

A Comparison Between Students Who Receive and Who Do Not Receive a Writing Readiness Interventions on Handwriting Quality, Speed and Positive Reactions

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Abstract Proper acquisition of handwriting is required for success in school. This study compared the effects of two writing readiness interventions, “Traffic Light” and “Word and Sound” on kindergartners’ handwriting quality, speed and positive reactions to writing. Handwriting readiness training for kindergarten children is controversial. Whereas some have questioned whether such a program would result in frustration, others believe it is crucial to prepare children for the writing demands of school. Research shows that the period from kindergarten to school plays a vital role in determining future academic success. Thus, it is important to examine the efficacy of programs that can help children acquire good handwriting. Participants included typical kindergarten children from four kindergartens in Israel. The “Malki” test, designed to assess writing quality, speed and positive reactions to writing, was administered to all participants. A handwriting readiness program (“Traffic Light”), designed to teach letter formation by using the image of traffic light was provided to 55 children from two kindergartens. A phonological awareness program (“Word and Sound”) was administered to a second group of 46 kindergartners. Both programs were administered to groups of five children each, in 12 weekly 20-min sessions. The handwriting readiness group demonstrated significantly greater improvement than the control group in writing quality and positive reactions to writing, but not in writing speed. These findings support the efficacy of a handwriting readiness training program among kindergartners.