

BACKGROUND

This poster reports on the development phase of a collaborative research project with J. Lim, Speech-Language Pathologist (S-LP) from the Saskatchewan Health Authority. J. Lim initiated the development of a parent-child journaling activity to be integrated with local preschools. This collaboration was explored as a population-level, preventative approach to strengthen language and literacy development in a potentially at-risk region. Prior to pursuing broad-based implementation of the approach, J. Lim sought to develop a research study to examine (1) the effects and (2) the feasibility of the approach.

Contributions of the current CSD 900 Group:

(1) Development of background literature and rationale; (2) Support for development of methods: Program structure and study design; (3) Materials development: Consent materials, study questionnaires, training materials for parents and educators.

Development of Background

Development of background and rationale focused on:

- Describing demographics of the target population linked to risk of poor literacy and education outcomes.
- Documenting existing evidence for the effects and feasibility of the proposed approach, as well as considerations for the target population.

Population

- 25-50% of people in Northern Saskatchewan have completed a high school diploma compared to the provincial average of 80 - 86% (Irvine, 2011).
- Education and literacy contribute to overall health and wellbeing (Population Health Unit, 2016).
- Reading skills are fairly stable after grade 4, indicating a need for early intervention (Spira, 2005).

Evidence for Approach

- Caesar and Nelson (2014) conducted research on a 5 week picture journaling activity in a bilingual school.
- Picture journaling:
 - Parents and children draw a picture about an interesting event.
 - Parent promotes language skills by asking questions, building on what the child says, and including event-specific vocabulary.
 - Teacher then discusses the same picture in the class to solidify the information with the child.
- Half were given preschool aged books, half completed picture journaling. There was improvement in vocabulary and pre-literacy skills of the journaling group, and also high parental enjoyment and participation.

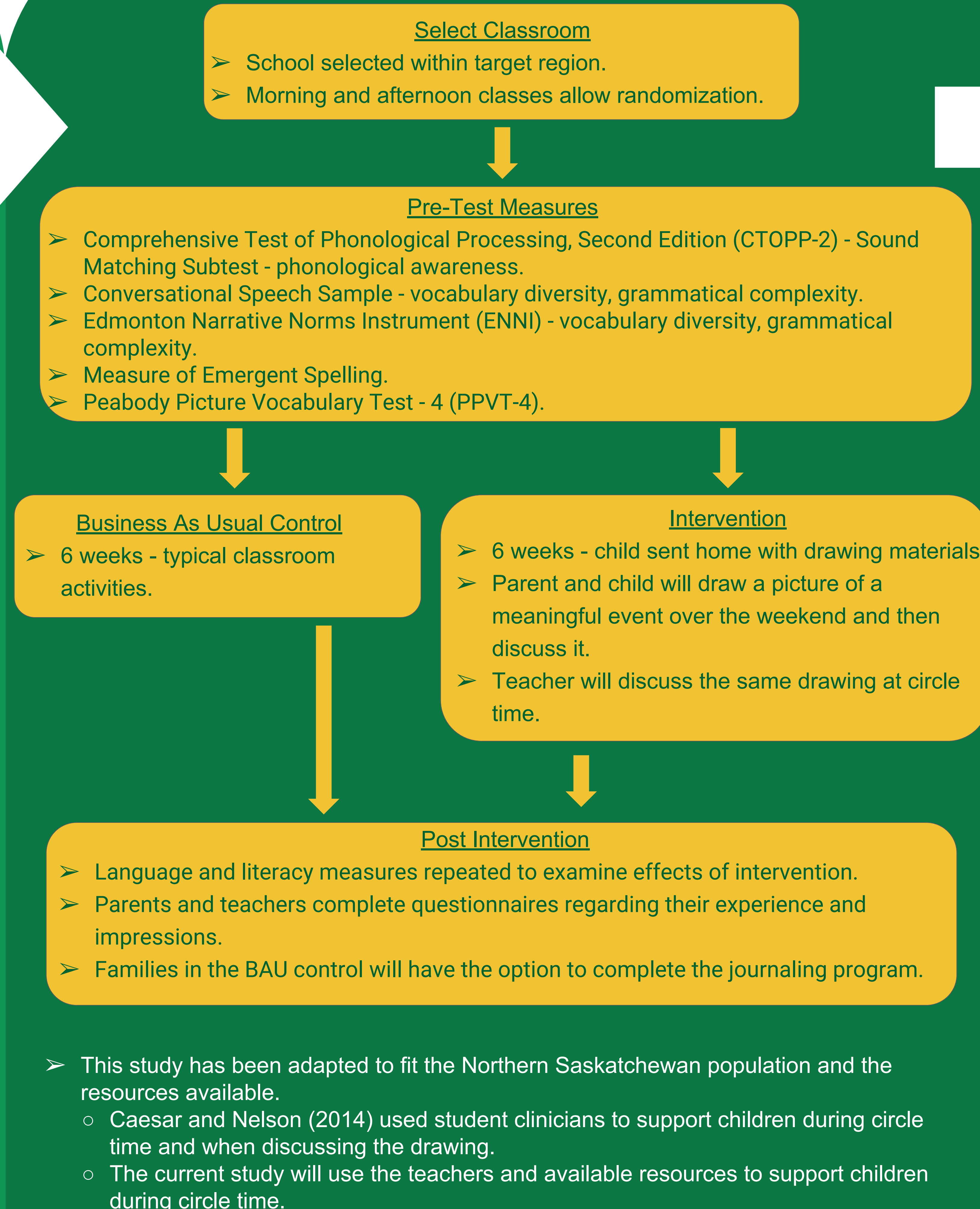
Likelihood of Parent Involvement

- Prior research indicated feasibility of similar projects in which parents of low SES families were asked to attend sessions, and complete logs and surveys about the project (O'Neil-Pirozzi, 2009).

Funding

- Speech-Language and Audiology Canada (SAC) to fund the planned study through a grant.

Development of Method



Development of Materials

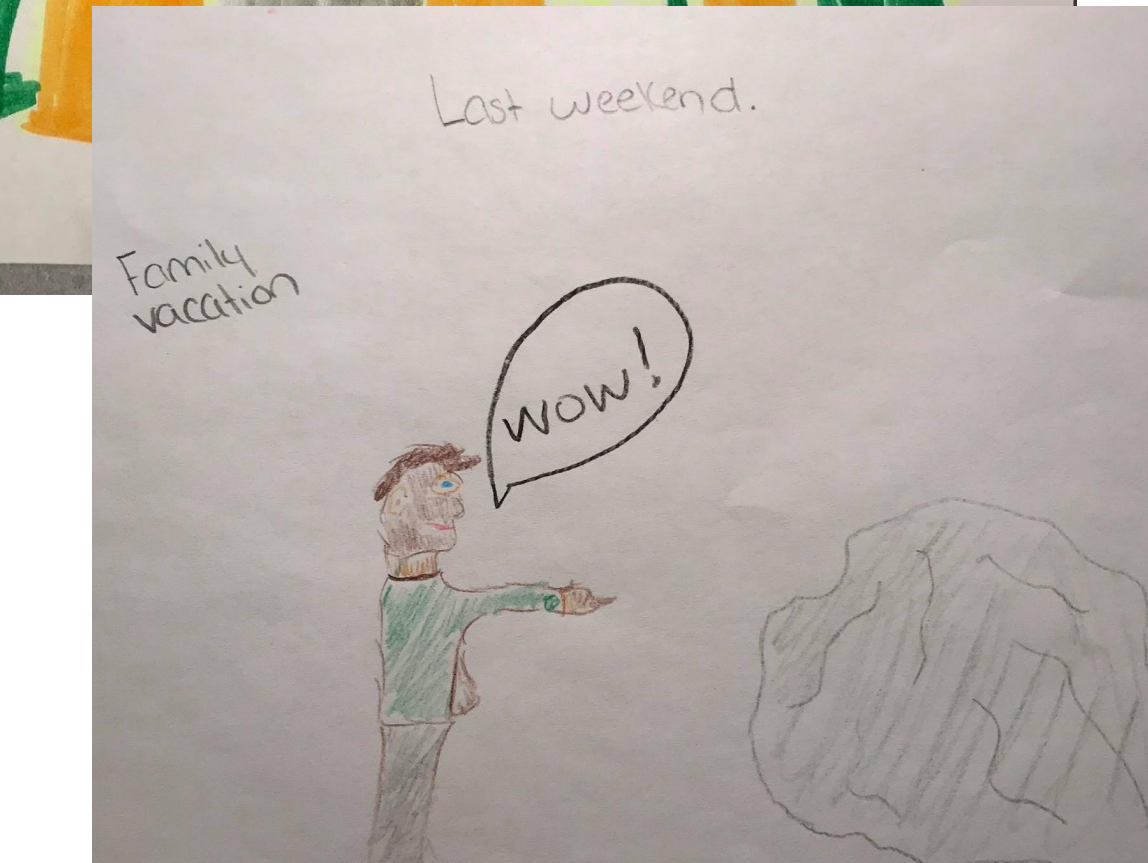
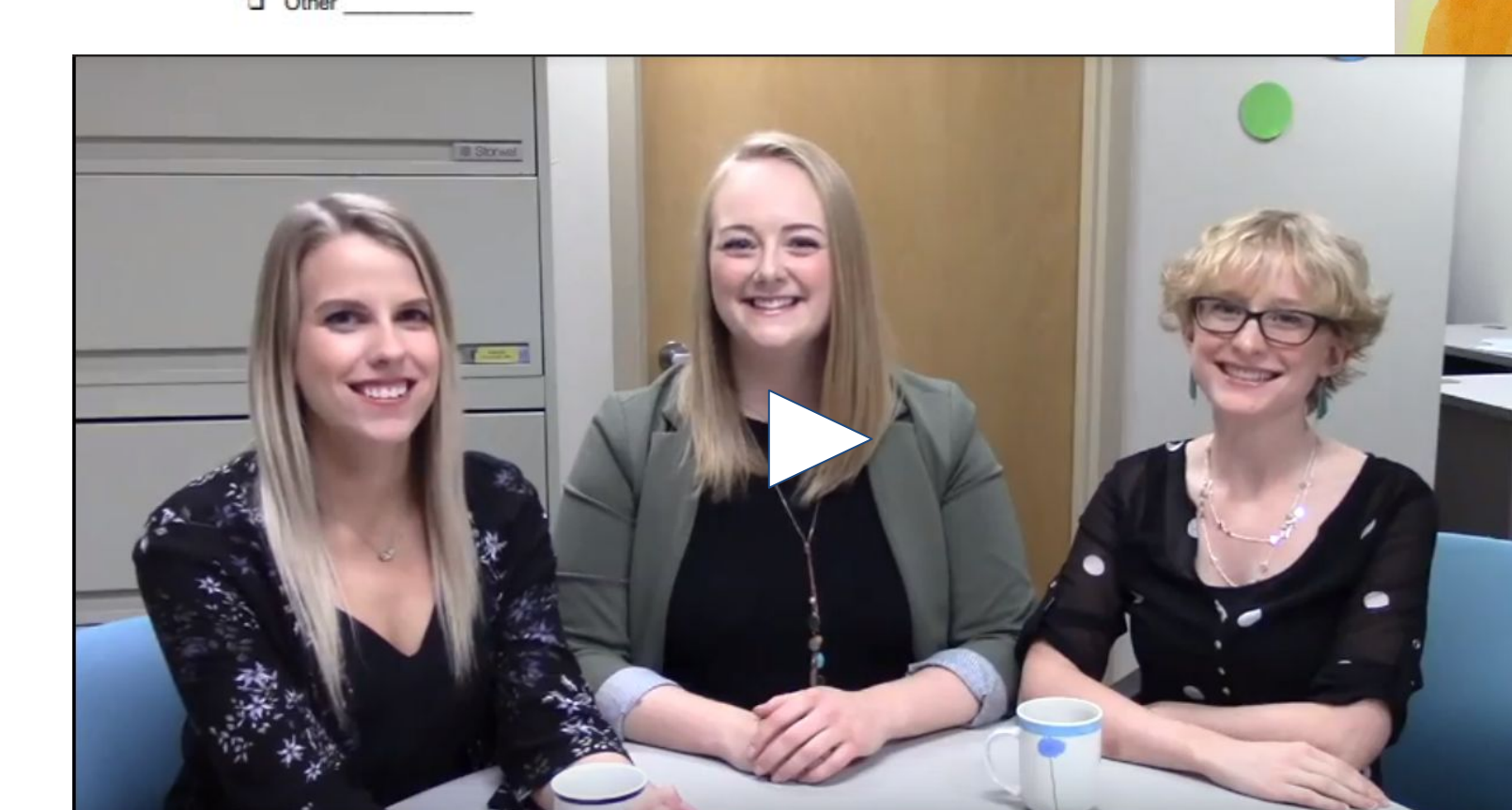
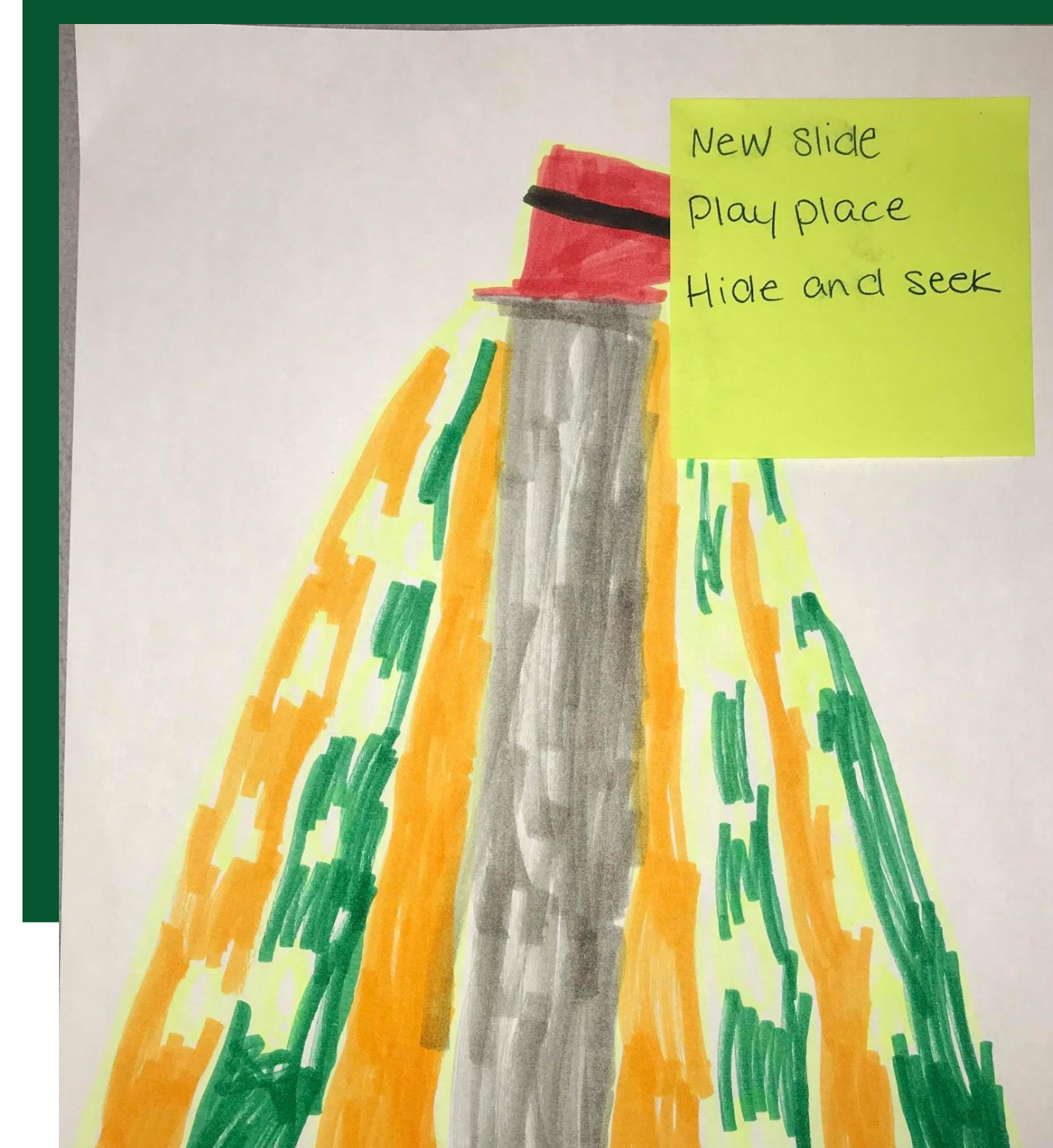
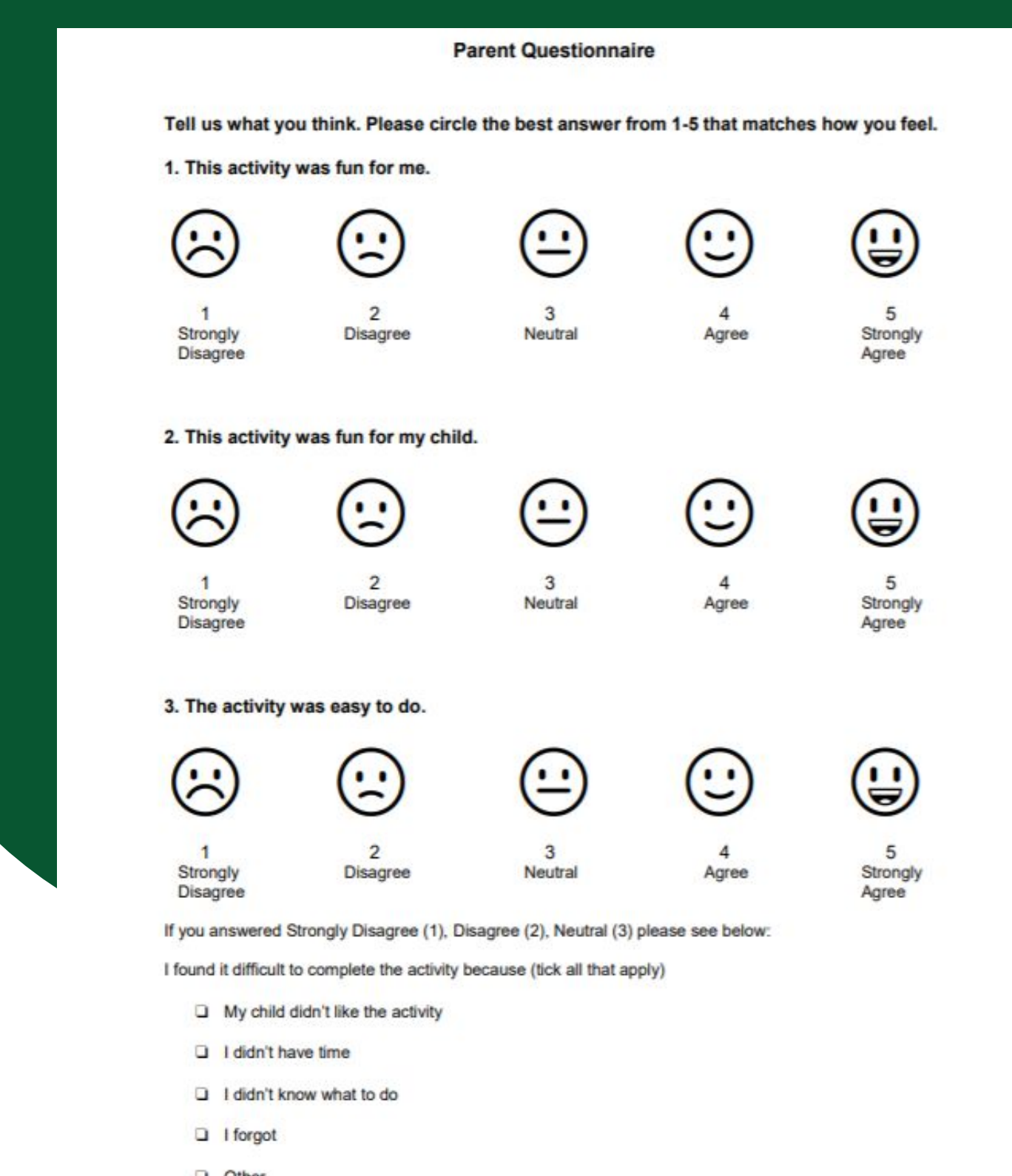
- Materials were created using Taylor and Hamdy (2013) framework which discussed five phases of adult learning: dissonance, refinement, organization, feedback, and consolidation.

Parent and Teacher Questionnaires with Likert Scales:

- Developed to examine feasibility, perceived value of the project, and enjoyment.
- Allow the parent to reflect and provide feedback on the project and to promote consolidation of their learning.
- To ensure understanding of the questions and reduce the likelihood of false data, they were developed to be accessible for parents with lower literacy levels.
- Wording choices of these measures were adapted to a grade 6 reading level. Wording was kept concise, clear, and avoided jargon.
- Include clear visuals (i.e., smiley faces matching each number on the scale) in order to promote understanding.

Training Video:

- Created to convey a concise, informative explanation of the project.
- Gives parents specific strategies to promote enhanced vocabulary.
- Divided into two components:
 - 1) Introductory video for exclusive use in this project.
 - 2) General video that explains the procedure.
- General video promotes the use of this early intervention program across other health regions, should the results be favourable.
- Designed to organize old and new knowledge and to highlight the importance of the project in a parent-friendly way.



REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

- This project highlights the importance of clinician-driven research. This research was developed based on a need in a community, and can create positive outcomes for an at risk community.
- It also draws attention to the potential benefits of involving parents in children's education, specifically for children who are at risk for poor literacy and vocabulary outcomes.
- Early intervention for these children is crucial for success in education. Integrating parents into early intervention is an excellent strategy to promote success.
- The study is currently under ethical review. A new group of students will be collecting and analyzing the data in the following year.

References:

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