

# Oral Academic Narrative Intervention Improves First Graders' Inferential Word Learning

Spencer, T. D., Kirby, M. S., & Gardner, C. (2023). Oral academic narrative language intervention improves listening comprehension and generalized word learning of first graders at risk for comprehension difficulties. Manuscript in review.

**Purpose** To what extent does an oral academic narrative intervention with embedded vocabulary instruction improve first graders' ability to learn new words from context?



## Participants & Setting

22 ethnically, linguistically, and racially diverse 1st graders participated in the study; 3 were English language learners (Navajo, Arabic) and 4 had IEPs. 11 students were randomly assigned to the narrative intervention group (treatment), which was delivered by under-/graduate research assistants and 11 received classroom instruction from their teachers as-usual (control).



## Intervention & Assessment

For 12 weeks, students received oral academic narrative intervention with a focus on "clue finding" to figure out the meaning of unknown vocabulary words 4x/week in groups of three. Definitional knowledge of taught words was measured weekly & inferencing of novel, untaught word definitions from context was measured at pre- and posttest.



## Important Findings

The treatment group showed statistically significant growth in story retelling, but vocab outcomes were awesome, too! The students demonstrated immediate acquisition and retention of taught words after several weeks. They were also able to use context to figure out the meaning of difficult, untaught words!

