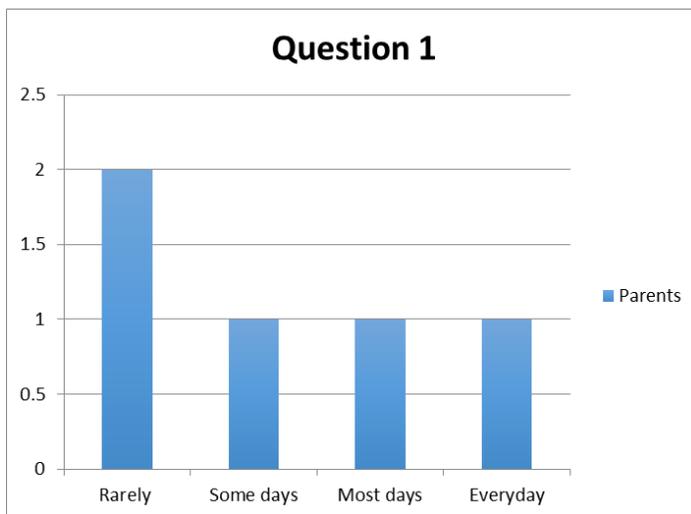


Figure A. Amount of time read to the student at home

Below, Figure B asked parents and guardians, “who reads with your children (outside of school) on a regular basis for 15 minutes or more?” This question allows me to understand who reads to their child. Everyone said that the mother or father in the house reads to their child. Two participants said that the child’s grandmother reads to them for 15 minutes or more each week. One parent said their grandfather, siblings, and someone unrelated in the household reads to the child for 15 minutes or more each week.

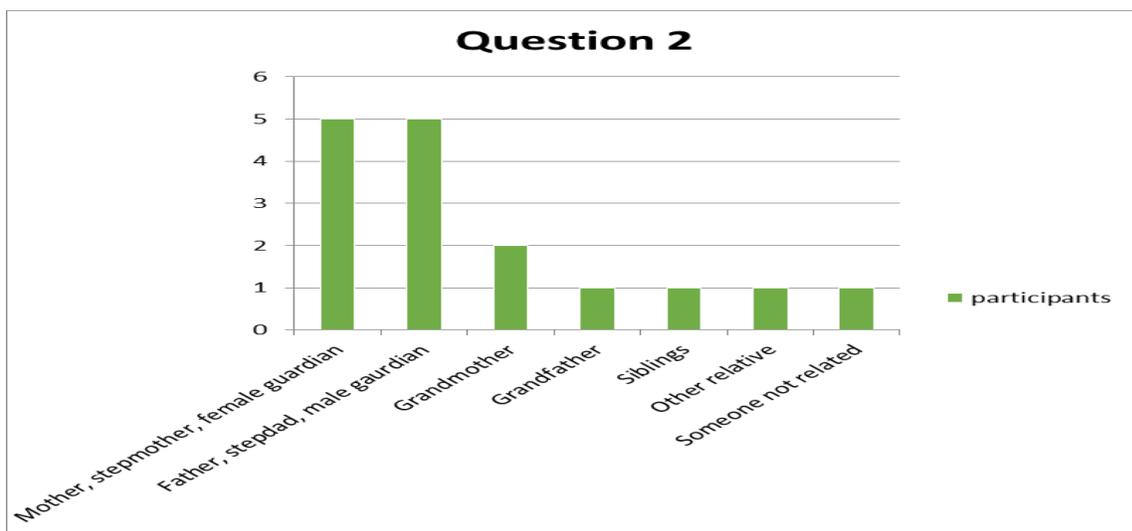


Figure B. Caregivers who read with children

Figure C, was asked using a Likert scale with the terms, frequently, sometimes, rarely, and never. When I asked the participants who ask their children comprehension questions about books they’ve read three parents said frequently, one said sometimes and the last said rarely. Then I asked if they point out letters and words while reading, three parents said frequently, and the other two said sometimes. The third question asked if any of the participants point out pictures and ask children to point to them as well, three parents said frequently, two had said sometimes and the last one said rarely. When I asked participants how often they ask for help reading or filling in words, two had said frequently, and the last three said sometimes. Then I

asked if they about what happened in the story after they have read it, two parents said frequently, and the other three participants said sometimes. The last question I asked was participants was if they do an activity with their child based off of the material they read in the book. Three parents stated that they rarely do an activity and the other two participants said they never do a follow up activity.

Table 3

*Parent's literacy practices at home*

| P=Parent   | Ask Question about what is being read | Point out letters or words | Point to things in the pictures/ ask child to point | Ask child for help reading or filling in words | Talk about what happened in the story | Do an activity based on the book |
|------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Frequently | <b>P1, P2, P3,</b>                    | <b>P1, P2, P4</b>          | <b>P1, P2, P3</b>                                   | <b>P1, P2,</b>                                 | <b>P1, P2</b>                         |                                  |
| Sometimes  | <b>P4</b>                             | <b>P3, P5</b>              | <b>P3, P4,</b>                                      | <b>P3, P4, P5</b>                              | <b>P3, P4, P5</b>                     |                                  |
| Rarely     | <b>P5</b>                             |                            | <b>P5</b>   |  |                                       | <b>P2, P3, P4</b>                |
| Never      |                                       |                            |   |  |                                       | <b>P1, P5</b>                    |

In Figure C, parents were asked to determine who does your children see reading for 15 minutes or more a day for work, school, pleasure, or other reasons. It was determined that in 3 households a mother or step mother reads for enjoyment. In 1 house a father reads for pleasure. In 3 of the households grandma reads around the house and in 2 of the households siblings enjoy reading.

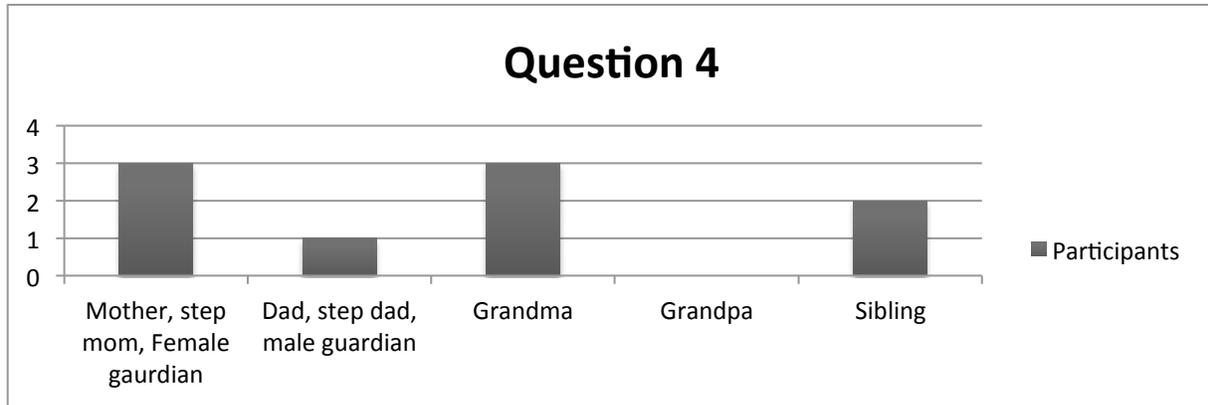


Figure C Caregivers who read at home

In Figure D, parents are asked how many children’s books that your children enjoy are in your home. I was able to determine how many books each household has. One parent said that they only own 1-15 books. Two parents said that they own 16-50 books and the other two parents stated that they own 50 or more books that their child enjoys.

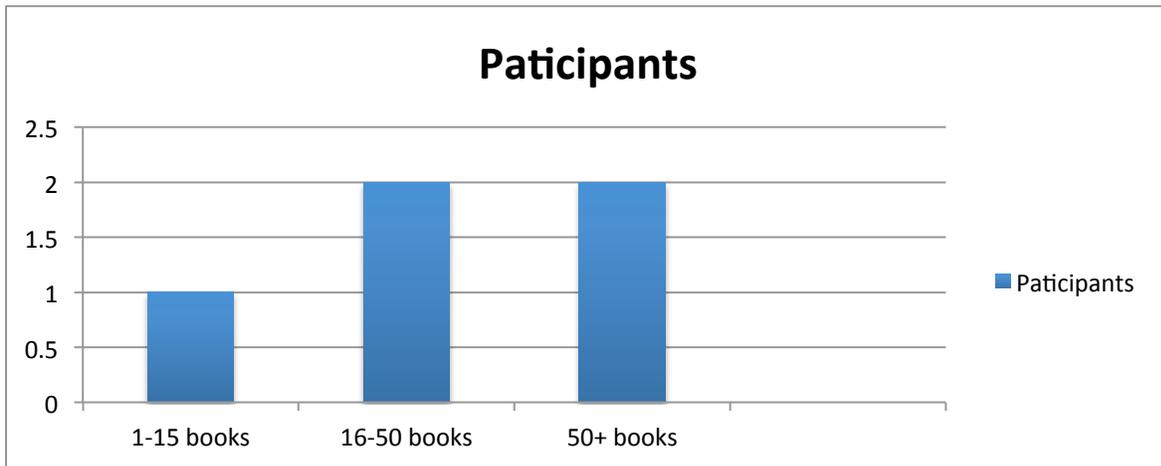


Figure D. Number of children’s books in each home

Figure F, asked parents, which of the following things do you or someone else (outside of school) do with your children. Parents were allowed to check more than one. It was determined that 3 parents will tell their child a story from their memory, talk about letters and words, and

watch educational TV shows. Two parents sing songs and poems and four parents talk to their child about their interest.



Figure F. Literacy strategies used at home

## Discussion

This study produced multiple results, which will be looked at to answer the three questions of this study. The purpose of this study was based on three research questions:

- a) What home literacy practices do parents engage in with their first grade children?
- b) How do these practices lead to academic achievement?
- c) How does parent's ethnic and SES background affect parental involvement in home literacy practices?

### **Question One: Home literacy Practices**

To answer this research question I held a focus group with students to determine if home literacy practices were being practiced with them in their home by their parents. The first five questions of the focus group were specifically designed to answer the first question of this study. This was an effective tool for this research study. The three focus groups held determined the overall reading habits of students at home with students with a high academic average compared to an on level average verses students who are way below grade level expectations.

Based on the results of the patterns found in the answers of the focus group, the "beyond" students were indeed practicing literacy at home as well as in school. These students were reading books, newspapers, and were allowed to go on the Internet to play games that related to reading words, sounding out letters and sounds. Other strategies that parents are using with these students include getting them a recorded book on a tape, asking comprehension questions after reading with their child and creating activities that go along with a book for further comprehension skills. These students also come from a home that encourages them to read.

Parents and guardians of these households often read themselves and visit the library as a weekend activity with their child. Students who are way below grade level in the first grade classroom and who are significantly struggling when reading are rarely or are not practicing literacy skills at all outside of school. These students are not being encouraged to read and said that reading is “boring” or “not cool.” These students only go to the library when it is a special at school and only pick up a book when they are in the reading corner in the classroom.

### **Question Two: Academic Achievement**

To answer this research question I created 10 questions that were discussed during the time of the focus groups. I was able to determine student’s personal feeling towards reading, which can affect their overall grade when it comes to academic achievement. After analyzing this data I realized that student’s feelings towards reading affects their attitudes and outlook on school as well. There were a lot of similar patterns I noticed that students who read at home and do things such as visit the library often seemed to be more excited about reading than students who do not read at home. Students at a lower reading level almost always said that they do not think reading is important. Students with on level reading scores and beyond all agreed that reading is important. All students agreed that reading can be difficult but students who are more exposed to reading at home came up with their own reading strategies to help make it a little easier for them, such as sound out big words, using illustrations to help them understand what is going on in the story and to look in a dictionary if there are any words they do not know. Students who were at a lower reading level were not able to brainstorm ideas of making reading fun or engaging. They also struggled with finishing the sentence frame “I would read more if....”

**Question Three: Ethnic and SES**

The results of the surveys allowed me to understand that with these specific participants, ethnic backgrounds did not play a role in their child's at home literacy practices. However my lowest students within my classroom do happen to be Native American and typically do not complete their homework, and are not as interested in reading during our centers time. The parents and guardians of the Native American background stated more often than others that they rarely practice any strategies with their child at home. This parent also said that they sometimes-never read to their child or ask their children questions about what is being read. Parents and guardians that come from a lower socio-economic family still encouraged their children to read but seemed to not own as many books. These parents were the ones that said they owned less than 15 books and no not engage in reading with the child. These parents said that they do not take their children to the library due to the fact that they have to work on the weekends. The children also mentioned that they do not own a computer or tablet to practice educations applications and games. I noticed from this pattern that these parents were also the ones who had only a high school diploma or a GED.

This study has been influenced by a variety of variables such as the students home environment, if they already had emergent literacy skills before coming to school, parental involvement, socio-economic status, ethnicity, along with student disabilities. In addition, after seeing all of the variables that could affect this outcome, this study also was designed to determine if parent's ethnic and SES background affect parental involvement in home literacy practices.

In conclusion, the results of this study have indicated that parents who are not practicing in literacy skills at home are allowing their children to be held at a lower standard than students who do receive these extra practices at home. Students who are reading books, magazine, on their tablets and I-pads are having a higher success rate in the classroom than the students who are not engaging in reading at home or outside of school.

### **Limitations**

One limitation to this study was that I only interviewed students in one first grade classroom out of the five in this district. It also only a certain amount of students in one out of three schools in Cattaraugus County, specifically first grade. To make this study stronger, I could have gathered data from the other first grade classrooms as well as other grade levels as well.

The second limitation is that I only focused on completing the study in one county in New York. New York State has sixty-two counties so it would have been more beneficial if I went to other schools in more counties to complete this study. I then would have been able to get a better idea if socio-economic status and ethnicity play a huge factor in student's literacy skills and academic achievement.

Another limitation to this study is that only the researcher examined the surveys sent home to parents and guardians. The researcher was also the only one to hold the focus groups, create the questions and analyze the data. Other personnel such as teachers, administrators, school philologists, school counselor, caseworker, special education teachers and higher-level English teachers could have had opposing views. This study could have been stronger if there were more outlooks by other professionals.

The final limitation is that the researcher chose to specifically send home a survey to participants. This limited information and didn't allow the parents and guardians to expand on any information they might have had. Using other tools, for example a interview could have led to more open-ended questions, allowing the researcher to gain a better insight and collect more data. An interview also allows the participant to understand the study better and learn more about what information is needed from the researcher. Using multiple tools would have made this a stronger study.

### **Implications**

Results show that children who are not practicing in reading and writing at an early age at home as well as in school are struggling more with grade level material. Either students are having a hard time reading due to the fact that they were never exposed to it before coming to school, or they are not encouraged to read on their free time so they are not making it a priority. New York State Standards are changing each year and are becoming more and more intensive. Teachers, as well as parents need to be more aware of these specific standards and should get more preparation as well as awareness to parents so that they can work towards helping their child succeed at home as well as in school. Teachers should reach out to parents and let them know their classroom expectations for ELA as well as any subject area. Keeping parents in the loop and making them aware of the expectations can lead to a higher success rate.

Most parents, such as the ones who were surveyed do not have any education level beyond high school. They might not know specific strategies that they should be using with their child to help them with their reading. Teachers and administrators can work together and send home packets and ideas for parents to work on with their child while they are at home so that

they can get more practice. The more students are exposed to reading and everything that comes along with it, the less frustrated they will be when they have to read and write in school daily to meet the classroom and grade level expectations.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The results of this study only reflected a small population in a specific county. In the future, research should examine multiples schools in the surrounding area and can also look at more than just one classroom. Different grade levels could also be looked at. Having other personnel look over and analyze the same data might also be very beneficial so that there are many viewpoints of the study, and not just one. Another recommendation would be to set up interviews with parents, guardians and students instead of sending home surveys. Interviews are more personal and it's easier to understand the parent/guardians reactions when it is held in person rather than at home. By holding an interview, more discussion could have been brought to the table allowing me to gain more evidence and data then just using a survey. A survey limited the amount of information that I was allowed to gain from each personal.

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*Appendix A***Interview Protocol for Teachers**

Age:

DOB:

Gender: F/M

Ethnicity:

Education level:

- |                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Caucasian       | - High school diploma |
| <input type="radio"/> African America | - Bachelors degree    |
| <input type="radio"/> Native American | -Masters degree       |
| <input type="radio"/> Hispanic        | -Doctrine             |
| <input type="radio"/> Other           | -GED                  |
|                                       | -Other                |

1. In a typical week, how often does someone (outside of school) read with your child for 15 minutes or more?

- Never (0 days a week)
- Rarely (1-2 days a week)
- Some days (3-4 days a week)
- Most days (5-6 days a week)
- Every day (7 days a week)
- I don't have any children these ages.

2. Who reads with your children (outside of school) on a regular basis for 15 minutes or more?

- Mother, step-mother, female guardian
- Father, step-father, male guardian
- Grandmother, step-grandmother
- Grandfather, step-grandfather
- Brother or sister (full, step, or half)
- Other Relative
- Person Not Related (nanny, babysitter, neighbor, friend)
- No one

3. Do you or someone in your family do the following things when reading with your children at home?

|   | Frequently            | Sometimes             | Rarely                | Never                 |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ask questions about what is being read                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Point out letters or words                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Point to things in the pictures/ask child to point      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Ask the child for help with reading or filling in words | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Talk about what happened in the story                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Do an activity based on the book                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

4. Who does your children see reading for 15 minutes or more a day for work, school, pleasure, or other reasons? Check all that apply.

- Mother, step-mother, female guardian
- Father, step-father, male guardian
- Grandmother, step-grandmother
- Grandfather, step-grandfather
- Brother or sister (full, step, or half)
- Other Relative
- Person Not Related (nanny, babysitter, neighbor, friend)
- No one

5. About how many children's books, that your children enjoy are in your home right now?

- 0 books
- 1-15 books
- 16-50 books
- More than 50 books

6. What types of things do you have in your home for children to read or use for writing? Check all that apply.

- Books that we own
- Books borrowed from the library
- Books on an electronic reader
- Books on audio tape or CD
- Children's magazines
- Computer that your children can use
- Pencils, pens, crayons, and/or markers
- Paper

7. Which of the following things do you or someone else (outside of school) do with your children? Check all that apply.

- Tell a story from memory or make up a story to tell
- Teach or talk about letters or words
- Sing songs, say poems or nursery rhymes
- Play games
- Watch TV shows focused on learning letters, words, or reading
- Have conversations about something interesting or enjoyable
- None of these

*Appendix B***Focus Group Questions for Students**

Adapted and modified from [Readtosucceedbuffalo.org](http://Readtosucceedbuffalo.org)

## Reading Habits

1. Do you read at home? (books/magazines/newspaper/internet)
2. What are you reading right now at home/ what is the last thing you read?
3. Do you see anyone in your home read?
4. Are you ever encouraged or told to read?
5. Is it cool to read?

## What do you think about reading?

1. On a scale of 1-10 how much do you like to read? ( 10 being the highest)
2. Is reading or writing ever fun? Why or why not?
3. What do you like to read about? What do you not like to read about?
4. Are there times you find reading difficult? What makes it difficult?
5. Do you think reading is important?

## What can we do differently?

1. If we were to have a reading party, what would you want it to be like?
2. How would you get your friends to come?
3. If you were the teacher how would you teach and encourage the students to read?
4. What would make you want to read more? "I would read more if...?"

*Appendix C***HSR Approval**

20 January 2017

Jacquelyn Marie Bursee  
c/o Sovicheth Boun, Ph.D.,  
Language, Learning and Leadership  
College of Education  
The State University of New York at Fredonia

Re: Jacquelyn Marie Bursee—How Home Literacy Skills Lead to Academic Achievement

Your research project using human subjects has been determined Category 1, Exempt, under the United States Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Public Welfare, Part 46 Protection of Human Subjects, 46.101, Subpart A (b) (1) and/or (2). This document is your approval and your study titled "How Home Literacy Skills Lead to Academic Achievement" may proceed as described. **Your approval is valid from February 6, 2017 through February 27, 2017.**

Thank you for keeping the high standards relating to research and the protection of human subjects under the auspices of the State University of New York at Fredonia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith M. Horowitz". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Judith M. Horowitz, Ph.D.  
Associate Provost, Graduate Studies, Sponsored Programs  
and Faculty Development  
Human Subjects Administrator

## Appendix D

### Citi Certification

#### COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM) COMPLETION REPORT - PART 1 OF 2 COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS\*

\* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- **Name:** Jacquelyn Bursee (ID: 5078481)
- **Institution Affiliation:** SUNY - College at Fredonia (ID: 273)
- **Institution Email:** burs5579@fredonia.edu
- **Institution Unit:** Education
- **Phone:** 716-592-0198
- **Curriculum Group:** Human Research
- **Course Learner Group:** Group 1.
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course
- **Record ID:** 17288211
- **Completion Date:** 27-Nov-2016
- **Expiration Date:** 27-Nov-2018
- **Minimum Passing:** 80
- **Reported Score\*:** 81

| REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY                                   | DATE COMPLETED | SCORE      |
|--|----------------|------------|
| Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction (ID: 1127)               | 27-Nov-2016    | 3/3 (100%) |
| History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)                       | 27-Nov-2016    | 3/5 (60%)  |
| Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)                | 27-Nov-2016    | 3/5 (60%)  |
| The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)                              | 27-Nov-2016    | 5/5 (100%) |
| Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)                                       | 27-Nov-2016    | 4/5 (80%)  |
| Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)                                     | 27-Nov-2016    | 3/5 (60%)  |
| Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)                          | 27-Nov-2016    | 5/5 (100%) |
| Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)                              | 27-Nov-2016    | 4/5 (80%)  |
| Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)                               | 27-Nov-2016    | 3/5 (60%)  |
| Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)  | 27-Nov-2016    | 4/5 (80%)  |
| International Research - SBE (ID: 509)                               | 27-Nov-2016    | 4/5 (80%)  |
| Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)                              | 27-Nov-2016    | 4/5 (80%)  |
| Avoiding Group Harms - U.S. Research Perspectives (ID: 14080)        | 27-Nov-2016    | 3/3 (100%) |
| Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483) | 27-Nov-2016    | 4/4 (100%) |
| Conflicts of Interest In Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488) | 27-Nov-2016    | 5/5 (100%) |
| SUNY Fredonia State College (ID: 567)                                | 27-Nov-2016    | No Quiz    |

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: [www.citiprogram.org/verify/2k99ae5249-a2de-4743-a2d1-3abc668ad5e9-17288211](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/2k99ae5249-a2de-4743-a2d1-3abc668ad5e9-17288211)

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)  
Email: [support@citiprogram.org](mailto:support@citiprogram.org)  
Phone: 888-529-5929  
Web: <https://www.citiprogram.org>

## COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM)

### COMPLETION REPORT - PART 2 OF 2 COURSEWORK TRANSCRIPT\*\*

\*\* NOTE: Scores on this Transcript Report reflect the most current quiz completions, including quizzes on optional (supplemental) elements of the course. See list below for details. See separate Requirements Report for the reported scores at the time all requirements for the course were met.

• **Name:** Jacquelyn Burse (ID: 5078481)  
 • **Institution Affiliation:** SUNY - College at Fredonia (ID: 273)  
 • **Institution Email:** burs5579fredonia.edu  
 • **Institution Unit:** Education  
 • **Phone:** 716-592-0198

• **Curriculum Group:** Human Research  
 • **Course Learner Group:** Group 1.  
 • **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course

• **Record ID:** 17288211  
 • **Report Date:** 03-May-2017  
 • **Current Score\*\*:** 81

| REQUIRED, ELECTIVE, AND SUPPLEMENTAL MODULES                         | MOST RECENT | SCORE      |
|--|-------------|------------|
| History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)                       | 27-Nov-2016 | 3/5 (60%)  |
| Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)                | 27-Nov-2016 | 3/5 (60%)  |
| Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction (ID: 1127)               | 27-Nov-2016 | 3/3 (100%) |
| The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)                              | 27-Nov-2016 | 5/5 (100%) |
| SUNY Fredonia State College (ID: 587)                                | 27-Nov-2016 | No Quiz    |
| Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)                                       | 27-Nov-2016 | 4/5 (80%)  |
| Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)                                     | 27-Nov-2016 | 3/5 (60%)  |
| Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)                          | 27-Nov-2016 | 5/5 (100%) |
| Research with Prisoners - SBE (ID: 506)                              | 27-Nov-2016 | 4/5 (80%)  |
| Research with Children - SBE (ID: 507)                               | 27-Nov-2016 | 3/5 (60%)  |
| Research in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools - SBE (ID: 508)  | 27-Nov-2016 | 4/5 (80%)  |
| International Research - SBE (ID: 509)                               | 27-Nov-2016 | 4/5 (80%)  |
| Internet-Based Research - SBE (ID: 510)                              | 27-Nov-2016 | 4/5 (80%)  |
| Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483) | 27-Nov-2016 | 4/4 (100%) |
| Conflicts of Interest in Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488) | 27-Nov-2016 | 5/5 (100%) |
| Avoiding Group Harms - U.S. Research Perspectives (ID: 14080)        | 27-Nov-2016 | 3/3 (100%) |

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing Institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

Verify at: [www.citiprogram.org/verify/?k99ae5249-a2de-4743-a2d1-3abc868ad5e9-17288211](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/?k99ae5249-a2de-4743-a2d1-3abc868ad5e9-17288211)

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program)  
 Email: [support@citiprogram.org](mailto:support@citiprogram.org)  
 Phone: 888-529-5929  
 Web: <https://www.citiprogram.org>

*Appendix E***Student Consent**

Dear student,

I am asking you to participate in a study I am leading to find out about if you are reading and writing at home. If you agree to participate, you will take part in a focus group (interview with your other classmates).

During this interview, you and your fellow classmates will be asked 14 open-ended questions about reading and writing at home as well as in school. This will take no longer than 20 minutes. Furthermore, **there are no risks involved in this study**. You are not required to be in this study and may stop your participation at any time during the process. Please feel free to ask questions. Your involvement will be kept confidential (e.g. you do not need to share your name) and you may answer only the questions that you feel comfortable answering.

If you participate in the study I will not tell anyone else how you respond to the questions within the focus group.

**If you choose to participate in this survey and/or the focus group, please follow these steps:**

1. Sign your name and write the date on the lines below. One signature is required for participation in the survey. Another signature is required for participation in the focus group.
2. Leave the consent form on the corner of your desk.

**If you do not choose to participate in this survey, do not sign your name at the bottom of this page.** You can just put the paper on the corner of your desk. Thank you very much for your time. You have been very helpful.

**I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in this focus group about home literacy environment. I understand that all my information will be secure and remain confidential. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and I know that I may stop my participation at any time without explanation or penalty.**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

Ms. Bursee

*Appendix F***Parent Consent**

Hello, parent/guardian:

For my graduate class at the State University of New York at Fredonia I will be conducting a research study about home literacy environment. This will give me a better insight on your students so that I will be aware of who is reading and writing at home as well as in school. I will be able to understand who practices literacy, how often and which strategies are being used, if any.

The main goal of this study is to find out if home literacy environment effects academic achievement within the classroom.

- If you agree to let your child participate in this research study, the following will occur:

Your child will be in a focus group with the other participating students and will be asked 14 questions about his or her thoughts and opinions on reading and writing such as their reading habits, personal interest in reading and what can we do to make reading and writing fun.

- This will take place in the school during normal school hours and will only be 20 minutes in length.
- There are no direct individual benefits to your child's participation in this research, but the information will be useful to understand your child's reading and writing habits. **There is no risk in this study.**

I will also be sending home a survey for parents and guardians to fill out as well. This will consist of 13 questions all pertaining to home literacy environment. **Confidentiality will be protected throughout this research study.** All surveys and transcriptions of the focus group will be shredded after the study is complete.

**You have been given a copy of this consent form to keep. Please sign and return one form if you wish to have your child participate.** PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY IS VOLUNTARY. You are free to decline to have your child participate in this research study. You may withdraw your child's participation at any point without penalty. Your decision whether or not to participate in this research study will have no influence on your or your child's present or future status at school.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_