

## ABSTRACT

James Cluthe Moore

### Effects Of Musical Pitch Training On Reading Skills And Phonemic Awareness Of Kindergarten Students

(Major Professor: Joyce S. Choate)

This study investigated the interrelationships among musical pitch discrimination, reading skills, and phonemic awareness (segmentation). The theoretical framework for the study was based on the belief that skills required for musical pitch discrimination, reading, and phonemic awareness are closely related, and that knowledge and skills acquired in one realm might transfer to the others. Subjects included 49 kindergarten students from one northeastern Louisiana elementary school. Students were randomly assigned to groups, with 23 in the control group and 26 in the experimental group. Pretesting included measures of musical pitch discrimination, reading skills, and phonemic awareness. The experimental group received eight weekly 30-minute lessons on musical pitch discrimination. The control group received art lessons on a similar schedule. After treatment, students were tested again using the same measures. Statistical analyses revealed no significant differences between the groups and little or no effect size on posttest measures. However, the experimental group realized 21% and 61% increases on measures of pitch and phonemic awareness, respectively. A post-hoc analysis found significant but relatively small to medium correlations between measures of musical pitch discrimination and reading skills, and between measures of phonemic awareness and reading skills. These significant correlations were evident in both pretests and posttests. No significant correlation was found between the measures of musical pitch discrimination and phonemic awareness. It was concluded that the training in musical pitch discrimination used in this study had no effect on measures of musical pitch discrimination, reading skills, or phonemic awareness. This study did not rule out, however, the possibility of a stronger relationship among musical pitch discrimination, reading skills, and phonemic awareness than the correlational relationship shown by this and other research. Recommendations for future study included more research to determine the nature of musical pitch discrimination in young children and a longitudinal study to help determine the nature of the relationships among musical pitch discrimination, reading skills, and phonemic awareness.