

Building Background Knowledge in Your Youngest Learners



Pewaukee School District

HELLO!

@PewaukeeSD



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PEWAUKEE SCHOOL DISTRICT

OPENING THE DOOR TO EACH CHILD'S FUTURE



- Serving 3000 Students
- About 400 Faculty & Staff
- 4 Schools on a Unique Single Campus Setting
- Utilize the Baldrige Framework for Performance Excellence for continuous improvement
- Demographics:
 - 14.9% Special Education
 - 12.9% Low Socioeconomic Status
 - 20.4% Non-white (7% Asian-primarily India)



Learning Objectives

- Understand research on building background knowledge in early literacy instruction
- Understand research on play in early childhood instruction
- Demonstrate how innovative programming can yield increased literacy results in early childhood



What is Background Knowledge?

Background knowledge is the vocabulary, facts, and conceptual understanding of a specific topic.

Readers use their background knowledge to comprehend the text they read.



The Research on Background Knowledge

The Baseball Study

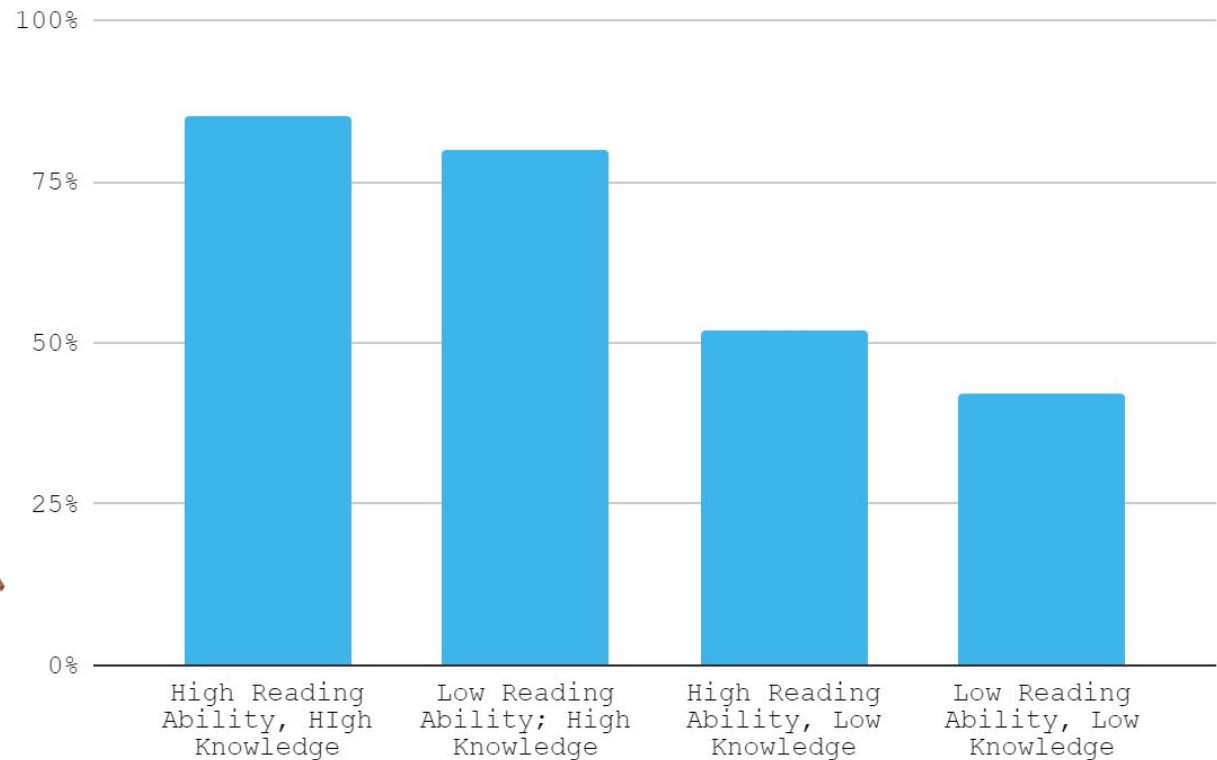
~Recht & Leslie (1988)



High reading ability Low knowledge of baseball	High reading ability High knowledge of baseball
Low reading ability Low knowledge of baseball	Low reading ability High knowledge of baseball

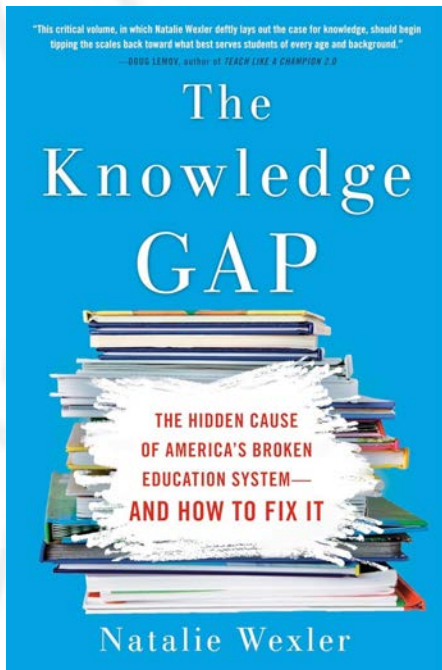
The Research on Background Knowledge

The Baseball Study ~Recht & Leslie (1988)



The Research on Background Knowledge

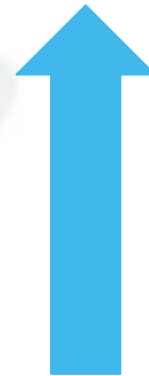
The Knowledge Gap
Natalie Wexler



Background Threshold
O'Reilly, Wang, Sabatini



Background
Knowledge



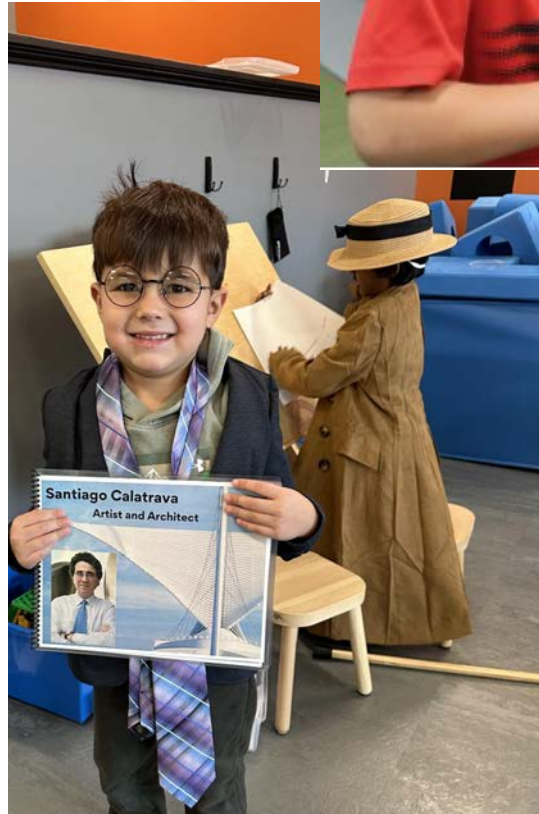
Comprehension

The Research on Play

Educational Play Experiences:



- meaningful
- actively engaging
- joyful
- iterative
- socially interactive

(Zosh et al., 2017)



The Research on Play

For maximum learning value, play occurs on a spectrum

Child-directed Activities  Adult-guided Activities  Adult-directed activities
(Weisberg et al., 2013; Pyle and Danniels, 2016)

Contributing to the body of research
~Dr. Kristin Whyte

DPI endorsement of play





Our 4K Model



- Alignment of experiences to science & social studies curriculum
- Increased literacy & numeracy experiences
 - Stronger emphasis on phonological awareness & phonemic awareness
 - Number combinations & subitizing
- Instructional approach
 - Students experience ~3 weeks in each classroom experience
 - Teacher remains with same students all year- rotates through experiences with kids (no home classroom for teachers)
 - Inclusion practice remains
- Integrated curricular & play time
 - Same curricular topics delivered in each experience at the same time, just adapted for environment
- Enhanced with music, art, & phy ed gross motor activities

Our 4K Model



1- Farm to Table

2- Wonderful,
Amazing Me



1- Journey in Time

2- Zoo



1- Construction

2- City & Rural



1- Let's Get Going

2- Storyland



1- Ocean

2- Polar Regions



1- Space

2- Our World



Our 4K Model:

Imagine to Impact

Board Role

- March 23, 2020 Board Learning Session
- Funding towards program
- Support & advocacy of program
- Annual review of results



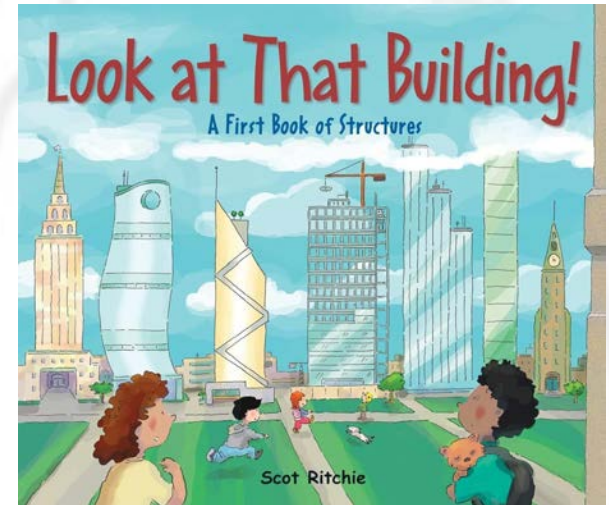
Know Students' Future Curriculum



Dramatic Play



Read Alouds & Literacy Exploration



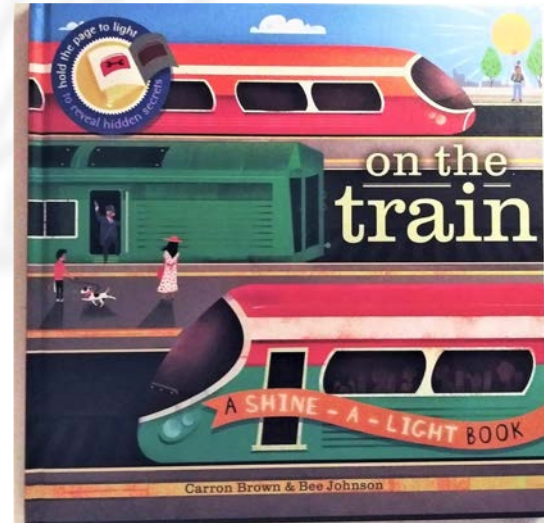
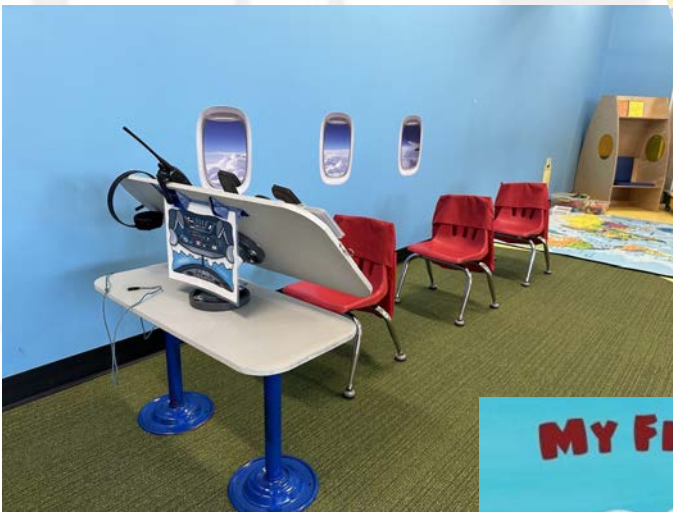
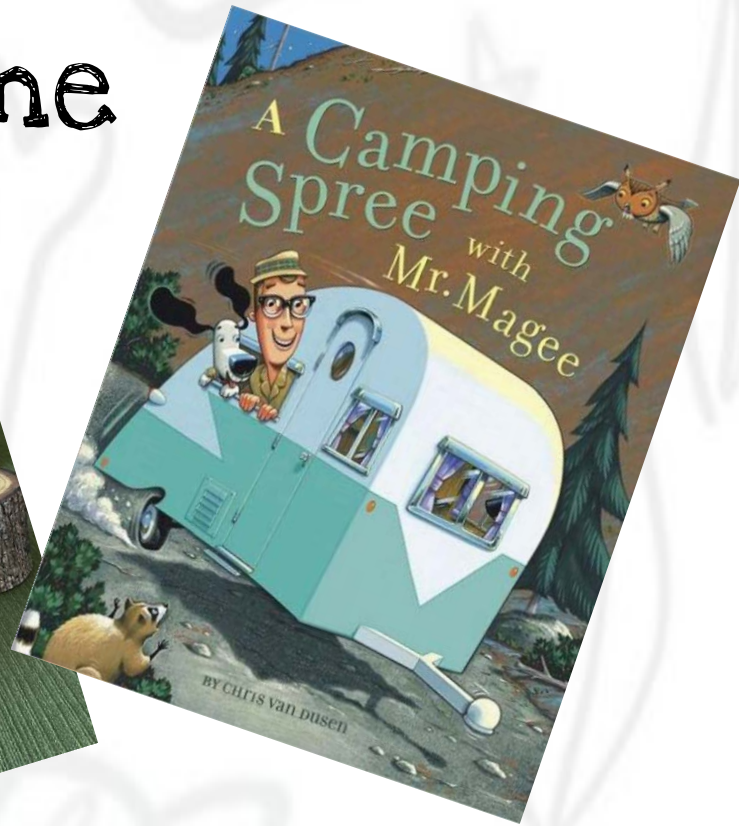
Leaving Room for Student Interest



Wrapping Content around Literacy & Numeracy



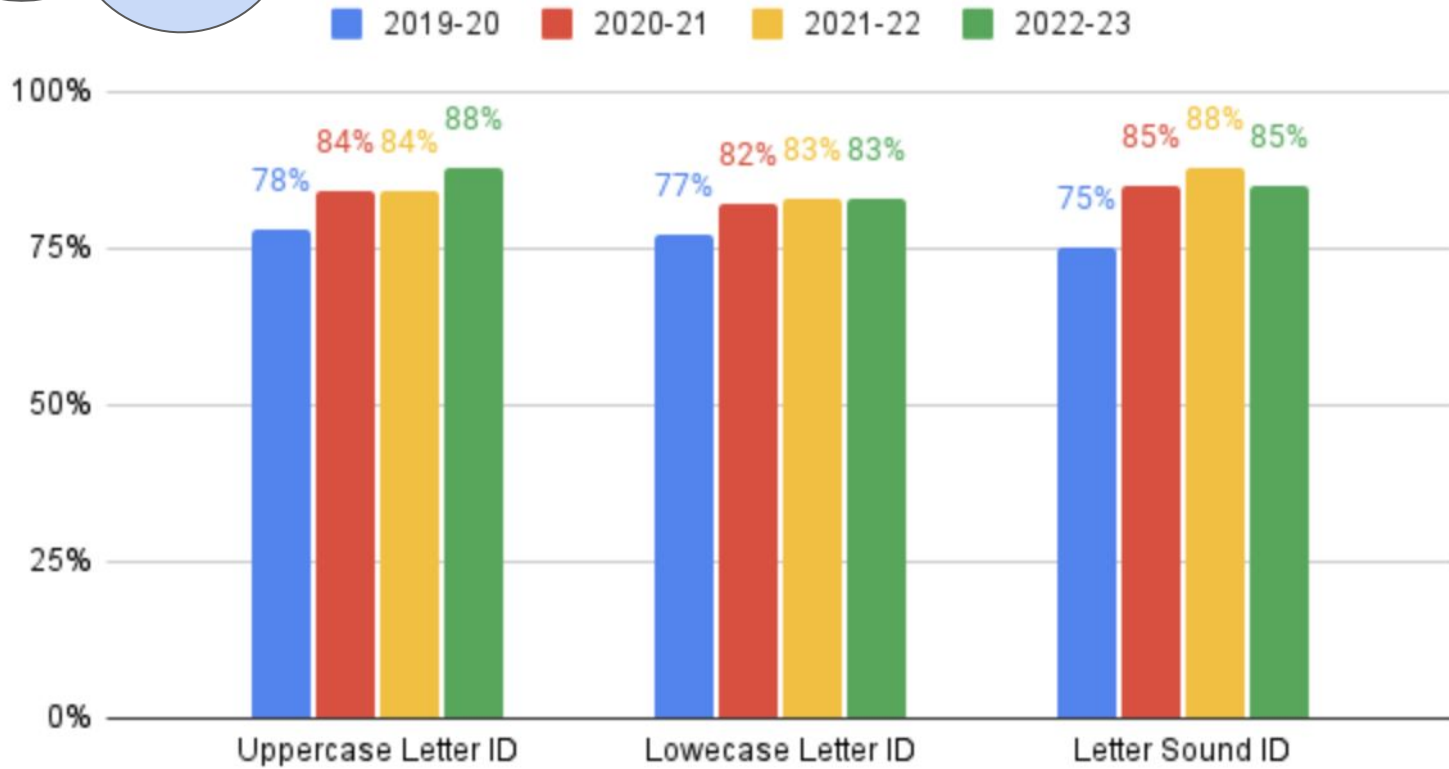
Taking Content Home



Results

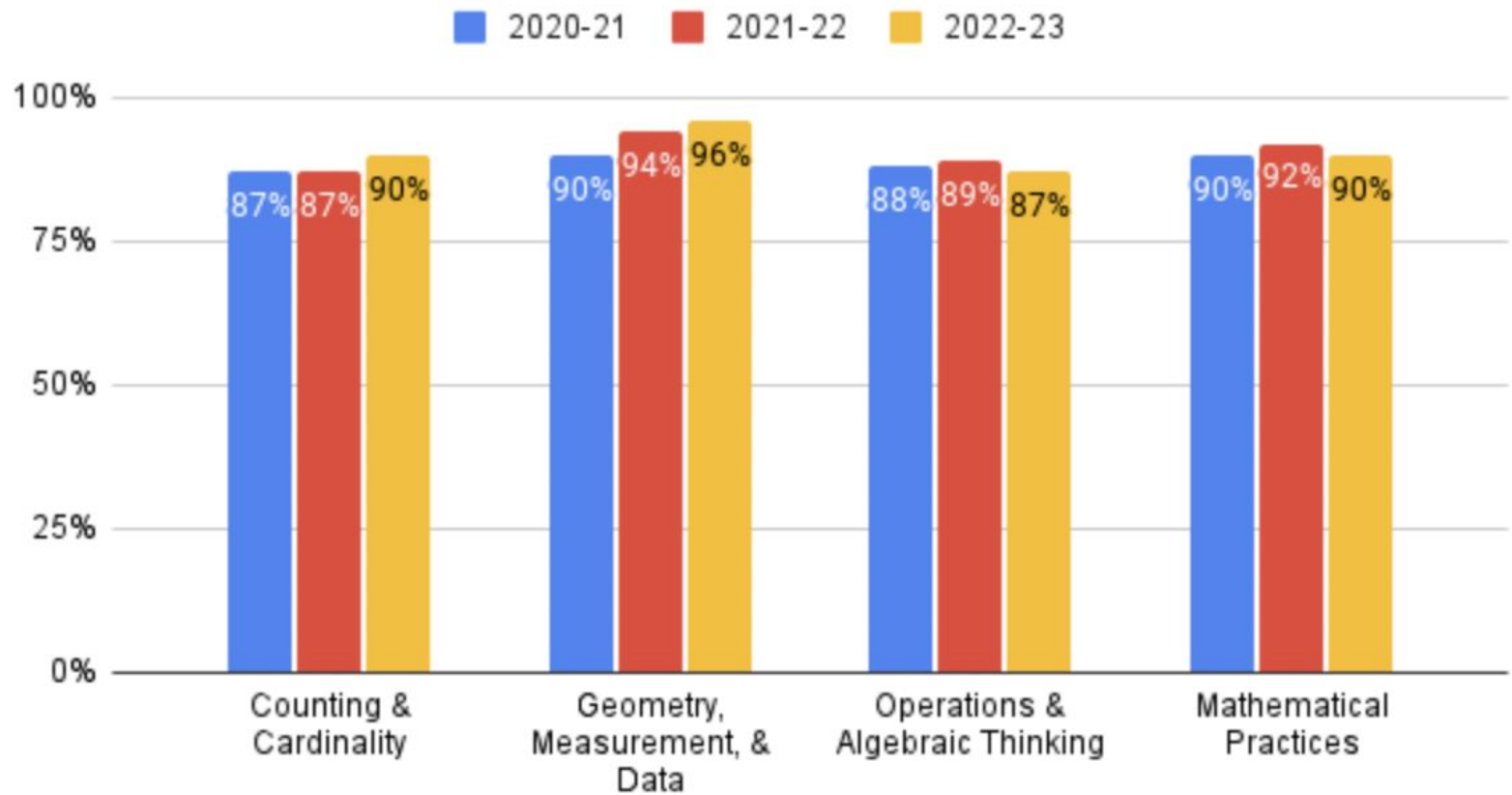
NO literacy achievement gap between students with disabilities and students without disabilities

4K Literacy



Results

4K Math



Anecdotal Observations

- Increase in student independence & taking initiative
- Students' desire to play



Building Background Knowledge in Your Youngest Learners



1. Know Your Future Curriculum
2. Dramatic Play
3. Read Alouds & Literacy Exploration
4. Leaving Room for Student Interest
5. Wrapping Content Around Literacy & Numeracy
6. Taking Content Home



Thank You!

**Any
Questions??**