

Summer Reading Intervention with Elementary Students

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Introduction

- This study reports on the impact of a summer reading intervention in two types of summer programs. Separate interventions were offered for children who were reading at least 10 words and those who were merely identifying letters.
- The reading intervention was dispensed through The Citadel's SUMMER Succeed Program which consists of Citadel cadets, veteran students and graduate students who devote their summer to service by being a part of Title I school academic enrichment programs or camps.
- The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, was established in 1842 and is one of the six United States senior military colleges.
- Research shows that reading interventions put into practice in late elementary schools are likely to produce small to average effects when assessed against standard measurements (Miciak et al., 2018).
- A study conducted by Wise (2009) reported that an average of six million middle and high school students were reading below grade level.
- Hindman, Wasik and Snell (2016) reported starting at just 18 months old, children from higher income households know 60% more words compared to low income students.
- The purpose of this study was to determine whether summer programs in academic or community-based settings could help prevent summer learning loss and help students move forward in their recognition of letters and words.

Methods

Subjects:

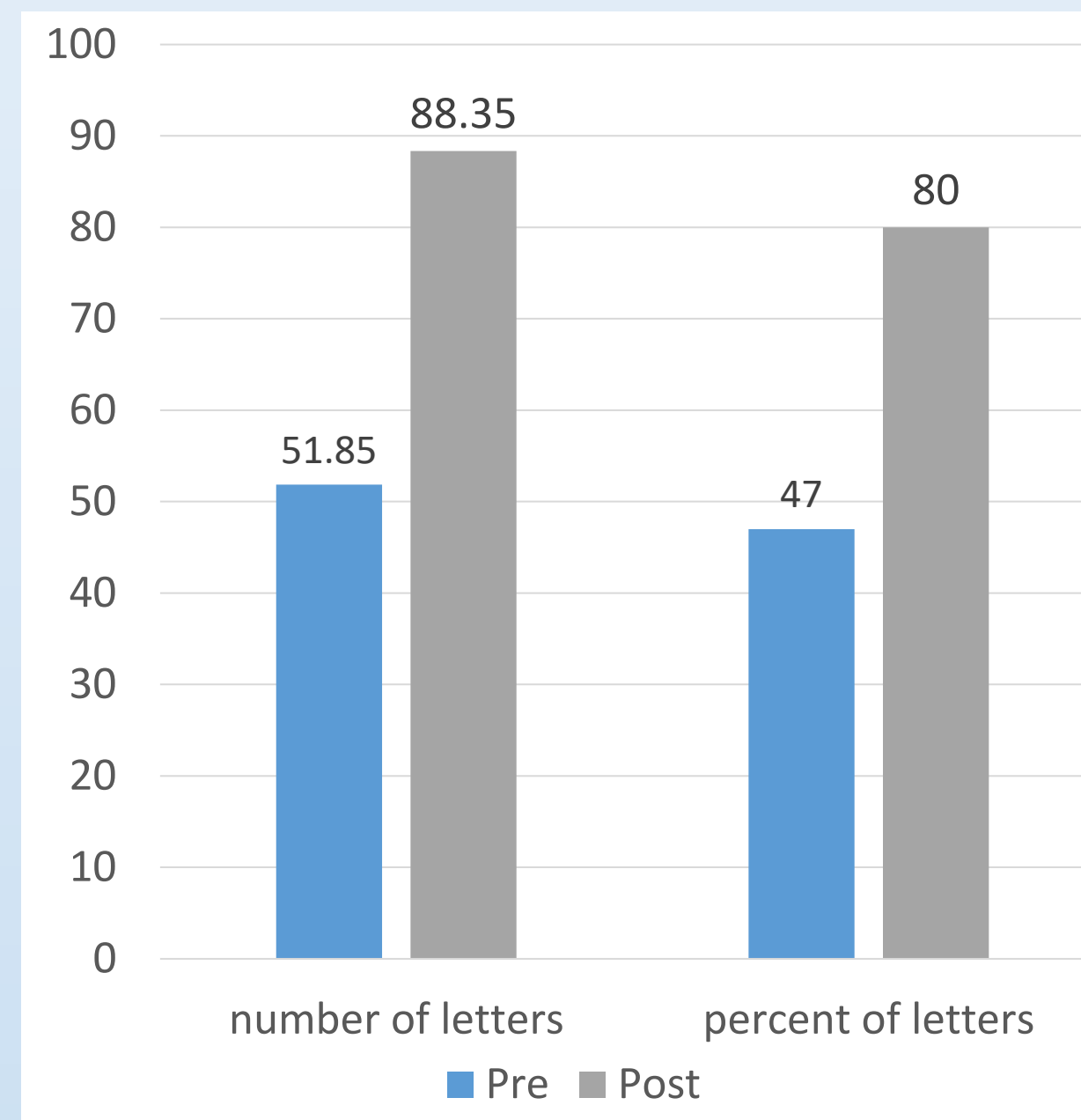
- There were 28 total participants from Destiny Worship Center and Charleston Progressive Academy who consented to participate in an IRB approved study.
- The study covered rising kindergartners through rising second graders.

Measures and Procedures:

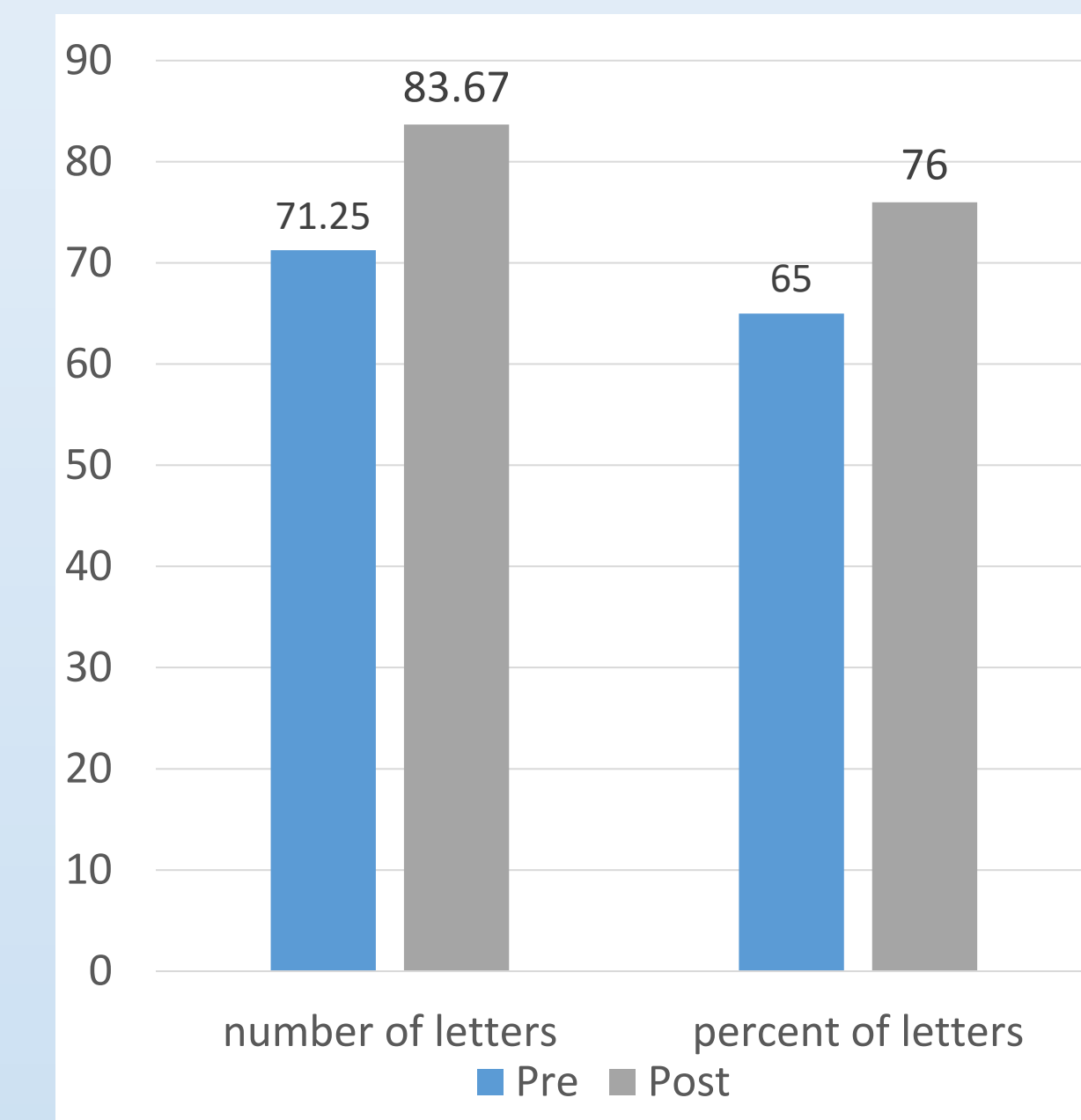
- The Dolch word list was used to determine if student knew the majority of words at his/her grade level.
- Dolch word list administered through trained cadets, graduate students and Citadel SUCCEED Program staff.
- The Scholastic reading program, a school based academic program, was the selected reading intervention. The program included guided lesson plans and book that covered comprehension questions, vocabulary, themes and lesson based activities.

Letter recognition: **Animal Alphabet** participants

Students in either program who could identify fewer than ten words at pre-test participated in the Animal Alphabet curriculum, which taught 2-3 letters daily and tied the sounds and shapes to animal images. Games, songs, and worksheets enabled participants to repeat letters in multiple mediums. Figures 1 and 2 provide samples of worksheet activities. Volunteers assisted children with their craft projects and worksheets and reinforced letter sounds as they worked and played.



Results from 20 Animal alphabet participants during Academic year revealed significant gains from September to May, $t(19) = -3.86, p < .001$.



Results from 12 Animal alphabet participants during the summer of 2019 revealed modest gains, which in this small sample were not significant, $t(11) = -1.57, p < .14$.

Results

- In all, 20 of the 25 students (80%) either stayed the same (plus or minus four words) or improved. Almost half (48%) improved by five or more words. The sample size of the church program precluded a planned direct comparison between the two types of programs.
- However within samples percentages supported the conclusion that either program model could contribute to the prevention of summer learning loss and/or improvement of word recognition skills.
- Although the average letter score for the lower group increased from 71 letters to 84 letters in the sample of twelve 4-6 year olds, paired t-tests did not result in significant pre-post changes.

Discussion

- These findings are consistent with previous studies demonstrating the efficacy of summer reading intervention at preventing summer learning loss, but add the finding that even lower intensity intervention integrated into what is primarily a recreational program can make a positive difference in students' literacy skills.
- Further investigation with more robust samples might further elucidate the nature of the impacts in various programs.

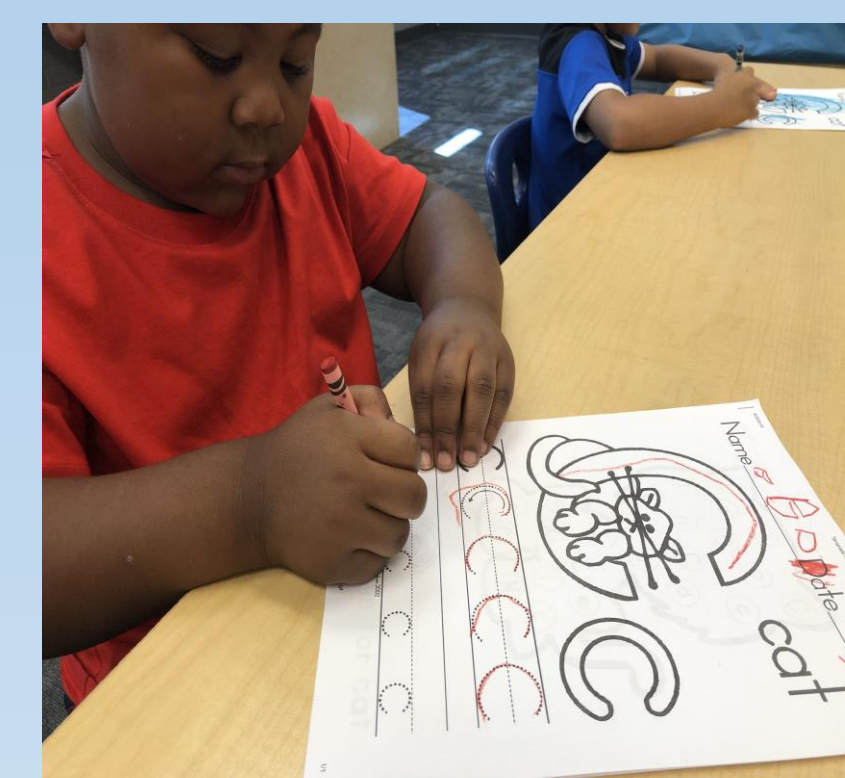
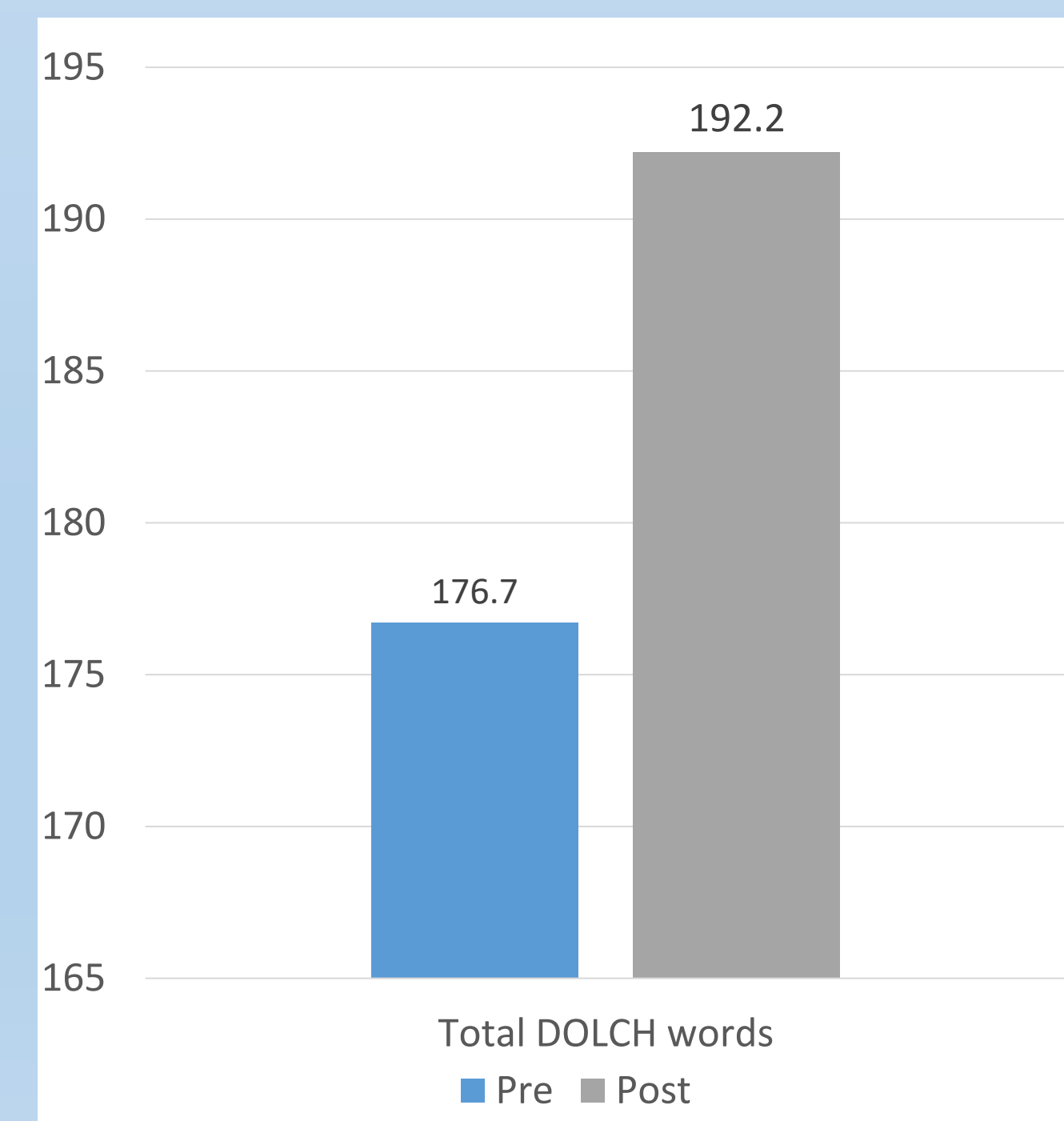
References

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Miciak, J., Roberts, G., Taylor, W. P., Solis, M., Ahmed, Y., Vaughn, S., & Fletcher, J. M. (2018). The effects of one versus two years of intensive reading intervention implemented with late elementary struggling readers. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 1*(1), 24.

Wise, B. (2009) Adolescent literacy: The cornerstone of student success. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 52*(5) 369-375.

Word recognition: **Scholastic Reading** participants



Results from 25 student participants in in two summer programs revealed a significant increase in Dolch words identified $t(24) = -2.30, p < .03$.