



# Effectiveness Study

## Los Angeles Unified School District

Students Using LeapFrog SchoolHouse Literacy Center Program  
Realize 74% Gain in Key Early Literacy Skills

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### Abstract

In a study conducted in three Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) schools, students who participated in the LeapFrog SchoolHouse Literacy Center program outperformed students in the control group by 37% in key reading predictor tests. Prekindergarten students using the LeapFrog SchoolHouse Literacy Center made a 74% gain in early reading skills, surpassing those children who received only the standard district literacy program materials.

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The School Readiness Language Development Program within the LAUSD participated in a scientifically based research study designed to measure the effectiveness of the LeapFrog SchoolHouse early literacy program, *The Literacy Center*. *The Literacy Center* is a research-based curriculum that combines multisensory technology with direct instruction and practice in phonemic awareness and other key early literacy skills.

Students' early literacy skills were measured in the fall and, after using *The Literacy Center* program in class, in the spring. Results reveal statistically significant gains for those students who received *The Literacy Center* (74% gain in early literacy skills) compared to students in the control group who received the standard district literacy materials (37% gain in early literacy skills). Early literacy skills were measured through letter-word identification (Woodcock Johnson III), blending sounds (Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing), and phonemic awareness (LEAPDESK Assessment). There is ample evidence that early literacy skills are key predictors of future reading engagement and success.

### Sample

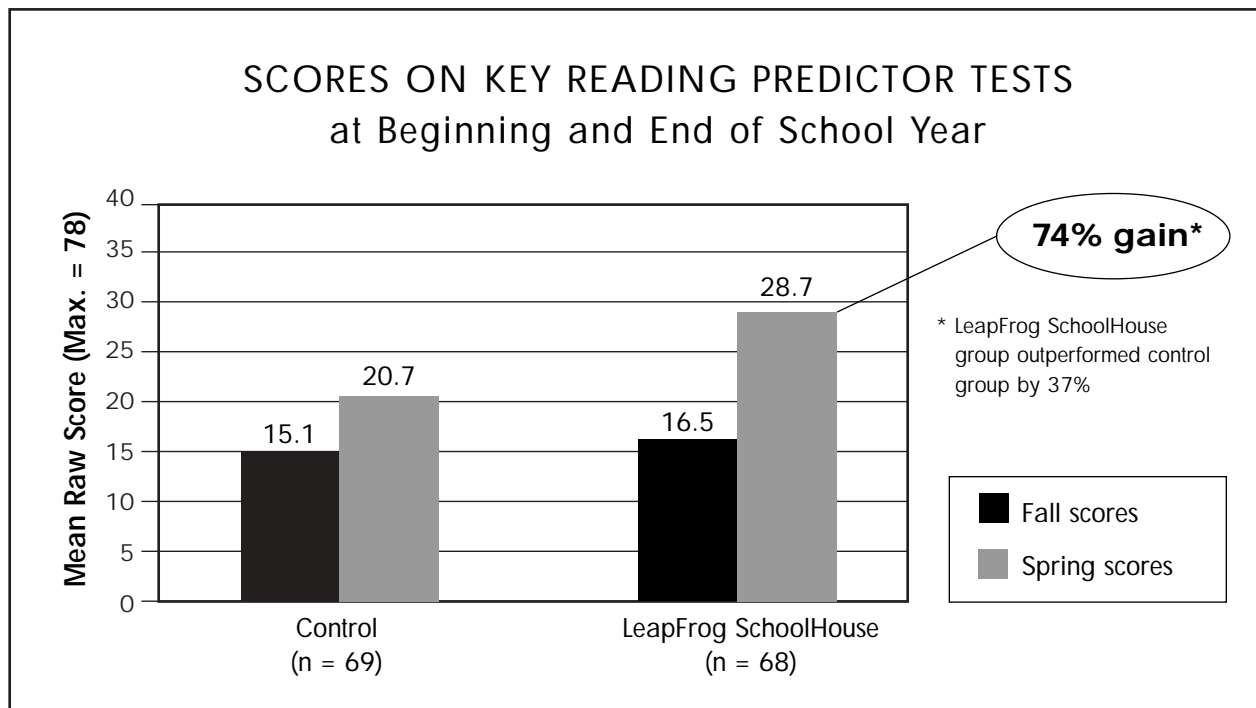
Three LAUSD schools with half-day Prekindergarten classrooms were chosen by the district. Forty-five percent (45%) of the children were girls, and 55% were boys. There were 137 children (68 treatment, 69 control) participating in this study, and their average age was 52.5 months at the beginning of September 2001. Forty percent (40%) of the children spoke English as their primary language and 10% were bilingual in the fall of 2001. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the children were Hispanic, 22% Caucasian, 12% African-American, and 6% Asian-American.

## Method

Twelve classrooms at the three LAUSD schools made up the age- and gender-matched LeapFrog SchoolHouse (treatment) and control groups. The existing district-wide literacy program was Creative Curriculum. The LeapFrog SchoolHouse treatment group used *The Literacy Center* in addition to Creative Curriculum, while the control group only used Creative Curriculum. Assessments were conducted in English at three points throughout the 2001–2002 school year (October, January, and May). An index of key reading skills was computed by summing the raw scores for the Woodcock Johnson III (letter-word identification), The Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (blending sounds), and LEAPDESK Assessment (phonemic awareness).

## Results

Pre- and post-test results on this composite index of key reading skills demonstrate that students who received *The Literacy Center* instruction in class performed 37% better (74% gain vs. 37% gain) on tests of key reading predictors than students in the control group.



## Conclusion

This LAUSD study found a statistically significant difference in performance on key reading skills between the Prekindergarten students using *The Literacy Center* and the Prekindergarten students who used only district curriculum materials. Those children who used *The Literacy Center* outperformed their peers by 37%. The implications of these results are critical because early literacy skills are highly predictive of future reading success. Every expert at the White House Summit on Early Childhood Cognitive Development (July 2001) stressed that reading is the keystone for both academic and life success. *The Literacy Center* program includes research-based, multisensory instruction and practice with essential pre-reading skills, and has been effective in thousands of classrooms nationwide.