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A letter intervention in preschool: Exploring the effects of program duration
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Approximately one third of the U.S. population encounters difficulty in learning to read (Adams, 1990). According to Storch and Whitehurst (2001), this early reading failure may have an enduring, detrimental effect on children's lives; therefore, early interventions are instrumental to children's success. With regard to the content of these interventions, decades of research have shown that letter name and sound knowledge in preschool and kindergarten are predictive of later reading ability. In this study, which is part of a larger longitudinal study of the effectiveness of a games-based intervention, we explore "duration of program" effects on letter learning. Children from two Midwestern preschools were randomly divided into two intervention groups consisting of a shorter and longer time frame. We hypothesized that children in a longer (8-week) program would learn and retain more letters than children in a shorter (4-week) program who had equal contact time. The 4-weeks groups met with a researcher twice per week for 20 minutes while the 8-weeks groups met once per week for 20 minutes. Assessments were done based on pre-intervention, immediately post intervention, and 4-weeks post-intervention letter knowledge, name writing, and reading attitudes. The literacy measures found no significant group differences.

Storch, S.A., & Whitehurst, G.J. (2001). The role of family and home in the literacy development of children from low-income backgrounds. In P.R. Britto & J. Brooks-Gunn (Eds.), *New directions in child development: No. 92. The role of family literacy environments in promoting young children's emergent literacy skills* (pp. 53-71). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.