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Questions or Comments?
Please feel free to contact me!

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Developing a Literacy Carnival Handbook to Support Local Elementary Schools and Family Literacy Programs



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Family Literacy Programs

Under the direction of faculty mentor, Dr. Linda Williams, I was given a grant through the Undergraduate Research Stimulus Program to research the positive effects of family literacy and coordinate a Family Game Night (Literacy Carnival) at a local elementary school.

This service-learning project provided an opportunity for schools and families to cooperatively engage in children's reading education. The Literacy Carnival also supported family literacy by showcasing the positive effects of play-based literacy learning.

I worked cooperatively with Dr. Williams to create an innovative literacy games handbook that serves as a guide for how to host literacy carnivals at local elementary schools. This guide begins by outlining the major tenets of Family Literacy. What follows is the step-by-step process I went through in coordinating a successful Family Reading Carnival. The hope is that my handbook will be a useful resource to those planning a similar family literacy night.

Play-Based Literacy Learning: Why Games?

Learning is a social process; we learn both in and through social contexts. For children, learning is authenticated when it is experienced through social engagement. Similarly, literacy is a shared construct, developed for the use of social encounters. Therefore, it is assumed that literacy is best learned through naturally occurring, personal engagements.

These engagements can be created through the use of interactive games designed to have educational benefits. With the exciting draw to playing games, children are given practice without growing board of mundane routine.

Games also give children the means to learn in a non-threaten environment in which they can take risks without real-life consequences (Compton-Lilly, 2007). Risk taking promotes a truly creative mind by allowing children to wholly engage their thinking without hindrance.