Travis and Presley Evaluation

Dr. Julia T. Atiles & Nikole L. Dominique-Maikell

Early Childhood Education

Oklahoma State University

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A Report of the Adventures with Travis and Presley Evaluation

The Adventures with Travis and Presley curriculum addresses good manners. The series is designed for children three to six years old providing a tool that reinforces character development, and demonstrates the importance of having good manners. There are eight specific topics addressed:

1. Please and Thank You,
2. How to Deal with a Bully,
3. Good Teamwork,
4. Good Table Manners,
5. Respecting Others,
6. Be Polite,
7. It's Okay to Be Different, and
8. Share and Take Turns.

There is a book, a teacher's guide, a CD with a read-a-long, an Adventure DVD, and SMART board games for each of the eight topics addressed. The curriculum is intended to be used for one month, targeting one good manners topic or concept at a time. Throughout the month the lesson should be incorporated into activities, centers, small and whole group work.

The purpose of this manuscript is to describe research conducted with the purpose of determining children's knowledge about the good manners series, in other words, determining whether the Travis and Presley curriculum is an effective curriculum to teach character education to young children.

Method

Participating teachers

Approval for the Adventures with Travis and Presley Evaluation project was obtained from the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board of Human Subjects, the Enid Public School District and the Stillwater Public School District. Enid and Stillwater school districts

were chosen because both school districts had already decided to adopt the Travis and Presley

Curriculum.

Researchers provided training with the objective of learning to utilize concept maps as an

assessment tool to utilize in early elementary classrooms. Training was conducted by Dr. Julia

Atiles, Nikole Dominique-Maikell, and Rachel Greer. Training included benefits of using

concept maps, how to create concept maps and how to score the concept maps for use in the

classroom.

Upon completion of the training, all 30 participants, Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten

teachers, were invited to volunteer for a study about the Travis and Presley curriculum. As an

incentive the school with the highest percentage of concept maps would receive a visit from

Travis and Presley themselves. Twenty of the thirty teachers agreed to participate in the research

project. However, only six actually followed through, 2 PreK teachers from Stillwater and 4

Kindergarten teachers from Enid.

Participating children

In an effort to protect the human subjects of interest, in this case very young children, the

researchers ensured anonymity as no identifying information was collected. A look at the cities

of Enid and Stillwater demographics may offer an idea of the demographic makeup of the

children participants.

Table 1

Population Profile by Race According to the 2010 Census

Race	Percentage of the Population in the City of Enid	Percentage of the Population in the City of Stillwater
White persons, percent, 2010	81.6%	79.5%
Black persons, percent, 2010	3.6%	4.7%

American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2010	2.3%	3.9%
Asian persons, percent, 2010	1.1%	5.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2010	2.2%	0.1%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2010	3.8%	5.0%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2010	10.3%	4.3%
White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2010	77.7%	77.0%

http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/40/4023950.html

The six teacher participants collected data from the children in their class. Table 2 describes

the concepts taught by each of the teachers and an estimated number of children participants per

class.

Table 2

Concepts Taught by Grade and Teacher

Volunteer teacher	Concept taught and assessed	Estimated number of children assessed: Number of groups X 4-6 children per group
Teacher 1, Pre-Kindergarten	1. Good Teamwork, 2. Be Polite, 3. Share and Take Turns.	Five groups of 4 children for each of the three concepts. Thus, 20 children were assessed about three different concepts.
Teacher 2, Pre-Kindergarten	1. Good Teamwork.	Four groups of 5 children for one of the concepts. Thus, 20 children were assessed about three different concepts.
Teacher 3, Kindergarten	1. How to Deal with a Bully 2. Good Table Manners.	Four groups of 4-6 children for each of the two concepts. Thus, 16-24 children were assessed for each topic.
Teacher 4, Kindergarten	1. How to Deal with a Bully	Four groups of 4-6 children for the topic. Thus, 16-24 children were assessed.

| Teacher 5, Kindergarten | 1. How to Deal with a Bully | Seven groups representing the assessment of 25 children. |
| Teacher 6, Kindergarten | 1. How to Deal with a Bully | Four groups of 4-6 children for the topic. Thus, 16-24 children were assessed. |

Data submitted by the teacher volunteers addressed five of the eight topics: How to Deal with a Bully (4 teachers), Good Teamwork (2 teachers), Good Table Manners (1 teacher), Be Polite (1 teacher), and Share and Take Turns (1 teacher). These data represented 113 to 137 Prekindergarten and Kindergarten children. That is about 40 PreKindergarteners in Stillwater, and 73- 97 kindergarteners from Enid.

Data collection protocol

The teachers were instructed to follow the curriculum exactly as specified in the Travis and Presley curriculum materials. This study used concept maps as the pre- and post- assessment tool. Participating teachers were asked to create concept maps with the topic of the concept as the central concept. For example, when completing data collection about the How to Deal with a Bully topic, the teacher would write "BULLY" in the center of the map. Teachers worked with small groups of 4-6 children, creating a concept map of the knowledge of the children in each small group before introducing the curriculum (pre-assessment) and a month later after having implemented the curriculum (post-assessment). It was stressed that the children in the small groups had to be the same in the pre and post assessments.

The concept maps were collected and coded by the researchers. The maps were scored quantitatively using the measures outlined in Table 3 which was adapted from Hough, O'Rode, Terman, and Weissglass (2007). Inter rater reliability was 1.0, established by having two coders for 26% of the maps. Concept maps are scored by counting the depth and width of the concept map. The depth and width are added together to create a Hierarchical Structure Score. This score

represents the complexity of understanding. The higher the HSS, the more complex the

understanding of the students who participated in creating the concept map.

Table 3

Concept Map Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition
Root	The main/first concept on a map
Concept	An individual idea or concept on a map depicted by a circle or box
Link	A connecting line between two concepts
Depth of Concept Map	The length of the longest chain on the map
Level	Number, X, representing the concepts on the map that are X links away from the root
Width	The number of concepts on the largest level

Hough, O'Rode, Terman, and Weissglass (2007)

Results

Changes in the concept map score totals, as well as, the changes in the pre and post

Hierarchical Structure Scores (HSS) were analyzed. In order to analyze change in children's

knowledge about the six Travis and Presley concepts taught by the teachers in this study,

dependent t-tests were utilized to examine total number of concepts and HSS scores. Results for

total concepts indicate a significant increase in children's knowledge [t (41) = -7.85, $p < .001$]

from before the curriculum implementation ($M = 6.90$, $SD = 3.24$) to after the curriculum

implementation ($M = 11.48$, $SD = 3.09$). Results for HSS scores indicate a significant increase in

children's knowledge about the Travis and Presley concepts they were taught [t (41) = -7.05, p <

.001] from before exposure to the curriculum to ($M = 7.19$, $SD = 2.83$) to after exposure to the

curriculum ($M = 9.88$, $SD = 2.72$). In other words, children had more complexity in their concept

maps at the end of the curriculum exposure than before it. Table 4 breaks down the information

by curriculum topic.

Table 4

Correlation Results for the Pre and Post Test Totals by Topic and the Pre and Post Test

Hierarchical Structure Scores

| Topic of Concept | Pre Total | | Post Total | | | | Pre HSS | | Post HSS | | | | |
	M	SD	M	SD	p	t	M	SD	M	SD	p	t	df
Be Polite	5.0	.71	13.4	2.30	.00	-11.22	5.80	.84	10.0	1.87	.003	-6.33	4
Share and Take Turns	3.80	.84	7.80	.84	.005	-5.66	4.80	.84	7.00	.71	.020	-3.77	4
Good Teamwork	5.0	2.45	10.89	2.26	.00	-7.30	5.22	1.48	8.89	2.37	.00	-5.88	8
Good Table Manners	8.50	1.91	11.75	1.26	.041	-3.43	9.50	1.91	12.75	1.26	.041	-3.43	3
How to Deal with a Bully	8.79	3.26	12.16	3.53	.005	-3.19	8.63	2.99	10.47	2.87	.015	-2.69	18

M= Mean
SD = Standard Deviation; shows the difference between the score and the mean.
t= Correlation strength; assesses whether the means of two groups are statistically different from each other.
df= Degrees of freedom or number of values in the final calculation of a statistic that are free to vary.
p= Correlation significance shows the probability that the observed correlation occurred by chance. That is, determining the probability that the correlation is a real one and not by chance. For example, if p=.00, this did not occur by chance. However if p= .041, there is a 4% likelihood to have occurred by chance.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this research study the Travis and Presley curriculum is an

effective way to teach prekindergarten and kindergarten children character education. While

knowledge increase in all concepts has been determined to be very statistically significant, the

specific strength varies among each concept.

Reference

Hough, S., O'Rode, N., Terman, N., Weissglass, J. (2007). Using concept maps to assess change

in teachers' understandings of algebra: a respectful approach. *Journal of Mathematics*

Teacher Education, 10, 23-41 doi: 10.1007/s10857-007-9025-0.