EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

This category lists research papers that discuss the impact of SESAME STREET on reading, mathematical, and thinking skills, language acquisition, IQ, and school readiness.

Empirical Studies


Anderson, B. D., Greenberg, E., & Mark, J. (1979). The educational technology mix: Production functions from SESAME STREET. Instructional Science, 8(1), 67-69. Examines SESAME STREET's educational effectiveness as a function of viewing levels and socioeconomic variables. Reanalyzes existing data from 695 kindergarten-aged children of varying SES randomly selected from five U.S. areas.

Australian Broadcasting Corporation. (undated). SESAME STREET: An ABC research interim report. Sydney: Author. Investigates the educational effectiveness of SESAME STREET as measured by performance on scholastic achievement tests (picture vocabulary; recognition of shapes, letters, and numbers; reading tests; arithmetic tasks; and counting). The subjects were 663 3- to 6-year-old Australian children most of whom were regular SESAME STREET viewers.

Ball, L. A. (1974). Study of the effects of SESAME STREET and POLKA DOT DOOR on preschool children. Ontario, Canada: University of Guelph. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 105 970). Investigates whether or not parents' attitudes and children's intelligence scores affect children's reactions to television programs. Compared the behavior of thirty-five preschoolers before and after the viewing of 2 half-hour programs of SESAME STREET and POLKA DOT DOOR. Parents' attitudes toward the programs were gauged with questionnaires and subjects' intelligence was measured using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.

Ball, S., & Bogatz, G. A. (1970). Evaluating SESAME STREET. Educational Television, 2(5), 24-26. ETS review of its measurement of the effectiveness of SESAME STREET in meeting its primary educational goals. Reports study evaluating the impact of SESAME STREET on the learning and viewing behavior of 1,300 preschoolers. The preschoolers, ages 3 to 5, were from urban poverty areas in Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Arizona, and California. Discusses research design and measurement instruments.
Evaluates SESAME STREET's first year to determine whether it accomplished its stated educational objectives. Subjects were 943 ethnically diverse, disadvantaged inner-city children, advantaged suburban children, rural children, and Spanish-speaking children. Also compared subjects viewing at home to those viewing in school under adult supervision.

(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 122 799). Summarizes the ETS evaluation of SESAME STREET's first year. For a related document, see Ball and Bogatz (1970), The first year of SESAME STREET: An evaluation.


Evaluates the first two years of SESAME STREET and its effectiveness as compensatory education. Progress along 36 primary goals of the show as well as transfer effects, home background variables, parental attitudes, and socioeconomic factors were assessed. Over 1,300 preschool children were tested and many were observed as they viewed the show. Also compared subjects viewing at home to those viewing in school on measures of educational effect and tendency to view.

Describes the first-year evaluation of the instructional effectiveness of SESAME STREET. Research strategies and techniques are reported, and comparisons are made between disadvantaged subjects and others.

 Responds to T.D. Cook’s report on the educational effectiveness of SESAME STREET. Discusses findings of the first and second year ETS evaluation. For T. D. Cook citation, see Cook et al. (1975) in the Literature Review section below.


Findings from a replication of the first-year ETS study and a second-year exploration of SESAME STREET's impact on extended, new goal areas. The follow-up study involved 283 disadvantaged children from the first-year evaluation. These children were from Winston-Salem, NC, and Los Angeles, CA. The second volume is a collection of data tables and figures from both studies.


Discusses findings of a reanalysis of the data from a follow-up study to the first year ETS evaluation and a second year study which measured SESAME STREET's effectiveness in teaching basic facts and skills to 283 disadvantaged preschoolers.


Report of the ETS first and second year evaluation of SESAME STREET.


Assesses SESAME STREET's effects on school readiness and the impact of early viewing at home on the first year of school. Subjects were ninety-nine 3-to-5-year-olds and their parents from low-income areas in Los Angeles, California.


A report on pre-science programs in elementary schools and SESAME STREET's potential contribution to teaching pre-science. Surveyed fifteen K-2 teachers in Manhattan about the science curriculum.


Examines reform efforts in a selected sample of big city school systems which have been planned or initiated in response to the reported successes of SESAME STREET. Forty-six big city school systems responded to a questionnaire developed to obtain information about demographics, student viewing patterns, in-school performance of SESAME STREET viewers and graduates, and the use of SESAME STREET as a model for school districts to develop programs and materials.
Carrico, M. A. (1971). An assessment of the children's television program SESAME STREET in relation to the attainment of the program's goals by kindergarten children in the Sioux Falls, South Dakota public schools (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Dakota). Dissertation Abstracts International, 32(05), 2297A. Compares the goal attainment of kindergarten children who viewed SESAME STREET with the attainment of children who did not view the program. Eight elementary schools representing a socioeconomic cross-section of all areas of Sioux Falls were selected for the study. A pre-post test was administered to measure the effect of SESAME STREET relative to the attainment of specific behavioral goals by kindergarten children.


Clarke, H. (1978). Comprehensibility for SESAME STREET audiences of selected pre-reading segments from SESAME STREET and THE ELECTRIC COMPANY. New York, NY: Children's Television Workshop. Evaluates SESAME STREET's pre-reading curriculum for comprehensibility of letter sounds, sight words, and sight phrases to determine ways to tailor pre-reading segments to the target audience's needs and abilities. Subjects were 4- to 6-year-olds, ethnically diverse, from three day care centers in New York City. Pre-test and post-test comparisons were done for each pre-reading and reading segment.


Cosby, W. H. (1976). An integration of the visual media via FAT ALBERT AND THE COSBY KIDS into the elementary school curriculum as a teaching aid and vehicle to achieve increased learning (Doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts). Dissertation Abstracts International, 37(09), 5557A. Examines the failure of urban schools to meet the educational needs of minority children and the potential of television as a tool for educational change. Three television series, SESAME STREET, THE ELECTRIC COMPANY, and FAT ALBERT AND THE COSBY KIDS, were analyzed for their attempts to combat institutional racism.

Darnell, C. D., & Goodwin, W. L. (1975, August). The kindergarten child 1971 or the class of 1984. Paper presented at the 83rd Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, Illinois. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 116 816). This longitudinal study describes kindergartners' abilities, evaluates the effect of teacher expectations on kindergarten performance, and explores the predictive validity of kindergarten performance for later reading ability. The academic performances of 450 kindergartners from the Denver Metropolitan area were monitored through the end of
Educational Impact - Empirical Studies

3rd grade, at which point only 122 children remained in the sample. Correlated SESAME STREET viewing with performance on school-related tasks.

Examines the impact of SESAME STREET on first grade teachers in facilitating reading readiness achievement for their first graders. Survey questionnaires and telephone interviews were conducted with a sample of one hundred and twenty-five first grade teachers.

Investigates preschoolers' comprehension of SESAME STREET's classification and sorting segments. Children were tested on classification and sorting tasks after viewing. Subjects were ninety-five 3- to 6-year-olds from an urban day care center.

Examines children's classification skills in relation to televised instruction. Created an interactive learning situation for SESAME STREET viewers. Subjects were 94 low SES preschoolers from three day care centers in the midwest.

Assesses achievement in 150 3- to 5-year-old Mexican children before and after viewing PLAZA SESAMO, the Mexican version of SESAME STREET. Four ETS achievement tests were used in the following areas: 1) symbol representation, 2) cognitive organization and relational components, 3) reasoning and problem-solving, and 4) recognition and labeling of body parts and emotions.

Evaluates the educational effectiveness of PLAZA SESAMO. Subjects were 221 Mexican urban children, ages 3 to 5, from three different low SES day care centers. The children were divided into experimental (watched SESAME STREET) and control groups (watched non-educational TV), and were pre- and post-tested on content achievement, cognitive content, and independent cognitive measures.

National summative study that produced an audience profile in critical regions of Mexico to determine the feasibility of a quasi-experimental design. Children were measured repeatedly at three stages: 1-prior to exposure to PLAZA SESAMO, 2-midstream, and 3-after completion of PLAZA SESAMO. Subjects were 216 children, ages 3-5, low SES in day care centers.
Diaz-Guerrero, R., & Holtzman, W. H. (1974). Learning from televised PLAZA SESAMO. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 56*(5), 632-643. Evaluates the educational effectiveness of PLAZA SESAMO during its first season in Mexico City. Subjects were 221 Mexican urban children, ages 3-5, from three different low SES day care centers. They were randomly assigned to an experimental group or a control group. The experimental group watched 130 PLAZA SESAMO programs over 6 months and the control group watched non-educational programming. Nine achievement tests which measured general knowledge, numbers, letters, and words as taught by the program, were administered pre-, during, and post-telecast.


Ellis, E. N., Reid, M. J., & Hoen, R. (1972). *The impact of SESAME STREET on primary pupils in Vancouver (RR-72-16)*. Vancouver, British Columbia: Department of Planning and Evaluation. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 077 988). This observational study assesses the educational impact of SESAME STREET and THE ELECTRIC COMPANY on 2,300 primary school students. A questionnaire was also administered to measure the percentage and frequency of viewing of these programs.


Flores, B. (1974). *The observation and testing report on the SESAME STREET program*. Los Angeles: California University Chicano Studies Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 126 864). Examines SESAME STREET's cultural content with regard to Chicano children and reports an observational study of Chicano children's reactions to the presentation of Spanish segments on SESAME STREET. Nineteen Chicano preschoolers were given pre- and post-tests to determine the impact of the show on shape, number, and letter recognition, classification, and number recitation skills.
Educational Impact - Empirical Studies

Gadberry, S. (1980). Effects of restricting first-graders' TV-viewing on leisure time use, IQ change, and cognitive style. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 1*, 45-57. Examines the effects of limiting television on children's Wechsler IQ scales, cognitive style (reflectivity versus impulsivity), and leisure time use. Subjects were middle-class six-year-olds matched for sex, age, pretest IQ, and TV viewing time. They were blindly assigned to a restricted TV-viewing group or an unrestricted group.

Garfinkel, R. (1976). *Fallout from SESAME STREET: Effects on intelligence testing, Phase 1*. New York, NY: Children's Television Workshop. Investigates the change in difficulty of individual Stanford-Binet questions for 1937 preschoolers versus 1972 preschoolers. Examined the relationship between SESAME STREET's curriculum goals and the types of questions on which preschoolers had improved. Asked 11 CTW raters to rate the individual Stanford-Binet questions according to how much easier the items would be for a child to answer correctly if he/she had exposure to SESAME STREET. See Garfinkel & Thorndike (1976) and Thorndike (1977) below for related documents.

Garfinkel, R., & Thorndike, R. L. (1976). Binet item difficulty then and now. *Child Development, 47*, 959-965. Compares scores on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale Form L-M from a 1937 sample with a 1972 sample in an effort to determine whether individual items on the scale have maintained similar difficulty levels and discrimination indices over time. The age range in both samples is 2 to 18 years of age.


Greenfield, P. M. (1984). Using television to overcome educational disadvantage. In J. P. Murray, & G. Salomon (Eds.), *The future of children's television* (pp. 81-86). Boys Town, NE: Boys Town. Investigates the educational impact of television on the disadvantaged. Subjects watched an animated narrated story on TV. At a later time, subjects heard another story presented via a tape recorder. After each story, they were tested for comprehension and memory. Subjects were 6 to 10 year old, from four different SES groups.


Educational Impact - Empirical Studies

reading to child, age when child first watched SESAME STREET, attendance at preschool, and visits to the public library.

Examines the extent to which preschoolers viewing SESAME STREET's 7th season curriculum differ from their first and second season counterparts. Compared results from emotions and divergent thinking pre- and post-tests. Subjects were 30 children, ages 3 to 5.

Examines children's attention to and comprehension of various problem-solving, classification, concept development, and affect segments of SESAME STREET. Eye movement patterns of 89 suburban Toronto children, ages 5 to 6, were recorded.

Reports the views of parents and children, and the opinions of experts in Great Britain regarding SESAME STREET.

Findings of a 3-year longitudinal study examining the development of categories children establish to classify programs and preschool children's understanding of the relationship between various types of TV programs within the TV world. Subjects were three 3- to 5-year-olds. Their ability to differentiate between adult-perceived categories of TV programs was studied. SESAME STREET was included because many children's first attempts at classification revolve around identification of SESAME STREET segments.

Formative study of the effectiveness of 15 different segments of the SESAME STREET rhyming curriculum. Thirty-eight children, ages 4 to 6, were tested before and after exposure to SESAME STREET on their rhyming skills.

See p.58 - VIEWING ENVIRONMENT.

Provides preliminary data on the effectiveness of SESAME STREET in Australia. Examined the relationship between performance on tests of cognitive achievement and level of viewing. Subjects were 67 children from low SES areas of Adelaide. Used six testing instruments developed by ETS: the letters test, numbers test, sorting skills test, relations test, classification of pictures, and parts-of-a-whole test.
Educational Impact - Empirical Studies


Lemish, D., & Rice, M. L. (1986). Television as a talking picture book: A prop for language acquisition. Journal of Children's Language, 13, 251-274. Reports a longitudinal observational study of young children's behavior while viewing television in their own home over a time when the children were actively involved in the process of language acquisition. Subjects were 8 females and 8 males, ages 6 months to 2.5 years at the beginning of the study, and ages 1 to 3 at the end of the study.


Lukoff, J. (1972). Recall and recognition of letters and numbers of children in two day care centers. New York, NY: Children's Television Workshop. Provides normative data on the abilities of 4-year-olds regarding the specific SESAME STREET goals of learning letters and numbers. Compares the findings from children in two day care centers, one that regularly viewed SESAME STREET, and one that did not. Tests of letter, number-matching, recall, and recognition were used.

A pre-test/post-test experimental study of viewers and nonviewers. Assesses whether preschool children learn as a direct result of watching the program. Measures used were the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and a content battery developed by ETS. Subjects were 200 preschool black and white children, ages 4 to 5, in day care centers in Maine, New York, and Tennessee. After being administered an extensive battery of pre-tests, subjects were divided into groups of viewers and nonviewers. At the end of three months of program viewing, the subjects were retested.

Investigates the effects of SESAME STREET's first season (1969-1970) on school readiness in a socioeconomically diverse pool of 524 urban kindergartners. Compared their scores on the Metropolitan Readiness Test with scores from 977 kindergarten children from 1968-1969, the year preceding SESAME STREET's first season.

See Minton (1972) above.

Explores Israeli children's contact with SESAME STREET as a teaching medium and examines how various facets of the learning process, characteristics of the medium, personality of the learner, and the multiple interactions between these factors influence the effectiveness of SESAME STREET. Subjects were 125 disadvantaged and 192 advantaged children, ages 5 to 8. The use of encouragement was a major treatment variable in this pre- and post-test study design.

Examines the effects of modeling or expansion, on two processes of language acquisition, in a television environment. This study used SESAME STREET because effective verbal communication is one of its primary objectives for young viewers.

Murray, M. M. (1985). A comparison of the performance on certain reading readiness skills of kindergartners who have had no formal preschool group experience with kindergartners who have had a social or academic preschool group experience (Doctoral dissertation, Boston College). Dissertation Abstracts International, 46(08), 2180A.
Examines the effects of a child's preschool experience on reading readiness as ascertained by performance on Brigance letter sub-tests, the Wide Range Achievement Test, and the Lass Environment Word List. Subjects were 75 kindergartners from two Connecticut towns.

Examines whether the achievement gap between socioeconomic groups widened or narrowed after receiving a uniform educational treatment. Data from the 1970 ETS evaluation of SESAME STREET was reanalyzed.
Examines strategies for assessing the readiness level of the kindergarten child within three educational domains: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective.

Analyzes the language in SESAME STREET to determine the frequency with which the adults speak Standard English.

Studies the effects of three intervention programs on the intellectual functioning of 132 black preschool children ranging in age from three years, five months to four years, five months. The following groups, all from inner city of St. Louis, Missouri comprised the sample: 1) A group of children in a highly structured preschool emphasizing cognitive development; 2) A group of children in a less-structured preschool emphasizing personal-social development; 3) A group of children with no formal preschool experience but with daily regular exposure to the program SESAME STREET; 4) A contrast group made up of children with no formal preschool experience and no home exposure to SESAME STREET.

Examines the relationship between learning styles and school readiness within two groups of 5- and 6-year-old primary school children. The first group was composed of 15 preschool children who watched an average of 5 hours of SESAME STREET per week. The second group consisted of 29 preschoolers who did not watch the programs. Children were tested on the Learning Styles Inventory-Primary Version (LSI-P) and the Metropolitan Readiness Test.

Assesses the effectiveness of PLAZA SESAMO, the Spanish language version of SESAME STREET produced in Latin America, upon Spanish language training for secondary school students in the United States. Subjects were 12 male Phillips Exeter Academy students in the second semester of first-year Spanish.

Discusses the messages and approaches being implemented in current curricula for preschool children on fire safety and burn prevention.

Discusses preliminary findings from an ETS study which evaluates the educational effectiveness of the New Approach Method (NAM) of early education, and compares it to the first year evaluation of SESAME STREET. Subjects were 25 males, 25 females.
Educational Impact - Empirical Studies

with a median age of 56 months. Pre- and post-test instruments tested colors, concepts, shapes, numbers, letters, word reading, and attitudes toward reading-related activities.

Assesses the impact of SESAME STREET on preschooler's performance on cognitive tasks, paired-associate learning tasks, and ability to utilize imposed pictorial elaborations. Data were collected from 49 preschoolers before July 1969, prior to SESAME STREET's premiere, and after July 1970, following exposure to SESAME STREET.

Results of formative research conducted during SESAME STREET's pre-broadcast season and during the broadcast period which focussed on the establishment of instructional goals, and assessed determinants of appeal and achievement. Six small viewing groups were observed for 14 days watching SESAME STREET to examine consistency in reactions of viewing groups to various programming elements.

See p.59 - VIEWING ENVIRONMENT.

See p.59 - VIEWING ENVIRONMENT.

Findings from two 1974 studies evaluating the impact of the Spanish version of SESAME STREET, PLAZA SESAMO, on learning in Mexican children. The experimental design was a replication of the 1971 PLAZA SESAMO study (see Diaz-Guerrero in this section). Subjects from the first study were 221 low SES 3- to 5-year-olds in day care centers. The subject pool in the second study consisted of 1,113 socioeconomically and geographically diverse 4- to 5-year-olds.

A longitudinal study of the relationship between preschool children's viewing of SESAME STREET and their vocabulary development. Variables of interest were children's vocabulary skills, gender, number of older siblings, parents' educational level, parental encouragement of SESAME STREET viewing, and positive attitudes about television. Diary records of television viewing were collected for 2 years from two cohorts of children: one group of 3-year-olds (N=160) and one group of 5-year-olds (N=166).

Formative research that investigates the curriculum goals of IFTAH YA SIMSIM, the Arabic version of SESAME STREET. Tested for comprehension of segments teaching various cognitive skills in 3- to 6-year-old children.


Salomon, G. (1976). Cognitive skill learning across cultures. *Journal of Communication*, 26(2), 138-144. Investigates whether exposure to SESAME STREET improved particular cognitive skills and how skill improvement was related to knowledge acquisition. Subjects were 317 Israeli 5-, 7-, and 8-year-olds relatively unaccustomed to television.


Salomon, G., Eglstein, S., Finkelstein, R., Finkelstein, I., Mintzberg, E., Malve, D., & Velner, L. (1972). *Educational effects of SESAME STREET on Israeli children* (brief summary). Jerusalem, Israel: Hebrew University of Jerusalem. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 070 317). Summarizes findings from a field study (n=317), controlled experiment (n=75), and clinical observation (n=36), evaluating SESAME STREET's educational effectiveness. Subjects were 5-, 7- and 8-year-olds from Jerusalem, half middle and half low SES.

Salzer, R. T. (1984). Early reading and giftedness--Some observations and questions. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 28(2), 95-96. Investigates characteristics of children who read before age 4. Interviews of more than 50 children were conducted. One area explored was SESAME STREET viewing.

Educational Impact - Empirical Studies

Investigates SESAME STREET's method of educating disadvantaged children. Twenty-four pairs of disadvantaged kindergartners were randomly selected and divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group was exposed to SESAME STREET and the control group was exposed to social and affective learning experiences. Used Metropolitan Readiness Test to compare the two groups.

Reports findings from studies discussed in Sprigle (1972) above. Also discusses a follow-up study that analyzed the communication pattern used on SESAME STREET to determine the degree and quality of two-way interaction between children and adults.

Investigates SESAME STREET's methods of educating poverty children. See Sprigle (1971) above for description of study. Discusses a second study testing the effects of exposing poverty children to different time lengths of SESAME STREET viewing.

Analyzes SESAME STREET's treatment of non-Standard black language.

A field study that examines the effects of SESAME STREET on 5- to 7-year-old children living in four isolated communities on Canada's Labrador Coast. Over a 3-year period, children in grades K-2 were administered the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities, and Criterion Reference Tests to measure SESAME STREET's impact.

See Taylor and Skanes (1977) above.

Investigates the discrepancy in IQ shifts between 1937 and 1972 preschoolers. Preschoolers from the 1972 sample showed an IQ improvement averaging about 10 IQ points over the 1937 sample. Discusses possible explanations.

Investigates the effects of SESAME STREET and MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD on memory recall and spontaneous social play. Subjects were 58 white, middle-class nursery school children. Three viewing groups were exposed to three 1/2 hours of MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD, or neutral films on animals and nature over two weeks. Interactions of children's age, sex, IQ, and level of imaginativeness with the stimulus conditions were considered.

Tropf, A. E. (1972). An evaluation of the effects of SESAME STREET upon the reading achievement of deprived children who are having difficulty reading at the first, second and third school levels. Melbourne, FL: Florida Technological University. Investigates the effects of SESAME STREET on the reading skills of 23 reading-deficient students from Florida United Methodist Children's Home measured by pre- and post-test scores on IQ and reading tests. Subjects individually matched by IQ scores, gender, and classroom, and divided into experimental and control groups.


Van Strat, G. (1975). The reading problem in urban schools: Who has it and what has been done about it? (Doctoral dissertation, University of Massachusetts). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 36*(02), 855A. Examines pertinent literature which seeks to explain the causes of reading failure in urban schools, and identifies ingredients of successful urban reading programs.


Wilder, P. G. (1980). The moral of a story: Preschoolers' gradual comprehension of a narrative on SESAME STREET. *Moral Education Forum, 5*(3), 2-14. This developmental study examines preschoolers' comprehension of a televised narrative. Nine children viewed a SESAME STREET story "The boy who cried monster" at regular 9 month intervals while they were between ages 2.5 and 5. At each age, attention to the story, reactions while viewing, and levels of understanding were noted.


Zillmann, D., Masland, J. L., Weaver, J. B., Lacey, L. A., Jacobs, N. E., Dow, J. H., Klein, C. A., & Banker, S. R. (1984). Effects of humorous distortions on children’s learning from educational television. Journal of Educational Psychology, 76(5), 802-812. Assesses the consequences of the use of distorted forms of humor for learning by integrating the humor within an educational program modeled after SESAME STREET. Exposed subjects to educational material distorted by (1) exaggerated humorous distortion, (2) ironic humorous distortion, and (3) ironic distortion that was later corrected. Subjects were 64 kindergarten, first-grade, and fourth-grade students from Bloomington, Indiana.

Literature Reviews


society. Presents program descriptions and evaluations of Head Start and Follow Through Planned Variation, SESAME STREET, and other programs. Highlights philosophies and techniques that could benefit public education.


Blanton, W. E. (1972). *Preschool reading instruction: A literature search, evaluation, and interpretation* (Final Report(2)). Bloomington: Indiana University. Reviews literature on preschool reading instruction, along with suggestions and materials for teaching preschool reading. SESAME STREET's effectiveness in fostering pre-reading skills is evaluated.


Comstock, G., & Paik, H. J. (1987). *Television and children: A review of recent research.* Syracuse, NY: ERIC Clearinghouse. Reviews and consolidates the findings of over 300 independent studies on the effects of television on children. The empirical research is divided into six topics: 1) time use, 2) the viewing experience, 3) beliefs and world knowledge, 4) scholastic achievement, 5) advertising, and 6) behavior.


Evaluates the impact of TV on reading instruction. Also examines the success of SESAME STREET and THE ELECTRIC COMPANY in teaching reading.


Evaluates the impact and limitations of television on children's cognitive development. Discusses findings of ETS studies.

Analyzes the instructional techniques used on SESAME STREET and their ability to elicit cognitive activity from preschool viewers.

Examines learning differences and knowledge gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged children.

Describes the thinking behind the televised prereading and reading instruction offered on SESAME STREET and THE ELECTRIC COMPANY to identify key issues in program design and to relate them to actual program design decisions.

Reviews evidence on the negative effects of TV on reading development and examines the medium's potential as an instrument for positive attitudes toward reading and academic work.

Case studies that examine the relationship between hyperactivity and exposure to television in children under 3-years-old. Presents 16 case vignettes of mixed SES 2-year-olds. Discusses stimulus content of SESAME STREET.

Clinical observations of the relationship between hyperactivity and exposure to television in children under 3-years-old. Discusses stimulus content of SESAME STREET.

Reviews literature on the educational effectiveness of instructional television and discusses the success of CTW formative research in testing the power of television as an educational tool.
Examines educational children's television programs in the United States. Cites the acceptance of SESAME STREET for preschool education in 1970 as marking the beginning of a new era in educational television. Discusses ETS and PLAZA SESAMO research.

Examines the educational evaluation process using SESAME STREET as an example. Discusses seven major steps in the evaluation of educational television. Also discusses SESAME STREET evaluations by ETS and T. D. Cook.

Examines the role of television in young children's lives including various aspects of child functioning in relation to television. Discusses research findings on the educational effectiveness of SESAME STREET.

Discusses the inconclusive nature of the impact of mass media on children. Evaluates studies indicating educational gains from viewing SESAME STREET.

[Annotation not available].

Explores the potential of television for contributing to children's education and development. Includes a detailed analysis of the forms used in American children's programs.

Describes the processes of learning and teaching, and the various ways in which widely diversified types of electronic media, technology, and programming have altered or enhanced those processes.

Reviews the evidence for instructional effectiveness of educational programming and describes the conditions under which television has been shown to be an effective instructional tool.

Kaplan, M. L. (1989). Does psychology live on *SESAME STREET?* (Psy. D. Dissertation, Hahnemann University Graduate School). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 50*, 06-B. Investigates and analyzes CTW's utilization of psychological theory and research. A pattern of use was traced and documented through an examination of CTW's genesis, the philosophy and assumptions guiding its operations, the setting of the psychosocial and cognitive goals for *SESAME STREET*, and the translation of these goals into program design. Selectively reviews psychological and educational literature pertaining to *SESAME STREET*.

Kob, J. (1976). *Lehren aus SESAMSTRASSE*. *Fernsehen und Bildung, 10*(1/2), 115-122. (Parts in English). Examines the conditions that led to the success of *SESAMSTRASSE*, the German version of *SESAME STREET*. Explores show-related reasons for *SESAMSTRASSE's* success, including its structure, content, and style. Evaluates the achievement of cognitive curriculum goals.


Educational Impact - Literature Reviews

Reviews research, published between 1970-1975, on the nature and effects of mass media. Discusses the research designs and analyses of ETS's summative evaluations of SESAME STREET.

Discusses research studies pertaining to the use of television as a means of teaching reading. Discusses the 1971 and 1972 ETS evaluation of the first and second year of SESAME STREET.

Reviews research as a regular feature of this journal. Reviews include The first year of SESAME STREET: An evaluation. by Ball and Bogatz (1970).

An annual report of the educational research and research-related activities authorized under the Cooperative Research Act for the 1970 fiscal year. Cites SESAME STREET preliminary study findings evaluating its impact on cognitive skills.

Examines the relationship between television and reading. Consideration is given to two schools of thought on the matter: one that assumes a negative relationship, hypothesizing that time previously devoted to reading has been replaced by increased television viewing, and one that assumes a positive relationship suggesting that television can stimulate reading. Discusses SESAME STREET's in light of both schools of thought and evaluates ETS studies.

Responds to Herbert Sprigle's criticism of SESAME STREET.

Discusses how educational television programs can be used to supplement the education of our nation's children. Reviews research evaluating the contribution to children's cognitive development of educational programs like SESAME STREET, 3-2-1 CONTACT, and THE ELECTRIC COMPANY.

A collection of 21 papers introducing the reader to what television does for, to, or in collaboration with children. Integrates research studies with theoretical papers in three areas: teaching, violence, and selling.

Analyzes effects of SESAME STREET on preschool children's learning and behavior. Aims to increase awareness in educators of the uses of television as an effective
eductional tool. Includes an annotated literature review with background information on SESAME STREET's goals, objectives, format, positive impact studies, negative evaluations of SESAME STREET, and overall evaluations of summative research.

Pawlik, K., Kob, J., & Berghaus, M. (1981). Educational television research in the Federal Republic of Germany. In W. H. Holtzman & I. Reyes-Lagunes (Eds.), Impact of educational television on young children (Educational Studies and Documents, 40), (pp. 34-38). Paris, France: UNESCO. Reviews studies on SESAMSTRASSE, the German version of SESAME STREET. Authors sought to answer three questions: Can TV be used as a preschool instrument, can it compensate for a lack of preschool education, and can realization of the program serve as a model for other efforts?


A critical review of research on the effects of television viewing on children's cognitive growth and affective behavior. Evaluates the effectiveness of SESAME STREET's format.

Reports studies on the use of television to teach reading. Discusses the effectiveness of the CTW approach to program development and research implications for program development.

Discusses television's impact on children's cognitive development. Also focuses on television in relation to learning covering topics such as television and violence, advertising, and educational television.

Essay in four parts examining the effects of educational programming. Parts 1 and 2 examine effects of planned programming on cognitive skills and prosocial behavior. Part 3 explores processes by which children learn from television. Part 4 discusses the features of television programs and children's environments that enhance or detract from the effectiveness of educational programming.

A review and synthesis of research and theory dealing with processes of children's learning from TV. Examines how and what children learn and at what ages TV is a more or less powerful teacher.

Reviews research studies from 1973-75 on teaching and learning with emphasis on cognitive processes which have implications for changing teaching and instruction.
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This category lists research papers evaluating the effectiveness of SESAME STREET in fostering social and emotional development.

Empirical Studies


InVESTigates the impact of different television programming on the social interactions and toy play of preschool children. Same-sex pairs of young children were observed during three types of television programs: cartoons, Sesame Street, and situation comedies.


This field observational study assesses the impact of prosocial TV on the free play of preschool children. Twenty-two subjects aged 3.5 to 5.5 viewed segments of SESAME STREET and THE LITTLE RASCALS.


Studies the influence of 45 film sequences from the German version of SESAME STREET on the content of children's imagination and on their behavior during play.


Summarizes analyses of in-house data on SESAME STREET target children's attention in four categories of affect segments (cooperation, anger, fear, and pride). Used attention scores derived from a series of formative research studies using the group observation and distractor methodologies.


Examines positive reinforcement and punishment modelled on both SESAME STREET and MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD. Ten hours of each show were coded. Reports the frequency of occurrence of positive reinforcement and punishment as given by adult, child, and fantasy characters.


This observational study assesses the influence of SESAME STREET and MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD on the social behavior of twenty-six children, ages 3 to 8. Children's behavior was observed before, during, and after one week of exposure to each of the programs, to measure the frequency of their giving reinforcement and punishment to other children and adults.
Examinestheimpactofmodelingonthetoypreferencesthirty-six 4- to 6-year-olds. Subjects viewed sex-neutral SESAME STREET segments and sex-biased segments where two Muppets discuss the sex-appropriateness of a set of toys. Subjects were then observed at play with test toys.

Afield study that examines whether viewing a prosocial cartoon would be as effective as viewing a live-model prosocial program in inducing prosocial behavior in preschool children. Forty 3- to 5-year-olds were shown videotapes of a neutral cartoon and live-model program and were then observed at 30 minutes of free play.

Examines the short-term effects of TV programming on attitudinal and behavioral measures of non-physically disabled children toward the physically disabled. Experimental subjects viewed SESAME STREET segments positively portraying physically disabled youngsters. Control subjects viewed SESAME STREET segments without the portrayals. Subjects were 40 first-graders from a New York private school.

Studies the effect of television on racial and cultural attitudes of English-speaking Canadian preschool children using a series of inserts into SESAME STREET programs depicting children of other races in ethnic and integrated settings.

Replicates and extends the 1976 study (see Gorn, 1976 below) which revealed that 3- to 5-year-olds preferred nonwhite playmates after viewing Canadian produced SESAME STREET inserts containing nonwhite children. Investigates whether exposure effects in initial study would be maintained over time and whether playmate preferences for televised nonwhites would generalize to non-televised nonwhites. Subjects were 167 white, upper middle class, English Canadian children, ages 3 to 5.

Examines SESAME STREET's impact on preschool children's attitudes toward other races. A sample of 205 3- to 5-year-old white nursery preschoolers were tested on their playmate preferences after watching Canadian-produced SESAME STREET inserts containing nonwhite children.

Studies observed behavioral responses in situations from SESAME STREET segments designed to test cooperation in children. Subjects were 16 children who were observed in situations where they were required to draw, play with toys, and solve puzzles.