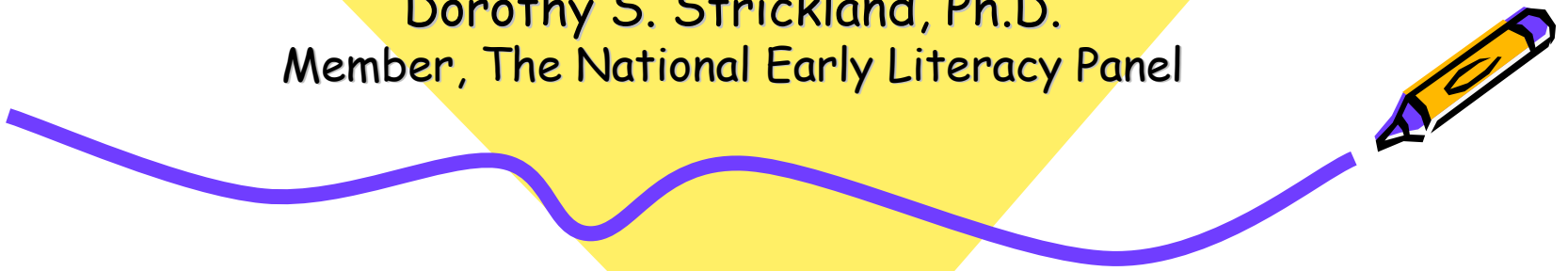




# Developing Early Literacy

## Report of the National Early Literacy Panel

ECEA-SCASS - June 2009  
Dorothy S. Strickland, Ph.D.  
Member, The National Early Literacy Panel



# Background

*Funded by:*

- National Institute for Literacy

*Coordinated by:*

- National Center for Family Literacy  
Laura Westberg, Director

*In consultation with:*

- National Institute for Child Health and Human Development
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



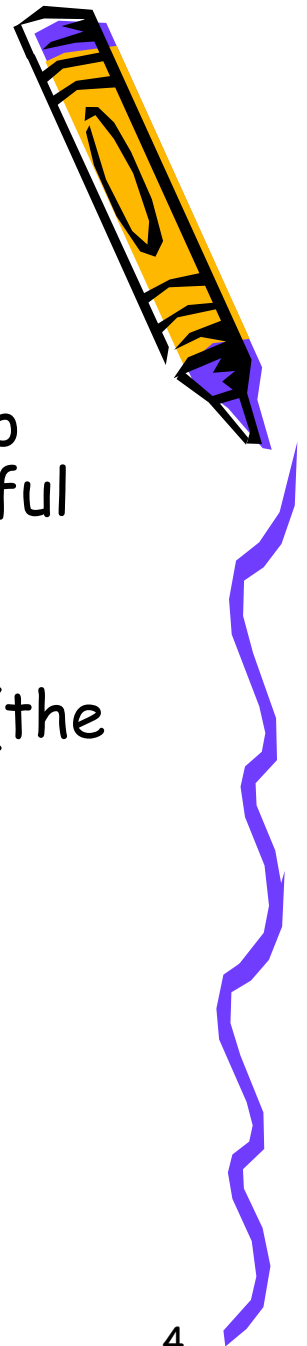
## Panel Members

- Dr. Anne Cunningham, University of California at Berkeley
- Dr. Kathy Escamilla, University of Colorado at Boulder
- Dr. Janet Fischel, State University of NY at Stony Brook
- Dr. Susan H. Landry, University of Texas—Houston
- Dr. Christopher J. Lonigan, Florida State University
- Dr. Victoria Molfese, University of Louisville
- Dr. Chris Schatschneider, Florida State University
- Dr. Timothy Shanahan (Chair), University of IL at Chicago
- Dr. Dorothy S. Strickland, Rutgers, State University of NJ

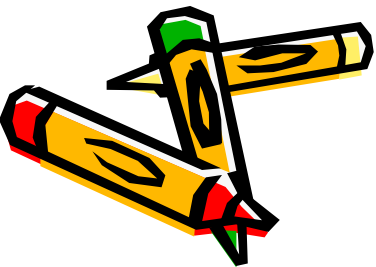


# Background

## What we wanted to know!



- What can we do to help young children develop early literacy skills that are linked to successful development of reading, writing and spelling during the school years?
- What instructional programs and approaches (the interventions) support the early literacy skills and/or conventional literacy skills
- With whom do these efforts work best?

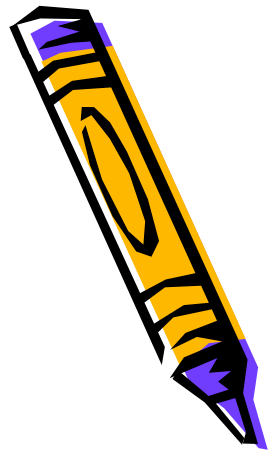


To Investigate,  
We needed to identify Conventional Literacy Skills

What skills constitute the domain of conventional literacy skills?

- Decoding
- Reading Comprehension
- Spelling
- Writing

But what precedes these?



# Methodology: Literature Searches

- Electronic Literature Search
- 9 categories of language and literacy-related terms
- Identified 7,000 records
- Supplemental procedures - reference lists; current journals, experts.



# Methodology: Study Selection



- Published in English
- Published in a Refereed Journal
- Empirical research with quantitative data on groups of children
- Language studied included alphabetic languages
- Included children between the ages of 0 and 5 or kindergarten children



# Methodology: Study Selection

299 studies identified that involved a predictive relation between a preschool or K skill and a later-measured conventional literacy outcome (decoding, reading comprehension, spelling).

MEASURE  
Birth - Beg. K

MEASURE  
End of K and Later



# Research Question #1

What are the skills and abilities that are linked to later outcomes in reading, writing and spelling?



# Findings: Research Question #1

## Strong to Moderate Predictors of Success in Reading and Writing:

Alphabet Knowledge

Phonological Awareness/Phonological Memory

Concepts About Print/Print knowledge

Oral Language

RAN (Rapid Automatic Naming (letters/numbers))

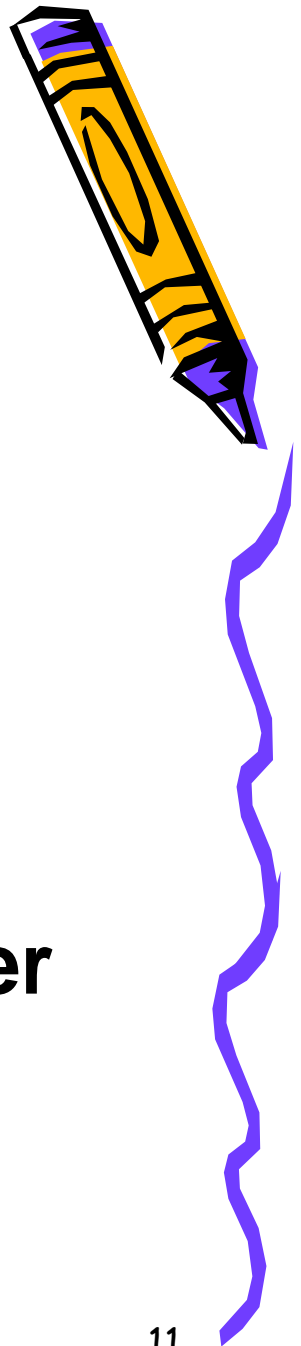
Writing or Name Writing

Visual Processing



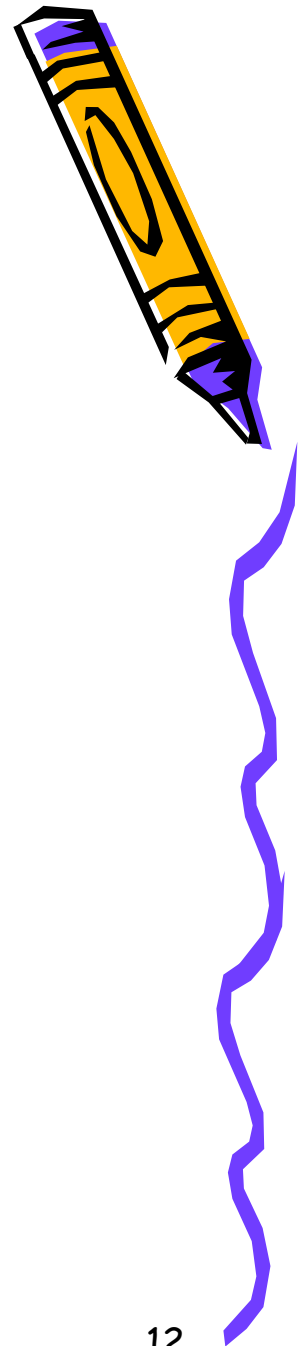
# Findings: Research Question #1

**Some researchers combined variables Reading Readiness (combination of Alphabet Knowledge; Concepts about Print; vocabulary; memory, and phonological awareness) was also found to be a predictor of later literacy achievement.**



# Research Question #2

What programs and interventions contribute to or inhibit gains in children's skills and abilities and are linked to later outcomes in reading, writing, and spelling?



# Findings:

## Research Question #2



- Efforts to teach code-related skills are highly successful
  - Most studies involved teaching phonological awareness
  - Most effective programs combined this with print training (alphabet knowledge and early decoding) involving awareness of print

*These effects result in better early literacy and conventional reading outcomes.*



# Findings:

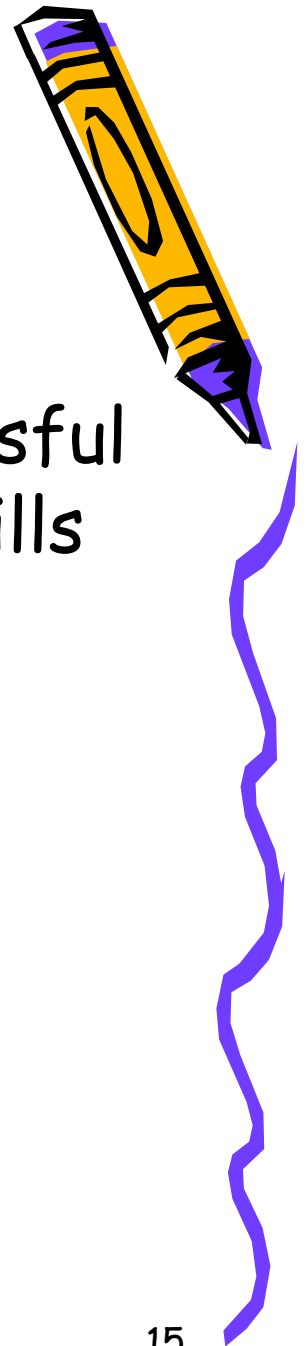
## Research Question #2

- Shared reading interventions help promote print knowledge and oral language skills
  - Reading aloud and shared reading that encourage various forms of reader-child interaction were effective



# Findings:

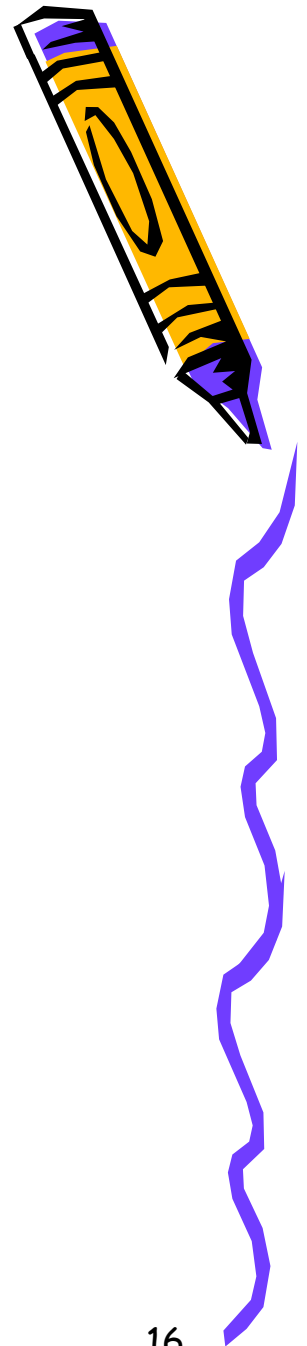
## Research Question #2



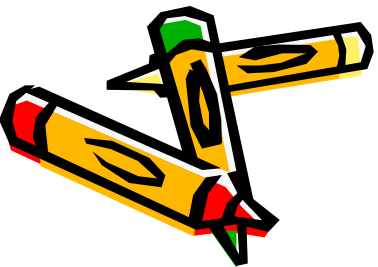
- Parent and home programs were successful in promoting children's oral language skills and cognitive abilities.
- Language enhancement programs were successful at increasing children's oral language skills.



# Findings: Research Question #2



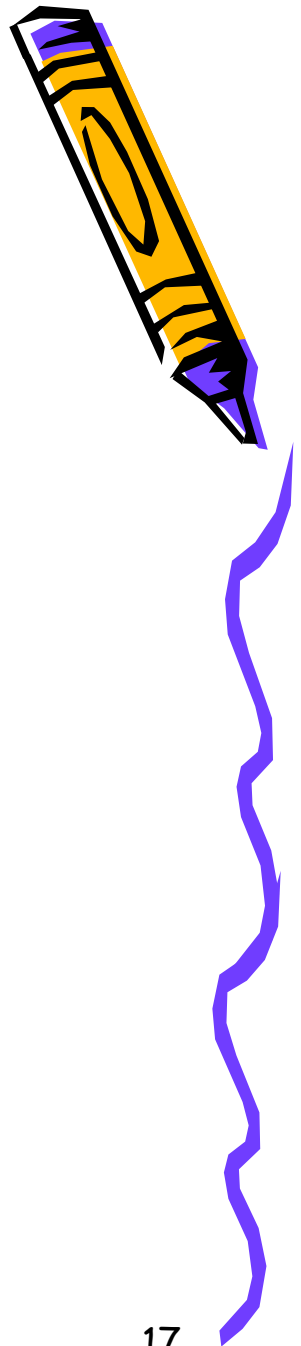
- Preschool and Kindergarten programs, in general, produced significant and large to moderate effects on spelling and reading readiness.



# Other findings

Age, SES, and race did not seem to alter the effectiveness of the various interventions.

Interventions that produced the largest effects were usually conducted as one-on-one or small-group instructional activities.

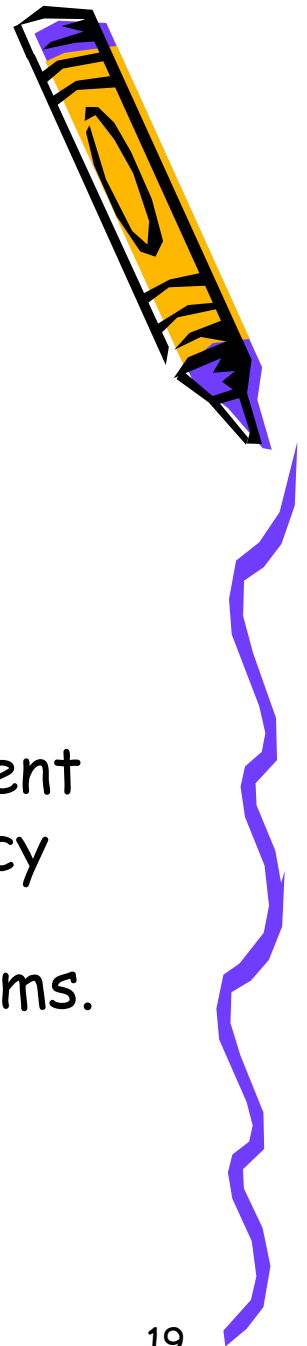


# More findings

- Activities tended to be teacher-directed and focused on helping children learn skills by engaging in the **use** of those skills
- Few used rhyming activities as the primary teaching approach
- Teaching children about the alphabet or simple phonics enhanced the effects of Phonological Awareness training.



# Implications for Early Childhood Education



- Evidence for building children's language and literacy skills in the preschool period.
- Identifies early skills that give children the strongest foundation for reading.
- Informs decisions about curriculum choices
- Provides guidelines for professional development
- Supports importance of assessing early literacy development.
- Helps to guide the development parent programs.
- Provides direction for future research.



# A cautionary note - (strictly from Strickland)



- The NELP report is important because it identifies **WHAT** we must focus on in early literacy and it helps to inform **WHY**.
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice provides the framework for **HOW** we bring quality language and literacy learning experiences to young children.

*HOW we teach makes a difference in HOW well children learn.*

