



TITLE OF POSTER SESSION
MY MAGIC STORY CAR:
Video-Based Games to
Strengthen Emergent
Literacy of Preschoolers
from Low-SES Families



PRESENTER (PROJECT DIRECTOR)

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ABSTRACT

Research by Institute of Education Sciences Director, Grover (Russ) Whitehurst, indicates that a significant number of children, particularly those from low socioeconomic status (SES) families, enter kindergarten lacking key *emergent literacy* skills that are the foundations for learning to read; and they are at increased risk of subsequent academic failure.

My Magic Story Car is a video-based program of make-believe games to strengthen the emergent literacy skills of at-risk preschoolers in any childcare setting.

The program includes an interactive video/DVD for 4-5-year-olds that leverages the efficacy of intrinsically motivating play, and materials and instructions for parents, teachers and other caregivers in user-friendly text that is clear to those with limited literacy skills or for whom English is a second language.

Children 'drive' Magic Story Cars (cardboard boxes, cushions or chairs) to play the program's entertaining learning games, such as Rhyme Store and Octopus Treasure. Each game's makebelieve narrative engages preschoolers in practicing skills such as phonological sensitivity, print knowledge, alphabet letter recognition, vocabulary, and emergent writing. The program also strengthens adults' skills for fostering emergent literacy.

National testing with 434 preschoolers in the care of 259 parents, home care providers and teachers in representative low-income communities in six states demonstrated significant gains in children's targeted emergent literacy skills after playing the program's games for two weeks.

My Magic Story Car was developed under an Institute of Education Sciences SBIR-II grant by Emmy Award-winner, Harvey F. Bellin, in conjunction with Prof. Jerome Singer and Dr. Dorothy Singer, Directors, Yale University Family TV Research Center.



Live-action and Digital Animation Scenes from *My Magic Story Car* Video/DVD Program