

Beyond Shaving Cream:

Multisensory Approaches to Literacy Instruction

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ABOUT THE PRESENTER



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Overview

Areas of need
+ growth

02

Research

Independent
+ collaborative study
+ essential questions

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Implementation
+ samples

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Results

Summary of learning
+ reflection





01

Overview

Areas of need, growth,
+ instructional focus

Project Overview

1. Classroom Snapshot:

Play-based kindergarten

80% average attendance / engagement

57% below benchmark

1.5 hours of live instruction

2. Area of Need:

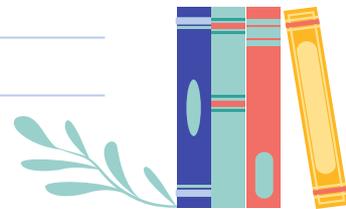
Non-traditional instruction (NTI) led to significantly decreased student engagement with fewer hours of live instruction for play-based strategies.

3. Area of Growth:

Increase student engagement through the implementation of play-based learning and multisensory approaches in non-traditional instruction.

4. Instructional Focus:

Reading Foundations +
Comprehension





PROBLEM STATEMENT

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the 2020-21 school year saw the implementation of digital learning for all students in the district. Also known as non-traditional instruction (or NTI), this format posed challenges for my play-based learning classroom practice.

Inconsistent attendance, truncated instructional time, and lack of access to hands-on materials were factors that altered my teaching. I addressed these challenges by incorporating multisensory approaches across the digital platform.

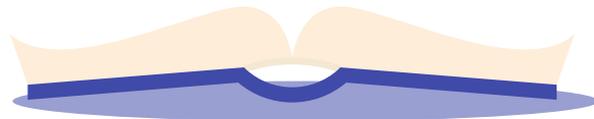




02

RESEARCH

Independent + collaborative study



RESEARCH



Wohlwend (2015)

“Standards are forcing schools into a false dichotomy of reducing playtime in favor of more time to learn math and literacy. But play can deepen learning even in core content areas.”



Pyle, Poliszczu, Danniels (2018)

“Results revealed three common challenges with integrating play and literacy learning: direct instruction... play is less structured and difficult to plan, and feeling uncertain how to implement guided play.”



Edwards (2013)

“It is suggested that a contextual orientation towards the problem of digital play in the early years might better support teachers to effectively engage children in... critical thinking skills.”

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

in a digital framework



How do I digitize play?

How do I continue to honor play-based practice with less instructional time that is mediated through a screen?



How do I create multisensory learning?

How can I engage all students in multisensory activities without face-to-face interaction?



03

Action Plan

Implementation + samples

ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

Challenge

- Determining access to hands-on materials
- Making best use of time to address standards *and* incorporate play
- Providing a variety of activities that would appeal to all senses despite screen mediation

Solution

- Frequent, home deliveries of supplies and materials as needed
- Deliberate, goal-oriented play activities tied explicitly to standards, with optional loose play times
- Use of videos, storytelling, movement, dance, songs, drama, manipulatives, and pretend.



EQUITY + DIVERSITY



Online Access

Ensured each student had a Chromebook, hotspot, and direct line to teacher for IT help.



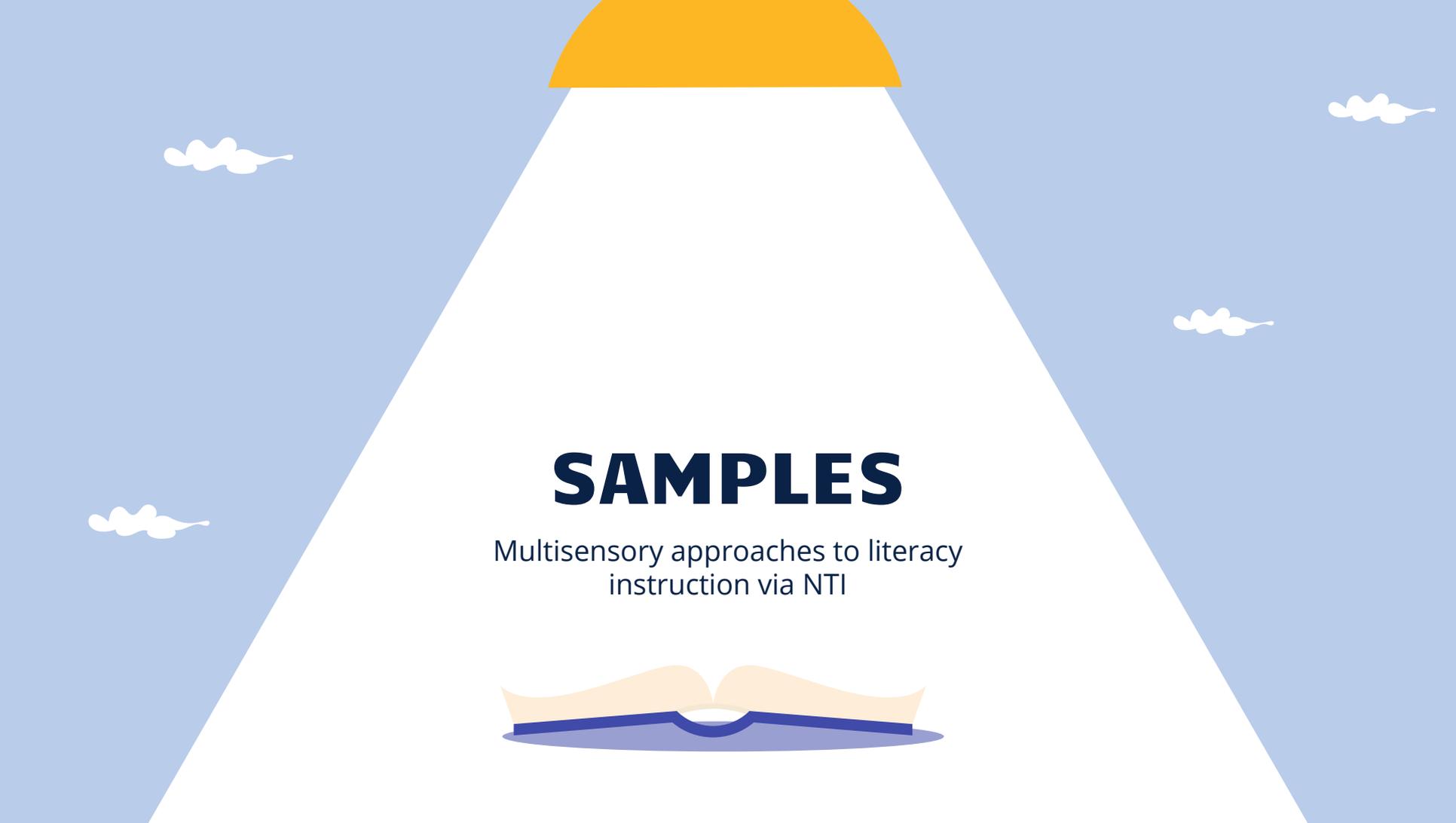
Materials Access

Hand-delivered learning bags to each student, door-to-door.



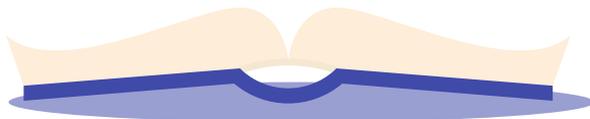
Cultural Variety

Offered multisensory and play-based activities with diverse experiences and cultures in mind.



SAMPLES

Multisensory approaches to literacy
instruction via NTI



Loose Parts: Letter Building

When learning about the alphabet, I delivered loose parts so we could notice attributes and build letters together. I combined these manipulatives with magnetic letters on salt trays.



Bear Hunt: Sequencing

I delivered safari hats and told students to wear them the next week to our Reading Party for a top secret adventure. I wore a bear onesie, and we sang "Going on a Bear Hunt" together. Afterwards, we reviewed the sequence of events.



Story Stew: Story Elements

I rewrote the lyrics to “Purple Stew” to include definitions of character, plot, and setting. Each day, I read aloud a mentor text. Then we used our imaginations to become chefs and sang the song to make a Story Stew.

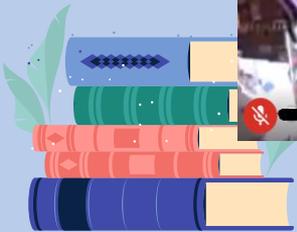


Click me!



Play Groups + Snack Time: SEL

To counteract truncated instructional time (and to keep students online between their small group times), we implemented Play Groups. Whenever students aren't working with a teacher on direct instruction, they join other students on a Google Meet for guided play. Generally, we give them a prompt to get them going, and then sit back as they take over!



OTHER SUCCESSFUL IDEAS

Quick ways to incorporate play while enriching instructional time:

Play pretend while you learn about a topic, person, or place. “Dress up” or play charades.

Go on a scavenger hunt. Practice categorizing as you assess for understanding.

If you don’t have the materials, use something else or pretend! (when possible)

Practice listening to stories and songs without videos or visuals.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- Needed parents to actively do the “adult writing” portion of writing stories.
- Parents + caregivers recorded and shared videos of students reading their stories that we posted on the website.
- Invited families to literacy parties and read-aloud events to participate in the fun!



Mrs. Jackson will read live on Portland Elementary's Facebook page tonight at 7:30 pm!

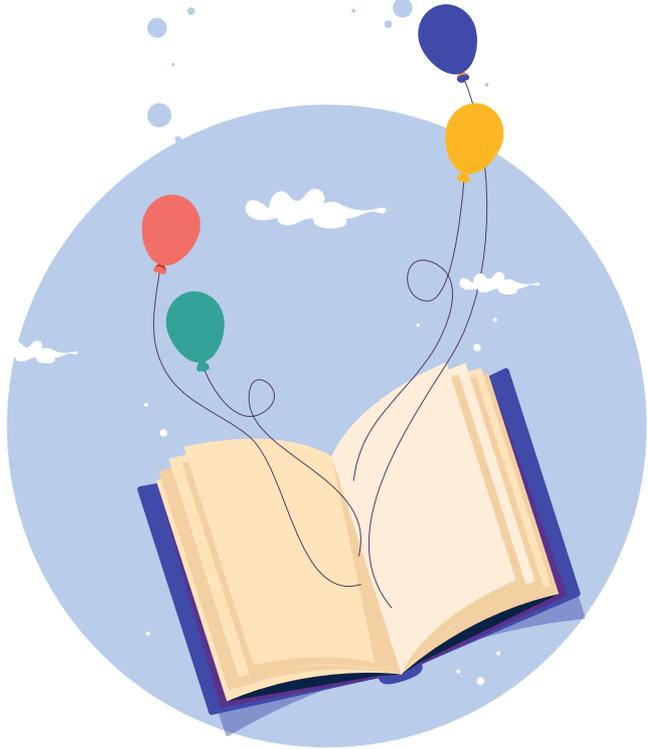
A graphic featuring a large, bright full moon in a dark night sky, with silhouettes of evergreen trees in the foreground. A yellow star is positioned in the upper right corner of the graphic.

Portland Elementary
presents
Books & Bedtime

When: December 14th-17th

- Bedtime Stories
- Special Guests
- Evening Snacks
 - Prizes

Parents please like and follow our facebook page
Portland Elementary School
to join the event!



04

Assessment + Results

Summary of learning
+ reflection

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

October

1 learning bag

November

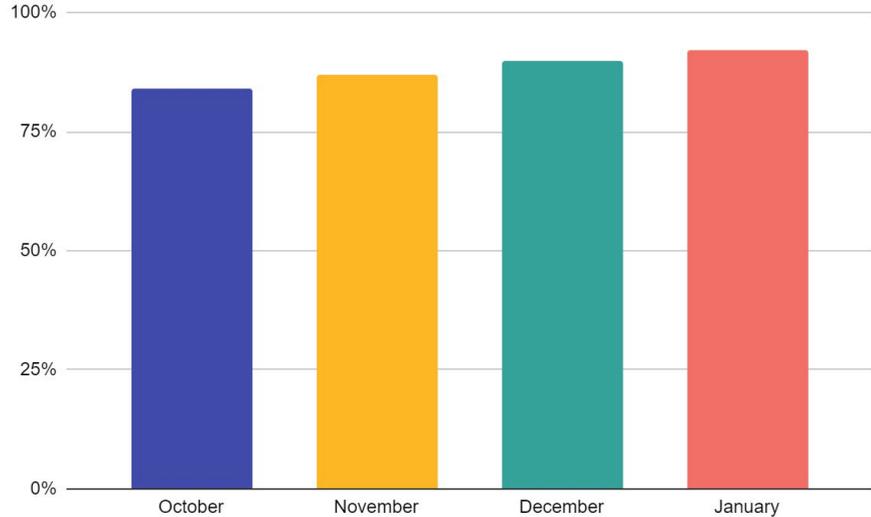
2 learning bags

December

1 learning bag +
play groups

January

Learning bag +
play groups + increased
instructional time



Average monthly engagement for students who participated in both whole group and small group instruction.

Summary of Results



Engagement

Students were more likely to participate in both whole group and small group instruction.



Social Emotional

Students had more practice on social emotional learning skills and could more easily identify wants and needs.



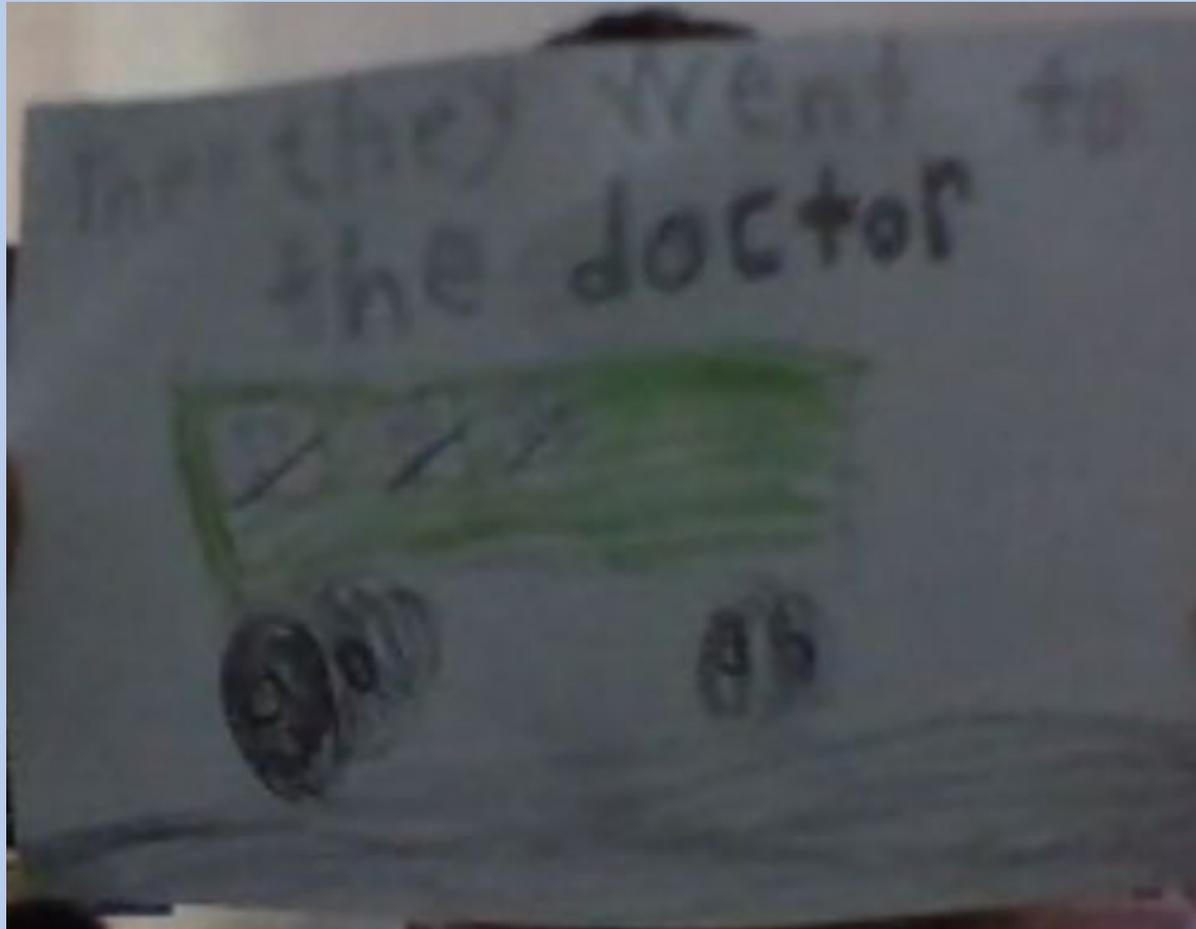
Academic

Students were able to synthesize their literacy knowledge to write and publish a story.

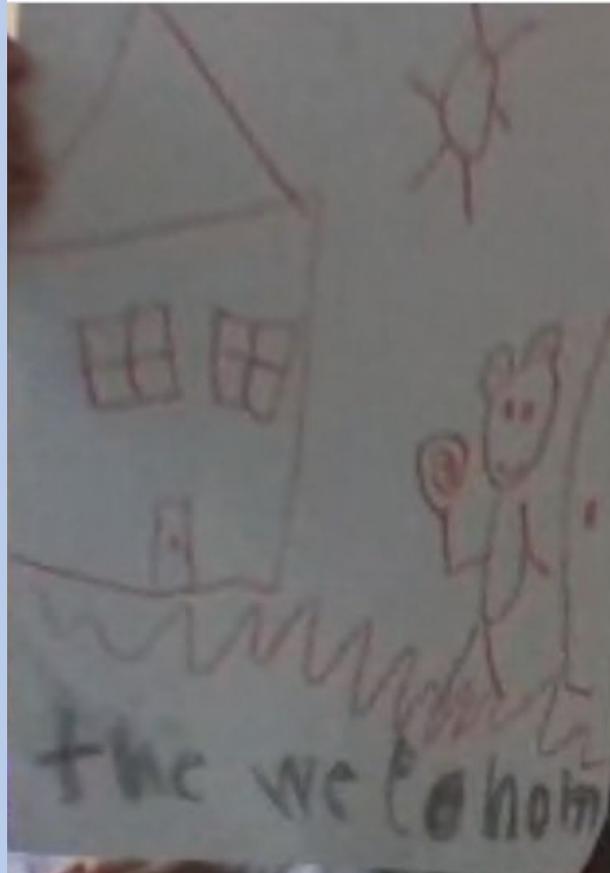
STORY ELEMENTS: STUDENT SAMPLE



STORY ELEMENTS: SAMPLE (cont.)



STORY ELEMENTS: SAMPLE (cont.)



REFLECTION



Coming from a hands-on, play-based classroom, I struggled with how I would effectively cover all my literacy standards while also counteracting screen time with play during digital instruction.

I simply had to change the way I thought about play-based and multisensory learning. I was able to think creatively to engage my students through the screen. In fact, I plan to translate many of these activities into my in-person classroom next year.

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THANKS!



Questions or comments?

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