

Research Question:

The focus of my research is to understand how students can benefit from collaborative learning and what it can do for instructional development and academic achievement in early education. What happens to students' conversations and the classroom environment through the implementation of a learning environment that is intentional and engaging? In round one of my research project, I am seeking to understand and identify where each student is socially, measuring their expressive ability, interactions with peers, and where they are academically.

Intervention/Innovation:

In round one, I began by identifying each student's expressive ability and their academic performance. The students were measured in different DRDP domains; language and literacy: communication and use of language (expressive), reciprocal communication and conversation, (California Department of Education, 2021) and assessed on their Kindergarten readiness. Kindergarten readiness included: alphabet knowledge, number recognition, writing skills, shapes, and social skills. I collected data through observations, writing samples, photographs, peer to peer interactions, and the use of a checklist. I observed the students for two weeks, throughout different times of the day and various situations. Attempting to gain an understanding of how competent and cooperative the students were with one another, their expressive language, communication, and their overall academic ability.

After getting a basic understanding of where the children were developmentally and academically, I began to implement specific lessons pertaining to certain domains. The lessons required the children to cooperate with one another and work on their team building skills. I focused on domains specifically pertaining to interactions and social skills so that I can gain an understanding of which might have the biggest impact on the children's overall academic success.

With the help of my instructional assistant the data was collected, and a checklist was also implemented to collect real time data on children. I explained to the students the importance of cooperating with one another and what team building might be like.

Using songs and literature surrounding teamwork, children gained an understanding of how to cooperate with one another. The children were given the opportunity to share their own thoughts and ideas and then the opportunity to practice what was taught to them. Data was collected throughout the day and then analyzed at the end of each day.