ADHD and PLAY THERAPY KIT

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Project approval Form

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this project to my parents and uncle who had been a support from the beginning of my graduate years.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Ahmad Oueini for his guidance throughout my graduate studies and the project. Thanks are due to Dr. Bahous for taking the time to read the project and for being on the project committee. I would like to thank my father for guiding me throughout my life and especially during my college years and project. Also, thanks are due to my uncle for helping me with the project.
Abstract:

This project describes the influence of play therapy on children with ADHD and whether it helps to improve their condition. A pilot study was performed on a student who was diagnosed to be an ADHD child. Play capacities and Ludic behavior are described and analyzed in relation to intellectual capacities. Students demonstrate their abilities in the setting of the appropriate scenes on stage and use of miniature characters and objects.

The outcome of the work of both groups of students (those on medication and those without medication) in both assessments are carefully observed and recorded. Four out of the six elements of the Ludic attitude, curiosity, initiative, pleasure, and spontaneity are present irrespective of IQ level.

The application of the kit helps to determine in each student the presence (or absence) of sense of humor and enjoyment of challenge while applying play/art therapy (Mesier, Ferland & Majnemer, 2007). According to Mesier, et al. (2007) “play performance provides insight into a child’s development in physical, cognitive, as well as social domains” (p. 193). The experience of play gives a child satisfaction and enjoyment allowing him/her to externalize his/her hidden emotions and provide an opportunity for him/her to learn and gain knowledge (Mesier, et al. 2007). The kit was created to discover the intellectual capacities of disabled children who are not on medication and compare their results with those who are on medication to find out how much play/art therapy can be beneficial for both groups of children and find out the level of improvement of their attention span in retaining what they can watch, feel, hear and do. Play performance could be useful for both assessments and treatment of these children and evaluate their abilities. The evaluation relies on non-standardized tools that have been created to assess the abilities of these children and
find out to what extent the kit can be a beneficial intervention in improving and
developing their attention. Hence, the objective of this pilot study is to describe the
play performance of Lebanese students with intellectual impairments and to
determine the association between the intensity of intellectual impairment and play
performance. Play performance is comprehensively characterized with respect to
developmental level as well as interests, abilities and attitudes of play.
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CHAPTER ONE

ADHD and play therapy kit

Introduction

The main aim of this project concerns ADHD and the effect of play therapy on students with ADHD. ADHD is a chronic neurobiological disorder that interferes with the individual’s capacity to regulate activity level, inhibit behavior, and attend to tasks in a regular way (Rief, 2005). There is a constant need and challenge to look for effective methods and possibly an alternative to medication therapy for ADHD students (Malaerida, 2002). Historically, with such a little understood disability as ADHD, professionally labeled “a non-medical problem gets defined and treated as a medical problem” (Conrad, 1992 p. 209), a non-medical approach becomes a priority for dealing with this disability. Generally speaking, interventions such as behavioral modification techniques (for example reinforcers and therapy balls), or academic approach (class-wide peer tutoring, and computer assisted instruction) are methods used to deal with ADHD disabilities. In considering play therapy, counselors, advisors, and educators working with children discovered that the use of ‘play’ is one of the most effective approaches in dealing with ADHD, since children appear to express themselves more naturally in an environment of play (Landreth, 2002). Play and art therapy have become a viable technique and an effective alternative in providing treatment for ADHD children and adolescents (Allen, Folger & Pehrsson, 2007).

One of the most negative effects of ADHD related behavior on educators is the mounting stress level between the student and the educator as the student-teacher relationship is very critical to the academic and eventual success of the student.
Studies have indicated that play therapy has a strong impact on the reduction of stress level between the teacher and the student (Ray, 2007).

The play therapy kit is designed to serve and deal with all three-subheadings of ADHD (hyperactivity, inattention and impulsivity). The farm and superheroes applications represent the practical functional kind of play such as the farm and the fictional kind of stories such as Superman and Batman. The tests are intended to find out which of the two applications appeal most to the student.

The purpose of the study

The application of play therapy is intended to investigate the degree of improvement in the condition of ADHD students on medication compared to those not using medication.

The purpose of the farm and superheroes is to determine how the student is able to remember, recognize, and use their creativity in making their own farm and/or story. The kit helps the child to pay attention to small detail as it is based on Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences.

Rationale and significance of the project:

Play therapy was chosen as a significant intervention technique because it has been recognized to be an effective intervention approach in children with ADHD based on Piaget’s theory of cognitive development, which identifies the difference between the way children understand and process information and the way adults think (Ray, Armstrong, Warren & Balkin, 2005).

The theory of Piaget identifies for most elementary level children two functional phases, Pre-operational (2-7 years) and Concrete operations (7-11 years). Piaget identified basic principles to be used as a guide to the play therapist. These basic principles include but are not limited to:
1. Play is a child’s natural self-expression language.

2. A child has an inherent tendency to grow and mature.

3. A child is able to positively act responsibly (Landreth, 2002).

Based on a literature review by Ray, Bratton, Rhine and Jones (2001), 94 studies were involved spanning 6 decades, play therapy was found to be an effective treatment for children’s problems.

According to Rees and Dawson (1998) there is a tendency to over medicate leading to mismanagement of ADHD children. The advantage of using play therapy is that it helps reduce the dependence on medication.

*Description of the intended product and its uses:*

According to Rief (2005), the multiple intelligence theory by Gardner puts forward the notion that people in general use one or more of seven inherent intelligences when coping or facing normal daily life problems. These intelligences exist to varying degrees within individuals and are as different as the individuals differ from one another. The play therapy kit is based on the multiple intelligences as follows:

1. The linguistic learner: children learn best by saying, hearing, and seeing words.

2. The logical/ mathematical learner: children learn best by categorizing, classifying, and working with abstract patterns and relationships.

3. The spatial learner: children learn best by visualizing and working with colors and pictures.

4. The musical learner: children learn best through rhythm, music, and melody.

6. The interpersonal learner: children learn best by sharing, relating, and cooperating with others.


The following is a brief description of the kit:

- Life on a farm and reenacting the activities in it.

- Fictional characters that display strength and plenty of movement (Batman & Superman).

The application of the kit helps ADHD children with physical and emotional expression. Also, fantasy roles give the child the feeling of superhuman abilities (Geldard & Geldard, 1999).

Research question

The research question is: “What is the effect of play therapy by using the Play Therapy Kit on ADHD children, and whether it helps to improve their condition?

Targeted Population

The pilot study was performed on a 14-year old, male 8th grader who had been on medication for the last two years. The student’s Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) evaluated by Dr. Oueini in 2008 revealed an intellectual ability of mid 4th grader.

Procedure:

Parallel lesson plans are divided into three parts: Two traditional lessons, and the third lesson the application of the play-therapy kit. During the first two lessons he was not on medication, while on the third lesson he was on Ritalin.
Twenty questions are assigned to each lesson, and each question is worth 1 point. The method of assessment is based on a rating scale from 1 to 5. The observation results based on a checklist of the pre-test are forwarded to the researcher. Similarly, a post-test evaluation is carried out at the end of the semester to evaluate the effectiveness of the play therapy kit on the medicated and the non-medicated ADHD children in the different classes. The children’s behavior is closely monitored. Two groups of children are selected. The first group represents those children who are not able to adopt and integrate play therapy. The second group represents children who are too hyperactive and/or frustrated. The children of this group are monitored carefully to keep them calm through their progressive participation in the play therapy. As an initial trial period, the play therapy kit is administered within the school curriculum twice a week during character building sessions. Ethical considerations include anonymity of children’s names and parents’ consent. Each child is given a number. (i.e. children on medication will be given the alpha-numeric code names M-1, M-2, M-3 etc, children who are not on medication will be given the code names, N-1, N-2, N-3, etc.

*Expected benefits and educational implications*

Depending on the child’s disposition, and using the basic principles as elaborated above under rationale, which were built upon Piaget’s theory (Landreth, 2002), it is expected that the application of the play therapy kit to have a rewarding compensation to the extent the use of medication to treat ADHD diagnosed children will be reviewed and reduced if necessary. According to Rief (1993) hyperactivity and frustration of an ADHD child would be positively managed when experienced educators introduce play in a well-studied and applied manner.
Limitations

The play therapy kit has to be used in conjunction with certain restrictions to guarantee success. Lack of classroom discipline can completely cause the application of the kit to fail. Taking home items produced by children, leaving the playroom at will, painting or marking walls and doors, or misusing kit material will negatively influence the performance of the class and could cause the project to yield negative results, hence the need to monitor closely children's behavior (Perez, Ramirez & Kranz, 2007).

The effect of medication on children with ADHD sometimes could cause the project data collected for the final analysis to be lacking due to the fact that a child can get sick or be absent during a session or several sessions. Close cooperation with the prescribing medical staff need to be maintained to see if a change in the type of medicine and dose is necessary.

Informed Consent:

The volunteering student upon whom the play therapy kit was tried had been advised of the procedure. Personal information, data collection and results were kept in strict confidence.
CHAPTER II

This chapter concerns the review of the literature and includes characteristics, causes, assessment, interventions of ADHD, types of medication and play therapy application and their effectiveness on students with ADHD.

Review of the literature

Introduction

ADHD may depend on children's gender and cultural variation. An ADHD is a high maintenance child requiring constant observation and monitoring. ADHD children try the patience of everyone. They frequently are rejected by their peers and it worsens as they get older. Parents, teacher and friends get easily frustrated by ADHD students as most of them are hyperactive and inattentive at times (Ashley, 2005 and Peirce, 2008). Children with ADHD disorder seem to reveal it in the middle elementary school years between second and fifth grades, where the study material becomes more complex and the child is expected to pay more attention for longer periods of time (Peirce, 2008). ADHD was considered a disorder that only affected children up until the late teens. However, research has shown that 30 percent to 70 percent of people with ADHD experience symptoms until their 20s and later (Ashley, 2005).

Characteristics of ADHD

The officially accepted criteria for diagnosing ADHD disorder are that the child or the teenager displays at least six or more of the inattention characteristics but fewer than six of the hyperactivity-impulsivity characteristics would be identified as having ADHD, Predominantly Inattentive Type. The following are the ADHD characteristics for the two types:
"Inattention"

- often fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities.
- often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
- often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
- often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace (not due to oppositional behavior or failure to understand instructions).
- often has difficulties organizing tasks and activities.
- often avoids, dislikes or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as schoolwork or homework).
- often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g., toys, school assignments, pencils, books, or tools).
- is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli
- is often forgetful in daily activities.

Hyperactivity-Impulsivity

- often fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in seat.
- often leaves seat in classroom or in other situations in which remaining seated is expected.
- often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate (in adolescents or adults, may be limited to subjective feelings of restlessness).
- often has difficulty playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly.
- is often "on the go" or often acts as "if driven by a motor".
- often talks excessively.
- often blurts out answers before questions have been completed.
- often has difficulty waiting in turn.
- often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games).” (American Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 83-84).

Other behavioral characteristics are finding difficulty with change in the student’s environment in school and at home, for example aggressive behavior that causes the student to be anti-social and frustrated (Barkley, 2005 and Rief, 2005). According to Ashley (2005) boys have ADHD 4 to 9 times more often than girls do. Both boys and girls with ADHD are not liked much by their peers and report having fewer friends. Girls with ADHD are more honest in their self-perceptions than ADHD boys. Girls report more problems with self-esteem, depression, family relationships, and peer rejection than boys. Boys evaluate themselves better at schoolwork, behavior, and friendships, which differ from teacher’s rating. It appears that boys put up a defense barrier to protect themselves against depression that could surface if they would admit their condition, while girls’ self-awareness and admittance to ADHD could be a reason for developing depression more readily than the boys.

Causes of ADHD

One of the most common causes of ADHD based on evidence is heredity. Eighty percent of children with ADHD are caused by heredity (Rief, 2005). Children with ADHD may have a parent, sibling, grandparent or someone else in the family with ADHD. A contributing factor that causes ADHD is fetal exposure to alcohol or cigarettes, exposure to lead, complications during pregnancy and birth such as toxemia, and brain injury from disease or trauma (Rief, 2005, Peirce, 2008, Nigg, 2006 and Barkley, 2005). Another contributing factor is a purely social consideration involving poor child management by parents (Barkley, 2005). Although poor
parenting does not cause ADHD, parents with ADHD children appear to be more rejecting, negative and critical, a situation which worsens the child's condition. Hence parents can decrease the negative cycle between the child's symptoms and the parent's negative reaction by taking a more positive attitude. Parents have to be less demanding, more consistent in setting rules to create a reliable and predictable routine daily life for the child (Ashley, 2005).

**ADHD assessment and evaluation**

A child's assessment for ADHD begins by interviewing the parents, the use of questionnaires (filled out by the parents, teachers as well as students), and a review of previous medical and school records. The educator obtains important data regarding the child's medical developmental history, behavioral, and school history. There are many different rating scales. For example: Barkley Home and School Situations Questionnaires, The Snap Scale and Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC-TRS). The educator has to gather up to date school information about the child by directly observing the child in class, a pediatric examination, and an academic and intelligence test. It is the educator's responsibility to conduct a comprehensive and multidimensional evaluation, be knowledgeable about ADHD and coexisting conditions. It is very important that the educator is accurate about the assessment, treatment, and management when assessing the child (Rief, 2005).

**ADHD interventions and their effectiveness**

There have been many comprehensive treatment programs for ADHD children. According to Rief (2005) and Barkley (2005) the most effective approach is a multifaceted treatment approach, which may include

1. Behavior modification - management at home and school.
2. Psychiatric help - counseling of the family is recommended because with an ADHD child at home the whole family and the environment are affected.

3. ADHD children need constant individual counseling to learn coping techniques, i.e. problem solving strategies, and how to deal with mental pressure and self-esteem.

4. Cognitive therapy is very useful for ADHD students; it helps them to regulate their own behavior as well as “stop-and-think” techniques.

5. Constant social skills training - normally available in school counseling groups (Ashley, 2005).

6. Other kinds of intervention are available such as environmental, instructional and behavioral.

7. Extra curriculum activities such as swimming, karate, gymnastics, and running (particularly non-competitive sports).

8. Medical interventions

9. Parental guidance and education to help parents about ADHD. Parent support groups are excellent sources of training, assistance, and networking. Most communities have parenting classes and workshops that deal with a variety of helpful management strategies (Rief, 2005 and Barkley, 2005).

According to Ashley (2005), Rief (2005) and Barkley (2005) there are management techniques used in the classroom to help prevent behavioral problems. For example teachers and special educators should clarify what they expect from their students and teach them what is acceptable and what is not. There should be structure and setting up of class rules, predictable routines, and plenty of practice, modeling, and review of behavioral expectations and rules.
Teachers should make sure that their instructions are clear in the classroom. The teacher should follow up on student's academic level and behavioral problems; this requires the teacher to be understanding, flexible and patient and should not hesitate if assistance is demanded on a personal level. There should be positive reinforcements such as verbal comments, privileges such as classroom jobs and responsibilities, tangible rewards such as stickers, prizes and food (Ashley, 2005, Rief, 2005 and Barkley, 2005). Another intervention for ADHD is music (Rief, 2005 and Peirce, 2008). For example:

1. Music for a calming effect, use for example: Mozart’s. “Adagio for Glass Harmonica” and Puccini’s, “The Humming chorus”.

2. When students are moving in and out of the classroom or returning from the playground to the classroom, use e.g. Verdi, “Grand March” from Aida or Elgar, Sir Edward, “Pomp and Circumstance,” March no.1 in D major.

3. To relax students after stressful situations try the sound of piano, cellos and violas. Research indicates that learning is easier and quicker when the learner is in a relaxed atmosphere (Rief, 2005 and Peirce, 2008).

ADHD children need constant positive reinforcement because they find it harder to keep up with relationships and accomplish goals. Another approach to obtain positive reinforcement is to provide an opportunity to succeed by accomplishing tasks; breaking down goals into simple steps can be very helpful for ADHD students (Peirce, 2008). Finally, the multi-sensory approach can also be considered, involving auditory, visual, tactile, spatial, verbal, and conceptual senses normally used by regular student in their everyday life. There are two excellent model programs used in some schools that have ADHD children and have made a tremendous difference:
1. Project for Attention Related Disorders (PARD), San Diego (Rief, 1993, 2005).
   - The goals and objectives of PARD project are to improve the physical health, mental and educational outcome of children identified with ADD/ADHD.
   - Educate and train the individuals working with the ADHD children, for example: school personnel, parents, physicians, and other community providers.
   - Improve the services at schools for ADHD children.

2. Key School, Indianapolis
   The Key School is based on the multiple intelligences, thematic teaching and qualitative meaningful assessment. The teaching staff at Key School includes eight classroom teachers and several specialists. The school only has 150 to 160 students that were selected by a district lottery. The curriculum includes:
   - Project-oriented curriculum, where students are required to make a project that reflects the theme every nine weeks (Rief, 1993, 2005).
   - Pods are where students spend forty minutes of the class period, four times a week in a group where they are engaged in an activity of their choice given extended time to do it. Some examples of pods are drama, choir, and physical sciences, and movement (Rief, 1993, 2005).
   - Flow center where the students go to a room in the school equipped with puzzles, games, and manipulatives three times a week. The teacher observes and records student’s choices of activities and preferences:
     - Integrated arts program where students are exposed to all kinds of arts, for example learning to play a musical instrument.
     - Teachers plan and evaluate sessions weekly.
- Parents are involved at all times and must attend parent/teacher conferences throughout the year (Barkley, 2005 and Rief, 2005).

**Types of medication and the effectiveness on ADHD**

According to Ashley (2005) and Peirce (2008), there are three types of stimulants: short, intermediate, and long acting (e.g. Ritalin and Concerta).

Long-acting medications are sustained release stimulants that are taken once daily and last from eight to twelve hours.

A study showed that a multimodal treatment of ADHD involving a large number of students confirmed that intensive behavioral treatment by itself is an effective treatment, but not as effective as medication (Peirce, 2008). The multimodal treatment of ADHD also recommended that behavioral treatment combined with stimulant medication is more effective. The stimulants help decrease hyperactivity, impulsivity, inattention, and associated features of defiance, aggression, and oppositionality (Peirce, 2008 and Ashley, 2005). According to Greenhill (1992), medication improves classroom performance, behavior and promotes increased interaction with teachers, parents, and peers. The stimulants however can also cause many kinds of side effects such as headaches, stomachache, delay of sleep onset, and reduction of appetite. Other side effects are irritability, dizziness, moodiness, and agitation. It is the teacher’s duty to observe and monitor the student’s changes and report them, such as:

1. Academic performance
2. Work production
3. Ability to stay on task
4. Behavior
5. Relationships
6. Any possible side effects the child may be experiencing (Rief, 2005 and Ashley, 2005).

These observations and feedback are necessary in helping the physician to regulate the dosage and determine whether the medication has the right expected positive effects on symptoms and functioning, with minimal harm. There should always be coordination between parent and teacher throughout the school year (Rief, 2005 and Ashley, 2005).

*Application and effectiveness of play therapy on ADHD*

When used as an early intervention program in the treatment of young children with ADHD, play therapy has to be part of a broader multi-modal program called Child ADHD Multi-modal Program (CAMP) to succeed. This program takes into consideration the teaching staff and parents of the child (Reddy, Files-Hall & Schaefer, 2005). However, the kit focuses on the part that concerns the child only, the first component of CAMP, and that is the child-training group (Reddy, 2000). This component utilizes Developmentally Appropriate Games (DAGs) designed on competitive bases to be enjoyed by the child and to significantly increase motivation and skill development (Reddy, Files-Hall & Schaefer, 2005). That is exactly what the kit is aimed at providing through behavioral management techniques. It is worth mentioning that the outcome of empirically supported intervention for young children with ADHD using the child’s component of CAMP alone yields improvements in the child’s disruptive and aggressive behavior and social skills (Reddy, et al., 2005). The importance of the kit can be recognized by reviewing the three basic principles on which DAGs (synonymous with the kit) is based on:

1. Children have the chance to participate at their own ability level.
2. As each game progress, the child’s opportunity to practice and improve skills grows. There is no room for a group member to quit or be eliminated as each member’s cooperation, self-control, and problem-solving ability develops. Each child becomes more active (Reddy, et al, 2005).

3. Children with a restricted ability can interact in a positive manner with their peers (Torbert, 1994).

Based on a study by Messier, Ferland, Majnemer (2007) which is a description of play of intellectually disabled children, and the students represented a sample of 27 school aged children from five to seven, the play capacities and Ludic attitude in relation to intellectual capacities were described and analyzed. Children showed good response in the use of objects and space. The 4 elements (curiosity, initiative, pleasure, and spontaneity) out of 6 elements of the Ludic attitude were present irrespective of the IQ level of the children sampled. The importance of this study is that it highlights the strengths and limitations in play behavior of children with intellectual disability (Messier, et al., 2007).

The application of the kit involving the model farm and superheroes is to determine the extent to which it promotes children’s interest, and the effectiveness in improving their involvement in play therapy.

Evaluations depend on a non-standardized tool such as the kit, and the goal is to find out how effective it is as an intervention tool and as a reward to enhance collaboration of the children (Watling, Deitz, Kanny, & McLaughlin, 1999). According to Messier, et al. (2007) few studies have described play behavior of children with intellectual impairment, specifically for those of school age. Existing studies show an important relationship between the IQ level and play performance in children with intellectual impairment. The objective of the pilot study of the kit is
to describe the play performance of the child to determine the link between the intensity of intellectual impairment and play performance. Play performance is related to developmental level of the child as well as interests, abilities and attitudes of play of children with ADHD. The therapist observes the manner in which children communicate and note it. The assessment is observational and non-directed. Many of the toys and play material are available in the kit’s environment. The same toys and characters are used in the three assessment settings for this study (farm, batman and superman). If a child does not spontaneously play with any of the play materials, then the evaluator has to begin playing with the toys to try and facilitate any reaction from the child (Messier, Ferland & Majnemer, 2007).

The application of the kit in Lebanon should help to investigate the similarities or differences in the results when compared with results obtained in the United States. The studies in the United States shown that there are certain demographic trends involving ethnicity have throughout the United States that were listed (Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, & Smith, 2004). Art therapy has been found to be a useful tool in many disabilities. Integrating art and play therapy to a multi-modal program, which also involves psychodynamic, cognitive, and behavioral therapy, enhances a child’s capability to coping with ADHD on a long-term basis (Henley, 1998). These effects included controlling impulse behavior as well as increasing the ability to focus, even with a stimulating activity such as painting a mural. The therapeutic practice of art therapy is still relatively new and has not been widely used for a long duration of time. In the 1960s, controlling unwanted behaviors of autism only used operant conditioning as the main tool, despite its lack of long-term success (Kornreich & Schimmel, 1991). Studies using this form of therapy as the only way of coping with a disability were not found. Art therapy was meant to be an
additional form of treatment along with medication and group therapy. No research was found that conducted the effects of art therapy with giftedness. According to different sources there is some evidence linking effect, play, and creativity. Also, research in the fantasy and creativity area and the mood-induction in creativity area are relevant to the play and creativity area (Kornreich & Schimmel, 1991).
CHAPTER III

Introduction

Research Design

The pilot study was applied on a 14-year-old student with learning and behavioral problems. He was given two traditional lessons (one during which he was under medication) and one lesson involving the play therapy kit (superheroes) without medication. The kit is designed to handle two age groups (2 to 7) and (7 to 11) years old.

Method

At the start of the study three parallel assessment lessons were performed on a 14-year-old student over a three-day period. The student was under observation by a special educator. Two lessons were without medication, one of which was while utilizing the play therapy kit, and the third lesson was under medication. The three lessons were compared.

Regarding the application of the kit, the materials in the play therapy kit is designed on the basis of multiple intelligence. The kit focuses mainly on elementary children with ADHD, especially those experiencing hyperactivity. As a start, the teacher review’s with the students the kit’s details:

- Description of life on a farmhouse and re-enacting the activities in it.
- Reenacting the deeds of fictional characters that display strength and movement (Batman and/or Superman)
- Students feedback of either programs

Data collection

The following procedure and data collection tools are used during the study:
Implementation of program I

For the Farm

Observe the student during a lesson (baseline)

1- Explain to the student what is included in the kit.

2- Explain the rules of the game for every scene i.e. the farm, Superman and Batman.

3- Explain that the kit is divided into two parts:

Part I: Game/Play consists of looking at the set-up of an "ideal farm" (the stage). Verify what is there on stage in the scenery and scenic views reflecting the four seasons (See Appendix A).

Part II: Count the number of people working on the farm and other items:

- Recall the different kinds of plants, flowers, trees, vegetation, fruits and vegetables, etc.
- Count the number of tools, equipment, and vehicles used within the farm.
- Listen to the music that is to accompany every scenic view and select the appropriate melody.
- Setting the proper lighting on stage.

4. Comprehension questions- the questions are divided into two parts.

1. Farm (See Appendix A)

2. Superheroes (See Appendix B)
The questions are to verify how many items the student can identify that belong in a farm and answer the 5 Ws and 2 Hs (What; When; Where; Why; Who: How long and How much?).

Children are shown the three scenarios: farm, batman, superman comic books to start with. At later stage, motion pictures of the same scenarios are shown to emphasize the stories, the music and different scenic views to find out which pictures appeal most to the children's taste. After a brief interruption (15 minutes) they select one of the three above-mentioned scenarios. They are observed carefully to find out which scenario appealed most to them and why. They are invited to recreate their own scenarios to find out how much they are able to retain from the original comic book or storyboard (or at a later stage the film).

Coaching is necessary to assist students to remember certain highlights of the scenarios to enable them to understand the different plots and how they evolve. All through the class period, they are monitored and all their steps registered in a logbook. Every week two sessions are held throughout the scholastic year.

Examples of questions addressed to the students follows:

- Which is the storyboard that appeals most to you and why?
- What impressed you most about the story?
- Can you make your own storyboard?
- Can you select the appropriate music?
5. **Structure of the therapy session**

The students have to set up their own farm after observing the scenic views on stage (the kit) for a few minutes. The state of the farm is depicted throughout the four seasons (spring, summer, fall, and winter). In every session only one season is chosen. The stage is then covered with a cloth for a few minutes. The teacher removes the characters, tools and the scenic views to rearrange them, after which time the cloth is removed. Each student is to recall the setting of the farm in the different seasons as they were before covering the stage in every session and try to recreate them by remembering the way they were during each one of the four seasons.

6. **Items and tools to use:**

   - Students can use cardboard, pens, crayons, scissors and glue etc. The student has also a book filled with stickers of drawings, and pictures of the characters, tools, and equipment used in the farm to assist in the design and drawing of the student’s own farm.

   - After setting the stage the student recalls the music that is played in the different sets and scenes. The student listens to several melodies and a variety of musical pieces, and selects the appropriate music for the different scenes (i.e. Vivaldi’s Four Seasons; Batman’s and Superman’s soundtracks).

   - The student observes the spotlights, as they are set around the stage to light the different scenic views.

7. **Checklists of Evaluations**

   - Evaluation of the student’s strengths and weaknesses.

   - Obtaining a comprehensive school evaluation.
• Profile of the student.

7.1 ADHD physical symptoms

• Extremely active and restless- fidgets
• Difficulty relating own ideas
• Responses are inappropriate
• Difficulty following directions
• Blurs out answers (Rief, 2005).

7.2 Educational factors

• Academic difficulties in reading, math and written language
• Poor retention of subject matter
• Poor handwriting or reversals- messy work
• Difficulty staying on task- inattentive
• Difficulty comprehending directions - subject matter
• Difficulty changing activities
• Easily discouraged, often frustrated
• Work completion: rushed-slow-fails to finish (Rief, 2005).

7.3 Personal/social factors

• Generally withdrawn, timid, fearful
• Poor self-control-temper outbursts-inappropriate language
• Poor peer relations-fights-disturbs other
• Seems unhappy-moody- cries easily
• Feelings of inadequacy, low self-concept
• Fantasizes-exaggerates-lies
• Challenges authority-defiant-impulsive
• Shows little empathy/concern for others (Rief, 2005)
Implementation of Program II

Superman and Batman comic

1. The educator reads the comic book with the students.
2. The educator then distributes the comprehension questions based on the comic book (appendix C).
3. Miniature characters and tools are given to the student to use on stage to make up the storyboard and apply it on stage.
4. Each one of the pictures is given a sequential number. The student puts the different characters of the story according to the sequence in the comic book. Purpose of the test is to find out how much the student can recall the sequence of events in the storyboard. For example: The students are given the first twenty pictures (scenes) and asked to put these scenes in sequential order as in the comic book. The comic storyboard is used as a baseline for reference once the students create their own scenario on stage (Appendix B).
5. Next the student is given the shuffled scenes to allow him to put them back the way they were.
6. The student is required to make up their own story by drawing and coloring, and cutting for the first part of the test using the same items as above.
7. The students draw their own conclusions of their story by using the books and stickers based on the comic.
8. The teacher’s checklist: All the steps taken by the students are monitored and registered as mentioned above in the implementation of the farm.
In the application of the kit it is important to point out that the detailed steps described in this section starting with ‘data collection’, going on to ‘comprehension questions’, and ending with ‘therapy session’, are vital in keeping up and sustaining the child’s attention and interest, which is the key to the healing process expected from play therapy. The selection of the farm is intended to represent the functional kind of play while the superheroes represent the fictional kind of stories. The music detail and the various figures are an integral part of the play therapy.
Chapter IV

Implementation and Discussion

The kit includes the farm and the superheroes. I had the opportunity to apply the superheroes on a student. The case study concerns a 14-year-old student who was on medication for the past two years. The student is no longer on medication. Three parallel lessons were applied on him including Batman and Superman.

Results

In the first traditional lesson he was not on medication and he scored 17.8/20. During the second traditional lesson he was on medication and he scored 13.6/20. In the last lesson he was not on medication and the superheroes part of the kit was applied; the student’s score was 16/20 (results shown in appendix D). These scores are based on how accurately he answered the questions according to the story. The scores show that he did better when he was not on medication. However when he was on medication he was attending the lesson outside the usual school environment, and it is possible he was nervous and uncomfortable, and therefore the location could be a limitation. When he was not on medication he appeared calm and relaxed. A second limitation is the limited number of lessons due to the short available time where only three lessons were given, which is considered insufficient to draw satisfactory and reliable conclusions. The three parallel lessons mentioned above were given using the same theme with different stories. All three lessons included, vocabulary, spelling words, creative writing, brainstorming, predicating, predicting and creating his own stories using the kit material. The purpose of this part of the kit is to teach ADHD or any LD children, vocabulary, spelling, brainstorming, writing one’s story, creating their own scenario by using conversational bubbles similar to what was used by the
student as shown in appendix C, like reading, predicting and use of vocabulary words in the story.

The reason for selecting action hero figures is because most teenage boys always relate to powerful figures such as Superman, Batman and other action figures. During the lessons and based on observation, the student appears to be motivated and enjoying reading while creating his own story. When the student was asked a question it was observed that he was able to recall scenarios without hesitation from the comic book.

**Discussion**

A major advantage of play over other alternatives is that play therapy can be applied safely at an early age starting at 2 years old. According to Reddy, Files-Hall & Schaefer, (2005) it has been discovered that the treatment at an early age of children diagnosed with ADHD stand a better chance of success and likely to benefit from the treatment for a longer period than older children. Historically, the majority of children destined to develop ADHD symptoms get diagnosed accurately by the time they reach the age of 4 years old. Therefore early treatment could save the child serious setbacks caused by untreated ADHD.

Another advantage of play is that it comes naturally with all children alike, and the feeling of wanting to play may continue well after the child has recovered, while ADHD symptoms appear to return once the medication has been stopped (Reddy, Files-Hall & Schaefer, 2005).

In the application of play therapy it must be emphasized that in order for it to succeed, it must be implemented simultaneously with an appropriate program, professionally recognized as a multi program called CAMP (Reddy, 2000). CAMP is designed for guiding parents of the children with special needs, and the
teachers/educators. The parent-training program is designed to provide an intensive parent training and support group experience and the teacher-training program involves an individual parent and teacher behavioral consultations.

Fantasy roles give the child the feeling of superhuman abilities (Geldard & Geldard, 1999). In a fantasy role-play children have a very powerful and creative ways to transfer emotions into symbolic representations or figures to express their inner world or problems. This is why the medium of play is a desirable outlet for the child. It is very important at this stage for the play therapist to understand the child as an indication of acceptance of the child’s expressions when playing the assigned role. Here the child externalizes inner concerns into fantasy play, wanting to be the master of the game rather than helpless over emotions related to distressful situations (Schaefer, & Kaduson, 2007).

It is interesting to find out how the approach used in play therapy can be included in the different topics of a syllabus to stir the interest of a child with ADHD or LD to increase his interest in the different curriculum.
Conclusion

Play provides insight into a child’s development in physical, cognitive and social domain. Studies show that play therapy, or fantasy role, has a strong impact on lowering stress level between teacher-student relationships, which is a prime factor in making any educational program succeed (Schaefer, & Kaduson, 2007). It is important to recognize that educators need to receive special training as a basic building block for the teacher when applying play therapy on students with special needs.

Play therapy has been recognized as an effective intervention technique when handling children with ADHD, as it acknowledges and understands the difference between the way children assimilate information and the way adults think.

A significant finding is that play therapy approach as a treatment for ADHD children can be safely applied in combination with professionally prescribed medication with a possible advantage that with time such medication may be reduced to reduce side effects (Rees & Dawson 1998).

Based on available data the application of play therapy, as an intervention technique to treat ADHD students had no physical or psychological harm reported. (Perez, Ramirez & Kranz, 2007). There have been many comprehensive programs to treat children with ADHD; however the most effective approach appears to be a multi-faceted treatment which includes behavior modification by appropriate management and guidance at home and at school, psychiatric help, social skills training, and medical intervention. For play therapy or fantasy role to be effective it must be part of a multi-modal program, which includes the parents and the educators in addition to the child or student (Rief, 2005).
I was diagnosed with ADHD and struggled through high school years. I never took medication as a treatment. However, play therapy in the form of superheroes was used during my school years. It definitely showed a marked improvement in behavior and academic progress.

Recommendations for future research

As a future recommendation, a multi-modal play therapy program involving ADHD students should be initiated on a large population. The program involves the educator, parent, and student. In the application of the kit when applied on the student using the superhero part, only three days were used because of the limited time. The application of the kit must be applied over a long period time (minimum 3 months) to be effective and obtain reliable results. The educator applies the program in the school environment with constant monitoring over the period of application. The kit may take longer than medication to make an effect on the student, but eventually with the appropriate guidance and intervention the kit can yield positive results and be a success.

Indirect gains include development of social skills, develop problem solving, decision-making skills, building self-concept and self-esteem, improve communication skills and develop insight. However, the kit needs to be empirically tested to support the theoretical considerations.
References


Ray, D., Bratton, S., Rhine, T., & Jones, L. (2001). The effectiveness of


APPENDIX A

A. Game consists of looking at the setup of an ideal farm (the stage).

The farm.

- The barn
- The house
- Garage of the vehicle
- Roads
- River
- Stable
- Henhouse
- Vehicles
- Pig house
- Different kinds of animals
- The four seasons

Comprehension questions based on the farm:

For the farm:

Stage 1: A day in the farm throughout the four seasons:

1- Farm house setting (depending also on the season)
2- How many items are there in the farmhouse kit?
3- How many characters are there?
4- How many vehicles?
5- How many animals?
6- How many plants?
7- How many barns?
8- How many fences?

Stage 2: Farm house work (roles)
1- What does the 1st farmer do?
2- What does the 2nd farmer do?
3- What does the 3rd farmer do?
4- What does the 4th farmer do?

Stage 3: The day in the farm
1- When does the work of the first farmer start?
2- When does the work of the second farmer start?
3- When does the work of the third farmer start?
4- When does the work of the forth farmer start?

Stage 4: How many animals are there?
1. How many pigs
2. How many cows?
3. How many hens?
4. How many roosters?

5. What kinds of vegetables are on the farm?

The Farm: Interviewing the student
- Tell me about your favorite character in the farmhouse?
- Tell me about your favorite animal in the farm?
- Tell me about your favorite vehicle?
- Tell me about your favorite plant?
- Have you ever been in a farm?
- What struck you the most?
- What did you dislike?
- What did you like?
- What would you suggest to do to improve the situation on the farm?
- Which is your favorite game?
- Which is your worst game?
Dimensions of the Kit

Width 40 cm

Height 30 cm

Panel of the first scenic view
Panel of the second scenic view
Panel of the third scenic view

The stage
Summer 1 - Scenic view 1

Summer 1 - Scenic view 2

Summer 1 - Scenic view 3
Summer 2 - Scenic view 1

Summer 2 - Scenic view 2

Summer 2 - Scenic view 3
Fall 1 - Scenic view 1

Fall 1 - Scenic view 2

Fall 1 - Scenic view 3
Animals in the Farm
Vehicles in the Farm

Vehicle 1

Vehicle 2

Vehicle 3

Vehicle 4
Illustration 1 - Spring II

Illustration 2 - Summer I
Illustration 4 - Winter I

Illustration 4 - Winter II
APPENDIX B

B. Batman and Superman

- Gotham City
- Buildings
- Cars
- Joker
- Metropolitan City
- Office
- Enemy
Superman 1 - Scenic view 1

Superman 1 - Scenic view 2

Superman 1 - Scenic view 3
Superman 2 - Scenic view 1

Superman 2 - Scenic view 2

Superman 2 - Scenic view 3
Superman 3 - Scenic view 1

Superman 3 - Scenic view 2

Superman 3 - Scenic view 3
Batman 1 - Scenic view 1

Batman 1 - Scenic view 2

Batman 1 - Scenic view 3
Batman 3 - Scenic view 1

Batman 3 - Scenic view 2

Batman 3 - Scenic view 3
Illustration 6 - Batman III
Appendix C

Traditional lesson I

Objectives:

1. Student will be able to identify words in the comic.
2. Student will be able to use the vocabulary words in the comic.
3. Student will be able to identify the vocabulary words in the comic.
4. Student will be able to read the story for fluency and comprehension.
5. Student will be able to create his own story based on superheroes.
6. Student will be able to predict pictures of the story.
7. Student will be able to take notes related to their purpose for reading.
8. Student will be able to use their notes to construct a concise summary.
9. Student will be able to comprehend the questions that are based on the comic.
10. Student will be able to write his own superhero story.
11. Student will be able to recognize the words during brainstorming.

Procedure:

- Introduce myself.
- Explain the work schedule of the lesson.
- Obtain student's opinion on superheroes.
- Allow student to express opinion on qualities and characteristics of superheroes.
- Brainstorm the word “superhero” on cardboard paper with different colors for three minutes maximum (possibly using colors for each word)
- Ask the student who is his favorite superhero?
- Read a comic with the student and encourage a role-play of the comic (using separate copies).
- Ask him to write all the words he doesn’t understand while reading the comic.
- Repeat process as many times as necessary.
- Ask student 20 questions based on the comic and ask him to write his answers as well as saying them out orally.

**Comprehension questions**

1. What is Batman’s role?
2. Where does the story take place?
3. What were the robbers doing in the jewelry store?
4. Why is Mr. Freeze in jail?
5. What was your favorite part in the story?
6. What do you like about Batman?
7. Would you prefer to be Batman or the villain?
8. What would your role be in the story?
9. How did the crooks get the glove of Mr. Freeze?
10. Who is Bruce Wayne?
11. Is Batman human?
12. Who did the crook turn out to be at the end?
13. What does “wailing” mean?
14. What does “robberies” mean?
15. What does “exhibit” mean?
16. What does “soared” mean?
17. Do you like Batman’s costume?
18. If you were to re-write the story, would you have changed the conclusion?
19. What did the crooks use the large stolen diamond for?
20. Who is Alfred?
After finishing the questions, the student will be asked to create and write his own superhero story. (No more than a paragraph long). He can use felts; colors and whatever motivates him.

**Materials:**

- Crayons
- Felts
- Papers
- 2 Comic books
- Sticker book
- Pen
- Puppets
- Cardboard
Traditional Lesson II

Objectives:

1. Student will be able to identify words in the comic.
2. Student will be able to use the vocabulary words in the comic.
3. Student will be able to identify the vocabulary words in the comic.
4. Student will be able to read the story for fluency and comprehension.
5. Student will be able to create his own story based on superheroes.
6. Student will be able to predict pictures of the story.
7. Student will be able to take notes related to their purpose for reading.
8. Student will be able to use their notes to construct a concise summary.
9. Student will be able to comprehend the questions that are based on the comic.
10. Student will be able to recognize the words during brainstorming.
11. He will be able to recall words, characters and his story from the previous lesson.

Procedure:

- Review previous lesson with the student.
- Explain the procedure of the lesson.
- Ask the student to brainstorm the word superhero again using various colors.
- Ask the student to brainstorm "superman" on a cardboard.
- Read a comic with the student and encourage a role-play of the comic (using separate copies).
- Ask him to write all the words he doesn't understand while reading the comic.
- Repeat process as many times as necessary.
- Ask student 20 questions based on the comic and ask him to write his answers as well as saying them out orally.
Comprehension questions

1. What is superman’s role?

2. Where does the story take place?

3. Is superman human?

4. Who threw superman on the ground, and how was he pushed on the ground?

5. Would you like to fly like superman?

6. Why do you think the story is called “the second landing”?

7. What does “mitts” mean?

8. What role would you take in the story?

9. What does “intrusion” mean?

- 10. What does “lunatic” mean?

- 11. What does “misconception” mean?

- 12. Would you like to have powers like superman?

- 13. What do you think will happen at the end of the story?

- 14. Who is “major force” in the story?

- 15. If you were to re-write the story, would you have changed the conclusion?

- 16. Would you like to be superman or the villain?

- 17. What would you change in the story?

- 18. What does “frustrate” mean?

- 19. What do you like about superman?

- 20. Who is Clark Kent?
- After finishing the questions, the student will be given a superman activity book. He will be asked to identify the characters in the stickers from the story, to create his storyboard.

**Materials:**

Crayons

Felts

Papers

2 Comic books

Sticker book

Pen

Puppets

Cardboard paper
Application of Kit

Objectives:

1. Student will be able to identify words in the comic.
2. Student will be able to use the vocabulary words in the comic.
3. Student will be able to identify the vocabulary words in the comic.
4. Student will be able to read the story for fluency and comprehension
5. Student will be able to create his own story based on superheroes.
6. Student will be able to predict pictures of the story.
7. Student will be able to use their notes to construct a concise summary.
8. Student will be able to comprehend the questions that are based on the comic.
9. Student will be able to recognize the words during brainstorming
10. He will be able to recall words, characters and his story from the previous lesson.
11. Student will be able to illustrate his own story
12. Student will be able to use the vocabulary words in his story

Procedure:

1. Review previous lesson.
2. Student will be asked to compare Batman and Superman.
3. The student will be allowed to brainstorm the similarities that “batman and superman” have on cardboard papers using different colors.
4. The student will be asked to use vocabulary words that were used previously in the last two lessons to make up his own story of batman and superman cooperating together to fight the bad guys. The material will be provided to allow the student to create his own story. He will be asked to use vocabulary in the story, and then he will be drawing his own conclusion according to his own version of the story.
Materials

Crayons
Felts
Papers
Comic book
Sticker book
Pen
Puppets
Cardboard
Glue
Scissors
Ruler
Scotch tape
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68/100 = 13.6/20
**Project Kit**

Kinda El-Ghussein  
ADHD and play therapy kit  
Evaluation Sheet  

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**Rating Scale**

Use of Vocabulary, testing the memory and creativity.

I asked the student to use the vocabulary words that we previously used in the last two traditional lessons to allow him to make up his own story of Batman and Superman as they cooperate to fight the bad guys. I provided the student with material that he could use to create his own story using both characters. He first used the vocabulary words in the story (a paragraph) then he used the vocabulary words by making up his own comic using conversational bubbles. This was accomplished successfully. I gave him a 4/5 in total, which rounds to 80/100=16/20