

Voices PreK
**Learner Verification Research:
Implementation Guide**

University of Cincinnati
Evaluation Services Center

Saperstein Associates

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Introduction

Welcome!

Thank you for assisting us with this research. We believe that your participation will benefit both you and your students. We also believe that this study is vitally important because the information you provide will help publishers of educational materials develop more effective PreK curricula.

Use this guide as a study resource. We have tried to anticipate your questions and include the information you will need to complete the study successfully. The contents of this guide are available online at the study Web site: www.sapersteinassociates.com. When you visit the site, click on *PreK Research*, which appears in the lower right-hand corner. As the study unfolds, we will use this site to provide information that is not in the guide at the present time.

Overview

This research measures how different curricular materials affect student performance and the attitudes of teachers and students towards PreK instruction. Teachers from all over central Ohio are participating in this study. Each teacher has been assigned to one of two groups, or “conditions.” The condition to which you’ve been assigned has been printed on the inside cover of this guide. Your unique TeacherID appears there, as well. (You will use your TeacherID to access information on the study Web site.)

The two groups created for this study are the Experimental Group and the Control Group.

- *Experimental Group*: Teachers in this group will use Zaner-Bloser’s *Voices PreK* as the primary source of instruction.
- *Control Group*: Teachers in this group will use their existing materials, whether or not those materials are a published program.

We will provide teachers in the Control Group more information about this study during an Implementation Conference Call, which we will schedule over the next few weeks. Teachers in the Experimental Group will learn more during the in-service training we will schedule shortly.

For now, however, keep this in mind: We understand completely that your primary concern is the success of your students. Consequently, we would never ask you to do anything that might limit or impair their academic performance, regardless of the study's requirements.

In short, we are conducting this study to learn more about PreK curricula – and, to that end, your participation is critical.

Benefits of the Study

This study will provide you and your students significant benefits:

- You will be helping publishers to develop more effective instructional materials. Though teachers often comment about the classroom materials they use, you will be taking an active role in improving them.
- When you have completed the study successfully, we will send you the \$150 honorarium we promised when you agreed to participate. We also will send teachers in the Control Group the complete *Voices PreK* kit, which includes all the program's components.

We are delighted that you are joining us for what promises to be a very exciting study. Thanks and good luck!

Contact Information

When you have questions about the study or need our assistance, contact Emily or Holly. You may call (toll-free), fax, or send an email. Most days, Emily and Holly are available between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm Eastern Time.

Emily Goldman

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Saperstein Associates, Inc.
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Information about this study is also available at the study Web site: www.sapersteinassociates.com. When you visit the site, click on *PreK Research* in the lower right-hand corner. You do not need to enter a username and password on the home page of the site, but you will need your TeacherID to access specific study materials.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center and Saperstein Associates promise to keep all student information confidential. Student names will not be referenced in any of the reports or publications prepared in conjunction with this study. The names of participating teachers will be referenced only with permission.

Study Activity List and Timeline

Scheduled Date	Activity	Date Completed
Prior to October 16, 2009 <hr/> All Teachers	Read through the Implementation Guide and the PALS PreK teacher manual. Be sure to watch the PALS PreK Assessment Training DVD.	
Prior to October 16, 2009 <hr/> Control	We will contact you to schedule a 30-minute Study Implementation Conference Call. During this call, we will provide you with more information about the study, the PALS assessment, and the other required activities.	
Prior to October 19, 2009 <hr/> Experimental	Complete the in-service training provided by Zaner-Bloser. We will contact you soon to schedule a training date.	
Prior to November 6, 2009 <hr/> All Teachers	Complete a Student Register for your PreK classes. You will find a copy of the register with the PALS PreK Assessment materials. Instructions on filling out the register will be provided during your training.	

Scheduled Date	Activity	Date Completed
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<p>Prior to November 6, 2009</p> <hr/> <p>All Teachers</p>	<p>Administer the PALS PreK Assessment (our “pre-test”) to each of your students and return the completed screening forms – along with your completed Student Register – in the FedEx envelope you will find on the inside cover of this guide. You will find a pre-addressed, pre-paid FedEx label with that envelope.</p> <p>Teachers in the Experimental Group may begin using <i>Voices PreK</i> as soon as all of their students have completed the pre-test.</p>	
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<p>Prior to December 4, 2009</p> <hr/> <p>All Teachers</p>	<p>Complete the Teacher Mid-Study Survey online. The survey can be found at the study Web site: www.sapersteinassociates.com. (Click on <i>PreK Research</i>, click on <i>Teacher Mid-Study Survey</i>, and enter your TeacherID.) The survey will take you about 30 minutes to complete.</p>	
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<p>Throughout the Study</p> <hr/> <p>All Teachers</p>	<p>We will contact you periodically – most often by email. Sometimes we will be checking to see if you have any questions. Other times, we may have a specific question for you.</p>	
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<p>Prior to January 8, 2010</p> <hr/> <p>All Teachers</p>	<p>In preparation for administering the PALS post-test, review the Student Register you sent us earlier (we will send you a copy) and send us any changes via email. We will need these changes to generate an accurate set of post-test materials, which we will send you prior to January 29.</p>	
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Scheduled Date	Activity	Date Completed
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<p>Prior to January 15, 2010</p> <hr/> <p>All Teachers</p>	<p>At some point before the study ends, we will visit your classroom to learn first-hand how teachers use PreK instructional materials.</p>	
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<p>Prior to February 12, 2010</p> <hr/> <p>All Teachers</p>	<p>Administer the PALS post-test to your students and return the completed screening forms in the FedEx envelope we have provided.</p>	
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<p>Prior to February 26, 2010</p> <hr/> <p>All Teachers</p>	<p>Complete the Teacher Post-Study Evaluation. The Post-Study Evaluation can be found online at the study Web site: www.sapersteinassociates.com. (Click on <i>PreK Research</i>, click on <i>Teacher Post-Study Evaluation</i>, and enter your TeacherID.) This evaluation will take you about 30 minutes to complete.</p>	
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<p>Prior to March 5, 2010</p> <hr/> <p>All Teachers</p>	<p>Complete the End-of-Study Honorarium Information form which can be found at the study Web site: www.sapersteinassociates.com. (Click on <i>PreK Research</i>, click on <i>End-of-Study Honorarium Information</i>, and enter your TeacherID.)</p>	
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Student Register

The information you provide on the Student Register will be used to establish a study database. Each student's scores on the PALS Assessment – both the pre- and post-tests – will be matched with the information the register contains.

A personalized copy of the Student Register can be found with your PALS PreK Assessment materials.

Prior to administering the pre-test, you will assign each student a unique StudentID. For your convenience, StudentID numbers have been pre-printed on the Student Register. The StudentID number will be our way of tracking your students' pre- and post-test data.

Prior to conducting the PALS post-test we will send you a copy of your Student Register with each StudentID printed on it. We will ask you to update the register with changes in your student population and return it to us.

The following tips may help you complete the Student Register:

- Student Name

Students can be identified in any of the following ways:

- Initials (first and last)
- Full first name and first initial of last name
- First initial of first name and full last name
- Full name (first and last)
- District or school assigned identification number

- English Language Proficiency

Check (✓) *Not Proficient*, for students you consider:

- ELL (English Language Learners)
- ESL (English as a Second Language)
- LEP (Limited English Proficiency)

or when other accommodations are made due to limited English mastery.

- Special Codes

Test data will be disaggregated based on the information you provide. We recognize that your school or district may have a privacy policy, so provide whatever information you can.

Return your completed Student Register with your completed PALS Assessment screening forms.

Pre- and Post-Tests

Teachers participating in this research will be required to assess each of their students twice – once as the study begins (the pre-test) and again as the study ends (the post-test).

The assessment we have chosen is PALS PreK.

You will receive individualized, pre-coded student materials. Please be sure to match the StudentID number on the pre-coded test with the StudentID number you assigned on your Student Register.

Return the completed PALS Assessment screening forms – along with your completed Student Register – in the FedEx envelope you will find on the inside cover of this guide. You will find a pre-addressed, pre-paid FedEx label with that envelope.

If you would like to learn more about the PALS Assessment, you can go to the following Web site: <http://pals.virginia.edu/>.

Site Visits

At some point before the study ends, we will visit your classroom to learn first-hand how teachers use PreK instructional materials.

We will call you in advance of our visit to arrange a day and time that is convenient for you.

You will not need to do anything special to prepare for our visit.

Teacher Mid-Study Survey and Post-Study Evaluation

The Teacher Mid-Study Survey and Post-Study Evaluation are critical to the success of this research. They will provide us with the information we need to better understand how you feel about teaching PreK and the instructional materials you employed throughout the study.

Each of these questionnaires will take about 30 minutes to complete.

Complete the Teacher Mid-Study Survey by December 4. You will find it online at www.sapersteinassociates.com. (Click on *PreK Research*, click on *Teacher Mid-Study Survey*, and enter your TeacherID.)

Complete the Teacher Post-Study Evaluation no later than February 26. You will find it online at www.sapersteinassociates.com. (Click on *PreK Research*, click on *Teacher Post-Study Evaluation*, and enter your TeacherID.)

Return Shipping / FedEx Information

Pre-paid FedEx Airbills and envelopes accompany this guide.

Remove the paper backing from the Airbill and place it, sticky-side down, on the front, lower right-hand corner of the FedEx envelope.

Keep the top copy of the FedEx Airbill . The Airbill Tracking Number is useful when a package is not delivered when expected.

When your package is ready, call FedEx pick-up at 1-800-GO-FEDEX (1-800-463-3339). If you prefer, you may place the package in a FedEx drop-box or at a FedEx Kinko's location.

Each FedEx Airbill is pre-printed with a billing authorization number. Contact us if you or someone at your school receives an invoice or other communication from FedEx regarding shipping charges.

Should you need additional Airbills, please contact us and we will send them to you.

End-of-Study Honorarium Information

When we have received your responses to (1) the Teacher Mid-Study Survey, (2) all of your pre- and post-test materials, and (3) the Post-Study Evaluation, we will send you the \$150 honorarium we promised when you agreed to participate.

Teachers in the Control Group will also receive the complete *Voices PreK* kit.

To be sure that we know where you would like us to send your honorarium, complete the End-of-Study Honorarium Information form online at the study Web site: www.sapersteinassociates.com. (Click on *PreK Research, End-of-Study Honorarium*, and enter your TeacherID.)

You will find a copy of this form on the following page, as well. Furthermore, a PDF is available at www.sapersteinassociates.com. (Click on *PreK Research*, click on *End-of-Study Honorarium-PDF*, and print.)

Complete this form no later than March 5, 2010.

**University of Cincinnati
Evaluation Services Center**

Saperstein Associates

End-of-Study Honorarium Information

Send to my attention at the school:

Name: _____

School: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Alternate Telephone: _____

OR

Send to my attention at the address provided below:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Alternate Telephone: _____

Complete and return this form to:

**Saperstein Associates, Inc.
Attn: PreK Research
4555 N. High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43214
Toll Free: 800-860-3573 / Fax: 614-261-0076**