



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.

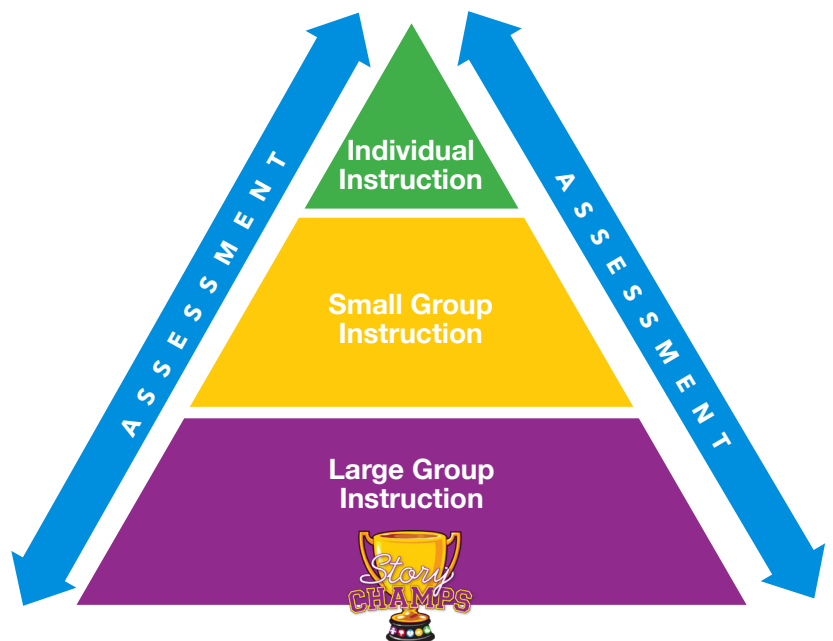
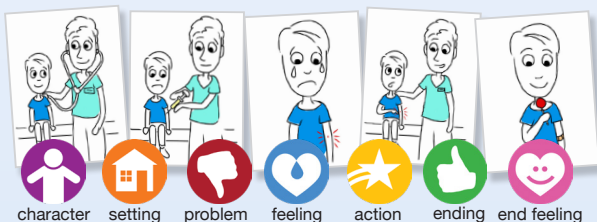
As a multitiered program, Story Champs® lessons can be differentiated for any student or group of students. The advantage of aligned tiers is that students with greater language needs receive more intensive instruction whereas students with fewer needs participate in a low dose instruction that is sufficient 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.

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





STUDIES



39 completed studies

3 in progress

Independently researched & published

25 published by authors

2 investigated remote Story Champs® intervention



Participants

United States

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

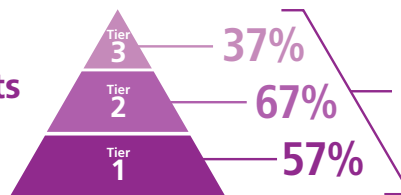
- Typically developing children
- Children at risk for reading failure
- Children with autism
- Children with language disabilities
- Children with learning disabilities
- Children with challenging behavior
- English language learners
- Bilingual children

International

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



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

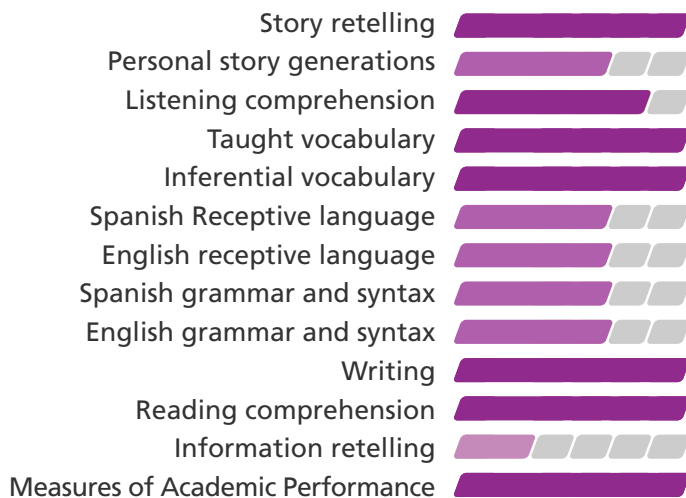
- Head Start teachers
- Preschool teachers
- General ed K-3 teachers
- Special ed K-3 teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- Speech-language pathologists
- Reading specialists
- Spanish-speaking parents
- Parents
- Researchers

**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. (2023). Oral academic narrative language intervention improves listening comprehension and generalized word learning of first graders at risk for comprehension difficulties.



Infographic

Spencer, T. D., Kirby, M. S., & Garcia, A. R. (2023). The effect of narrative intervention on the listening and reading comprehension of children with autism.

Petersen, D. B., Staskowski, M., Foster, M. E., Douglas, K., & Spencer, T. D. (2023). A three-arm randomized controlled trial examining the effects of multi-tiered oral narrative language instruction on kindergartners' academic language.

Spencer, T. D., Moran, M. K., Petersen, D. B., Thompson, M. S., & Restrepo, M. A. (in press). A design-based implementation study of a preschool Spanish-English multi-tiered language curriculum. *Journal for the Study of Education and Development*.

Spencer, T. D., Kirby, M. S., & Petersen, D. B. (2023). Vocabulary instruction embedded in narrative intervention: A repeated acquisition design study with first graders at risk of language-based reading difficulty. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 1-18. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Infographic

Spencer, T. D., Kirby, M. S., Garcia, A. R., & Sturm, R. (2023). Additive effect, feasibility, and cost-effectiveness of family engagement activities that supplement dual language preschool instruction. *Early Childhood Education Journal*. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Infographic

Petersen, D. B., Staskowski, M., Spencer, T. D., Foster, M. E., & Brough, M. P. (2022). The effects of a multitiered system of language support on kindergarten oral and written language: A large-scale randomized controlled trial. *Language Speech Hearing Services in Schools*, 53(1), 44-68. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Infographic

Scadden Nelson, B., Petersen, D. B., & Rai, A. (2022). The effects of a multi-tiered system of language support on oral narrative language, writing, and reading comprehension in India. *Language and Education*, 36(1), 74-94. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Infographic

Raymond, S. M., & Spencer, T. D. (2021). The effect of narrative language intervention on the language skills of children with hearing loss. *Perspectives of ASHA Special Interest Groups*, 6(2), 386-396.



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Kirby, M. S., Spencer, T. D., & Chen, Y. I. (2021). Oral narrative instruction improves kindergarten writing. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 137(6), 574-591.



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Gutierrez Arvizu, M. N. & Spencer, T. D. (2020). Comprensión auditiva en inglés con cuentos en primaria en México. *Lenguas en Context*, 11, 30-37. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Infographic

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.



Infographic

Spencer, T. D., Moran, M. K., Thompson, M. S., Petersen, D. B., & Restrepo, M. A. (2020). Early efficacy of multi-tiered dual language instruction: Promoting preschoolers' Spanish and English oral language. *AERA Open*, 6(1), 1-16.



Infographic

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.



Infographic

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



Infographic

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.



Infographic

Spencer, T. D., Petersen, D. B., Slocum, T. A., & Allen, M. M. (2015). Large group narrative intervention in Head Start classrooms: Implications for response to intervention. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 13(2), 196-217.



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Petersen, D. B., & Spencer, T. D. (2016). Using narrative intervention to accelerate canonical story grammar and complex language growth in culturally diverse preschoolers. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 36(1), 6-19.



Infographic

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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Weddle, S. A., Spencer, T. D., Kajian, M., & Petersen, D. B. (2016). An examination of a multi-tiered system of language support for culturally and linguistically diverse preschoolers: Implications for early and accurate identification. *School Psychology Review*, 45(1), 109-131.



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Spencer, T. D., Kajian, M., Petersen, D. B., & Bilyk, N. (2013). Effects of an individualized narrative intervention on children's storytelling and comprehension skills. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 35(3), 243-269.



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Petersen, D. B., Thompson, B. E., Guiberson, M., & Spencer, T. D. (2016). Cross-linguistic interactions from L2 to L1 as the result of individualized narrative language intervention with children with and without language impairment. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 37(3), 703-724.



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Spencer, T. D., & Slocum, T. A. (2010). The effect of a narrative intervention on story retelling and personal story generation skills of preschoolers with risk factors and narrative language delays. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 32(3), 178-199.



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Spencer, T. D., Petersen, D. B., & Adams, J. L. (2015). Tier 2 language intervention for diverse preschoolers: An early stage randomized control group study following an analysis of response to intervention. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 24, 619-636.



Infographic

Teacher Friendly Articles

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

[FULL ARTICLE](#)



Article

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

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

Research Outreach (2022, April). When children's storytelling says so much more. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Article

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. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Article

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



Article

Independent Research

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. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Article

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. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Infographic

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



Infographic

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.



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Schmitt, M. B., Tambyraja, S., & Hutchins, C. (Commentary Authors) (2022). Story Champs: Changing the narrative on oral language intervention. *Evidence-Based Communication Assessment and Intervention*. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



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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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Gorman, B. K., Martinez, G., & Garcia, L. P. (2021). Dual-language narrative intervention outcomes for a bilingual adolescent with down syndrome. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 44(4), 444-465. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Infographic

Gutierrez Arvizu, M. N. (2020). L2 vocabulary acquisition through narratives in an EFL public elementary school. *IAFOR Journal of Education: Language Learning in Education*, 8(1), 115-128. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



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Pico, D. L., Hessling Prael, 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. [FULL ARTICLE](#)



Article

Gutierrez Arvizu, M. N. (2017). Teaching story grammar to develop retell and speaking skills in an EFL context. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona, United States of America.