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# Importance of School Readiness and Early Childhood Education

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IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL READINESS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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A Project Report

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

Master Teacher

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By

Amanda L. Moore

August 3, 2009

ABSTRACT

IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL READINESS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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The need for childhood education was studied and, based upon experiences garnered as a Kindergarten teacher, Cub Club was created and implemented in order to begin to reduce the achievement gap. The program was designed to educate parents about the importance of family involvement and the benefits, lasting into adulthood, of working with children at home during their early years of learning.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Students in the education system today face many challenges. Many of those challenges begin before entering kindergarten. School readiness consists of three components: 1) children's readiness to enter school; 2) schools' readiness for children; and 3) family and community support that contribute to the readiness of children (Washington school readiness, 2004). A child's readiness consists of all the experiences he/she has had since birth. Within this there are five dimensions: 1) physical health; 2) social and emotional development; 3) approaches to learning; 4) language and literacy development; and 5) cognition and general knowledge (Washington school readiness, 2004). Relationships are the basis of a child's development and they begin within the family structure, move into their community, and are ultimately affected by broader social and economic resources (Center on the Developing Child, 2007).

In order for children to develop, their needs must be met: physical, social emotional, and cognitive. Physical needs include food, clothing, shelter, and medical care. Social and emotional needs consist of a positive, predictable, attentive, and caring relationship with an adult. Cognitive needs, at the minimal level, include the ability to effectively communicate and process information, engage in problem solving, and have successful experiences in school and the community (Isenberg & Renck, 2003). Children who do not have these needs met are at a disadvantage and often times show

behavioral and developmental characteristics including, but not limited to, developmental disabilities, school performance issues, and medical problems which make them vulnerable and have a difficult time functioning as effective learners (Isenberg & Renck, 2003).

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Early childhood education does not begin with Kindergarten, it begins at birth. Every experience that a child has impacts his/her achievement (Rouse, Brooks-Gunn, and McLanahan, 2005). It is estimated that by the time children reach Kindergarten, there is already a sizeable academic achievement gap between different ethnicities (Rouse, Brooks-Gunn, and McLanahan, 2005). Experiences challenge the senses, therefore it is important to create experiences that are both formal and informal, with education being a formal experience (Morgan, 2007). Readiness does not specifically refer to academics, it also refers to social and emotional skills; children must be able to follow directions, work within a group, be engaged in classroom tasks, and show impulse control (Rouse, Brooks-Gunn, and McLanahan, 2005).

Learning is a biological/chemical process that creates knowledge through the central nervous system (Morgan, 2007). Recent research in neurobiology indicates that the brain development that begins during the prenatal time and the first years of life is much more extensive, and is in fact influenced by those early exposures (Isenberg & Renck, 2003). Learners decide whether or not to attend to an experience, either

consciously and /or subconsciously, and the first step in learning is experience, followed by attention, perception, short-term memory, long-term memory, and retrieval (Morgan, 2007). Ultimately, any adult (parent, caregiver, etc.) that is part of a child's life plays a vital role in the development of the brain (Isenberg & Renck, 2003). A strong family life has a positive impact within both the home and school settings, which creates an increase in a child's involvement in school along with a strong sense of value for education (Isenberg & Renck, 2003).

A child's future success in school and life lies within the early nurturing and life experiences, and being ready for school can help to close the gap before he or she enters the school system (Student readiness for, 2005). Children who arrive unprepared for Kindergarten have a more difficult time closing the achievement gap (Office of superintendent, 2008).

States must improve their standards for prekindergarten education if programs are to produce the large gains in learning and development that the nation seeks. Teachers are required to have a BA and specialized training in preschool education in only 13 state preschool initiatives, whereas all public K-12 teachers must hold 4-year degrees and be state licensed or certified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. States should apply high standards to all programs, so that no child can slip through the cracks (Morgan, 2007, p. 91).



At Lion Elementary, in recent years it has become apparent that more and more children are entering kindergarten with very little phonemic awareness and/or mathematical skills. Many students have never been in any type of academic setting; therefore, their academic knowledge is very limited. A number of students are unable to write their name and identify such things as letters, sounds, numbers, colors, and shapes. This has become a significant problem, mainly because parents are unaware of the rigorous standards and expectations of a kindergarten classroom in today's society.

#### PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of the project is to educate parents of incoming kindergarten students on the expectations in the kindergarten classrooms of Washington State and more specifically, Lion Elementary. It also allows teachers to make a connection with families and create a dialogue before their children are active participants in the education system. The main goal is to provide parents, who may not know how to help their child at home, with simple ideas and activities to help prepare their child for kindergarten. Cub Club has been created at Lion Elementary, to reach out to parents and invite them into the school to allow them the opportunity to learn methods and ideas in how to prepare their child for kindergarten. This is a basic introduction to what kindergarten is really like. It is no longer free play and naptime, but instead the expectations are high and can be difficult to accomplish without parents and teachers joining forces to provide early interventions for students. This program does not focus

only on “at-risk” students, but focuses on all, regardless of family history, race, and socio-economic status. The first Cub Club meeting is designed to be an overview, while the second meeting focuses only on reading skills (phonemic awareness) and the third meeting has a focus on math skills. The skills that are mentioned are targets that students should come in knowing (for example being able to identify ten letters or knowing shapes and colors). Reaching children through quality early education programs is a strategy that has been proven to help children be successful in school as well as have a healthier more productive life (Isenberg & Renck, 2003). Early childhood programs that involve parents, community, and educators in a collaborative setting are likely to be more successful than those that do not (Isenberg & Renck, 2003).

If parents and teachers hold similar beliefs, then there is a greater opportunity for congruence between the skills parents encourage in their children prior to school entry and the skills teachers look for as children enter kindergarten. Such congruence may contribute to a teacher’s positive evaluation of the child early in his or her school life and to the child having a successful early school experience (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008 p.684).

#### SIGNIFIGANCE OF THE PROJECT

In recent years, adults have come to realize that by creating a learning environment from birth, they are more intentional about the interactions they are having with young children (Washington school readiness, 2004). Children begin

kindergarten with various levels of knowledge and skills, all based on their background. Students who are more disadvantaged may be able to catch up in basic reading and math skills, but as the skills become more intense and require more as the gap widens (Munoz, 2000).

Within the first five years of life, ninety-five percent of the brain's architecture is formed, ultimately laying the foundation for all learning (Office of superintendent, 2008). Language is a large part of this foundation. At Lion Elementary, the 2008-2009 kindergarten class was administered the Washington Language Proficiency Test, to determine each student's English Language Proficiency. The data is used to determine student eligibility for language support services (Office of superintendent, 2008). The results consisted of the following language levels: Level 1-32 students, Level 2-26 students, English Only-42 students, and Migrant-18 students, 11 of which also fell in Level 1 and 7 were in the Level 2 categories. Level 1 students are Beginning/Advanced Beginning; Level 2 students are Intermediate; Level 3 students are Advanced; and Level 4 students are Transitional and not eligible for services. Over half of the students had very low English Language abilities when looking at this data, causing a need for concern about the incoming learning levels of the students. Since many students were considered English Language Learners, it was assumed that their incoming academic knowledge was very limited.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE PROJECT

The only participants invited to Cub Club are those who have been identified as siblings of current students. Due to all of the preparation, teaching materials, and limited teaching staff, the kindergarten teachers of Lion Elementary have chosen to invite only those students who will be attending the school. If requested by parents from other schools, they may participate in Cub Club. Cub Club is also held in conjunction with the district wide program *Ready! For Kindergarten*, which offers more in depth information for ages birth to five.

The information presented at Cub Club was created by the kindergarten team members of Lion Elementary, and focuses on skills that are important to the specific kindergarten classrooms of Lion Elementary. The format of the meetings was modeled after the *Ready! For Kindergarten* program, but on a much smaller scale. The *Ready!* program that is also offered is open to any family living within the school district boundaries, where the targets have already been established by another group of individuals, outside of Lion Elementary. Both programs are beneficial and parents are encouraged to attend both, if at all possible. Regardless of the type of program, all early childhood education programs should be flexible, family-friendly, and support parents (Rivera, 2008).

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following are definitions which will help the reader to understand many educational terms used throughout the project.

**At-Risk:** being endangered, as from exposure to disease or from a lack of parental or familial guidance and proper health care (dictionary.com, 2008)

**Early Childhood Education (ECE):** A period of public and/or private education for children ages birth through eight (Morgan, 2007).

**ELL:** English Language Learner (Office of superintendent, 2009)

**General Knowledge:** Refers to information that the child needs for problem solving, self-identification, and handling situations when away from home and parents (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008).

**Inferential Reasoning:** Refers to higher order thinking skills, processing of information, and creativity that go beyond repetition or drilled material. (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008).

**Nominal Knowledge:** Refers to the possession of information that makes it possible to name or label objects in the environment. (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008).

**Phonemic Awareness (P.A.):** "The ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words (National Institute for Literacy, 2008)

Poverty: the state of having little or no money, goods, or means of support; condition of being poor; indigence (dictionary.com, 2008)

Washington Language Proficiency Test-II (WLPT –II): Assessment of reading, writing, speaking, and listening knowledge and skills used in Washington State for English language proficiency for English language learners (Office of superintendent, 2009)

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

Chapter One defines early childhood education. It also provides insight as to why it is important for students to be ready for school success and reasons for the achievement gap that exists, beginning in kindergarten. The problem is that without early childhood education and interventions, this achievement gap will continue to grow. Chapter Two reviews the history of Early Childhood Education, ways that a child's brain develops and what is needed to do this successfully, how to close the achievement gap, and how parents, teachers, and the community can work together. In Chapter Three the development and implementation of the Lion Cub Club are outlined. Chapter Four is a written description of the project along with data on students who have attended in previous years. Chapter Five contains a summary and conclusion of the project.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The history of Early Childhood Education spans nearly two hundred years, which simply means that there were many influential figures, who had very different views that contributed to this particular field. Beginning in the 1600's, John Locke (1632-1704) had the idea that teaching and learning should be a relationship that is shared between both parents and the child(ren). Johann Frederick Oberlin was the first to organize a school system for children under the age of six, today known as pre-school and Johann Pestalozzi designed schools to prevent children from going into poverty and introduced the idea of free education for young children to poor families (Morgan, 2007).

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Rousseau (1712-1778) pushed for change from a utilitarian and adult view of children to one that affirmed the goodness of children and their need for supportive adults in their lives (Isenberg & Renck, 2003). Fredrich Froebel (1782-1852) had a tremendous influence on the kindergarten movement both in Germany and the United States. In the 1800's Froebel would train early-childhood professionals from the United States, who would study and observe Froebel's methods, in Germany (Morgan, 2007). However, outside of Germany his influence was not as powerful due to the prohibition against kindergartens, that was enacted in Prussia in 1851 (Morgan, 2007). The first kindergarten classroom, in the United States, was opened by German immigrant, Margarethe Schurz (1833-1876), in Wisconsin in the 1800's. This classroom

consisted of Schurz's own children and class was taught in the German language (Morgan, 2007). However, the first English speaking kindergarten classroom was opened by Elizabeth Peabody in Boston, Massachusetts in 1860 (Morgan, 2007). Kindergarten classrooms became part of the public school system in 1873 (Morgan, 2007). In the beginning, kindergartens were being conducted in philanthropic and community-based social institutions (Morgan, 2007).

In 1910, the Montessori Educational System was gaining popularity. This particular system was created by Maria Montessori (1859-1952), who felt that children who were naturally competent learners and children who were reluctant learners could work and learn together in the same classroom (Morgan, 2007). Her educational objective was to offer free schooling to poor children whose parents either would not or could not send them to school and meet their educational needs (Morgan, 2007).

Between 1800 and the early 1900's, early childhood education attracted much attention, including that of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), John Dewey (1859-1952), Jean Piaget (1896-1980), and Erik Erikson (1902-1994) (Morgan, 2007). Early childhood education does not have a good fit with the traditional K-12 educational model, because the scope of early childhood education is birth to age eight. In a traditional K-12 model, the ages are approximately six to seventeen (Morgan, 2007).

Although difficult to predict the complete transition, there are persistent signs that both state and federal educational initiatives are moving in the direction of creating



a public educational system that will provide schooling for all children from birth (six weeks) through grade 12 (Morgan, 2007). It is expected that parents invest energy and time into teaching and reinforcing skills, socializing competencies, and arranging experiences to promote the acquisition of skills they believe are needed by their children by the time they start kindergarten (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008).

#### LONG TERM BENEFITS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

A child's cognitive and socio-emotional skills develop rapidly and are heavily influenced by parents, home life, child care, and the health care system (Duncan, Ludwig, & Magnuson, 2007). A majority of parents perceive Kindergarten readiness by the ability to name objects, letters, and numbers, but rarely include inferential skills (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008). By the time a child enters Kindergarten, there are already sizeable gaps when looking at race and ethnicity (Rouse, Brooks-Gunn, & McLanahan, 2005). The skills, which an entering kindergarten student has in reading and mathematics, are very predictive of later achievement (Duncan, Ludwig, & Magnuson, 2007). If a child scores poorly on an assessment before entering kindergarten, he/she is more likely to become a teenage parent, become involved in criminal behavior, and as adults be unemployed (Duncan, Ludwig, & Magnuson, 2007). When parents show interest in and value their child's education, then their child will have positive outcomes when it comes to homework, behavior, and academic

achievement (Prior & Gerard, 2007). Parents are more likely to cultivate skills and impart knowledge they consider to be essential and are less intentional about competencies and skills that are deemed less important (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008). Efforts need to be made to bring parents, educators, businesses, universities, foundations, and the community together as one entity with one goal in mind: to improve schooling for all children (Munoz, 2000).

Investing in our youngest children is essential to boosting our nation's competitiveness and creates a long-term commitment to promote positive growth and development, with those who have a significant role early in a child's life (The Education Begins, 2008). Quality early childhood education programs enhance language, cognitive, emotional, and social development (School readiness helping, 2001). Children who attend preschool have fewer referrals for remedial or special education classes, have fewer retentions, obtain higher grades, have greater social and emotional maturity, more frequently graduate high school or obtain a GED, have greater academic motivation, have greater on-task behavior, work more independently, spend quality time on homework, have fewer absences and detentions, have a better attitude toward school, have higher self-esteem, have lower incidents of teenage pregnancy, have lesser drug abuse issues, have fewer delinquent acts, participate in sports, and have higher self goals (Cotton & Conklin). Once those students are in the workforce they tend to have higher employment rate, higher wages, and a lower dependence on welfare, have fewer

arrests, and have positive family and social relationships (Cotton & Conklin). Parents who themselves were prepared for school as children tend to have better attitudes toward their own child's education, have higher expectations for learning and achievement, and are in frequent contact with teachers even if their child(ren) had few school problems (Cotton & Conklin).

#### WHAT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION LOOKS LIKE

Early childhood education comes in many forms. All quality programs should consist of the following: available, accessible, affordable, appropriate, accountable, accredited, advocate, and aspirational (Rivera, 2008). Early childhood home visitation programs provide benefits such as helping to increase student achievement, improve access to preventative medical care, reduce high school dropout rates, and decrease maternal depression (The Education Begins, 2008). Various program models target different types of families, ranging from first-time teen mothers to all families with children of varying ages, typically providing services from a period of two to five years (The Education Begins, 2008).

Early childhood visitation programs are viewed as a promising strategy for helping parents and thereby promoting the growth, development and school readiness of young children because, as developmental research consistently confirms, young children are most likely to reach their full

potential when they have nurturing, stimulating and supportive relationships with their caregivers (The Education Begins, 2008, p. 11).

One of the most popular, that serves children in poverty, is the Head Start program, which is funded by the federal government (Barnett & Belfield, 2006). Early Head Start introduced expectant mothers to the educational world and helped to establish a belief among family members that the need for parental and family support was vital for the education of children and the school system (Morgan, 2007). In 2006 the Head Start program served approximately 900,000 children, with the majority ranging in age from three to four years old (Barnett & Belfield, 2006). The Head Start policy regarding parent involvement has created a phenomenon of changing parent-teacher organizations, a new outlook on home-schooling, an expanded commercial market of parent-directed activities to use with infants and toddlers (Morgan, 2007).

Healthy Families America serves parents of all income levels that are identified as at-risk for abuse and neglect, promoting positive parenting (The Education Begins, 2008). Introduced in 1992, home visitations and other services are offered to families in over 450 communities, within the United States and Canada, with a ninety percent acceptance rate (Healthy Families America).

The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is for families of all socio-economic backgrounds, many of which are low income, educates parents on how to empower themselves as their children's educators, enhancing children's early

school success (The Education Begins, 2008). Parents are provided with a set of carefully developed curriculum, books and materials designed to strengthen their children's cognitive skills, early literacy skills, social/emotional and physical development (The Home Instruction). This is an international program that started in Israel in 1969 as a research and demonstration project and since spread to other countries including Germany, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Canada, and has been in the United States since 1984 (The Home Instruction).

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) provides low-income, first time mothers on how to improve pregnancy outcomes, child health and development, and family economic self-sufficiency (The Education Begins, 2008). Visitations are conducted by a registered nurse beginning during pregnancy and continue through the child's second birthday. As recently as July, 2008, this program, which began in the 1970's, has been implemented in twenty-eight states, including Washington (The Nurse Family).

The Parent-Child Home Program, for low-income families, focuses on developing children's language and literacy skills and preparing them for academic success and empowers parents by enhancing parenting skills (The Education Begins, 2008). The target group for this particular program includes, but is not limited to families who do not have access to center-based early childhood or parenting programs, homeless families, families in which there is limited language stimulation at home, and families with multiple risk factors. Starting in 1965, the Parent-Child Home program can now be

located in 150 communities throughout the United States as well as three international locations, and helps to bridge the "preparation gap" by helping families challenged by poverty, limited education, language and literacy barriers, and other obstacles to school success prepare their children to enter school ready to learn (Parent-Child Home).

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is for parents of all income levels and empowers parents by increasing their knowledge of child development, and prepares children for school success (The Education Begins, 2008). The concept was developed in the 1970's, early childhood professionals suggested that a program to help parents understand their role in encouraging their child's development right from birth could help prepare children for school and life success. Such a program, available to all families, would help level the playing field for all children. Since 1985, PAT has been incorporated into all 50 states, China, Mexico, Belize, and Germany (Parents as Teachers).

All early childhood programs need to reflect the community they serve in order to be successful (Rivera, 2008). The first step that all public schools can take is to identify skills that are important to succeed in kindergarten and communicate these expectations to all parents and childcare providers (Protheroe, 2006). It is a necessity to "take full advantage of every opportunity to define for the community the importance of school readiness-the skills or stages of development we hope to see in a 5-year-old entering kindergarten" (Protheroe, 2006).

“When we view schooling as a continuum of learning-from pre-K through college-pre-K and kindergarten teachers become much more than babysitters and play becomes purposeful (Principal, 2008)

#### PARENT INVOLVEMENT

According to the Harvard Family Research Project, parenting and family processes are one of if not the strongest predictor of kids’ development and school and life success (The Education Begins, 2008). When parent and family involvement are part of a child’s educational experience, then there are increases in the school attendance, successful homework habits, and an overall more positive attitude about school (Prior & Gerard, 2007). Schooling for children of all ages requires the involvement of parents and other significant adults in a child’s education (Morgan, 2007). Parental involvement builds the foundation for formal education, which in turn creates a positive, successful educational experience and is also a predictor of how an adolescent will perform in school (School readiness helping, 2003). Engaging parents as their youngsters take first steps down the path of schooling is a critical factor (Principal, 2008). Children that have involved parents often do better academically and continue on to higher education, compared to their peers that have little or no parental involvement (School readiness helping, 2003). One way to avoid the problem of a student entering school behind is to ensure positive pre-kindergarten experiences ((Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008). Most educators agree that having a strong background of language,

pre-literacy skills, and social and emotional capacities is essential for school success (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008).

Parent involvement may easily mean quite different things to people. According to Hart and Risley's 2002 study, the role of families in early development indicated that a child's early language and literacy development, as well as their understanding of their capacity to learn, are shaped in the everyday interactions they have at home with the parents in the first few years (The Education Begins, 2008). It can mean advocacy; parents sitting on councils and committees, participating in the decisions and operation of schools. It can mean parents serving as classroom aides, accompanying a class on an outing or assisting teachers in a variety of other ways, either as volunteers or for wages. It can also conjure up images of teachers sending home notes to parents, or of parents working on bake sales and other projects that bring schools much needed support. Increasingly, parent involvement means parents initiating learning activities at home to improve their children's performance in school: reading to them, helping them with homework, playing educational games, discussing current events, and so on" (Prior & Gerard, 2007). The level and quality of parent involvement is also determined by the family's socioeconomic status. Directive strategies are commonly used by low-income and ethnic minority families, whereas inductive strategies, consisting of questions, explanations, and inferential reasoning are more likely to be used by middle-class and White families (Barbarin, Early, Clifford, Bryant, Frome, & Burchinal, 2008). Specifically



within the Latino community, there are several key points that parents must be made aware of: parents should assume the responsibility of educating their children, parents are their children's first and lifelong teachers, young children are not "just kids", all children can learn, school readiness requires intellectual, social, and emotional preparation, children should be heard, not just seen, and parental involvement is crucial to school success (Rivera, 2008).

#### THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The education system that is currently in place is not meeting the needs of the diverse population of students that are attending the schools. A number of different gaps exist that result in this phenomenon of low achievement. These include an opportunity gap, resource gap, readiness-to-learn gap, and a preparation gap of teachers constituting an overall education gap (A Plan To, 2008). "If this state requires all students to meet the same educational standards, we must also assume the responsibility to provide adequate resources to allow all students a reasonable opportunity to achieve those standards" (A Plan To, 2008). In order to close this gap, it will require more than simply implementing another program or two (A Plan To, 2008).

The difference in academic achievement between African American, American Indian, and Hispanic students and their white and Asian peers and the difference in academic achievement between students, whose families are of low-income, and their peers from middle and upper

income families. The academic achievement gap is further defined in terms of performance on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)/Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED). (From Where The, 2008, p 47).

One of the goals that has been created is teacher quality. This is especially important, because “consistent exposure to effective teachers can overcome obstacles to learning and even closing the achievement gap” (A Plan To, 2008). The No Child Left Behind Act ensures that all teachers are highly qualified, which includes teachers being diverse, culturally knowledgeable, and experienced (A Plan To, 2008).

Early learning is one of the key points that has been identified in helping to close the achievement gap. “Access to high-quality pre-kindergarten programs that emphasize vocabulary development and early literacy skills can do a great deal to narrow the achievement gap” (A Plan To, 2008). In Washington State in 2007, the number of African-American students attending Head Start were 1,434 and another 818 were enrolled in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (A Plan To, 2008).

State, school district, and school building leadership can help perpetuate the achievement gap, or it can be a powerful force for eliminating it. When school boards, superintendents and principals make closing the gap a top priority—and when they plan, allocate resources, and design

accountability measures to do so – they make progress (A Plan To, 2008, p 18).

Early childhood education has a long, steady history that has in fact had a great influence on today's working educational system. Many people contributed their knowledge and skills to give young children the opportunity to be educated in a system, which at the time had no place for them. From those actions, the idea of early childhood education grew and became what it is today, encompassing all ages beginning at birth. The advantages of an early childhood education last well into adulthood, producing active and productive citizens within the community as well as a strong family foundation for future generations. The skills that are earned at an early age are predictors of future achievement. Early childhood education looks very different throughout the world, but all quality programs have one common goal: give young children positive learning experiences at a young age to help them succeed in school. One key factor in the early childhood education process is parent involvement. Parents have the most influence and are role models for children. A strong family foundation is an excellent asset that goes hand in hand with a strong, successful educational experience. As parents and early childhood programs begin to reevaluate their roles and make positive changes within the educational system, the achievement gap will become less and less, resulting in a quality education for all students, in all schools regardless of location or socioeconomic status.

## CHAPTER III

### BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

The idea of Cub Club was created, in part, as a piece of Lion Elementary's school improvement plan. The other part being that many of the families that make up the school district are migrant workers, and have little or no access or knowledge about early childhood education such as preschool. As part of the school improvement plan, the Home-School Connection Team was created, and the focus of this particular team is to enhance and promote parent and community involvement within the school. It was this team that came up with the idea about getting parents and community members involved, at the earliest stage possible, within the school system. However, the Home-School Connection Team is comprised of certified teacher's, one from each grade kindergarten through sixth grade, and Educational Assistants, but it was difficult to determine a starting point, which ultimately led to the team asking the kindergarten teachers for input. As things began to evolve into what is now known as Cub Club, the kindergarten teachers volunteered to spearhead Cub Club, since this was their area of expertise, with assistance from the Home-School Connection Team. Cub Club was created for three reasons: to provide parents with information on skills their child should have before entering Kindergarten, to provide parents with tools to assist their child in preparing for kindergarten, and to make connections with families.

## PROJECT PROCEDURE

To begin the process of creating Cub Club, the kindergarten teachers, sat down with the principal and presented the idea. In order to find a starting point, it was requested that the kindergarten team travel to a neighboring school district and attend a session of the *READY! For Kindergarten* program. It was decided that the team would attend the four to five year old session, since that was going to be the focus of Cub club. Originally, this was the program that the team wanted to implement within their own school district, unfortunately due to funding this was not possible, so modifications were made. The morning began with the team attending the introduction portion of the session, which explained the philosophy behind the importance of the program. Once this thirty minute class was completed, the team moved on to the actual class. It was here that the team was introduced to the learning targets. Targets are provided in great detail for each age group. As the team sat, took notes, and spoke with the other teachers a plan was beginning to form.

Within a short amount of time, the Lion Elementary kindergarten teachers sat down and looked at the binder that was given to them from the other program. An informational letter was created along with a registration form. After getting approval to send the letter home, work on the actual Cub Club sessions began. The first step was looking at the targets. It was agreed that these targets should be the focus and Cub Club should revolve around those. The targets were looked at and divided into general

skills, reading skills, and math skills. Once the targets were established, teachers looked at how and what could be used to teach the families how to appropriately and consistently use those skills at home. One idea that was agreed upon, was to create a packet of materials that families could take home and begin implementing the activities right away. Some of the materials included in the packets were alphabet flashcards, rhyming flashcards, number flashcards, dice, playing cards, crayons, pencils, pencil grips, and scissors.

Rather than looking at all of the targets in at once, the team decided to concentrate on the first set of targets, consisting of reading, writing, math, social and emotional, and fine motor skills. These were simple and less complex than the others that would be presented in the second and third sessions. The same process was followed when putting together the information for the reading and math sessions. Both of these sets of targets were based on specific skills that are required within the kindergarten classroom. A parent survey was also created, in order to get feedback from the families about Cub Club. It was very important to the kindergarten teachers to meet the needs of the families and to address any concerns they had.

It was also decided that Cub Club needed something to entice the families of Lion Elementary to attend. That is when the team decided to ask various community businesses for their help. Academic based prizes or monetary donations were asked for, and it was explained to the businesses the reason behind the request. Children were

going to put their names in a drawing, and at the end of each session five names would be chosen. The response by the community was overwhelming, and provided enough prizes for each child attending to go home with a prize.

Since reading is such a large focus in the educational system, the team also wanted to allow parents the chance to begin building a home library for their families. This was going to be done using the resources the teachers had at hand. Fortunately, there were several cases of unused books from a previous reading program that had been offered to the kindergarten team to give to their current students, so it was decided that this was a perfect way to encourage reading at home. Since a majority of the families are Spanish speaking, the idea of having books written in Spanish should also be available. After talking with one another, the teachers determined that the Parent Teacher Association would be a logical choice to request the money for purchasing books. The PTA was approached and the team was given one-hundred fifty dollars to purchase books for all of the children attending Cub Club.

Since it was very important for the children to also be a part of Cub Club, some form of daycare was also needed. Knowing that young children do not have a large attention span, and that many families have other children who would also be attending Cub Club, the idea for daycare was presented. A separate kindergarten classroom would be used for all of the children to go to during the presentation portion of each session, then when it was time to actually partake in the activities, the appropriate aged

children would join their parents. The district high school was contacted and asked if any of those students needed to complete community service requirements and were willing to help with the Cub Club daycare. Again, the response was wonderful and several eager students volunteered their services for all three Cub Club sessions.

#### PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The idea of creating Cub Club came about by the kindergarten teachers at Lion Elementary consistently noticing the lack of readiness each fall when school began. Students were coming into the classroom with little to no phonemic awareness and/or basic mathematical knowledge.

During the planning phase of Cub Club, the decision was made to offer this program only to those students who would be attending Lion Elementary the next school year. Staffing and funding were next on the list. Cub Club was staffed, on a volunteer basis, by the kindergarten teachers and Home-School Connection Team of Lion Elementary. The original *Ready! For Kindergarten* program was funded through a grant from Washington State University several years prior, and that was not a feasible option. Each team member went out into the community and gathered donations from the local businesses and organizations. The last part of the planning stage was to put together the presentation. Cub Club would be held in three different sessions, the first consisting of an overview and expectations of kindergarten at Lion Elementary, the second focused on reading and the third had a focus of math.



Throughout the completion of the presentation portion, invitations were also sent out to those siblings of current Lion Elementary students. The invitations consisted of a short informational letter with all three dates and a pre-registration form to fill out and return to the school. Also provided was a telephone number to call and register as well. Within a week of each of the meetings, a reminder postcard was also mailed out to each family, again inviting them to Cub Club. Each meeting was held within the kindergarten classrooms, so families could become familiar with surroundings and relationships could begin to form between teachers, students, and parents.

It was also decided that Cub Club would be more successful if parents were given materials that were ready to take home and could be used immediately. For each of the sessions, a packet was to be prepared with a copy of the presentation and all of the materials that would be necessary to engage the families in a more educational form of game playing. At the end of each session a child would receive a book to take home and read, as well as a prize, which consisted of educational materials. At the end of each session, parents were going to be asked to complete a questionnaire so the kindergarten teachers could use the feedback to make adjustments and modifications for each upcoming Cub Club session.

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

To begin the implementation process, the kindergarten team traveled to another school district, who had implemented the *Ready! For Kindergarten* program several years earlier and was very successful. This particular program offers classes from birth to age five, and it was decided that the most beneficial would be the four to five year old class (those who were going to be entering kindergarten the next school year). After attending the class and speaking with the teachers, it was then decided that Lion Elementary could create a similar program, however on a much smaller scale.

Invitations, registration forms, and a short informational letter were sent out to all perspective Lion Elementary students who would be attending the next school year. Contact information for all kindergarten teachers was also given; so further questions could be answered, if needed. Approximately three days before the first Cub club session, a reminder post card, with the Lion Elementary logo, was mailed as well.

The first Cub Club meeting was an overview of the expectations in general at the kindergarten level. Basic information was given, such as identifying ten letters in the alphabet, identifying numbers, colors, and shapes, is able to hold a pencil with the correct grip, can focus attention for a minimum of ten minutes at a time, and is capable of sharing with other students. Knowing that some parents were very surprised by these expectations, the kindergarten teachers stressed that the reason behind Cub Club is to help parents teach their children how to get to this point. Many ideas and

suggestions were given to parents on how to accomplish these goals with everyday activities, but most importantly doing the suggested activities together.

The second Cub Club meeting was designed to focus strictly on reading skills. Parents were introduced to the phrase “phonemic awareness” which is the understanding that spoken language is made up of sounds, and the ability to blend, segment, and manipulate sounds. The targets were given to parents, in parent friendly terminology, so parents and students were not completely overwhelmed. Several activities were introduced, modeled by the kindergarten teachers and then parents were encouraged to play the same games/activities with their child. All of the activities that were shown are actual activities used within the kindergarten classrooms at Lion Elementary. Teachers moved throughout the room assisting and answering questions when needed.

The third Cub Club meeting had a focus on math. The first part of this was to go over the targets, as previously done in the other two meetings. Math targets included counting, recognizing numbers, recognizing shapes and colors, and identifying a simple pattern. Again it was stressed that parents should not worry if their child could not accomplish these targets; there was still time to prepare them for kindergarten. Several of the suggestions given to parents included flashcards to help with number recognition, cooking together and daily activities such as setting the table and laundry. Parents were also given several games that they could play with their child, all of which are used

within the kindergarten classrooms. One at time, the games were introduced and modeled by the staff, and then the children were brought in from the other room to play the games with their parents. Teachers assisted where needed and answered questions when possible.

## CHAPTER IV

Cub Club was designed to target, but not limited to, families with little or no access to early childhood education, as well as to get families more involved with their children's education. It was created by the kindergarten teachers of Lion Elementary, based on another successful program called *READY! For Kindergarten*, which has been in a neighboring school district for several years. Cub Club introduces parents and families to the kindergarten classroom and provides tools to help prepare their child for academic success. Parents were given information about the reasoning behind Cub Club, as well as targets in specific academic areas to try to accomplish before their child enters kindergarten.

Due to the overwhelming amount of information, Cub Club was divided into three sessions, the first being an overview and philosophy behind the creation of Cub Club. In particular, the targets for this session included reading, writing, math, social and emotional, and fine motor skills that are needed upon entering a kindergarten classroom. Parents were given strategies and ideas for all academic areas, to use on a daily basis in everyday activities.

The second session centered on phonemic awareness. Since many parents were not familiar with this particular term, it was also defined for them, so they could better understand and familiarize themselves with terms that would be used throughout their child's educational career. Activities that were introduced during this time dealt with

singing songs, reading books, rhyming games, counting syllables, listening for and identifying beginning sounds of words, identifying uppercase and lowercase letters, and beginning writing skills.

The third session stressed the importance of math skills that were needed in a kindergarten classroom at Lion Elementary. Targets for this session included identifying numbers, colors, and shapes, counting, creating simple patterns, and matching a number of objects to a specific number. Games introduced during this session were memory (using variety of items and objects), dominoes, as well as various dice and card games.

Teachers at Lion Elementary developed the specific targets based on the needs of their particular student demographics. A large number of the students attending Lion Elementary are English Language Learners, along with a majority of those coming from migrant families. There are three ultimate goals of Cub Club: to introduce families to the kindergarten classroom, to mentor parents on how to effectively work with their children with fun academic focus, and to begin to form positive, ongoing relationships between the families and teachers.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

The idea of early childhood education is not a new radical type of thinking; in fact it has been part of educational theory since the 1600's. However, it has recently come to light how substantial it truly is in closing the achievement gap and preparing students not only for the demands of the educational system, but also better prepares them to become productive members of society. Early childhood education was not always recognized, but many prominent members of the educational world worked and strived to make early childhood education noticed and accepted by society.

School readiness is determined by several factors, including the family dynamic and experiences that have occurred during the youngest years of life. Physical, social emotional and cognitive needs must be met in order for students to develop appropriately. If any of these needs are not met, then a child's development can be hindered, therefore impacting school readiness. Language exposure, parent involvement, and life experiences are all factors that contribute to the school readiness of a child.

Teachers at Lion Elementary determined there was a need to increase parent involvement and communication, and kindergarten readiness. Cub Club was created by those same teachers, which heavily promoted the importance of preparing children for school. Not only was it important to have children ready for school, but it was also

important to teach parents how to be effective teachers themselves, outside of a structured school setting. Cub Club was designed for incoming kindergarten students, and presented well in advance of them entering kindergarten so they could be better prepared. Three separate sessions were designed, each focusing on specific targets that were identified and defined by the kindergarten teachers. Cub Club was only offered to students who would be attending Lion Elementary, and was beneficial for all involved.

The entire purpose of creating Cub Club was to make a positive, long lasting connection with families, as well as to make parents aware that kindergarten has a very meaningful purpose in today's society, and it is not as what they remembered as a child themselves. It was very important for parents to understand that they are their child's first teacher and everything that is said and done within the family unit has a direct impact on their child, ultimately effecting their academic success either in a positive or negative way. It was also determined that many families do not have the knowledge or capabilities on how to help their child at home, so Cub Club is a way to help parents become teachers themselves, and have an academic focus in everyday daily life.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Many conclusions can be drawn from researching Early Childhood Education and creating and implementing Cub Club. The most pertinent conclusion is that early childhood programs do work. Although many programs offer a variety of things, they all



have one thing in common: to educate young children and prepare them for a successful academic career.

When looking back at the effectiveness of Cub Club, a conclusion that can be made is that if students enter kindergarten with the proper skills and are prepared, then they will continue to flourish and be successful. Of course, this is also assuming that parents and families have a positive impact on the child. The need for quality early childhood education programs is in demand, based upon various research findings and specifically looking at the students who have attended Cub Club in the past. A majority of the students that did attend Cub Club or had another form of early childhood education (such as preschool), entered kindergarten prepared, and has continued to make steady academic progress.

#### IMPLICATIONS

There are many implications of Cub Club. One implication is that by creating, preparing, and teaching Cub Club, it shows that the kindergarten teachers saw a need for early childhood education and interventions, and worked hard to make it possible to provide families with the essential tools to prepare their children for kindergarten. Overall, it shows that the kindergarten teachers and Lion Elementary are committed to working together, hand in hand, with families.

One long term implication would be that as Cub Club continues to grow and flourish, the achievement gap that is very noticeable and persistent will begin to shrink

and become less dominant in the classroom. As families become more aware of the rigorous standards set by Washington State, the need for more early childhood programs will become evident and will hopefully be accessible to all families, regardless of socio-economic status or age. Currently, the programs offered have age limits and are not offered for infants, which is unfortunate because those are the years that are often overlooked.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the previous research, several recommendations could be presented. First and foremost, the school district should consider programs such as Cub Club to be an effective teaching tool and do all they can to promote the positive outcomes and long term benefits. Research has shown that by offering varying types of early childhood programs, the achievement gap dissipates and becomes smaller and smaller. Along the same lines, individual schools need to reach out to their families and make connections early on. Money is always an important factor and Lion Elementary need to set aside appropriate funds to support Cub Club and all of the people that put in much time and effort in order to make it a success.

A second recommendation would be that Cub Club be transformed into a larger program, requiring more input and assistance from all staff members. Many staff members at the school have little knowledge about what kindergarten is truly like, and it would be extremely beneficial for all teachers to see precisely what academics

students begin their educational careers with. Not only would it benefit the teachers, as a group, but it would also signify to families that Lion Elementary is committed to working together and providing the best education possible for their children.

Lastly, parents should be required to attend, at the very minimum, one session of Cub Club. Early childhood education has been around for hundreds of years, and it has been proven that parents are a child's first teacher. Cub Club was not created to tell parents that they are not doing a sufficient job; it was created to help parents refine what they are already teaching their children. If parents are able to gain the necessary knowledge in how to help their children at home, then the more prepared the child and family will be, when that child walks through the classroom door on the first day of school.

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APPENDIX

Cub Club

The following are the materials and information given to families who attended Cub Club. The informational letter was designed to inform families about Cub Club and to invite them to the sessions that were going to be held at Lion Elementary. All of the information that is presented or given as a take home item is available in English and Spanish. The three PowerPoint presentations contain all of the information that was presented during each session. Also included is a copy of the assessment that is given to the children to determine what skills and knowledge they currently have, but it also shows parents precisely what skills need to be addressed in the months before the first day of kindergarten. The surveys were given to all participants to complete, as a form of feedback for the presenting teachers.

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December 15, 2008

Dear Parents/Guardian,

According to our records, you have a child who will be attending Kindergarten during the 2009-2010 school year. We would like to share with you an exciting program, "Cub Club", that we are beginning at Lutacaga this January. The program is designed to assist incoming Kindergarten students and their families in getting prepared for the upcoming school year. We will be holding monthly meetings in January, February and March. During the meetings, you will have the opportunity to learn about activities that you can be doing at home to help prepare your child for Kindergarten. At each meeting, you will receive materials that you can take home to use with your child. There will also be opportunities for participants to win additional materials and books to use at home. Daycare will be provided during each meeting and we encourage you to bring your child so he/she has the opportunity to meet and get acquainted with the Kindergarten teachers. **The following are the dates for our "Cub Club" meetings:**

- **Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup> -6:00-7:00 p.m.**
- **Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup> -6:00-7:00 p.m.**
- **Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> -6:00-7:00 p.m.**

If you are interested in participating in the Lutacaga Elementary "Cub Club", please return the attached registration form to Lutacaga by **Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>**. We are looking forward to meeting you and your family and working with you to help your child have a successful and exciting first year of school. If you have any questions, please contact Mandy Moore at 488-9669.

Sincerely,

Lutacaga Kindergarten Staff &  
Home/School Connection Team

diciembre 15, 2008

Estimados Padres/Guardianes,

Según nuestros archivos, usted tiene un niño/a que estará atendiendo al Kindergarten durante el año escolar 2007-2008. Nos gustaría compartir con ustedes un programa emocionante, "Club de los Cachorros", que vamos a comenzar aquí en Lutacaga esta primavera. El programa esta diseñado para ayudar a los estudiantes que van a entrar al kindergarten y a sus familias a comenzar a prepararse para el próximo año escolar. Vamos a tener juntas mensualmente en Marzo, Abril y Mayo. Durante las juntas, ustedes tendrán la oportunidad de aprender sobre actividades que ustedes pueden hacer en casa para ayudar a preparar a sus niños para el Kindergarten. En cada junta, ustedes recibirán materiales que ustedes pueden llevar a casa y utilizarlos con sus niños. Habrá también oportunidades para los participantes de ganar mas materiales y libros para que los utilicen en casa. Se proveerá Cuidado para los Niños durante cada junta y les animamos a que traigan a sus niños ellos tendrán la oportunidad de juntarse y conocer a las maestras del Kindergarten.

**Las fechas siguientes son para las juntas del "Club de los cachorros":**

- **Lunes, 12 de enero — 6:00-7:00 p.m.**
- **Lunes, 9 de febrero - 6:00-7:00 p.m.**
- **Lunes, 23 de marzo - 6:00-7:00 p.m.**

Si ustedes están interesados en participar en el "Club de los Cachorros" en la Primaria Lutacaga, por favor regresen la forma de matriculación adjunta a Lutacaga para el **Miércoles, 7 de enero**. Esperamos reunirnos con ustedes y su familia y trabajar con ustedes para que sus niños tengan un primer año escolar exitoso y emocionante. Si tienen preguntas, por favor póngase en contacto con Mandy Moore al 488-9669.

Sinceramente,

El personal del Kindergarten de  
Lutacaga y el Equipo de Conexiones  
Escuela/Hogar

# Cub Club Registration



Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Will you need daycare?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes and I will be bringing \_\_\_\_\_ children.

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like information about the  
READY! For Kindergarten program.

# Inscripcion para el club de cachorros



Nombre del niño/a \_\_\_\_\_

Nombre de Padre \_\_\_\_\_

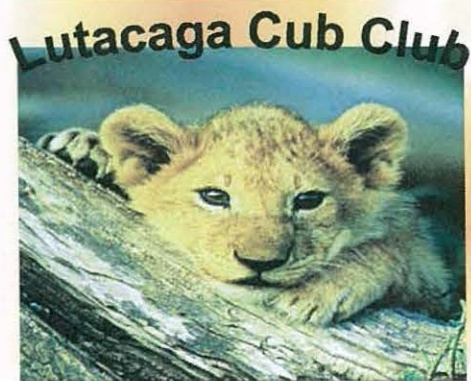
Número de teléfono \_\_\_\_\_

¿Necesitaras cuidado de niños?

\_\_\_\_\_ Si, voy a traer \_\_\_\_\_ niños.

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ Si, me gustaria información sobre el programa READY! For Kindergarten.



### Why was the Cub Club created?

- To provide parents with information on skills their child should have before entering Kindergarten.
- To provide parents with tools to assist their child in preparing for Kindergarten.
- To make connections with families.

### Reading/Writing Targets

- Knows 10 letter names and sounds
- Knows 5-10 nursery rhymes or songs
  - Identify words that rhyme
  - Writes first name

### Math Targets

- Knows basic colors
- Recognizes and draws basic shapes
  - Counts to 10
  - Recognizes numbers 0-10
  - Extends a pattern
- Matches number of objects to a number

### Fine Motor Skill Targets

- Holds a pencil correctly
- Holds and uses scissors correctly
- Copy and trace shapes, letters, numbers

### Social/Emotional Targets

- Plays cooperatively with others
- Follows 3-step directions
- Focuses on a task for 5 minutes

### How can I help my child meet these targets?

- Read with your child for 20 minutes a day
- Talk with your child using a wide range of vocabulary in kid friendly language
  - Play games
  - Cook together
  - Sing songs



### Why is it important to read with my child 20 minutes a day?

- Provides one-on-one time with your child
  - Builds vocabulary
- Provides reading experiences
- Promotes interest in reading

### How do I read with my child?

- Sit next to your child or with child on your lap
  - Talk about the pictures
  - Ask questions
- Make comments about the story and/or pictures
- Point out the cover and the back of the book
- Model how to read: left to right, top to bottom
  - Have your child "read" the book to you

### How do I build my child's vocabulary?

- Talk, talk, talk, talk
- Talk about pictures and books
- Cut pictures out of magazines by category (transportation, people, animals, etc.)
  - Read books

### Activity:

#### Where is your child now?

- **What skills does your child already have?**
- **What skills does he/she still need to practice?**

### •The next Cub Club meeting will be on:

February 9, 2009

6:00-7:00 p.m.

Room 10

#### Focus:

- Phonemic Awareness
- Building reading skills

### Thank you for coming!

Please fill out the evaluation and don't forget to pick up your materials before you leave.

If you have any additional questions or concerns please feel free to contact any of the Kindergarten teachers at 488-9669.

Mandy Moore

Charity Michel

Karen Rickenbach

Guille Garza

Charee Gilbert

## Club de Cachorros



### Porque fue creado el Club de Cachorros?

- Para dar padres informacion de las habilidades que su hijo debe de poder hacer antes de entrar a kinder.
- Para dar padres arramientos para preparar a sus hijos para Kinder.
- Para hacer conexiones entre familias y las maestras de kinder

### Metas de Lectura/Escritura

- Saber 10 letras y sonidos
- Saber 10 cantos o rimas de ninos
- Identificar palabras que riman
- Escribir su primer nombre

### Metas de Matematicas

- Saber colores basicos
- Reconocer y dibujar formas basicas
  - Contar a 10
- Reconocer numeros 0-10
  - Extender un patron
- Iguala numero de objetos a un numero

### Habilidades de Motrices Finos

- Poder detener un lapiz
- Poder detener y usar tijeras correctamente
- Poder copiar y trazar letras, formas y numeros

### Metas Sociales y Emociales

- Juega cooperativamente con otros ninos
  - Sigue direcciones de 3 pasos
- Puede concentrarse en trabajos de 5 minutos

### Como puedo ayudar a mi hijo alcanzar estas metas?

- Leer con su hijo diariamente por 20 minutos
- Hablar con su hijo usando una variedad de vocabulario apropiado para ninos
  - Jugar juegos
  - Cocinar juntos
  - Cantar canciones

### Porque es importante leer con mi hijo 20 minutos?

- Le da tiempo 1 a 1 con su hijo
- Construye vocabulario
- Le da experiencias de lectura
- Promoviene interes en la lectura

### Como debo de leer con mi hijo?

- Sientase con el enseguida
- Habla sobre los dibujos
- Preguntale preguntas
- Explicale lo que es la portada y contraportada
- Deja que su hijo le "lee" el cuento
- Modela como leer: de izquierda a la derecha, de arriba hacia abajo

### Como puedo desarrollar el vocabulario de mi hijo?

- Hablar, hablar, hablar
- Habla sobre dibujos y libros
- Corta dibujos de revistas por categoria (transportacion, gente, animales, etc.)
- Lee libros

### Actividad

#### Donde esta su hijo ahorita academicamente?

#### •Que habilidades ya tienen?

#### •En cuales habilidades necesitan mas practica?

#### •La siguiente junta sera:

Febrero 9, 2009

6:00-7:00 p.m.

Salon 10

#### Enfoque:

- Conciencia Fonemica
- Construyendo habilidades de lectura

#### Gracias por Venir!

Favor de llenar la evaluacion, no se le olvide recojer sus materiales antes de irse.

Si tiene preguntas adicionales. Favor de comunicarse con una de las maestras de Kinder-488-9669.

Mandy Moore

Charity Michel

Guille Garza(Se habla espanol)

Karen Rickenbach

Charee Gilbert



Where Is My Child Now?

\_\_\_\_ 1. What is your name? (1 Point) \_\_\_\_\_ / No Response

(Child may say first, middle, last or first name and two given last names- regardless this is worth 1 point)

\_\_\_\_ 2. How old are you? (1 Point) \_\_\_\_\_ / No Response

\_\_\_\_ 3. When is your birthday? (1 Point) \_\_\_\_\_ / No Response (We are looking for month and day, but if child gives month, day and year- super!)

\_\_\_\_ 4. Recognizes colors: (9 Points) Red Yellow Blue Brown Green Pink Orange Black Purple White Grey

\_\_\_\_ 5. Recognizes shapes: (6 Points) Triangle Rectangle Square Circle Heart Star

\_\_\_\_ 6. Recognizes numerals: (10 Points) 5 8 1 3 4 6 9 10 2 7

\_\_\_\_ 7. Recognizes A/B Pattern (2 Points)      (Show the child the A/B pattern on the student sheet and ask which animal comes next.)

\_\_\_\_ 8. Names the following letters of the alphabet (26 Points)

A	E	H	K	M	R	S	W	Z	C	D	I	J	N	P	T	V	Y	B	F	G	L	O	Q	U	X

\_\_\_\_ 9. Names the following sounds of the alphabet (26 Points)

S	E	M	A	D	N	T	W	I	H	C	R	K	L	O	B	G	F	U	Y	P	V	J	X	Q	Z
																								U	

\_\_\_\_ 10. Rote count to ten. (10 Points) \_\_\_\_\_  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
 (Circle where the child ends) ... + \_\_\_\_\_ (Write the number the child stops at)

\_\_\_\_ 11. Child writes his/her name: (2 Points)

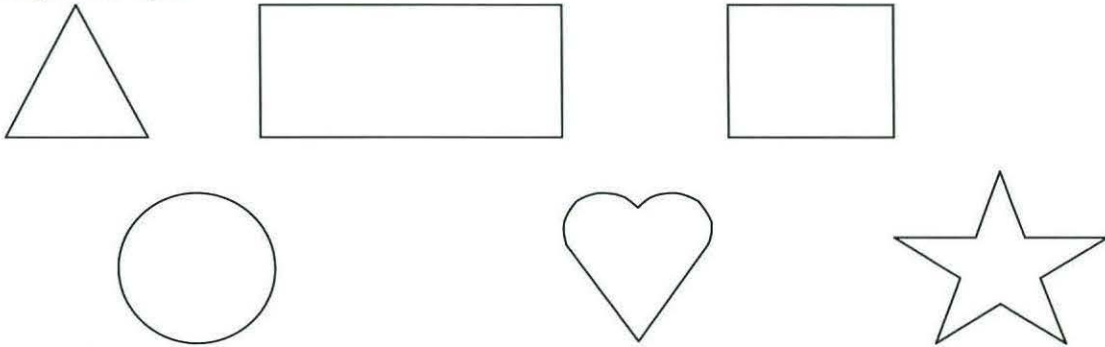
First Name (1 Point)

Last Name (1 Point)

Recognizes colors



Recognizes shapes



Recognizes numerals

5    8    1    3    4    6    9    10    2    7



\_\_\_\_\_ (Tell the child you are going to do a pattern. Say cat, dog, cat, dog, which animal comes next?)

Letter Naming (Please ask the child to try to identify all the letters even if he/she misses several in a row. He/she might know some toward the middle or end.)

A    E    H    K    M    R    S    W    Z    C    D    I    J  
 N    P    T    V    Y    B    F    G    L    O    Q    U  
 X

Letter Sounds (Please say the name of the letter for the child and ask him/her to give you the sound the letter makes.)

S    E    M    A    D    N    T    W    I    H    C    R  
 K    L    O    B    G    F    U    Y    P    V    J    X  
 QU    Z

¿Donde está mi Niño/a ahora?

\_\_\_\_ 1. ¿Cual es tu nombre? (1 Punto) \_\_\_\_\_ / No Respondió

(el niño/a puede decir su nombre, nombre del medio, apellido o su nombre con dos apellidos – solo contará por 1 punto)

\_\_\_\_ 2. ¿Que edad tienes? (1 Punto) \_\_\_\_\_ / No Respondió

\_\_\_\_ 3. ¿Cuando cumples años? (1 Punto) \_\_\_\_\_ / No Respondió (Queremos que diga el mes y el día, pero si el niño o la niña dice mes, día y año- fantástico!)

\_\_\_\_ 4. Reconoce colores: (11 Puntos) Rojo Amarillo azul Café Verde Rosa  
Anaranjado Negro Morado Blanco Gris

\_\_\_\_ 5. Reconoce las figuras: (6 Puntos) Triángulo Rectángulo Cuadrado Circulo  
Corazón Estrella

\_\_\_\_ 6. Reconoce los números: (10 Puntos) 5 8 1 3 4 6  
9 10 2 7

\_\_\_\_ 7. Reconoce Patrón A/B (2 Puntos)      (Muéstrale al niño/a el patrón A/B en el papel del niño/a y pregúntale cual animal sigue.)

\_\_\_\_ 8. Nombra las siguientes letras del alfabeto (26 Puntos)

A	E	H	K	M	R	S	W	Z	C	D	I	J	N	P	T	V	Y	B	F	G	L	O	Q	U	X

\_\_\_\_ 9. Nombra los siguientes sonidos del alfabeto (26 Puntos)

S	E	M	A	D	N	T	W	I	H	C	R	K	L	O	B	G	F	U	Y	P	V	J	X	Q	Z
																								U	

\_\_\_\_ 10. Cuenta hasta el diez. (10 Puntos) \_\_\_\_\_

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Circula donde el niño/a termine) ... + \_\_ (Escriba el ultimo numero donde el niño/a termina de contar.)

\_\_\_\_ 11. El niño o niña escribe su nombre: (2 Puntos)

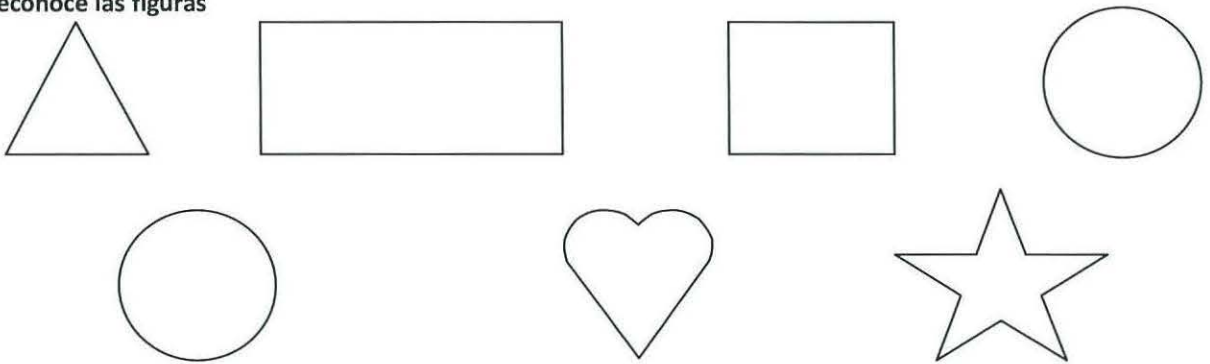
Primer Nombre (1 Punto)

Apellido (1 Punto)

Reconoce colores



Reconoce las figuras



Reconoce los números

5      8      1      3      4      6      9      10      2      7



\_\_\_\_\_ (Diga al niño/a que va a hacer un patrón. Diga gato, perro, gato, perro ¿Cual animal sigue?)

**Nombres de las letras (Por favor pregunte al niño/a que trate de identificar todas las letras, aun cuando él o ella falle en varias letras en una línea. El o ella puede saber algunas letras hacia el medio o al final.)**

A    E    H    K    M    R    S    W    Z    C    D    I    J  
 N    P    T    V    Y    B    F    G    L    O    Q    U  
 X

**Sonidos de las letras (Por favor diga al niño/a el nombre de la letra y pida que le diga el sonido que la letra hace.)**

S    E    M    A    D    N    T    W    I    H    C    R  
 K    L    O    B    G    F    U    Y    P    V    J    X  
 QU   Z

January 12, 2009

**"Cub Club" Evaluation**

Please answer the following questions. 1=no; 2=somewhat; 3=yes

1. **After participating in tonight's meeting, do you understand what your child is expected to know or do before entering kindergarten?**

1                      2                      3

2. **Do you feel you have received enough information to begin helping your child in achieving these expectations?**

1                      2                      3

3. **Will you commit to reading with your child for 20 minutes each day?**

Yes                      No                      Maybe

4. **Are you planning on attending the next meeting?**

Yes                      No                      Maybe

5. **What comments, questions, or concerns do you have that we can discuss at the next meeting?**



Enero 12, 2009

**Evaluación del "Club de Cachorros"**

Favor a responder las siguientes preguntas. 1=no, 2= un poco, 3=si

- 1. Después de participar en esta junta, entiendes lo que su hijo debe de saber antes de entrar a kinder?**

1                      2                      3

- 2. Sientes que has recibido suficientes información para ayudar a su hijo alcanzar estas metas?**

1                      2                      3

- 3. Podrás dedicar 20 minutos todos los días para leer con su hijo**

1                      2                      3

- 4. Estas planeando venir a la próxima junta?**

1                      2                      3

- 5. Tiene comentarios, preguntas o preocupaciones que podemos discutir en la próxima reunion?**

## Lutacaga Cub Club



## Phonemic Awareness

What is it?

- ✓ Understanding that spoken language is made up of sounds.
- ✓ The ability to blend, segment, and manipulate sounds.

## In other words . . .

Students who are developing phonemic awareness can:

- ✓ Identify words that rhyme
- ✓ Clap the number of syllables in a word (i.e. monkey=mon-key)
- ✓ Manipulate words (i.e. Say "rainbow" without "bow" or Say "Sam" without "S")
- ✓ Identify words that begin with the same sound (i.e. mop, dog, man)

## Activities For Developing Phonemic Awareness:

- ✓ Singing songs
- ✓ Reading and reciting nursery rhymes
- ✓ Playing games

## Activity 1

✓ **Listening Cans:** Fill pairs of empty pop cans with different items, such as beans, popcorn, pasta, beads, coins, etc. Cover the opening of the cans with tape so the items will not fall out. Put a matching mark on the cans that contain the same materials. Have your child "shake" the can to determine which cans sound the same.

## Activity 2

✓ **Not It! With Rhyming Cards:** Place 3 cards face up. Two of the cards should have pictures that rhyme. The third card should not. Have your child help you name each of the three cards and then choose the picture that doesn't belong.

### Activity 3

✓ **Concentration w/Rhyming Picture Cards:** Place 4 pairs of rhyming picture cards face down. Turn over 2 cards. If the cards rhyme, keep the pair and turn over 2 more cards. If they do not rhyme, turn them back over and the next player gets a turn. You can make the game more difficult by adding more pairs of picture cards

### Activity 4

✓ **Counting Syllables:** Say a word or show your child a picture card and ask them to "clap" or "hop" the number of parts they hear in the word.  
(i.e. rainbow=rain-bow, hamburger=ham-bur-ger, cat=cat)

### Activity 5

✓ **Beginning Sound Match:** Give your child 2 words, i.e. Sam, sun. Have your child repeat the 2 words and determine if they begin with the same sound. Repeat the activity with pairs of words that don't begin with the same sound. It may help your child to look in a mirror while doing this activity.

### Letter Names & Sounds

- ✓ Upon entering Kindergarten, your child should know ten letter names and sounds
- ✓ There are fun activities you can do with your child to help them accomplish this.

### Activity 6

✓ **Concentration w/Letter Cards:** Place 4-6 pairs of letter cards face down. Turn over 2 cards. If the cards match, keep the pair and turn over 2 more cards. If the cards don't match, turn them face down and the next player gets a turn.

### Activity 7

✓ **Make It! Write It!:** Using play dough, shaving cream, or sand, have your child practice making and writing the letters of the alphabet, especially the letters in their name.

## Activity 8

✓ **Spin a Letter:** Add 4-6 letters to the spinner. Take turns spinning the spinner to move along the game board. The player who gets the end first wins. Change the letters on the spinner as your child learns them.

## Kindergarten Round-Up

Hiawatha Elementary

4:00p.m.-7:00 p.m.

**April 25th**

Last names A-L

**April 27th**

Last names M-Z

The next Cub Club meeting will be on:

**March 23, 2009**

**6:00-7:00 p.m.**

**Room 10**

Focus:

Math

**Thank you for coming!**

Please fill out the evaluation and don't forget to pick up your materials before you leave.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any of the Kindergarten teachers at 488-9669.

Mandy Moore

Charity Michel

Karen Rickenbach

Guille Garza

Charee Gilbert

## El Club de los cachorros de Lutacaga



## Conocimiento de Fonética

¿Que es esto?

- ✓ Entender que el lenguaje hablado esta hecho de sonidos.
- ✓ La habilidad de mezclar, segmentos, y manipular sonidos.

## En Otras Palabras . . .

Los estudiantes que están desarrollando conocimiento en fonética pueden:

- ✓ Identificar palabras que riman
- ✓ Aplaudir según el número de sílabas en la palabra (Ej. monkey=mon-key)
- ✓ Manipular palabras (Ej. Decir "rainbow" sin "bow" o Decir "Sam" sin "S")
- ✓ Identificar palabras que comienzan con el mismo sonido (ej. mop, dog, man)

## Actividades para Desarrollar Conocimiento de Fonética:

- ✓ Cantar Canciones
- ✓ Leer y recitar versos en rima
- ✓ Jugar juegos

## Actividad 1

✓ **Latas para Escuchar:** Llene un par de latas vacías de las de refresco con diferentes artículos, tal como frijoles, palomitas de maíz, pasta, cuentas, monedas, etc. Cubra la apertura de la lata con cinta adhesiva para que los artículos no se tiren. Ponga una marca en los que son iguales y contengan el mismo material. Haga que su niño/a "agite" la lata para determinar que lata se escucha igual.

## Actividad 2

✓ **Tarjetas con Rimas ¡No es!** Ponga 3 tarjetas boca arriba. Dos de las tarjetas deben tener dibujos que rimen. La tercera tarjeta no debe tener. Haga que su niño/a le ayude a nombrar cada una de las tres tarjetas y luego elijir el dibujo que no pertenece.

### Actividad 3

✓ **Concentración con/Tarjetas con Dibujo que Riman:** Ponga 4 pares de tarjetas con dibujo que riman boca abajo. De vuelta a 2 tarjetas. Si las tarjetas riman, quédese con el par y de vuelta a 2 mas. Si no riman, deles vuelta orta vez y el siguiente jugador toma su turno. Ustedes pueden hacer que el juego sea mas dificil agregando mas pares de tarjetas con dibujo.

### Actividad 4

✓ **Contar las Silabas:** Diga una palabra o muestre a su niño/a una tarjeta con dibujo y pídale que "aplauda" o "salte" el numero de partes que ellos puedan escuchar en la palabra.  
(Ej. rainbow=rain-bow, hamburger=ham-bur-ger, cat=cat)

### Actividad 5

✓ **Igualar los Sonidos del Principio:** Dele a su niño/a 2 palabras, ej. Sam, sun. Haga que su nino/a repita las 2 palabras y determine si ellas cominzan con el mismo sonido. Repita la actividad con un par palabras que no comiencen con el mismo sonido. Tal vez sea de ayuda para su niño/a verse en un espejo mientras hace esta actividad.

### Nombres de Letras y Sonidos

- ✓ Al entrar en el Kindergarten, su niño/a debe saber diez nombres de letras y sonidos
- ✓ Hay actividades divertidas que ustedes pueden hacer con sus niños para ayudarlos a lograr esto.

### Actividad 6

✓ **Concentración con/Tarjetas de Letras:** Ponga 4-6 pares de tarjetas con letras boca abajo. De vuelta a 2 tarjetas. Si las tarjetas son iguales, quédese con el par y de vuelta a otras 2 tarjetas. Si las tarjetas no son iguales, pongalas boca abajo y el siguiente jugador toma su turno.

### Actividad 7

✓ **Hágalo! ¡Escríbalo!** Usando play dough(masa moldeadora), espuma para rasurar, o arena, haga que su niño/a practique formando las letras del abecedario, especialmente las letras en su nombre.

### Actividad 8

✓Gire una Letra: Agregue 4-6 letras al girador. Tomen turnos en el girador para que se muevan al lado de la tabla. El jugador que llegue al final primero gana. Cambie las letras en el girador a como el niño/a las aprenda.

### Rodeo para el Kindergarten

Primaria Hiawatha  
4:00p.m.-7:00 p.m.

**25 de Abril**

Apellidos de A-L

**27 de Abril**

Apellidos de M-Z

La próxima junta del Club de Los Cachorros será el:

**23 de Mayo, 2009**

**6:00-7:00 p.m.**

**Sala 10**

Enfoque en:  
Matemáticas

### ¡Gracias por venir!

Por favor llenen la evaluación y no olviden llevar sus materiales antes de que se vayan.

Si tienen cualquier pregunta adicional o preocupaciones, por favor póngase en contacto con cualquiera de las maestras del Kindergarten al 488-9669.

Mandy Moore

Charity Michel

Guille Garza

Karen Rickenbach

Charee Gilbert

February 9, 2009

**"Cub Club" Evaluation**

Please answer the following questions. 1=no; 2=somewhat; 3=yes

1. Do you feel you have received enough activities to help your child with learning letter names and sounds?

1                      2                      3

2. Do you feel you have received enough activities to help your child with phonemic awareness?

1                      2                      3

3. Are you planning on attending the next meeting on March 23rd?

Yes                      No                      Maybe

4. What comments, questions, or concerns do you have that we can discuss at the next meeting?



9 de febrero, 2009

**Evaluación del "Club de Cachorros"**

Favor a responder las siguientes preguntas. 1=no, 2= un poco, 3=si

- 1. Sientes que has recibido suficientes actividades para ayudar a su hijo aprender los nombres de las letras y los sonidos?**

1                      2                      3

- 2. Sientes que has recibido suficientes actividades para ayudar a su hijo con conciencia fonémica?**

1                      2                      3

- 3. Estas planeando venir a la próxima reunión?**

Si                      No

- 4. Tiene comentarios, preguntas o preocupaciones que podemos discutir en la próxima reunión?**



### What should my child be able to do in math?

- Knows basic colors
- Knows basic shapes
- Counts to 10
- Extends and creates an AB pattern
- Matches number of objects to a number

### Activity 1

#### Memory

Using matching sets of picture and number cards, place 4 to 5 sets face down. Player 1 turns over 2 cards, if the number of objects and the number card match, the player keeps the pair and goes again. If the cards do not match, player 2 has a turn. As your child gets better at playing the game, add more sets of cards.

### Activity 2

#### Domino Concentration

Using number cards 0-10 and dominoes representing each of those numbers, place dominoes and cards face down. Player 1 turns over 1 card and 1 domino, if the number on the card and the amount of dots on the domino match, the player keeps the pair and goes again. If there is not a match, player 2 has a turn.

### Activity 3

#### Bean Toss

Using a bean, toss it onto the game board and say the number the bean lands on.

### Activity 4

#### Spin A Number

Player 1 spins the paper clip on the game board, then moves their marker that number of spaces on the game mat. Player 2 has a turn. The game ends when all players reach the square marked "End"

### Activity 5

#### Monster Squeeze

To begin play, say: "I'm thinking of a number between 0 and 10." The child then guesses what the number is. If the number they guess is too large, reply: "The number I am thinking of is less than that number." Then, move the right-hand monster to cover the number that was said. If the number is too low, reply: "The number is greater than that number," and move the left-hand monster to cover the number that was said. Continue this process until the correct number is found.

### Activity 6

#### Dice Roll

Roll one or two dice and counts the number of dots. Write the number to represent the number of dots. Make this activity extra fun by having your child write the numbers in shaving cream, pudding, using playdough, salt, sand, or flour.

### Activity 7

#### Top-It

Using a deck of cards, divide it in half so each player has 20 placing them face down. At the same time, each player turns over the top card and read the numbers aloud.

Whoever has the largest number keeps both cards. If the cards are the same number, set them aside, and continue until someone wins. The game ends when all of the cards have been used.

### Activity 8

#### Color and Shape Picture Find

Cut out pictures from magazines or the newspaper and categorize them according to color or shape. This activity also helps with developing fine motor skills.

### Thank you for coming!

Please fill out the evaluation and don't forget to pick up your materials before you leave.

If you have any additional questions or concerns please feel free to contact any of the Kindergarten teachers at 488-9669.

Mandy Moore

Charity Michel

Karen Rickenbach

Guille Garza

Charnee Gilbert

See you in the fall!!!





### ¿Que es lo que mis niños deben saber hacer en matemáticas?

- Saber los colores basicos
- Saber las formas basicas
- Contar hasta 10
- Extiende y crea un patron AB
- Igualar los numeros de objetos al numero

### Actividad 1

#### Memoria

Usando barajas iguales de dibujos y barajas de numeros, coloca 4 de 5 grupos boca abajo. El jugador 1 da vuelta a 2 barajas, si el numero de objetos y el numero de la baraja son iguales, el jugador se queda con el par y va otra vez. Si las tarjetas no son iguales, el jugador 2 tiene su turno. A como su niño mejora en el juego, agregue mas grupos de barajas.

### Actividad 2

#### Concentración con dominos

Usando barajas con numeros del 0-10 y dominos representando a cada uno de esos numeros, coloca los dominos y barajas boca abajo. El jugador 1 da vuelta a 1 baraja y a un domino, si el numero de la baraja y la cantidad de puntos en el domino son iguales, el jugador se queda con el par y va otra vez, si no son iguales, el jugador 2 tiene su turno.

### Actividad 3

#### Titar los frijoles

Usando un frijol, tiralo a la tabla de juego y dí el numero que esta en donde cae el frijol.

### Actividad 4

#### Gira Un Numero

El jugador 1 gira el sujetapapeles en la tabla de juego, luego mueve su marcador ese numero de espacios en la colchoneta de juego. El jugador 2 tiene su turno. El juego termina cuando todos los jugadores lleguen al cuadro marcado "End" ("Fin")

### Actividad 5

#### Apreton del monstruo

Para comenzar a jugar, diga: Estoy pensando en un número entre 0 y 10. Los niños toman turnos tratando de adivinar. Si el número que ellos pensaron es muy grande, conteste:

Tu número es muy grande, y mueve al monstruo que está a la derecha para cubrir el número que se dijo. Si el número es muy bajo, contesta: Tu número es muy bajo, y mueve al monstruo a la izquierda para cubrir el número que se dijo.

### Actividad 6

#### Haz que Rueden los Dados

Rueda uno o dos dados y cuenta el número de puntos. Escribe el número que representa el número de puntos.

Haz esta actividad extra divertida poniendo a su niño a que escriba los números con espuma de afeitar, pudín, usando plastilina, sal, arena, o harina.

### Actividad 7

#### Hasta la Cima

Usando unas barajas, divídelas por la mitad para que cada jugador tenga 20 colocándolas boca abajo. Al mismo tiempo, cada jugador da vuelta a la baraja de arriba y dice el número en voz alta. Quien sea que tenga el número más alto se queda con las dos barajas. Si las barajas son del mismo número, póngalas a un lado, y continúa hasta que alguien gane. El juego termina cuando todas las barajas se hayan usado.

### Actividad 8

#### Encontrar los Dibujos y Formas de Colores

Recorten dibujos de magazines o de periodicos y categoríselos de acuerdo a las formas y colores. Esta actividad también ayuda para desarrollar buenas habilidades motoras.

### ¡Gracias por venir!

Por favor llenen la evaluación y no olviden llevarse sus materiales antes de irse.

Si tienen preguntas adicionales o preocupaciones siéntase libres de ponerse en contacto con cualquiera de estos maestros del Kindergarten al 488-9669.

Mandy Moore

Charity Michiel

Karen Rickenbach

Charee Gilbert

Guille Garza

¡Nos vemos en el Otoño!

March 23, 2009

**"Cub Club" Evaluation**

Please answer the following questions. 1=no; 2=somewhat; 3=yes

1. Do you feel you have received enough activities to help your child with math?

1

2

3

2. Do you feel that you received enough information at Cub Club to help prepare your child for next fall?

Yes

No

Maybe

3. What comments, questions, or concerns do you have that we can use to improve Cub Club?

marzo 23 , 2009

**Evaluación del "Club de Cachorros"**

Favor a responder las siguientes preguntas. 1=no, 2= un poco, 3=si

1. **Sientes que has recibido suficientes actividades para ayudar a su hijo con matemáticas?**

1

2

3

2. **Sientes que has recibido suficientes información a club de cachorros?**

Si

No

Maybe

3. **Tiene comentarios, preguntas o preocupaciones que improbé club de cachorros?**