

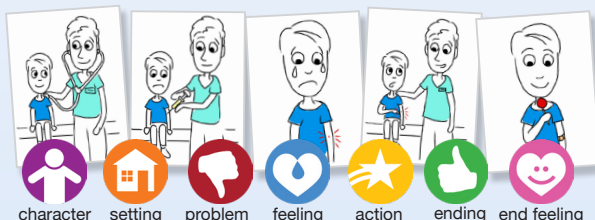


Skills Developed Through Story Champs®

- Listening comprehension
- Reading comprehension
- General academic vocabulary
- Domain-specific vocabulary
- Learning vocabulary from context
- Complex syntax
- Oral narrative retelling
- Oral narrative personal generation
- Oral narrative fictional generation
- Written narrative retelling
- Written narrative personal generation
- Written narrative fictional generation
- Information oral retelling
- Information writing
- Domain knowledge
- Problem solving
- Inference making
- Social and emotional aptitude
- Memory

Best Practices Used to Develop Skills

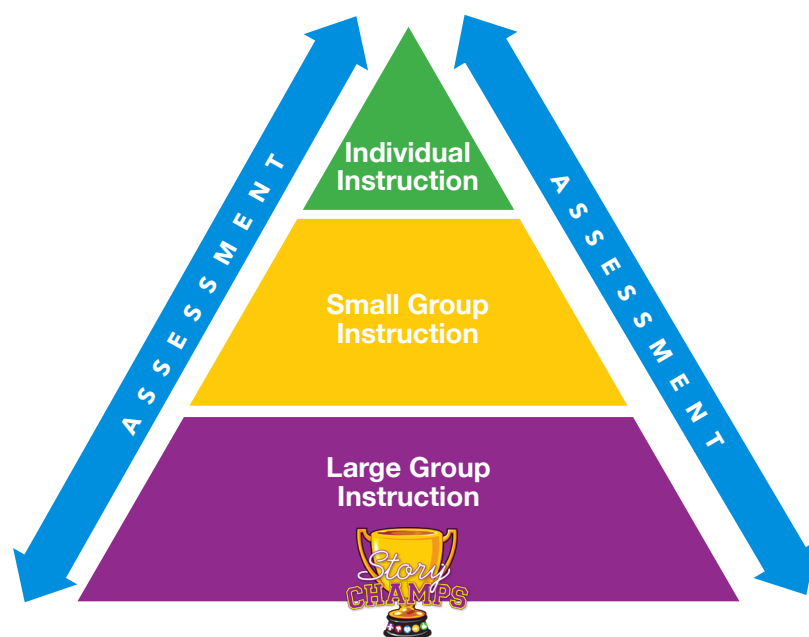
- Multiple exemplar training
- Frequent opportunities for students to respond
- Visually and socially engaging procedures
- Explicit and individualized targets
- Multiple exposures to words
- Supportive scaffolding
- Modeling and recasting
- Immediate corrective feedback
- Natural consequences



A Multitiered, Explicit, and Systematic Academic Language Program

Story Champs® is a multitiered language program that helps educators and clinicians promote academic language of diverse students. Although the primary focus of Story Champs® is on the development of a strong oral language foundation through storytelling, it also promotes other aspects of academic language that are essential for school success through information retelling, vocabulary, inferencing, and writing.

As a multitiered program, Story Champs® lessons can be differentiated for any student or group of students. The advantage of aligned tiers is that students with greater language needs receive more intensive instruction whereas students with fewer needs participate in a low dose instruction that is sufficient to support their academic language development. Ideally, a classroom teacher delivers lessons in the large group setting while a special educator, literacy specialist, or paraeducator delivers small group or individual lessons. Importantly, the program adheres to the same principles and instructional approaches across all tiers so students who move between the tiers are not confused by conflicting approaches.





STUDIES



Independently
researched &
published

40 completed
studies

2 in progress

26 published
by authors

2 investigated remote
Story Champs® intervention



Participants

United States

- Preschoolers – 6th Graders
- White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian American

- Typically developing children
- Children at risk for reading failure
- Children with autism
- Children with language disabilities
- Children with learning disabilities
- Children with challenging behavior
- English language learners
- Bilingual children

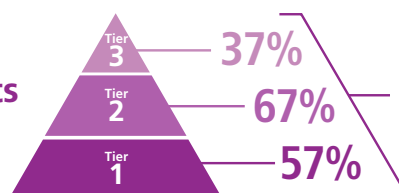
International

- Mexico: Spanish-speaking 5th and 6th Graders learning English
- India: Kindergartners & 1st Graders
- Israel: Hebrew and Arabic speakers



~2000 CHILDREN
participated in the studies

Instructional Arrangements



20% Fully implemented multi-tiered system

**Many studies included more than one tier of intervention*

Dose

TIME 10-45 min.

FREQUENCY 1-5x/week

LENGTH 2-72 weeks

Interventionists

- Head Start teachers
- Preschool teachers
- General ed K-3 teachers
- Special ed K-3 teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- Speech-language pathologists
- Reading specialists
- Spanish-speaking parents
- Parents
- Researchers

**Fidelity of intervention delivery is always above 90%*

Flexibility

- 57 master lesson plans
- 8 add on lessons
- Center activities
- Take home activities
- Writing organizers
- Word journals
- Digital materials for remote learning
- Spanish bilingual version
- Classwide peer tutoring
- Story games
- Informational lessons

Average effect sizes by outcome



What makes Story Champs® effective?

- Realistic child-friendly themed stories
- Stories carefully constructed to reflect complex academic language
- Multiple exemplar training to address metacognitive learning
- Simple and engaging visual materials with systematic fading
- High rates of active student responding
- Explicit instruction blended with authentic speaking and listening activities
- Extensive modeling and recasting
- Retrieval-based learning via story retelling
- Spaced learning of vocabulary through extensions and family engagement activities
- Intentional generalization strategies

Manuscripts submitted for publication

Spencer, T. D., Kirby, M. S., & Gardner, C. (2025). Oral academic narrative language intervention improves listening comprehension and generalized word learning of first graders at risk for comprehension difficulties.



Spencer, T. D., Kirby, M. S., & Garcia, A. R. (2024). The effect of narrative intervention on the listening and reading comprehension of children with autism.

Almubark, N. M., Spencer, T. D., & Foster, M. E. (2025). AAC narrative intervention for children with autism. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 1-14.



Spencer, T. D., Kirby, M. S., Garcia, A. R., & Sturm, R. (2025). Additive effect, feasibility, and cost-effectiveness of family engagement activities that supplement dual language preschool instruction. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 53, 175-193.



Spencer, T. D., Moran, M. K., Petersen, D. B., Thompson, M. S., & Restrepo, M. A. (2024). A design-based implementation study of a preschool Spanish/English multi-tiered language curriculum / Estudio de implementación basada en el diseño de un currículum preescolar multinivel inglés/español. *Journal for the Study of Education and Development*, 47(1), 138-172.

Petersen, D. B., Staskowski, M., Foster, M., Douglas, K., Konishi-Therkildsen, A., & Spencer, T. D. (2024). Explicit and systematic narrative language instruction to improve language comprehension: A three-arm randomized controlled trial. *Reading and Writing*. Advance online publication.

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Petersen, D. B., Mesquita, M. W., Spencer, T. D., & Waldron, J. (2020). Examining the effects of multi-tiered oral narrative language instruction on reading comprehension and writing: A feasibility study. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 40(4), pp. E25-E39.



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Spencer, T. D., Petersen, D. B., Restrepo, M. A., Thompson, M., & Gutierrez Arvizu, M. N. (2019). The effect of a Spanish and English narrative intervention on the language skills of young dual language learners. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 38(4), 204-219.



Spencer, T. D., & Petersen, D. B. (2018). Bridging oral and written language: An oral narrative language intervention study with writing outcomes. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 49, 569-581.



Spencer, T. D., Weddle, S. A., Petersen, D. B., & Adams, J. A. (2018). Multi-tiered narrative intervention for preschoolers: A Head Start implementation study. *NHSA Dialog*, 20(1), 1-28.



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Petersen, D. B., Brown, C. L., Ukrainetz, T. A., DeGeorge, C., Spencer, T. D., & Zebre, J. (2014). **Systematic individualized narrative intervention on the personal narratives of children with autism.** *Language, Speech, Hearing Services in Schools*, 45, 67-86.



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Teacher Friendly Articles

Spencer, T. D., & Pierce, C. (2023). **Classroom-based oral storytelling: Reading, writing and social benefits.** *The Reading Teacher*.



Spencer, T. D. (2023). **Oral storytelling is important for reading, writing, and social well being.** *Open Access Government*, 286-287.



Spencer, T. D. (2023). **Is the reading crisis associated with an academic language crisis?** *Open Access Government*, 288-289.



Research Outreach (2022, April). **When children's storytelling says so much more.**



SLP Practice Articles

Spencer, T. D., & Petersen, D. B. (2020). **Narrative intervention: Principles to practice.** *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 51(4), 1081-1096.



Katakowski, D., & Frank, M. (2020). **Shift to workload model shows enhanced learning, reduced referrals.** *ASHA Leader*.



Independent Research

Andrus, C. K. (2023). **Independent writing at the kindergarten level.** *Culminating Experience Projects*, 417.



Favot, K., Carter, M., & Stephenson, J. (2021). **The effects of oral narrative intervention on the narratives of children with language disorder: A systematic literature review.** *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities*, 33(4), 489-536.



Hunsaker, Giana H. (2023). **The Effects of an Oral Narrative and Expository School-Age Language Intervention: A Low-Dosage Study.** *BYU Theses and Dissertations*, 9986.



Hessling, A., & Schuele, C. M. (2020). **Individualized narrative intervention for school-age children with specific language impairment.** *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 1-19.



Kirby, M. S. (2022). **Oral narrative interventions implemented by teachers, speech-language pathologists, and parents.** *USF Tampa Graduate Theses and Dissertations*.



Lee, L. L. (2020). **Effects of a large group combined narrative and expository language intervention on oral language in third graders.** *Brigham Young University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing*, 28103516.

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Pico, D. L., Hessling Prah, A., Biel, C. H., Peterson, A. K., Biel, E. J., Woods, C., & Contesse, V. A. (2021). **Interventions designed to improve narrative language in school-age children: A systematic review with Meta-analyses.** *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 52(4), 1109-1126.

