

Improving Student Language and Literacy Skills: A Study of the Effectiveness of the *ABC Music & Me* Program

Overview

To evaluate the effectiveness of the *ABC Music & Me* curriculum, SEG Measurement conducted a national, multi-site study following 299 preschool children during the 2012-13 school year. *ABC Music & Me* is a supplemental early childhood curriculum that uses music and movement to engage young children while teaching a variety of skills critical to later school success. Extensive at-home materials, provided to parents monthly with each new curriculum unit, inform families of their children's classroom experiences and provide the means for continuing classroom learning at home.

The findings indicate that students in classes using the ABC Music & Me program made significantly greater gains in language and literacy skills as compared to students in classes that did not use any of the ABC Music & Me program components.

About *ABC Music & Me*

ABC Music & Me was created by Kindermusik International, the world's leading provider of early childhood music-and-movement programs. Kindermusik programs serve over two million families in more than seventy countries. The *ABC Music & Me* curriculum allows any classroom teacher, whether musically trained or not, to use music as a way to teach important language, listening, and social skills. The curriculum is delivered through a series of thematic 30-minute weekly lessons.

ABC Music & Me lessons build on the young child's natural love of music, stories, movement, and pretend play. Age-appropriate activities are designed to develop and strengthen each student's early literacy skills, fine- and gross-motor skills, social-emotional skills, and early math skills through theme-related songs, poems, and stories, and through movement, singing, dancing, and instrument play. New themes, activities, and stories are introduced in class monthly, and parent involvement is encouraged through the accompanying music, activities, instruments, and parent tips that are provided in monthly sets of *ABC Music & Me* Home Materials.

Study Design

The study examined the effectiveness of the *ABC Music & Me* program by comparing the growth in language and literacy skills among preschool students receiving the *ABC Music & Me* curriculum to a comparable group of preschoolers who did not receive the *ABC Music & Me* program.

The study incorporated a pre- and post-test treatment- and control-group design. All participating students took the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Pre-K Assessment* at both the beginning and end of the school year. Students in the treatment group received *ABC Music & Me* instruction and activities as part of their preschool curriculum during the school year. Students in the control group did not receive any *ABC Music & Me* instruction or activities.

Students in the control and treatment groups attended the same or comparable schools, and statistical analyses were conducted to ensure that the groups were comparable. Analysis of Covariance was used to compare treatment and control-group performance on the post-test while controlling for any initial differences in ability.

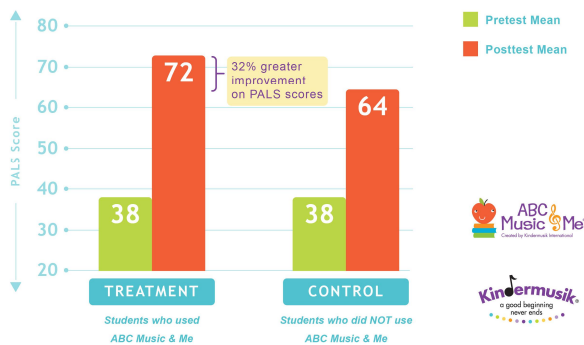
This study was conducted by SEG Measurement, supported by a grant from Kindermusik International. SEG is an independent research firm, providing research services to educational publishers, technology providers, and government agencies, since 1979.

Teacher and parent feedback regarding *ABC Music & Me* was also collected through biweekly teacher surveys on curriculum usage, an end-of-year teacher survey, a classroom environment survey, and two parent surveys investigating families' use of the *ABC Music & Me* Home Materials.

Results

The results of the study show that students who received *ABC Music & Me* instruction showed **significantly larger gains** on the PALS test than did students who did not receive *ABC Music & Me* instruction. In fact, ***ABC Music & Me* students showed 32% more improvement on the PALS test than did control group students.** These results indicate that the *ABC Music & Me* program successfully boosts preschoolers' language and literacy skills.

ADJUSTED PRETEST AND POSTTEST PALS SCORES



* The treatment group gained 34.06 points on the PALS test between the pre- and post-tests, whereas the control group gained just 25.83 points. The difference of 8.23 points represents a 32% greater gain by the treatment group.

Results from teacher surveys indicate that preschool teachers found the *ABC Music & Me* curriculum to be effective in teaching a variety of skills, and would strongly recommend it to other preschool teachers, and that parents would recommend the program to other parents.

Conclusions

Students who participated in *ABC Music & Me* showed significantly greater gains in language and literacy skills than students who did not receive *ABC Music & Me* instruction.

Teachers who used *ABC Music & Me* found the program to be effective in many areas. Both teachers and parents would **strongly recommend** the program to others.



"The most effective aspects of ABC Music & Me are that the children all participate and have fun doing the different activities each week. The lesson plan is easy to follow. The assessment forms from fall to spring show growth in many areas . . . Overall I feel that ABC Music & Me has now become a daily part of my lesson plan, and I am looking forward to using the program next year."

. Preschool teacher who used *ABC Music & Me* during the 2012 . 2013 school year

"My son loves ABC Music & Me! I think this program is amazing for learning, listening and social skills."

-- Parent of a child who used *ABC Music & Me* during the 2012 . 2013 school year

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***About PALS:** The **PALS-(Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Pre-K Assessment** is a scientifically-based phonological awareness and literacy screening that measures preschoolers' developing knowledge of important literacy fundamentals and offers guidance to teachers for tailoring instruction to children's specific needs. **The assessment reflects skills that are predictive of future reading success** and measures name writing ability, upper-case and lower-case alphabet recognition, letter sound and beginning sound production, print and word awareness, rhyme awareness and nursery rhyme awareness.