Elaine Clanton Harpine

Teaching At-Risk Students to Read

The Camp Sharigan Method

SpringerBriefs in Psychology

School Psychology

Elaine Clanton Harpine

Teaching At-Risk Students to Read

The Camp Sharigan Method

Elaine Clanton Harpine
University of South Carolina Aiken
Aiken, SC
USA

As I like to say: If you teach a child to read, you can change the world.

Elaine Clanton Harpine
Aiken, South Carolina

Preface

It was the first day for *Camp Sharigan*, and I had just finished laying out paper footprints to mark a path for the children to follow. We were using a cluster of eight different classrooms situated on a common hallway. Cloth wall hangings decorated each room to create a camp atmosphere. In one room, the wall hanging displayed a sunrise scene over a pond. The station is called *Lake Read*, and it features four big cloth fish with all sorts of reading surprises tucked inside. Another workstation features a forest scene where a waterfall tumbles over the rocks and a grapevine contains words to read and capture, while a pretend *campfire* provides stories for reading. Down the hallway, there is *Sharigan's Snake Pit* where the children practice letter sounds. They learn to take a word apart letter by letter, saying each letter sound, and then put those sounds back together to say the word. They capture words that are *tricky* (a word the child does not know), use a four-step method to learn the word, and then write the captured word on a leaf and place it on the make-believe paper *poison ivy vine*. Each day the children count to see how many words they have captured. A captured word is actually a word the child does not know; in school, we would say the child missed the word. At *Camp Sharigan*, we say that the word is *tricky* (has a confusing letter-sound); therefore, we *capture* the word and then learn the word. Adding an element of fun encourages children to tackle hard learning tasks. The *Rainbow Bridge* sits across the room from the snake pit and has steppingstones leading up to the bridge. Each child must stop and complete the task hiding beneath the steppingstones. Each task at the stepping-stones is graded by ability. Each child captures five new words. If the child does not capture five words at step one, the child proceeds on to step two, step three, or step four. Steps progress in difficulty. Once the children have captured five words each, they cross the bridge and work with a small group at the rainbow station, where the group reads step-by-step directions to make puppets or complete other tasks. The tasks vary each day, so there is always something new and challenging waiting for every student. By using a step-by-step system, instructions can be individualized according to each child's ability and needs. No child is either embarrassed or left out because the work is too hard or too easy. In the last room at the end of the hallway, there is a *tent* decorated with flowers that invites children to write their

own stories, and *Mount Reading* sits waiting to challenge students to spell. The *Friendship Tree* has word games that stress phonemes or letter sounds. There are even paper *camp cabins* in one room and a *library*. There is also a *stop sign* where everyone has to STOP and read a book. *Camp Sharigan* is totally hands-on and uses only intrinsic (internal) motivation—no stickers, prizes, or awards (extrinsic). Research shows that extrinsic motivators actually discourage children from reading; children read only long enough to get the prize and then they stop. With intrinsic, hands-on motivators, children read because they are excited about reading. They may be reading for the puppet show, around the campfire, as actors who listen carefully in order to act out the motions of a story, or as the authors of their very own pop-up books. Reading becomes fun, but first, we must teach children how to read.

This is the fifth book in a series about group-centered prevention. The first book, *Group Interventions in Schools: Promoting Mental Health for At-Risk Children and Youth* (2008), introduced the concept of group-centered prevention and presented step-by-step directions for developing 1-hour pull-out/clinical style group-centered interventions. The second book, *Group-Centered Prevention Programs for At-Risk Students* (2011), dealt with how to design intensive 10-hour week-long motivational group-centered prevention programs—like *Camp Sharigan*. The third book, *After-School Prevention Programs for At-Risk Students: Promoting Engagement and Academic Success* (2013), gives step-by-step directions for developing year-long after-school group-centered prevention programs. The fourth book, *Group-Centered Prevention in Mental Health: Theory, Training, and Practice* (2015), expands group-centered prevention beyond simply working with children and youth and illustrates how group-centered prevention can be used in communities, hospitals, and business/worksites. Each of the first three program design books gives step-by-step directions telling *how* to design a group-centered prevention program, but I am frequently asked, *WHY*.

This book, which focuses on the *Camp Sharigan* program, examines *why* I developed and designed the program as I did. My hope is that, as I explain the purpose of the different interventions used in *Camp Sharigan*, such explanations will help you to be more effective in using the *Camp Sharigan* program and also help you design your own programs.

My overall purpose in designing the *Camp Sharigan* program was to help children learn to read and enjoy reading. Reading is a life skill that each and every child needs. However, since each child learns differently, we often need to teach children in different ways. *Camp Sharigan* offers six different teaching methods to help children learn to read. Research has proven that the *Camp Sharigan* program is an effective method for teaching at-risk students how to read, but *Camp Sharigan* will only be effective if you understand how to use the program. This book focuses on *why*.

Let us explore together; let us take the *Camp Sharigan* program apart so that we can understand *why* each component is critical to its success. It is like baking a cake. If you leave an ingredient out, your cake will most likely be a flop. Programming is very similar. You must include all of the components or ingredients to make the program succeed. If you understand *why*, then you can be successful too.

Aiken, SC, USA   Elaine Clanton Harpine

Contents

About the Author

Elaine Clanton Harpine, Ph.D. is a motivational psychologist specializing in group-centered motivational program design. She has more than 44 years of experience designing and conducting motivational prevention programs for children and youth. Dr. Clanton Harpine earned her doctorate in Educational Psychology, Counseling from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Dr. Clanton Harpine has published 17 nonfiction books, including *Group-Centered Prevention in Mental Health: Theory, Training, and Practice* (2015), *After-School Prevention Programs for At-Risk Students: Promoting Engagement and Academic Success* (2013), *Prevention Groups* (2013), *Group-Centered Prevention Programs for At-Risk Students* (2011), and *Group Interventions in Schools: Promoting Mental Health for At-Risk Children and Youth* (2008). She is the author of *No Experience Necessary!* which received an *Award of Excellence* in 1995 and was selected as one of the top five children's books in its class. Other published children's writings include a two-volume series entitled, *Come Follow Me*, in 2001, a three-volume family series completed in 2003, a youth book in 1989, along with numerous articles for teenagers on peer pressure, coping with failure, alcohol abuse, parents, suicide, and, more recently, articles on using group-centered interventions in the schools. Additional published writings include a series on *Erasing Failure in the Classroom,* a series of ready-to-use group-centered program packets: Vol. 1, the *Camp Sharigan* program (*2nd ed.*, 2010), Vol. 2, *Vowel Clustering* (2010), and Vol. 3, the *Reading Orienteering Club* (2014).

Dr. Clanton Harpine has been interviewed on local early morning TV and radio concerning her workshop "Communication for Married Couples" and has been interviewed on local university radio concerning her work with inner-city children.

Her research for the past 15 years has focused on using group-centered interventions with at-risk readers. Dr. Clanton Harpine designed the motivational reading program called, *Camp Sharigan,* which she has used extensively in her work and research. She also designed the *Reading Orienteering Club* after-school prevention program and *Four-Step Method* for teaching at-risk children to read. Her

research with these programs has been published in psychological journals and reported through presentations at the American Psychological Association's annual conventions.

In recent years, Dr. Clanton Harpine has been teaching Group Therapy and Counseling, Lifespan Development, and Human Growth and Development at the University of South Carolina Aiken and is continuing her research with group-centered prevention. She is the editor for the "Prevention Corner" column, which appears quarterly in *The Group Psychologist*. She was selected for inclusion in *Who's Who of American Women*, 2006–2016, for her work with children in inner-city neighborhoods and at-risk communities.

Chapter 1
Why Are Groups a Better Way to Teach Reading Than One-on-One Tutoring?

The teacher said, "he never reads." Yet, after just four days at Camp Sharigan, the little boy was sitting outside the front door on Friday after school reading a book, waiting for Camp Sharigan to start.

A little boy cried as his mother demanded that he leave the reading camp early. "Can't I stay and be in the puppet play? I'm a reader," he pleaded.

One girl even begged her mother to reschedule her birthday party. "We're finishing our pop-up books on Friday. I've written the best story ever."

These are just a few of the stories from *Camp Sharigan*. Fine, you may say, children like the program, but does it work? Yes, it does.

A study published in 2009 showed that *Camp Sharigan* students outscored one-on-one tutored students from the same school and community. The only difference between the two randomly selected groups being tested was that 30 children participated in the *Camp Sharigan* program while the other 30 randomly selected students participated in a one-on-one tutoring program. The *Camp Sharigan* students not only outscored the one-on-one tutored students at the end of one week, but, one year later, when we went back to retest the same students, the *Camp Sharigan* students were still ahead of the one-on-one tutoring group (Clanton Harpine and Reid 2009). These students were all Hispanic, immigrant, English as a second language students for which learning to read English is often difficult.

Why Is *Camp Sharigan* so Successful?

Why did the *Camp Sharigan* students improve more than those receiving one-on-one tutoring? *Camp Sharigan* combines the counseling principles of group-centered prevention (interaction and cohesion) with effective hands-on teaching methods for improving phonemic awareness through *vowel clustering*. *Camp Sharigan* combines

learning and counseling in the same program. *Vowel clustering* teaches children to break down words into letter sounds, sound out letters one at a time, and then put those sounds back together and pronounce or read the word. Children are completely engaged in the benefits of group process at *Camp Sharigan* because they interact from the minute they arrive until it is time to go home.

You do not have to be a teacher or counselor to run the *Camp Sharigan* program. You do not even need any special training. Everything is written into the workstation booklets. In the 2009 research study described above, the program was conducted by one adult and 10 sixth grade bilingual students who served as workers at the workstations. The sixth graders did not have extensive training or experience in teaching reading. They simply sat down, read the instructions to the children, and helped the children complete the task assigned. The reading and counseling techniques being taught were interwoven and written into the task at each workstation. College students from a nearby university conducted the one-on-one tutoring sessions during the same week as the other group of children in the 2009 study. The university students used traditional one-on-one tutoring techniques like those in most public schools.

So, why is *Camp Sharigan* so successful? It is the group-centered prevention approach. Let us take a moment to stop and understand what group-centered prevention means.

What Is a Prevention Group?

The word *prevention* is used in a lot of different ways. Businesses, hospitals, and schools are all talking about prevention programs. Even on the Internet, some people advertise that they have a prevention group program, but, then, they actually present an old-style school assembly where classes are spread out across the gymnasium floor and students listen to a speaker. The program actually might be a good assembly about fire safety or illegal drug prevention, but it is not a prevention group program because it does not include group interaction.

> Prevention groups utilize group process to the fullest extent: interaction, cohesion, group process and change. The purpose of prevention groups is to enhance members' strengths and competencies, while providing members with knowledge and skills to avoid harmful situations or mental health problems. Prevention groups occur as a stand-alone intervention or as a key part of a comprehensive prevention program. Prevention encompasses both wellness and risk reduction. Preventive groups may focus on the reduction in the occurrence of new cases of a problem, the duration and severity of incipient problems, or they may promote strengths and optimal human functioning. Prevention groups encompass many formats. They may function within a small group format or work with a classroom of thirty or forty. Prevention may also be community-wide with multiple group settings. Prevention groups use various group approaches. Psychoeducational groups are popular and, while some prevention psychologists work within a traditional counseling group, others use a group-centered intervention approach. Two key ingredients for all prevention groups are that they be directed toward averting problems and promoting positive mental health and well-being and that they highlight and harness group processes (Conyne and Clanton Harpine 2010, p. 194).

Why Is Group-Centered Prevention Better for Teaching Reading?

All prevention groups must combine group interaction (where everyone in a group talks and interacts together in a positive and constructive way), positive group cohesion (where everyone feels like an accepted member of the group), and the therapeutic power of group process (where you create a supportive group atmosphere and environment that leads to change and understanding). Group-centered prevention goes one step further; it combines learning and counseling in the same program. Research shows that prevention groups can help students improve their reading skills (Berking et al. 2008; Curby et al. 2011; Foorman et al. 2003; Greenberg et al. 2001). Research also shows that, if groups are to correct reading failure, the group program must link academic performance and mental health in the classroom (Maugban et al. 2003).

Camp Sharigan combines learning and counseling. For example, a third grader had been diagnosed with dyslexia. His parents had tried everything—extra help at school, private tutoring, and even counseling. Nothing worked; the child simply could not learn to read. When he started at *Camp Sharigan*, he was once again convinced that he would not learn to read. Yet, he dutifully took his *treasure hunt map* and went off to his first workstation. His first station was *Sharigan's Snake Pit*. He enthusiastically crawled through the tunnel and climbed into the snake pit filled with foam letters and little fuzzy snakes. He scooted over to make room as a second student came tumbling through the tunnel into the snake pit. Word by word, with the help of the *camp guide*, both students began to match sounds to letters to construct simple words. The student diagnosed with dyslexia even helped the younger student he was working with in the snake pit to find the lowercase **letter f**. The two boys worked together until they had each captured five new words. The third grader was bubbling with pride as he took his *treasure hunt map* and headed for his second workstation.

Camp Sharigan instills hope. Because of *vowel clustering* (sounding words out letter by letter), the step-by-step system (starting with very simple letter sounds and working up to more difficult words), and the group-centered environment used at *Camp Sharigan*, the student in the previous example began to see hope for the first time, that yes, even he could learn to read. No, all of his problems were not solved in one single week, but *Camp Sharigan* gave the student the motivation and confidence to learn how to read. The student went on to join my after-school program and was reading beginning chapter books by the end of the school year. Yes, severe learning problems need more than a single week (sometimes more than one year) to reverse or correct, but, first, we need to rebuild hope and the child's self-efficacy (belief that they can actually learn to read).

Camp Sharigan emphasizes working in a real-world setting. Some prevention groups use role playing to teach skills; *Camp Sharigan* does not. *Camp Sharigan* uses real-world settings and interventions to teach skills. Interaction and cohesion help to bring about change in reading because the child is learning new skills

through structured, hands-on interventions at each workstation. The child then tests these new skills, traveling from workstation to workstation to work with others in the group.

Camp Sharigan emphasizes cohesive interaction. Group interaction and a cohesive atmosphere make prevention groups successful (Finn et al. 2005), but group interaction is not just sitting around in a circle of chairs talking. We must be careful when we define interaction. Yes, talking is interacting, but in prevention, we are looking for more than just conversation or chitchat sessions. We also mean more than just interaction between the teacher and students, and more than simply answering questions. Answering questions is interaction, but prevention groups want everyone in the group interacting in a positive and constructive way. If you are standing up in front of your group lecturing or even just explaining rules to the children, you do not have a group-centered prevention program. Group-centered prevention groups must have cohesive, constructive interaction—no lectures. With group-centered prevention, all of the children engage in group interaction from the beginning to the end of the program. For a group to be truly interactive, all group members must feel that they are free to talk, share their ideas, and work with others without the fear of criticism or rejection. Bullying and competition are never allowed in a group-centered prevention group.

Camp Sharigan uses the group structure to teach social skills as well as reading. For example, the painting workstation is not just about painting a picture. It is a place to solve problems and build group cohesion. We take an old bedsheet, cut it in half, cover the work area with plastic table cloths, and provide cover-ups and very washable tempera paint. The children must then work together throughout the first four days of the camp to paint a puppet stage that will be used on the last day. The children are instructed to think of the needs of others as they paint. This is a total group project. All 30 children paint on this single bedsheet. They work in teams of two and three at a time. They may not paint over anyone else's painting. They may not paint rude pictures, graffiti or inappropriate words. The picture must fit with the camp theme. The children must talk (interact), make decisions, decide what to paint, solve problems (how to add on to what others have painted), and have the puppet stage finished by the 4th day of the program so that it will be dry for the final puppet play on the last day. The children will then sign up to practice reading for the puppet play. The children are interacting both verbally and nonverbally, in small groups and as a total group, especially since the small groups change each day. The children rarely work with the same person twice. They spend about 5–7 minutes painting each day, but this ongoing weekly project pulls the group together and strengthens the cohesive bond that forms during the week. Teamwork culminates as the children work together to present a puppet play using puppets covered with captured words and a puppet skit that stresses the vowel sounds being learned that day.

Camp Sharigan stresses cohesion. Interaction is always structured toward a central goal. The goal for *Camp Sharigan* is to teach children to learn to read. The group structure and process must incorporate a cohesive atmosphere. Cohesion is more than just cooperation. Cohesion means being understanding, accepting, healing old disagreements, resolving fears or negative attitudes, developing a

common bond or attachment to the group—a sense of belonging. So, *Camp Sharigan* is a group-centered prevention program because it focuses on interaction and cohesion and uses group process to the fullest extent possible. You may be asking, how do I create this interaction? You create interaction by the way in which you structure your group. *Camp Sharigan* actually does all the work for you. The workstations and individualized rotation system built into the program keep the children working and interacting constructively for 2 full hours each day.

Why Is Group-Centered Learning Better Than One-on-One Tutoring?

The Reading Panel's (2000) nationwide research found groups to be more effective for teaching reading than one-on-one tutoring. Why? Groups offer a real-world setting where children can improve, examine, and develop new ways to learn and interact with others (Finn et al. 2005). Groups can especially help at-risk students because groups create their own environment, a place where students can learn how to work and cope with others—a safe place. Reading skills learned through a group setting are also easier for the child to transfer back to the classroom. Interaction in a group-centered prevention reading group is also more than just sitting around a table taking turns reading out loud. Reading out loud is very good, but simply reading out loud will not teach a child to read and it is not true interaction. We are talking about interaction where participants share ideas, solve problems, and evaluate their actions. They also need to learn reading skills that will lead to change.

   Camp Sharigan uses hands-on learning techniques. The hands-on learning activities structure and individualize each child's learning strategies. Research tells us that children learn better through hands-on structured activities (Jensen et al. 2007; Trout et al. 2007). Another example of why intrinsic motivation and the group atmosphere used with *Camp Sharigan* are so important comes from a first grader who at the end of the year was failing in reading, constantly in trouble for classroom behavior, and totally uninterested in participating in classroom activities. On the first day, he actually arrived late because he had a detention. We were in full swing with the children moving from workstation to workstation when he was escorted into the gymnasium by his teacher. He ignored the rest of the group, marched over to the far corner, and proceeded to roll around on the floor. I instructed my university students and the child's teacher to just ignore him. "I'll keep an eye on him," I said. After a few minutes, he came over where we were assembling "I am Special" puppets. "I want one," he said. "Excellent," I replied. "Here's a treasure hunt map. Start over at the **STOP** sign and continue around the gym to all of the workstations as listed here on your map. You'll collect a part of your puppet at each workstation; be careful, don't skip any stations or we will not be able to put your puppet together. Then, you'll come back to me, and I will help you make your puppet. Just match the letters on your map with the letters on the

signs at each workstation. It's easy. Have fun. See you in a few minutes." Yes, the young man finished his puppet, complete with captured words from each workstation. The teacher also told me that the student worked hard the rest of the week to stay out of trouble so that he could come to *Camp Sharigan* on time. No, a ten-hour, one-week program could not correct an entire year of failure, but *Camp Sharigan* did change his attitude toward reading and helped him find the motivation to try.

Camp Sharigan works better with at-risk students than one-on-one tutoring. You may be shaking your head after our previous example and saying, "It was just the puppet; he got excited about making a puppet. If you added a puppet, any child would be interested." Actually, that is not true. I tested the idea. I added hands-on puppet making to direct instruction in a classroom setting. It was a disaster. One child needed extra help and while I was helping that student, three others over in the corner turned their puppets into weapons. They were tired of waiting for the next step. *Camp Sharigan* solves this problem by having each student rotate and move independently. I also tested puppet making with one-on-one tutoring, but the puppets just were not as exciting that way. Some were interested, but many did not finish their puppet in the two-hour timeframe. Workstations, individual rotation, and groups were more exciting and the children were motivated to want to finish. The group-centered approach really did make a difference. Children enjoyed feeling a part of the group. They also enjoyed working together to complete their project. Where children complained in one-on-one tutoring when they were told they had to capture five words for the arms, and legs of the puppet, the children at *Camp Sharigan* eagerly looked for words to capture. It is more than just keeping their attention. The group, the workstations, moving around the room, and the puppet all become teaching tools that help students learn.

Camp Sharigan emphasizes working with others. Working with others in a positive, cohesively structured group can help motivate struggling students. An effective group can generate hope. Groups also help students resolve everyday problems, such as peer pressure, teasing, bullying, academic failure, and the need to belong and be accepted (Horne et al. 2007), but prevention programs only bring about this supportive group environment if they are effective (Durlak et al. 2010). The key to success lies in how we structure the group and the method that we use. *Camp Sharigan* uses six different teaching methods to help children learn to read— not just one as is typical with most one-on-one tutoring or classroom instructional programs.

Camp Sharigan uses only intrinsic motivators. One year, I had a student arrive at *Camp Sharigan* and say, "Well, I can't read; my teacher told me so. My mama says that's okay, I'm a sweet boy, and I don't need to read." The first story that I taught the child to read was *The Story of AT*. As you might assume, every word in the story is built upon the sound of *AT*. "The cat sat at a mat." Yes, the sentences are not always the greatest. It is harder than you might think to write a story with just the *AT* sound, but it is very motivating for a child to be able to read a story. Most commercial beginning reading books and even beginning textbooks have several vowel sounds on the first page. For students who are truly struggling, bombarding them with multiple vowel sounds is overwhelming. They simply cannot learn that

many sounds at one time. They become confused and frustrated. The idea of *The Story of AT* is not to prove that I'm a great story writer, but to encourage students to learn to read. The vowel clustered technique is that you teach the child to build words onto *AT* by simply changing the consonant sounds. The child gains confidence by sounding out the words and reading: "The cat spat at the rat." This particular student had failed and been retained multiple years, and he was truly convinced that he would never learn to read. After he read the story to me sounding out each word with help, I told him, "Congratulations, you've just read your first story." He replied, "No, I can't read." I went on to explain that he had just read the story to me; he still was not convinced. I suggested that he read it again. He did, and then looked up at me and said, "I did." Before I could teach the student to read, I had to rebuild the child's self-efficacy (belief that he could learn to read).

Camp Sharigan helps children rebuild their self-efficacy. Bandura (1995) says that, to rebuild self-efficacy, we must teach skills. Rebuilding self-efficacy and learning to read must be taught simultaneously. You cannot teach one, then the other. Changing a student's attitude about reading can sometimes be very difficult. Positive intrinsic (internal) motivation becomes essential. It took another 3½ years of intensive training in my after-school program for the previous student to advance to the first grade reading level. The student had multiple developmental concerns, and it was not possible for him to learn to read in only one week, but if he had not attended *Camp Sharigan*, he would never have been motivated to even try.

Camp Sharigan recreates a safe, motivating environment for change. Reading failure is a negative event in the life of a child that occurs in a public classroom (group) in front of the child's peers or fellow students. Such negative events can cause severe mental health and developmental life-long problems, even resulting in anxiety and depression (Herman et al. 2008). A critical element in overcoming failure is reversing the psychological damage caused by such negative events. We must rebuild a child's self-efficacy (belief that they can learn to read), but we cannot rebuild self-efficacy simply by being encouraging or with praise. The child must have effective skill building.

Why Is It Important to Add Counseling to a Reading Program?

The combination of learning and counseling in a group-centered program helps children learn new information through structured interactive interventions. The directions at each workstation give both reading and counseling tasks which helps children learn how to work and share with others.

The importance of combining learning and counseling into the same program along with the therapeutic power of cohesive group interaction became especially evident on the last day of the program at one of my summer camps. On the fourth day of the program, a horrendous evening thunderstorm struck the city. The community center was located in the flood plain of a major river that skirted the

downtown area. The children attending *Camp Sharigan* lived in a very low-income housing district even closer to the river. The children and their families evacuated their homes. It rained all night. The river had crested by morning and the community center was not flooded. Unfortunately, the housing district closer to the river was submerged under muddy water; therefore, we were not sure that we would have any children in attendance on the last day. When the doors opened, only three children were absent. The three not attending had a fever and upper respiratory infection from being out in the rain all night. The children eagerly waited in line to finish their pop-up books and to present their puppet play. The pop-up book is a challenging project that requires children to read and follow directions and to write a story using complete sentences and correct grammar. Many of the children spent the morning writing a final copy of their story and correcting grammatical mistakes. At the close of *Camp Sharigan*, the children proudly stood up and read their pop-up book stories to their parents in the audience.

Why Is Individualized Rotation Important in a Reading Program?

People often ask, "How are children working in groups if they move individually around the room from workstation to workstation?" One of the main advantages of using a group-centered approach in education is that you gain the advantages of both group process and individualized instruction. Typically, when children work together in groups with learning centers, the teacher will call time, ring a bell, or use some other method for telling students when it is time to rotate to the next group. Usually, the entire group then moves on to the next learning center. The problem with that is that no two students are alike or learn in the same way, not even identical twins. If you use assigned groups and timed rotation, you deprive the students of individualized instruction and assistance.

   Camp Sharigan uses individualized rotation to enhance instruction. At *Camp Sharigan,* children receive a *treasure hunt map* that sends them off to a workstation. The *treasure hunt maps* divide the children into 10 equal groups. No more than four children are allowed at a workstation at one time. The children work together in groups of three or four, interacting and completing the task assigned. When children finish, they check their *treasure hunt map* and go to the next station. They do not wait for others to finish. There is always a new task at each workstation. Therefore, the students are interacting and taking full advantage of the benefits of group process.

   Camp Sharigan offers individualized instruction to help meet the needs of each child. *Camp Sharigan* starts each day with an action story to challenge the children to listen for key words and to act out each word with an animal sound or motion. When they hear the word, they make the motion or sound that goes with that word. They interact as a total group to act out the story. After the story, children are given a

treasure hunt map to help them find their way around the room to each of the 10 workstations. With their *treasure hunt map* in hand, the children go to their designated workstations. Since this is a reading camp and many of our children cannot read, we tell them to match the letters on their *treasure hunt map* with the letters on the workstation signs. Matching letters is a good pre-reading exercise. Breaking into small workstation groups strengthens interaction and encourages cohesion. It is easier to work in a small group of three or four than with a room of 30 children. If one student finishes before the others at a workstation (with the reading, spelling, or writing task), then that student looks at their *treasure hunt map* and goes on to the next station (individualized rotation), even if the other members of the group are not finished. Students who may need more time continue working. Students do not become upset waiting on other group members to finish, and children who need more time do not become frustrated or embarrassed by having others in their group wait for them to finish. Everyone works at their own pace—individualized instruction.

Camp Sharigan uses individualized rotation to provide a challenge. When a student needs more help, there is a worker at each station, a *Camp Guide*. If a workstation already has four children when a new student arrives, the rotating student simply reaches under a nearby *reading rock*, selects a book, and reads while waiting. The action keeps moving. At-risk students get the individualized help that they need. Faster-paced students get the challenge that they need. By the end of the two hours, the students have worked in a variety of groupings. Each student works at all 10 workstations. This provides multiple opportunities for interaction, not just with two or three students, but with 10 different small groups. Two students might only work together once during the two-hour session. The *treasure hunt map* keeps students from clustering together in cliques or friendship circles and provides the opportunity and challenge for students to get to work together with several different students. Individualized rotation and group interaction also provide an excellent foundation for hands-on learning.

Camp Sharigan uses individualized rotation to increase motivation. This feature of the camp was demonstrated by a student who was said to have a hearing problem. The first day at *Camp Sharigan,* it rapidly became obvious that the student could memorize and repeat every word read to her. The problem was not hearing. Yet, when the student was asked to decode letter sounds and read unknown words, the student would simply sit and stare at the page. The student needed more than just group instruction; she needed individualized assistance in learning the *vowel clustering* method. Through *vowel clustering*, the student learned to decode words into letters sounds and then read the word. At *Sharigan's Snake Pit*, the student was taught to use letter tiles to spell the letter sounds. At the *Rainbow Bridge* work-station, the child then took those same letter sounds and learned to read the words in a *vowel clustered* story. By the end of the week, the student was showing progress in reading. This student needed individualized help, but she also needed the group atmosphere to give her the motivation to try and learn something new. One-on-one tutoring does not have the same intrinsic motivators, even if you are using the same curriculum, as a group-centered prevention program.

**Building a Better Reading Program:
What Does an Effective Reading Program Need?**

An Interactive Group Structure and a Cohesive Group Atmosphere

Groups have a healing power when you stress interaction and cohesion. When you combine learning and counseling, you are able to not only change a student's attitude about reading, but also to enable the student to learn the new skills necessary for learning to read.

More Than One Teaching Method

Camp Sharigan uses six different teaching methods in a supportive group atmosphere. Each workstation includes a new teaching skill (*vowel clustering*, comprehension, writing, spelling, oral reading) and a new group skill (friendship, sharing, kindness, working together as a team). *Camp Sharigan* has 10 workstations. The children travel to all 10 stations during a two-hour daily session. At one workstation, the children are spelling words. At another station, children are reading and writing an answer to the question: What happens next in the story? At still another station, the children paint a puppet stage. There is always something new and different at every workstation. There are questions to answer and problems to solve.

Intrinsic Motivation

Children are often labeled (non-readers, learning disabled, or slow reader) and those labels can prevent them from learning. Stickers, promises of pizza parties, or even pep rallies with costume characters will not motivate a child to read. True motivation must come from within. First, they must be taught the skills that will enable them to read. Then, true motivation comes from your group structure—not prizes or rewards.

To Combine Learning and Counseling

Positive talk and positive encouragement are not sufficient (Foorman et al. 2015). The child must see progress (skills training) while beginning to trust and learn to try again (Bandura 1995). Some children say that reading is the hardest subject that they must learn in school (Lyon 1997). By combining learning (reading skills) and

counseling (social skills training) together, we can help children learn and succeed in the classroom and in life.

Hands-on Interventions

At *Camp Sharigan,* a single large room or a cluster of rooms may be transformed into a make-believe camp. The idea is to create a hands-on learning center, sort of like going to a hands-on science museum, but the focus is on reading. The camp workstations help the children learn to read better, while the camp setting helps them have fun while they are learning to read (Clanton Harpine 2010).

Movement and Creativity

Movement helps children learn; it helps them stay engaged in the learning process. Creativity challenges children and motivates them to get involved and pay attention.

Individualized Rotation not Timed Groupings

Individualizing rotation adds intrinsic (internal) motivation through group process and the individualized structured learning progression needed by many at-risk students. At *Camp Sharigan*, children move individually from one workstation to another. This allows children to work at their own pace. When children move individually, a child does not become frustrated waiting for another child to finish or feel embarrassed or rushed because they work slower than someone else.

Camp Sharigan Uses a Ready-to-Use Program Packet

A program packet means that everything that you need to use the program is contained in one packet of instructions and ready-to-use workstation booklets. All you need to do is lay out the books, open to the page for that day, organize supplies, and help the children read and work the task assigned at each workstation. I have worked with fourth through sixth graders, middle school and high school students, university students, and even retired seniors as workstation helpers. The *Camp Sharigan* program does the work; all you need to do is read and use the program as it is written in the workstation booklets.

The 10 hands-on workstations are easy to set up because the program packet contains everything you need to create your own camp (Clanton Harpine 2016). Each station is different and changes each day so that there is always something

new and exciting at *Camp Sharigan*. An inflated air mattress creates *Mount Reading*, which features spelling words and stories to read on the mountain top. A colorful *tent* provides a place for children to listen and write stories. A make-believe paper *camp fire* helps children practice reading *vowel clustered* sight words from paper *grapevines*. The *Friendship Tree* has word games hidden in an old hollow log (made of cloth). *Lake Read*, a fishing pond with four hungry cloth fish, encourages children to practice tricky vowel sounds, prefixes and suffixes, as well as puppet plays. The *Rainbow Bridge* focuses on reading vowel clustered stories, and the camp *STOP* sign stresses reading beginning chapter books. At *Sharigan's Snake Pit*, the children practice *vowel clustered* decoding and encoding. The *Camp Library* and *Camp Cabin* workstations give step-by-step directions for making a pop-up book. A make-believe poison ivy vine teaches children to use *4 steps* in *capturing* and learning *tricky* words, and the camp *library* helps the children write their very own pop-up storybook. It is fun, it is exciting, and children really do learn while they are having fun.

References

Bandura, A. (1995). Exercise of personal and collective efficacy in changing societies. In A. Bandura (Ed.), *Self-efficacy in changing societies* (pp. 1–45). Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Berking, M., Orth, U., Wupperman, P., Meier, L. L., & Caspar, F. (2008). Prospective effects of emotion-regulation skills on emotional adjustment. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 55*, 485–494. doi:10.1037/a0013589

Clanton Harpine, E. (2010). *Erasing failure in the classroom, vol. 2: Vowel clustering, a ready-to-use classroom style group-centered intervention for teaching irregular vowel sounds to at-risk children and youth*. North Augusta, SC: Group-Centered Learning.

Clanton Harpine, E. (2016). *Erasing failure in the classroom, vol. 1: Camp Sharigan, a ready-to-use group-centered intervention for grades 1–3* (3rd ed.). North Augusta, SC: Group-Centered Learning.

Clanton Harpine, E., & Reid, T. (2009). Enhancing academic achievement in a Hispanic immigrant community: The role of reading in academic failure and mental health. *School Mental Health, 1*, 159–170. doi:10.1007/s12310-009-9011-z

Conyne, R. K., & Clanton Harpine, E. (2010). Prevention groups: The shape of things to come. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 14*, 193–198. doi:10.1037/a0020446

Curby, T. W., Rudasill, K. M., Edwards, T., & Pérez-Edgar, K. (2011). The role of classroom quality in ameliorating the academic and social risk associated with difficult temperament. *School Psychology Quarterly, 26*, 175–188. doi:10.1037/a0023042

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., & Pachan, M. (2010). A meta-analysis of after-school programs that seek to promote personal and social skills in children and adolescents. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 45*, 294–309. doi:10.1007/s10464-010-9300-6

Finn, J. D., Gerber, S. B., & Boyd-Zaharias, J. (2005). Small classes in the early grades, academic achievement, and graduating from high school. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 97*, 214–223.

Foorman, B. R., Breier, J. I., & Fletcher, J. M. (2003). Interventions aimed at improving reading success: An evidence-based approach. *Developmental Neuropsychology, 24*, 613–639.

Foorman, B. R., Herrera, S., Petscher, Y., Mitchell, A., & Truckenmiller, A. (2015). The structure of oral language and reading and their relationship to comprehension in kindergarten through grade 2. *Reading and Writing, 28*, 655–681. doi:10.1007/s11145-015-9544-5

Greenberg, M., Domitrovich, C., & Bumbarger, B. (2001). The prevention of mental disorders in school-aged children: Current state of the field. *Prevention and Treatment, 4,* Article 0001a. Retrieved May 9, 2005, from http://journals.apa.org/prevention/volume4/pre0040001a.html

Herman, K. C., Lambert, S. F., Reinke, W. M., & Ialongo, N. S. (2008). Low academic competence in first grade as a risk factor for depressive cognitions and symptoms in middle school. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 55*, 400–410. doi:10.1037/a0012654

Horne, A. M., Stoddard, J. L., & Bell, C. D. (2007). Group approaches to reducing aggression and bullying in school. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 11*, 262–271. doi:10.1037/1089-2699.11.4.262

Jensen, P. S., Arnold, L. E., Swanson, J. M., Vitiello, B., Abikoff, H. B., Greenhill, L. L., et al. (2007). 3-year follow-up of the NIMH MTA study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 46*, 989–1002. doi:10.1097/CHI.0b013e3180886d48

Lyon, G. R. (1997, July 10). Hearing on literacy: Why kids can't read. Testimony before the Committee on Education and the Workforce, U. S. House of Representatives. Retrieved November 27, 2006, from http://www.cdl.org/resource-library/pdf/lyon_testimonies.pdf

Maugban, R. R., Rowe, R., Loeber, R., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (2003). Reading problems and depressed mood. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 31*, 219–229.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4754). Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.

Trout, A. L., Lienemann, T. O., Reid, R., & Epstein, M. H. (2007). A review of non-medication interventions to improve the academic performance of children and youth with ADHD. *Remedial and Special Education, 28*, 207–226.

Chapter 2
Why Is Vowel Clustering More Effective Than Whole Language or Old Style Phonics for Teaching Reading?

> Yesterday, I sat talking with the mother of a young child who described herself as being "desperate for help." "I've tried everything," the mother said. "The school says that he's just not trying, but I know that's not true. I've worked with him at home; he simply doesn't understand how to read. I've bought every book that I can find. Nothing works. The teacher has given up. When I saw your article in the newspaper saying that hundreds of children have learned to read using your method of vowel clustering, I had to contact you to see if you thought it would work with my son."

Camp Sharigan uses *vowel clustering,* a method that teaches children to break words down into letter sounds (phonemes) and then put those sounds back together as words (Clanton Harpine 2010). There is no memorization of sight word lists and there are no phonics rules to learn. Children study letter sounds and combinations of sounds so they can sound out words and improve their reading skills. As Shaywitz (2003), co-director of the Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity at the Yale University School of Medicine explains, children learning to read need to be competent in phonemic awareness or decoding (breaking down) words into letter sounds and then encoding (reassembling) those sounds back into pronounceable words.

Camp Sharigan stresses phonemic and phonological awareness and using the lowercase alphabet. Research shows children struggling in reading often cannot identify lowercase alphabet letters. Seven first graders currently enrolled in my program do not know their lowercase alphabet. They cannot identify the letter or give the letter sound(s). They only know the capital letters, but most books are written using lowercase letters. So, the first place to begin teaching a child to read is to teach the lowercase consonant letter sounds.

Camp Sharigan also increases phonological awareness (ability to work with letter sounds) by having children distinguish between similar and dissimilar phonemes (sounds), match vowel sounds, separate words into syllables, blend sounds, and manipulate letter sounds to form new words by adding and dropping a letter. *Camp Sharigan* provides hands-on opportunities for children to practice oral reading,

spelling, vocabulary building, comprehension, letter recognition and handwriting, sentence writing and grammar, working with fiction and nonfiction, story writing, and social skills for the classroom. *Camp Sharigan* teaches fluency by having children practice oral reading, especially with puppets in a puppet play (Clanton Harpine 2016). The group-centered prevention approach provides the learning environment; the workstation style hands-on curriculum provides the instructional component for teaching first through third grade-level reading instruction. The hands-on projects at each workstation help children make decisions, solve problems, and rebuild self-efficacy (the child's belief that they can learn to read). It all starts with phonemic awareness or letter sounds, for both consonants and vowels.

Why Is Reading Important?

A very important step in early child development, reading is a strong influence on a child's life and actions (Foorman et al. 2003; Kuppen et al. 2011; Meyler et al. 2008a, b; Oakhill and Cain 2012). Reading failure is a life-long problem, especially when you consider that 85% of juvenile offenders in the court system are classified as "functionally illiterate" because they cannot read (National Center for Adult Literacy 2007). Reading failure is also considered one of the primary causes of overall academic failure (Twenge 2005).

We have a long history of reading failure under whole language instruction. Over the past 25 years, nationwide testing has shown that over half the children and teens across the nation cannot read at grade level by 4th or 8th grade. The Nation's Report Card (NPC) (2015) stated that only 36% of 4th graders and only 34% of 8th graders across the nation can read proficiently at grade level. When we tie reading failure to retention and to dropping out of school before graduation, we truly have a serious problem (Fleming et al. 2004; Twenge et al. 2007). Add depression and anxiety on top of academic failure, and reading failure can lead to enormous life-long complications (Coll and Marks 2012; Vaughn et al. 2014), especially when you consider that 70% of American prison inmates cannot read above the 4th grade level [National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) 2007]. We owe it to children to use the most effective way to teach them to read, because when children fail to learn to read such failure increases the likelihood that they will drop out of school before graduation, have trouble finding a job, or even get involved in criminal activity (Plucker and Esping 2014; Snowden 2005; Twenge and Campbell 2002; Vaughn et al. 2010).

Why Is Phonemic Awareness Important for Teaching Reading?

Phonemic awareness gives children a method for sounding out and reading new words —letter-by-letter, if necessary. Phonemic awareness is therefore one of the first essential steps in learning to read, but the terms phonemic and phonological awareness and phonics are sometimes used interchangeably and there is a lot of confusion about what each term means, before we continue, we need to stop and clarify these terms. We will use science-based definitions derived from Shaywitz' (2003) work:

- A phoneme is a single sound represented by an alphabet letter. For example, there are 26 letters in the English alphabet, but there are roughly 40 different phonemes or letter sounds. These letter sounds are represented by approximately 250 different letter combinations or spellings. Children do not learn these letter sounds automatically. Children learn to speak orally as a natural part of childhood development, but matching phonemes with specified letters or letter combinations is a skill that must be taught. Merely listening to someone read a book will not teach children to identify phonemes or learn to read.
- Phonemic awareness is the term used to explain a child's ability to hear a phoneme or letter sound and then to use that phoneme to sound out words. Phonemic awareness requires that children recognize that letters represent sounds and that words are composed of letters that systematically represent sounds (sometimes even blended or new sounds). When a child reads, the child says the sound(s) represented by the letter, not the name of the letter. Children must have phonemic awareness or letter-sound knowledge in order to learn to read.
- The terms phonological awareness and phonemic awareness are often confused or even used interchangeably. Often researchers will use the term phonemic awareness to represent both phonemic and phonological aspects of working and learning about phonemes. Phonological awareness actually goes one step further than phonemic awareness and describes a child's ability to work with letter sounds or phonemes in individual words, to break those words down into syllables, and even to identify single or combined phonemes (sounds). Phonological awareness means that a child can identify words with similar and dissimilar sounds, can blend or split and segment sounds, and can manipulate sounds by changing a letter in a word and thereby creating a new word. Phonological awareness must be taught; it is not a naturally occurring skill.
- Phonics is a method of instruction that teaches students the relationship between phonemes (sounds) and printed letters. Traditional (old style) phonics instruction uses rules to apply this knowledge to reading and spelling.

Why Does Whole Language not Teach Phonemic Awareness?

Whole language does not teach phonemic awareness; instead, it concentrates on teaching children to memorize words (usually lists of sight words or the "look and say" approach) rather than teaching children to break words down into phonemes or sounds. Foorman (1995), one of the leading researchers in reading, stated in her article on the "The Great Debate" that whole language simply does not work. She then went on to present study after study of how whole language failed. Researchers have for years supported teaching phonemic awareness or letter sounds over whole language as the key to correcting reading failure (Chessman et al. 2009; Foorman 1995; Foorman et al. 2003; Lyon 2002; Rayner et al. 2001; Torgesen et al. 2001). If phonemic awareness and the association between letters and sounds are so important for teaching children to read, why is it not taught in school? Why do schools still rely on *whole language* teaching techniques or old style phonics rules? As one administrator explained, "at the public school level, we do not pay much attention to research; we follow policy." Considering that 64% of children across the nation cannot read at grade level by 4th grade, and that the failure rate has been near 60% since 1992 without any significant improvement (NCES 2015), perhaps, we should consider a change in policy and begin to look at research.

Why Should Schools Teach Phonemic Awareness Instead of Whole Language?

First, we should change to phonemic awareness because the National Reading Panel found whole language to be ineffective. In 1997, Congress instructed the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the Department of Education to create a national reading panel to review reading research and to determine the best method for teaching children to read. After reviewing 100,000 studies, the National Reading Panel (NRP) published their results, showing that instruction in phonemic awareness, systematic phonological instruction, improving fluency, and enhancing comprehension were the best ways to help children learn to read effectively. In their report, the NRP (2000) concluded that neither whole language nor traditional phonics rules were able to effectively teach phonemic awareness.

Second, we should change to phonemic awareness because some of the nation's best researchers have found whole language not to work. In a report before Congress, April 28, 1998, G. Reid Lyon, past Chief of Child Development for the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), went even one step further than the Reading Panel and stated that the four causes for reading failure are lack of phonemic awareness, low comprehension, lack of student motivation, and the teaching method being used in the classroom. These two

national research-based reports left many reading specialists calling for a change in curriculum and teaching methods employed in schools (Foorman et al. 2003; Lyon 2002; Rayner et al. 2001; Torgesen et al. 2001). Unfortunately, *whole language* still prevails. I just spoke with the parent of a new kindergartener who explained how they had moved into a particular school district because they thought that their child would receive a better education. To the parent's disappointment, the school is using whole language. Even so-called "blended whole language and phonics" have been shown not to be effective (Foorman et al. 2003, 2015). If you search on the Internet, whole language, look and say (whole word), and even combining old style phonics rules with whole language are still advertised heavily, even though they have been proven to be ineffective and over 60% of children across the nation have failed to learn to read using these methods. To make matters worse, many universities training tomorrow's teachers are still teaching new prospective teachers to use whole language techniques to teach children to read in the classroom.

   Third, we should change from whole language to phonemic awareness because neuroimaging research has confirmed that phonemic awareness is better. Yoncheva et al. (2015) studied how the brain responds to different teaching methods, particularly whole language (memorization) versus phonemic awareness (sounding words out by letter sounds). Their neuroimaging study showed that when beginning readers used phonemic awareness or "letter-sound relationships" to decode words they could even pronounce words that they had never seen before. Yoncheva et al. (2015) also stated that it was better to teach children to sound out the word "c-a-t" rather than teaching the child to memorize the word "cat." In the neuroimaging studies, the brain responded better to sounding words out than trying to memorize words. They went on to say that the teaching method had a direct "neural" effect on learning to read.

Camp Sharigan Teaches Both Phonemic and Phonological Awareness

While most curriculums use only one teaching method or what some refer to as the "one-size fits all" approach. *Camp Sharigan* uses six different teaching methods to teach children to read.

   Teaching Method #1: Phonemic and phonological awareness. Reading and spelling are both taught through *vowel clustering* at *Camp Sharigan*. *Vowel clustering* works because it focuses on phonemic awareness (the sounds that letters represent) and helps children learn to read without memorization or rules. One student who failed for nine straight years in school, learned to read using *vowel clustering*. *Camp Sharigan* also stresses phonological awareness through word games. Children use the word *orange*, take a letter away, and try to see how many new words they can create: range, rang, ran, an. They also add letters: can, cane, mane (on a horse), make, take, bake. At *Camp Sharigan*, we use long rolls of paper.

Children love to see how far their list can extend across the floor. We even have a puppet play for that day where the puppets use the same Take-a-Letter/Add-a-Letter game. Word games can make learning fun and can be adapted to any age or ability level. Word games also help children listen for letter sounds and work on spelling words correctly.

Teaching Method #2: Workstations with individual rotation. Camp Sharigan features 10 workstations with individualized rotation, meaning that children move independently and not as a group. This enables *Camp Sharigan* to individualize instruction. Children work at their own pace, but also work together as a group. The workstations help students incorporate movement and group interaction into the learning process. Research states that movement and being physically involved in the learning process improves a child's ability to learn (Chandler and Tricot 2015; Moreau 2015; Toumpaniari et al. 2015). Physical activity or being allowed to move around while learning actually helps improve attention, focusing on a task, rational thinking or the ability to reason through a problem, and especially how the brain functions cognitively (Hillman et al. 2014), but movement must be controlled and purposeful. We cannot simply turn children loose, allow them to jump or run around, and call that learning. Movement must be structured or built into the learning process and how the child is learning. If movement is to benefit education, there must be a purpose for the movement or reason that the child is moving around the room. Simply standing up or walking around is not educationally focused movement.

Teaching Method #3: Hands-on teaching methods. Camp Sharigan adds hands-on teaching interventions to movement through workstations. *Camp Sharigan* uses hands-on exploratory activities to introduce a whole new way of teaching children to read. These hands-on activities encourage children to want to learn (intrinsic motivation—learning for the sake of learning) rather than being bribed with extrinsic rewards (candy, stickers, pizza). Hands-on learning techniques emphasize creativity, strengthen a child's determination, commitment, perseverance, and control over their actions and behavior (Kvarme et al. 2010; Linley and Proctor 2013). The pop-up house is an excellent example of how workstations, hands-on learning, and cognitive functioning work together. The children listen to a story at the beginning of the session about a make-believe town where everything is orange. The story stretches the imagination with orange people, houses, trees, and even orange food. The silliness of a story where everything is orange catches and holds the children's attention. The children then move throughout *Camp Sharigan* going to several workstations to trace patterns and make their pop-up book. Tracing patterns helps children develop fine motor skills that are essential for accurate handwriting. Keeping track of multiple house pieces as they move from workstation to workstation also teaches children to organize materials and their time. The finished pop-up book has (1) a lift-flap cover displaying a mountain, lake, and beach, (2) a pop-up house that emphasizes the color they have chosen for their story, (3) a pop-up bedroom and living room, and naturally (4) a story written by the child. The Camp Guides edit all the stories for correct grammatical structure and spelling. No invented spellings are allowed. Children write the final copies on manuscript paper so that they also display

proper letter formation. This one hands-on activity teaches listening skills, story writing, grammatical sentence construction, spelling, manuscript writing, comprehension through following step-by-step directions, organization, completion skills, perseverance, and oral reading—the children read their books out loud at the closing program for their parents.

Teaching Method #4: Using the 4-Steps. Children need oral reading, teaching phonemic awareness or decoding skills, and teaching skills that improve comprehension. When the reading curriculum omits these, researchers have shown that reading failure, antisocial actions, and improper classroom behavior result (Toppelberg et al. 2006). *Camp Sharigan* incorporates oral reading, phonemic awareness and decoding skills, spelling, vocabulary building, and comprehension using a teaching method called the *4-steps.* When children capture *tricky* words at *Camp Sharigan* (words that they do not know or cannot read or spell), we say that the word is *tricky*; therefore, we capture the word and use *4-steps* to learn the word. The children (1) break the word down letter-by-letter, sound-by-sound, and learn to pronounce the word correctly; (2) the children practice spelling the word out loud and then correctly write the word; (3) the children give a definition for the word using a dictionary, and (4) the children write a sentence using the word correctly based on a definition found in the dictionary. Using the *4-steps*, children actually learn the meaning and usage of a word and not merely the phonemic sounds. If a child does not know what a word means, it does not help to simply learn how to pronounce the word. Children need to know how to read (pronounce), spell, define, and use the word correctly in a sentence or story.

Teaching Method #5: Fluency through oral reading. Reading fluency is best defined as smooth, accurate, and comprehensible oral reading. Some people have the mistaken idea that fluency is all about speed—how fast can you read? Speed does not amount to much if you do not understand what you are reading. Dr. Shaywitz (2003) says that the worst approach for teaching fluency is timing a reader. This is especially damaging for children who had been diagnosed with dyslexia (Shaywitz and Shaywitz 2007). Fluency is developmental and should start on day one. Fluency hinges upon recognition of letter sounds. To be fluent, a student must have knowledge of letter sounds and patterns, vocabulary or meaning of words, knowledge of grammatical signs (commas, periods, question marks), and knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes (Wolf and Katzir-Cohen 2001). Shaywitz (2003) recommends repetitive reading as the best way to teach fluency. Unfortunately, many children find reading the same page or book over and over to be very boring. At *Camp Sharigan*, we use puppet plays. Children read and practice reading for a puppet. Children will practice reading a puppet skit over and over, although they would balk at being told to read a paragraph repeatedly. Children want their puppet play to be good and are often eager to practice, and puppetry provides a fun way to practice fluency. One worker even stated that after having children practice a puppet skit three or four times, he will ask "Do you want to read it again, or is that enough?" Most of the time, the children want to practice at least two or three more times, just to make sure that they are ready. Reading a puppet skit

orally also helps children work on phrasing, expression, and orally conveying the ideas of the puppet to the audience.

Teaching Method #6: Need-based or ability groupings through a progressive step system. A first grade student could not read at all during testing before first grade. He missed every single word on the sight word list and every word in the pre-primer level story (below kindergarten). At the end of first grade, the student could read four words from the sight word list, but he still could not read the story—not even one or two words. After the 1-week, 10-hour Camp Sharigan intervention, he not only read the pre-primer level story but moved up in reading oral passages (stories) and also made progress in sight words. The change in teaching method made success possible. The improvement comes from changing to a group-centered teaching method and teaching phonemic awareness through vowel clustering. The group-centered approach uses progressive steps, Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3. At *Camp Sharigan*, everyone starts at Step 1, regardless of their age or ability. They progress upward through the steps until they reach their ability level or as we say at *Camp Sharigan*, capture five words. Having everyone progress through a series of steps keeps children from being labeled or stigmatized as slow readers. Sometimes a third grader may only be able to work at Step 1, but, since the levels and workstations are not labeled by age or grade, children do not identify the work as easy or hard. As the children see themselves improving, their self-efficacy improves, and they begin to believe that yes, they really can learn to read.

Why Does Vowel Clustering Work?

It all begins with *vowel clustering,* teaching children to break words down into letter sounds or phonemes. Children are taught to never guess at a word or memorize a word. The focus is on breaking words down into letter sounds and pronouncing the word correctly (decoding). Then, children spell words by listening to the oral sound and identifying and writing the letters those sounds represent (encoding) (Clanton Harpine 2011).

Vowel clustering focuses on the root cause of reading failure—lack of phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is a more effective teaching approach than whole language because it teaches children to recognize that letters represent sounds and sounds work together to form words. *Camp Sharigan* emphasizes phonemic and phonological awareness using a new hands-on group-centered prevention format and responds to the four leading causes of reading failure as outlined by Lyon (1997): phonemic awareness, classroom teaching method, motivation, and comprehension.

Vowel clustering teaches one vowel sound at a time. The unique feature of *vowel clustering* over other techniques is that it helps the students learn vowel sounds one vowel at a time. For example, the children study all of the sounds for letter A before going on to the next vowel sound. The letter A uses seven sounds, and 22 different letter combinations to make these seven sounds. That is why at *Camp Sharigan* we say that words are *tricky*.

Vowel clustering teaches the lowercase alphabet. On the first day when children arrive at *Camp Sharigan*, they study the A vowel sound. I always pre-test children attending *Camp Sharigan* so that I know their reading level and their special needs. This is important because 1 year I had a second grader enter the program who did not know his lowercase alphabet letters. He knew the capitals, but none of the lowercase letters. We normally assume that second graders know their lowercase letters. Since, we read mostly using lowercase letters, this student could not learn vowel sounds until he learned to identify the lowercase alphabet letters. I started this student at the *Friendship Tree* where the task at the workstation is to make a paper *Sharigan* snake using lowercase alphabet letters. Once the student had made a snake and practiced identifying lowercase letters, he was directed to the *Snake Pit* where he used lowercase foam alphabet letters to spell beginning words: cat, hat, bat. Each workstation is graded by steps of difficulty: Step 1, Step 2, Step 3. This student started at Step 1, and even though the student did not progress past the short A vowel sound, the student discovered an effective teaching method that helped him learn and eventually read at his grade level. A 1-week program cannot solve every child's problem. The 1-week program is just the beginning, but a very important beginning. *Camp Sharigan* totally changed the teaching method being used with this student.

Vowel clustering stresses improvement one step at a time. In a recent research project, a first grader received one-on-one tutoring before first grade and pull-out one-on-one tutoring sessions at school while in first grade. The student still failed reading at the end of first grade and could basically read only "cat" and "go" from the sight word list. The student was then placed in *Camp Sharigan*. At the end of the 1-week, 10-hour *Camp Sharigan* program with the *vowel clustering* teaching method that stresses phonemic awareness, the student was showing improvement with both sight words and in reading oral passages. The student was still below grade level and struggling, but a mere 10-hour program showed more benefit for this student than an entire year in first grade with one-on-one tutoring.

Vowel clustering also helps students work with multi-syllable or compound words. For example, *sat, hat*, and *cat,* all use the *short a vowel sound*; so do, *satisfaction* and *caption*. Even though the word *caterpillar* is spelled with two *a's*, it only uses the *short a vowel sound* in the first syllable. The last syllable uses the *ar sound* as in car. At *Camp Sharigan*, the children break words down into letter sounds and then match the sound in the word with the letter sounds posted on a bulletin board or word wall. Working with words helps children to understand different letter sounds and the different ways the sounds can be combined together in a word.

Why Does Vowel Clustering Work Well in a Group-Centered Prevention Format?

Camp Sharigan provides an organized structure for teaching phonemic awareness and a teaching method that engages all students from the beginning to the end of the program. Working together in groups in a supportive, cohesive atmosphere encourages academic success (Brigman and Webb 2007). Students are motivated to work harder.

Positive group interventions strengthen the feeling of belonging, the sense of trust, and the level of acceptance that makes change possible (Marmarosh et al. 2014). This becomes important in school because children need to be accepted by their peers, display academic accomplishment, and develop a positive self-identity, a sense of pride (Marmarosh et al. 2011). Group programs also make it easier for students to transfer skills back to the classroom (Kulic et al. 2004; Pai et al. 2015). The group-centered structure of *Camp Sharigan* is one of its keys to success.

Why Would *Camp Sharigan* Be a Better Teaching Method for Teaching Children How to Read?

The two main causes of reading failure are (1) lack of phonemic awareness (being able to hear, understand, and use letter sounds), and (2) the classroom teaching methods (Lyon 2002). Many researchers are calling for the schools to change how they teach reading (Chessman et al. 2009; Foorman et al. 2015; Keller and Just 2009; Lyon 2002; Meyler et al. 2008a, b; Rayner et al. 2001; Shaywitz and Shaywitz 2007; Torgesen et al. 2001).

Through their neuroimaging work, Keller and Just (2009) revealed that at-risk readers can be taught to read. All that is needed is a successful teaching method (Meyler et al. 2008a, b). The National Reading Panel (2000) outlined the solution that we must seek when they announced that whole language and traditional phonics (phonics rules) do not teach children phonemic awareness and announced that it is time for a change.

As evidenced by the scores on the National Report Card and the negative evidence-based research on whole language and phonics rules, we need to seek a new approach. *Camp Sharigan* provides this new approach.

The superiority of a group-centered method over whole language techniques was exemplified by a study conducted right before end-of-the-year standardized testing at a Midwestern public school. The school would only allow us to work with children who they classified as "having no hope of passing the test." The children that they determined had a chance of passing the test with help were in a special "test prep" group.

We conducted the 1-week, 10-hour *Camp Sharigan* program with the school's "no hope" group. We used pre- and post-testing to determine the improvement in

both groups during the 1-week period. At the end of the week, the *Camp Sharigan* students, who the school said had "no hope" for passing the test, scored above the students in the "test prep" group (Clanton Harpine 2005).

A New Approach for Teaching Reading

Camp Sharigan is a new classroom teaching method that works even with at-risk students (Clanton Harpine 2016). *Camp Sharigan* teaches both phonemic and phonological awareness by teaching children to break words down into individual letter sounds and then to put those sounds back together to pronounce or read the word. It also teaches children to work with words and letter sounds by teaching children to break words into syllables, to look for prefixes and suffixes, and by teaching children to match vowel sounds—matching the sound not the spelling.

To overcome reading failure, children need a teaching method that emphasizes step-by-step instructions and active hands-on learning (Jensen et al. 2007; Trout et al. 2007). *Camp Sharigan* provides step-by-step directions, hands-on learning activities, phonemic and phonological awareness, and a positive group-centered motivational learning environment.

The effectiveness of the *Camp Sharigan* method was demonstrated by a student who made slow but gradual improvement throughout first grade. By the middle of the year the student was only able to read two words from the sight word list. At the end of the year, the student could read four new words—his only progress for the entire year of first grade. He had even received special assistive services from the school's pull-out program. During the summer, after first grade and before second grade started, the student was enrolled at *Camp Sharigan*. At the end of the 1-week, 10-hour *Camp Sharigan* program, the student had learned eight new words and the lowercase alphabet. The student learned more in 1 week than he had learned all year long in first grade. Unfortunately, the student moved and was not able to join my after-school program, but we had definitely proven that the child could learn to read. The teaching method made the difference. Vowel clustering and the group-centered teaching method helped this student to begin to read.

References

Brigman, G., & Webb, L. (2007). Student success skills: Impacting achievement through large and small group work. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 11*, 283–292.

Chandler, P., & Tricot, A. (2015). Mind your body: The essential role of body movements in children's learning. *Educational Psychology Review, 27*, 365–370. doi:10.1007/s10648-015-9333-3

Chessman, E. A., McGuire, J. M., Shankweiler, D., & Coyne, M. (2009). First-year teacher knowledge of phonemic awareness and its instruction. *Teacher Education and Special Education: The Journal of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children, 32*, 270–289. doi:10.1177/0888406409339685

Clanton Harpine, E. (2005, August). After-school community-based prevention project. In Carl Paternite (Chair), Using community science to promote school-based mental health. Symposium conducted at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D. C.

Clanton Harpine, E. (2010). *Erasing failure in the classroom, vol. 2: Vowel clustering, a ready-to-use classroom style group-centered intervention for teaching irregular vowel sounds to at-risk children and youth.* Aiken, SC: Group-Centered Learning.

Clanton Harpine, E. (2011). *Group-centered prevention programs for at-risk students*. New York: Springer.

Clanton Harpine, E. (2016). *Erasing failure in the classroom, vol. 1: Camp Sharigan, a ready-to-use group-centered intervention for grades 1–3* (3rd ed.). North Augusta, SC: Group-Centered Learning.

Coll, C. G., & Marks, A. K. (2012). *The immigrant paradox in children and adolescents: Is becoming American a developmental risk?*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Fleming, C. B., Harachi, T. W., Cortes, R. C., Abbott, R. D., & Catalano, R. F. (2004). Level and change in reading scores and attention problems during elementary school as predictors of problem behavior in middle school. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 12*, 130–144.

Foorman, B. R. (1995). Research on 'The Great Debate': Code-oriented versus whole language approaches to reading instruction. *School Psychology Review, 24*, 376–392.

Foorman, B. R., Breier, J. I., & Fletcher, J. M. (2003). Interventions aimed at improving reading success: An evidence-based approach. *Developmental Neuropsychology, 24*, 613–639.

Foorman, B. R., Herrera, S., Petscher, Y., Mitchell, A., & Truckenmiller, A. (2015). The structure of oral language and reading and their relationship to comprehension in kindergarten through grade 2. *Reading and Writing, 28*, 655–681. doi:10.1007/s11145-015-9544-5

Hillman, C. H., Pontifex, M. B., Castelli, D. M., Khan, N. A., Raine, L. B., & Kamijo, K. (2014). Effects of the FITKIDS randomized controlled trial on executive control and brain function. *Pediatrics, 134*, e1063–71. doi:10.1542/peds.2013-3219

Jensen, P. S., Arnold, L. E., Swanson, J. M., Vitiello, B., Abikoff, H. B., Greenhill, L. L., Hechtman, L. et al. (2007). 3-year follow-up of the NIMH MTA study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 46*, 989–1002. doi:10.1097/CHI.0b013e3180886d48

Keller, T., A., & Just, M. A. (2009). Altering cortical connectivity: Remediation-induced changes in the white matter of poor readers. *Neuron 64*, 624–631. doi:10.1016/j.neuron.2009.10.018

Kulic, K. R., Horne, A. M., & Dagley, J. C. (2004). A comprehensive review of prevention groups for children and adolescents. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 8*, 139–151.

Kuppen, S., Huss, M., Fosker, T., Fegan, N., & Goswami, U. (2011). Basic auditory processing skills and phonological awareness in low IQ readers and typically developing controls. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 15*, 211–243. doi:10.1080/10888431003706291

Kvarme, L. G., Helseth, S., Sorum, R., Luth-Hansen, V., Haugland, S., & Natvig, G. K. (2010). The effect of a solution-focused approach to improve self-efficacy to improve self-efficacy in socially withdrawn school children: A non-randomized controlled trial. *International Journal of Nursing Studies, 47*, 1389–1396. doi:10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2010.05.001

Linley, P. A., & Proctor, C. (2013). Surveying the landscape of positive psychology for children and adolescents. In C. Proctor & P. A. Linley (Eds.), *Research applications and interventions for children and adolescents: A positive psychology perspective* (pp. 1–9). New York: Springer.

Lyon, G. R. (2002). Reading development, reading difficulties, and reading instruction educational and public health issues. *Journal of School Psychology, 40*, 3–6.

Lyon, G. R. (1998, April 28). Overview of reading and literacy initiatives. Testimony before the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, Senate Dirkson Building. Retrieved November 27, 2006, from http://www.cdl.org/resource-library/pdf/lyon_testimonies.pdf

Lyon, G. R. (1997, July 10). Hearing on literacy: Why kids can't read. Testimony before the Committee on Education and the Workforce, U. S. House of Representatives. Retrieved November 27, 2006, from http://www.cdl.org/resource-library/pdf/lyon_testimonies.pdf

Marmarosh, C. L., Dunton, E. Carter, & Amendola, C. (2014). *Groups fostering a culture of change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Marmarosh, C., & Van Horn, S. M. (2011). Cohesion in counseling and psychotherapy groups. In R. Conyne (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of group counseling*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Meyler, A., Keller, T. A., Cherkassky, V. L., Gabrieli, J. D., & Just, M. A. (2008a). Modifying the brain activation of poor readers during sentence comprehension with extended remedial instruction: A longitudinal study of neuroplasticity. *Neuropsychologia, 46*, 2580–2592.

Meyler, A., Keller, T. A., Cherkassky, V. L., Gabrieli, J. D., & Just, M. A. (2008b). Modifying the brain activation of poor readers during sentence comprehension with extended remedial instruction: A longitudinal study of neuroplasticity. *Neuropsychologia, 46*, 2580–2592.

Moreau, D. (2015). Brains and brawn: Complex motor activities to maximize cognitive enhancement. *Educational Psychology Review, 27*, 475–482. doi:10.1007/s10648-015-9323-5

National Center for Adult Literacy (NCAL). (2007). The condition of education 2007 (NCES 2007–064). National Center for Education Statistics, National Institute of Literacy. Washington, D C: U.S. Department of Education.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *The nation's report card: Reading 2015 (NCES 2015-457)*. Washington DC: Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4754). Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.

Oakhill, J. V., & Cain, K. (2012). The precursors of reading ability in young readers: Evidence from a four-year longitudinal study. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 16*, 91–121. doi:10.1080/10888438.2010.529219

Pai, H. H., Sears, D. A., & Maeda, Y. (2015). Effects of small-group learning on transfer: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review, 27*, 79–102.

Plucker, J., & Esping, A. (2014). *Intelligence 101*. New York: Springer.

Rayner, K., Foorman, B. R., Perfetti, C. A., Pesetsky, D., & Seidenberg, M. S. (2001). How should reading be taught? *Scientific American, 286*, 84–91.

Shaywitz, S. (2003). *Overcoming Dyslexia: A new and complete science-based program for reading problems at any level*. New York: Knopf.

Shaywitz, S., & Shaywitz, B. (2007). Special topic: What neuroscience really tells us about reading instruction: A response to Judy Willis. *Educational Leadership: Improving instruction for students with learning needs, 64*(5), 74–76.

Snowden, L. R. (2005). Racial, cultural, and ethnic disparities in health and mental health: Toward theory and research at the community level. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 35*, 1–8.

Toppelberg, C. O., Munir, K., & Nieto-Castañon, A. (2006). Spanish–English bilingual children with psychopathology: Language deficits and academic language proficiency. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 11*, 156–163.

Torgesen, J. K., Alexander, A. W., Wagner, R. K., Rashotte, C. A., Voeller, K. S., & Conway, T. (2001). Intensive remedial instruction for children with severe reading disabilities: Immediate and long-term outcomes from two instructional approaches. *Journal of Learning disabilities, 34*, 133–158. doi:10.1177/002221940103400104

Toumpaniari, K., Loyens, S., Mavilidi, M., & Paas, F. (2015). Preschool children's foreign language vocabulary learning by embodying words through physical activity and gesturing. *Educational Psychology Review, 27*, 445–456. doi:10.1007/s10648-015-9316-4

Trout, A. L., Lienemann, T. O., Reid, R., & Epstein, M. H. (2007). A review of non-medication interventions to improve the academic performance of children and youth with ADHD. *Remedial and Special Education, 28*, 207–226.

Twenge, J., & Campbell, W. K. (2002). Self-esteem and socioeconomic status: A meta-analytic review. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 6*, 59–71.

Twenge, J. M. (2005). When does social rejection lead to aggression? The influences of situations, narcissism, emotion, and replenishing connections. In K. D. Williams, J. P. Forgas, & W. von Hippel (Eds.), *The social outcast: Ostracism, social exclusion, rejection, and bullying* (pp. 201–210). New York: Psychology Press.

Twenge, J. M., Baumeister, R. F., De Wall, C. N., Ciarocco, N. J., & Bartels, J. M. (2007). Social exclusion decreases prosocial behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 92*, 56–66. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.92.1.56

Vaughn, S., Denton, C. A., & Fletcher, J. M. (2010). Why intensive interactions are necessary for students with severe reading difficulties. *Psychology in the Schools, 47*, 432–444.

Vaughn, M. G., Salas-Wright, C. P., DeLisi, M., & Maynard, B. R. (2014). Violence in externalizing behavior among youth in the United States: Is there a severe 5%? *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 12*, 3–21. doi:10.1177/1541204013478973

Wolf, M., & Katzir-Cohen, T. (2001). Reading fluency and its intervention. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 5*, 211–239. doi:10.1207/S1532799XSSR0503_2

Yoncheva, Y. N., Wise, J., & McCandliss, B. (2015). Hemispheric specialization for visual words is shaped by attention to sublexical units during initial learning. *Brain and Language, 145–146*, 22–33. doi:10.1016/j.bandl.2015.04.001

Chapter 3
Why Is Reading Failure Both a Psychological and an Educational Problem?

A third grade student arrived two hours late for his pretesting appointment. I pretest all students before Camp Sharigan, so I can determine their reading level and special needs. This third-grader was unable to read even one word from the pre-kindergarten sight word list. I always have books in the waiting area and crayons and paper for the children. Instead of sitting down at the table to look at books or color with crayons, this student walked over to the wall and started hitting his head. I quietly explained to him that this was not an appropriate behavior. Next, I noticed that he was prowling through the shelves and stuffing things into his pockets. Again, I go over quietly and explain to him that he must return the items that he took off of the shelves because we share this room with another group and that those items do not belong to us. Next, he's rolling around underneath the table. Fortunately, it's finally his turn, and I called him over to the testing area. I did not have high hopes for a positive testing experience, but instead of criticizing his prior actions or lecturing him on proper behavior, I gave him a big smile and explained that at Camp Sharigan, we like to capture tricky words. After only a few minutes, I had the student working with me sounding out words letter-by-letter. We worked together for about 30 min using letter tiles to spell simple words by adding and taking letters away from **at**: at, bat, cat. The child began to smile. When it was time for him to leave, he gave me a hug as I told him that I looked forward to seeing him on Monday for the start of Camp Sharigan.

On the first day, he walked in a little reluctantly but when he looked around the room you could see his face begin to brighten. Camp Sharigan is not a typical classroom; it's colorful and bubbling with excitement. While I was relieved that we would not have a repeat of his earlier behavior, another little boy entered Camp Sharigan in tears. He was also a third-grader reading below the first grade level. This second student had been fine during the pretesting, but today, the only way he would stay at camp was if he could be in a group with his younger sister.

By day two, both boys walked in the door with smiles on their faces, eagerly took their treasure hunt maps, and marched off to their first workstation.

Not all anxiety problems are solved this easily, but *Camp Sharigan* is designed to help reduce stress, rebuild self-efficacy, and prevent reading failure. *Camp Sharigan* uses bold wall hangings painted with bright colors to transform empty rooms into a friendly camp setting. Most children enter the room with excitement,

but, occasionally, fear, anger, or other emotions keep children from immediately enjoying the fun atmosphere.

One year, a student arrived at *Camp Sharigan* and refused even to sit with other students, work in the same room with others, or allow the adult helpers to pin on his name tag. It took more than a mere two hours to alleviate his fears and anxieties, but by the last day, the student was moving from workstation to workstation with his treasure hunt map, working at the *Friendship Tree* with three other students, and even giving me a big hug when it was time to leave. A week really can make a difference.

A group-centered prevention program like *Camp Sharigan* provides a supportive learning and counseling atmosphere to help reduce stress and alleviate fears. *Camp Sharigan* combines learning and counseling to provide an effective way to teach children to read. A 1-week program cannot solve all problems, but it lays a strong foundation for further learning.

Why Is It so Important to Combine Learning and Counseling?

Jones et al. (2015) described it best when they said that, for students to succeed (learn to read) in the classroom, they must receive both educational and socioemotional skills training. They labeled their approach as cognitive and non-cognitive skill building. They identified cognitive skills as the educational lessons being taught (reading). Non-cognitive skills were identified as improving behavior, emotional control, self-regulation of actions, attention or focusing on a task, and any other social skills that help children interact successfully with others in a classroom or group setting. From their 20-year longitudinal study, they also discovered that cognitive and non-cognitive skills must interact together (Jones et al. 2015). In other words, the teacher cannot simply spend an hour on reading (cognitive) skills and then later in the day spend an hour on social skills (non-cognitive). Cognitive and non-cognitive skills must be taught at the same time through the same program. You cannot simply tack social skills onto reading or reading onto your social skills program. Both cognitive and non-cognitive skills training must be intertwined within the same program.

Research supports the need to combine both learning and counseling together in the same program (Baskin et al. 2010), and this is exactly what *Camp Sharigan* does (Clanton Harpine 2016). The group-centered approach intertwines learning and counseling throughout *Camp Sharigan*.

Researchers have also found that reading instruction is actually more effective when it is combined with counseling (Adelman and Taylor 2006; Buhs et al. 2006; Brigman and Webb 2007; Huang et al. 2005). Therefore, we need to combine counseling and reading instruction. When students work together in groups, the group's supportive, cohesive atmosphere increases academic success (Brigman and

Webb 2007). The cohesive power of group process gives students a sense of belonging, a feeling of trust, and positive acceptance (Smokowski and Bacallao 2007).

Why Do Groups Have a Therapeutic Healing Power?

Groups provide a real-world setting that enables children to explore interpersonal relationships, improve behaviors, try something new, and even develop new ways to share and learn with others. Groups are therapeutic because they create their own environment. They produce a safe place where children can learn how to work with others. Being able to work with others in a positive, cohesive, structured group environment helps students who are struggling in reading. As we said in Chap. 1, not every group provides a sense of hope or therapy. If we want groups to be therapeutic and offer a sense of healing, we must structure the group to be interactive and effective (Durlak et al. 2010; Yalom and Leszcz 2005).

An effective group creates hope. Everything that happens in life affects our lives and the people we become. Some events in life bring good influences into our lives. Negative events can be very damaging. We frequently pay attention to the catastrophic events and happenings but not the "little things"—things that we take for granted. When children have trouble learning to read and are faced with the embarrassment of failing in the classroom in front of their peers, the pain, the rejection, and the negative sense of failure, become deep-seated and eventually part of the developmental process. It is very hard to erase pain and failure. We cannot go back and erase what happened in the classroom, but we can generate hope by helping children rebuild their self-efficacy (belief that they can actually learn to read) and by creating a motivational environment that encourages children to try again. This is why *vowel clustering* and the *step system* works so well at *Camp Sharigan*. As soon as the children read *The Story of At,* which is an easy-to-read *vowel clustered* story, they begin to develop a sense of hope—"Maybe I can learn to read."

A cohesive, effective group allows everyone to share feelings. You want your group to be interactive but purposeful. Do not let the group sessions become chat sessions. You also do not want negative interactions, negative behaviors, bullying, teasing, or being rude. Working in small groups as children move from workstation to workstation at *Camp Sharigan* allows children to share their feelings in a constructive way. For example, at *Camp Sharigan,* we say that we are a team, not a competitive team, but a team that works together to help each other. Through teamwork, we introduce the concept of helping, sharing, and taking turns.

An effective group must also impart information or teach new skills. Learning to read is essential for a child's healthy development. When a child fails in school or is not able to cope with their sense of failure or a negative classroom event, then mental distress, anxiety, fear, anger, and sometimes even depression overcomes the child (Herman et al. 2008). Negative classroom events such as being identified as a

"slow reader" can be devastating for a child (Maugban et al. 2003). Every child can learn to read, but not necessarily through use of the same teaching method. This is why *Camp Sharigan* uses six different teaching methods. Unfortunately, sometimes parents are not ready for a new teaching approach. A young man, identified as being dyslexic by the school, joined our *Camp Sharigan* program one year. His mother had pulled him out of the public school and was homeschooling him. She begged me to let him into our program when she heard how successful we had been with other students who have been diagnosed with dyslexia. It was obvious from day one that the child had deep-seated emotional problems, bordering on mental health issues. He was very quiet, shy, well-behaved, but overly reserved, almost to the point of showing early signs of depression. After 2 days at *Camp Sharigan*, the little boy's mother announced that he would not be returning. She said, "this program isn't helping." When I asked the little boy if he wanted to learn to read, he nodded yes, as he glanced at his mother for her approval. Unfortunately, the little boy did not get to return. The mother wanted a more traditional one-on-one tutoring program. She did not see how a group program could possibly help her child. If ever a child needed the healing power of the group, it was this student. It is essential that we find methods that work for every child and stop using a "one teaching method fits all" approach.

An effective group will teach children to help others. Giving to others is very therapeutic. Sharing, showing you care, being nice, saying kind words are all behaviors that help children show that they care about other group members. Within your real-world group environment, it is very important to teach these skills. The *individual rotation* system used with *Camp Sharigan*, encourages children to work with different group members. Therefore, children must learn to work with a variety of personalities and temperaments. Children who struggle in school need this supportive interaction with their peers. They need to know that another child cares about them, but your group structure must ensure that this peer relationship is positive, supportive, and helpful. *Camp Sharigan* provides this supportive structure and enables students to make new, healthy interpersonal relationships.

An effective group must recreate a healthy classroom or peer group experience. It is impossible for a teacher or parent to motivate a child, but it is possible to build a positive learning environment where the child feels safe from failure and is therefore willing to work and become motivated to try once again to learn to read. This safe learning environment must be more than just a positive experience; it must also have a healing quality and use effective teaching methods (Nation 2003). To be effective, such a classroom learning environment must connect academic performance and mental health together in the same program (Maugban et al. 2003). As you recreate the classroom or peer group, you must make sure it is a positive, constructive experience. You must keep control of the group. Each child needs to learn self-control, and children also need to learn that there are consequences to their actions. We cannot have a positive environment if children are running wild and misbehaving. You want to recreate a positive but controlled classroom experience. I often use bubbles to help children relax at *Camp Sharigan*. Children love bubbles, but usually they chase or get hyper when they see bubbles

floating around. Instead, I have the children sit down on the floor. I tell them that we are going to count how long it takes a bubble to float to the floor. I insist that there be no talking, everyone counts silently. Several bubbles are released. Then, children quietly raise their hands to tell how long it took for their bubble to reach the floor. We always take a deep breath before we release the bubbles and begin to count. Actually what I'm doing is helping the children to relax. Watching a bubble float to the floor is a calming, relaxing activity. We repeat this exercise two or three times. I only call on people who are sitting quietly and calmly. I remind the children that waving their hand at me or jumping up and down will not get my attention. As I explain, "if you want to play the game, only calmness gets my attention. I only call on people who are sitting calmly just like the bubbles." After a few minutes, the children catch on. Taking a moment to relax and calm down is good for all of us.

An effective group must teach social skills. Learning how to get along with others, solve problems, communicate, change or correct improper behavior, cooperate, and how to accept and consider the needs of others are very vital skills for life. Most counseling groups with children are facilitated through the schools, approximately 70%, but few if any of these counseling groups incorporate reading (cognitive) as well as non-cognitive skill building (Jones et al. 2015). Yet, we know through research that strengthening mental health programming reduces discipline problems in the classroom and even improves academic test scores (Jennings and Greenberg 2009). At *Camp Sharigan*, we incorporate both cognitive and non-cognitive skill building in a positive, safe group-centered learning environment. *Vowel clustering* makes it easy for children to learn to read one step at a time —no more memorization, or rules to remember.

An effective group must enable children to model good behavior. Bandura (1986) says that children, teens, and adults learn from imitating or modeling the behavior of others in their group. Bandura's theory of social learning applies to both the cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of learning (Bandura et al. 1969). Of course we want children to imitate good behavior in the group, not misbehavior. Therefore, we must structure the group experience so that good behavior is demonstrated or modeled for others to imitate. This will only happen if your group program is structured and designed to generate the desired behavior. At *Camp Sharigan*, the workstations, small groups, and hands-on learning tasks help students stay engaged and model effective learning behavior. One example comes from a student who was very fearful and exhibited borderline panic attack symptoms every time she was asked to read. At *Camp Sharigan*, other children were reading all around her, not up in front of the class, but at the individual workstations. Children were sitting on the floor at *Lake Read*—reading, propped on cushions around the make-believe *Campfire*—reading, and stretched out underneath the *Stop* sign—reading. There were also children over at the *steppingstones* reading and moving up one step at a time. Reading no longer seemed to be as threatening or frightening. *Vowel clustering* allowed the student to be successful and read a *vowel clustered* story on her very first try. She had hope; she felt successful; she was motivated to try again.

An effective group must incorporate interpersonal learning. Irvin D. Yalom, a noted group psychiatrist, states that mental illness is cultivated through dysfunctional interpersonal relationships. A therapeutic group experience can correct dysfunctional interpersonal relationships (Yalom and Leszcz 2005), but only if your group includes positive interpersonal learning. When a child fails to learn to read in school, such failure creates a "negative event" in the mind of the child. The child may perceive this negative event as a personal threat and therefore try to discover ways to escape or prevent encountering the threat of being called upon to read. If the child is unable to stop the threat or prevent the negative experience from reoccurring, then the child may begin to invent escapes. The old standby "I'm sick" is frequently used by children. One student who was reading four grade levels below her age, frequently used this ploy. "My eye hurts; my head hurts; I have a stomach ache…. My hand can't write any more; it's too sore." Whatever the task, the student had an ailment which prevented her from being able to complete the task. Instead of focusing on her perceived ailment (this student had a long history of this kind of behavior), we stressed the hands-on creative art therapy projects at each station. She became interested in making Jumper the Frog. With help, she followed the step-by-step directions for making a paper frog. Then, she volunteered to be one of the readers for the puppet play. Her perceived ailments were forgotten.

An effective group must generate group cohesion. Group cohesion gives participants a true sense of acceptance in a group. If your group is cohesive then your children feel safe, feel as if it's all right for them to try and learn something new, feel that others actually care about them. There is never bullying or teasing in a cohesive group. Cohesion is essential if you want your group to be effective as both a teaching and counseling intervention. Cohesion does not happen on the first day. Cohesion grows and develops as your group works together. One example of cohesion from *Camp Sharigan* occurs when children work together to paint a puppet stage and again when they work together to present their program at the end of the last day. With children, friendship is always the beginning of a cohesive relationship. That is why the children focus on making new friends while they work the first day at *Camp Sharigan*. The story focuses on friendship: Sharigan the snake goes looking for a new friend. At the *tent*, they write an ending to a friendship story and talk about the qualities of good friendship. The workstations talk about being a friend and how a friend treats others.

An effective group needs to provide a sense of trust and acceptance. Children often decide if they have succeeded or failed at a task because of their past experiences. If the child failed when first learning to read in the classroom, the child may believe that they truly cannot read and therefore try to avoid any situations that involve reading. Such a negative opinion can keep a child from trying to learn. The child simply gives up. Children diagnosed with ADHD often struggle to complete tasks in the classroom, maybe from lack of organizational skills or self-control, or maybe from an inability to focus their attention. While the schools often seek a medical answer for controlling ADHD behavior, many researchers state that

medication does not improve academic work skills or teach behavioral skills (Hinshaw and Scheffler 2014; Jensen et al. 2007; Pelham and Fabiano 2008). Remember, what works for one student may not work for another. A structured classroom experience, step-by-step instructions, and hands-on projects that teach the skill in a classroom setting have been found to be the most effective method for training children to work with others in a group (DuPaul and Weyandt 2006). *Camp Sharigan* teaches children how to work together, how to solve problems, and how to share and be considerate of the feelings of others.

An effective group must teach responsibility. The group experience must teach not only self-control but also taking responsibility for one's actions. It is always much easier to blame someone else than to take responsibility when something goes wrong. Children, teens, and adults often need to be reminded that we, and we alone, are responsible for our words and actions. Children with emotional stress, frustration, or anger often have self-control issues. A cohesive group with a strong group structure can help children learn to cope with their problems (Kazak et al. 2010). The goal at *Camp Sharigan* is to help all children learn to act responsibly. Research shows that when schools incorporate effective group prevention type programs academic scores rise, there are fewer dropouts. Truancy problems are reduced, and there are fewer behavioral problems, such as bullying, rejection, and violence (Cuevas et al. 2007; Greenberg et al. 2001).

Why Is Creative Art Therapy Important?

A key component of *Camp Sharigan's* program design that helps intertwine learning and counseling in the same program is **Creative Art Therapy**. When I mention hands-on projects, some people automatically think, "oh, you're just doing arts and crafts." No, creative art therapy is a teaching tool that pulls both reading and therapy together in the *Camp Sharigan* program.

For example, on the second day of the program, *Noisy the Car* is used throughout the session. The session starts with a listening story about *Noisy* where children listen for key words and then respond at the appropriate time with an animal or car noise: moo for the cow that *Noisy* talks to or chug-a chug-a for *Noisy's* car engine going up the hill. The story helps children build better listening and attention skills. They want to participate in the story, so they listen and they concentrate. The story also emphasizes in a fun way that *Noisy* does not listen or follow directions. His friends keep telling *Noisy* to read the directions—all of the directions. Obviously, a problem that many children have is reading directions. Later at the *Camp Library* workstation, the children either read or listen to their camp guide read stories about *Noisy*. They must then distinguish between fiction and non-fiction. Even though the opening story was totally make-believe—cars do not actually talk or drive themselves—the workstation stories have the children

deciding activities a real car can actually do—a real car cannot pet a dog. It is important that children be reminded periodically that there is a difference between make-believe and reality. The workstation goes one step further by having the students trace a simple car pattern to make an easy *Noisy the Car* book that opens. The children write their own story about *Noisy* and glue their story inside their simple car book.

Creative art therapy uses hands-on projects to motivate children to work on hard tasks, teaches social skills, initiates group interaction, and encourages children who may be reluctant to get involved. Sometimes when children have experienced failure, they are reluctant to try again. Creative art projects help children overcome their fear and reluctance. Following step-by-step directions to make a paper frog or snake helps children tackle difficult learning tasks. For example, to complete *Jumper the Frog*, the children must solve the problem of making *Jumper* out of only one piece of paper. In other words, they must think before they trace or cut. They must look at the patterns and analyze how to fit the patterns on a single sheet. They can then create a list of *captured words* or write a story to go inside their frog. Again, making decisions. A tricky word is a word that a child cannot pronounce, spell, or define. We *capture tricky words* and then take *4 steps* (Clanton Harpine 2011) to learn those words. Teaching children to read and follow step-by-step directions is one of the best ways to improve comprehension.

One of the children's favorite projects is making pop-up books. The pop-up book contains captured words and a story written by the child. Tracing and cutting furniture or house pieces is an excellent way to build fine motor skills and strengthen hand muscles.

We also use puppet plays to teach cooperation and to encourage children to read and write. Reading out loud for a puppet also enhances fluency and reading skills. Children who refuse to read out loud orally in class eagerly line up to read for a puppet in a puppet play. There is a puppet play each day at *Camp Sharigan*. Children make puppets for the puppet plays and even paint their own puppet stage, which teaches group skills, decision-making, and sharing.

Vowel clustering and words are never forgotten in this hands-on approach because puppets and pop-up books are covered with captured words. *Sharigan the Snake* needs lower case alphabet letters to be in the puppet play and *Jumper the Frog* needs 15 captured words or a story to be in the puppet play. Every captured word is a word that the child does not know but is working to learn. Hands-on projects also teach completion skills because unfinished projects never go home. As I tell the children, you cannot drive a half finished car down the road. A project is never considered complete until it has the required number of captured words. Therefore, the puppets, the pop-up books, and even the *I Am Special* puppets are all used as teaching tools. They encourage children to try harder and even tackle more challenging reading, spelling, and writing projects. Every child reads their pop-up book story on the last day of the program.

Why Is It Important to Include Counseling in a Reading Program?

Children need a structured program with active hands-on learning, a positive atmosphere, and step-by-step procedures for learning new skills (Durlak et al. 2010; Pierce et al. 2010; Salas and Cannon-Bowers 2001). Students must also have mental wellness to be successful academically (Brown and Tracy 2008).

A little first grader came reluctantly to *Camp Sharigan*. When he started first grade, the student did not know the lowercase alphabet—not even one letter. By the end of first grade, he still had not learned the lowercase alphabet nor could he read —not one single word. He also explained that he really didn't want to learn to read. He even became angry when I suggested that we work together and capture tricky words during the pretest. He missed every single word on the pretest that I administered before *Camp Sharigan*, and he was not one of the most cooperative students to work with. After the one-week *Camp Sharigan* program, he read the pre-primer level sight word list and story and eagerly moved up to try the next step. He even wanted to move up and try Step 3 (stories progress in difficulty from 1 to 7). I knew that he wouldn't be able to read the Step 3 story, so I suggested that we only had time to read until he captured five words at Step 3. Then, we'd use the *4-steps* to learn the words. I didn't want the student to become discouraged again, so I set parameters on the task before he started. A change in teaching method made this success story possible. A student had moved from "I don't care" to "I want to try."

This student had completely failed in the traditional classroom. He also attended a homework program after school. Extra practice and worksheets had not helped.

Programs that combine learning and therapy are more effective (Baskin et al. 2010). Programs that include an educational group skills emphasis are also more effective than programs that just teach social skills (Gottfredson and Deary 2004; Gottfredson et al. 2004a, b; Payne et al. 2006). By combining learning and counseling into the same program, we provide academic assistance and mental health support (Fleming et al. 2004). As many researchers have stated, you cannot separate educational learning and mental wellness. They are intertwined; therefore, our programming must include both learning and counseling.

References

Adelman, H. S., & Taylor, L. (2006). Mental health in schools and public health. *Public Health Report, 121*, 294–298.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bandura, A., Blanchard, E., & Ritter, B. (1969). The relative efficacy of desensitization and modeling approaches for inducing behavioral, affective, and attitudinal changes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 13*, 173–199.

Baskin, T. W., Slaten, C. D., Sorenson, C., Glover-Russell, J., & Merson, D. N. (2010). Does youth psychotherapy improve academically related outcomes? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 57*, 290–296. doi:10.1037/a0019652

Brigman, G., & Webb, L. (2007). Student success skills: Impacting achievement through large and small group work. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 11*, 283–292. doi:10.1037/1089-2699.11.4.283

Brown, S., & Tracy, E. M. (2008). Building communities of practice to advance mental health services in schools. *The Community Psychologist*, *41*, 46–49.

Buhs, E. S., Ladd, G. W., & Herald, S. (2006). Peer exclusion and victimization: Processes that mediate the relation between peer group rejection and children's classroom engagement and achievement? *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98,* 1–13. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.98.1.1

Clanton Harpine, E. (2011). *Group-centered prevention programs for at-risk students*. New York: Springer.

Clanton Harpine, E. (2016). *Erasing failure in the classroom, vol. 1: Camp Sharigan, a ready-to-use group-centered intervention for grades 1–3* (3rd ed.). North Augusta, SC: Group-Centered Learning.

Cuevas, C. A., Finkelhor, D., Turner, H. A., & Ormrod, R. K. (2007). Juvenile delinquency and victimization: A theoretical typology. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 22*, 1581–1602. doi:10.1177/0886260507306498

DuPaul, G. J., & Weyandt, L. L. (2006). School-based intervention for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: Effects on academic, social, and behavioural functioning. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 53*, 161–176. doi:10.1080/10349120600716141

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., & Pachan, M. (2010). A meta-analysis of after-school programs that seek to promote personal and social skills in children and adolescents. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 45*, 294–309. doi:10.1007/s10464-010-9300-6

Fleming, C. B., Harachi, T. W., Cortes, R. C., Abbott, R. D., & Catalano, R. F. (2004). Level and change in reading scores and attention problems during elementary school as predictors of problem behavior in middle school. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *12*, 130–144.

Gottfredson, L. S., & Deary, I. J. (2004). Intelligence predicts health and longevity, but why? *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 13*(1), 1–4.

Gottfredson, D. C., Gerstenblith, S. A., Soule, D. A., Womer, S. C., & Lu, S. (2004a). Do after school programs reduce delinquency? *Prevention Science, 5*, 253–266.

Gottfredson, G. D., Gottfredson, D. C., Czeh, E. R., Cantor, D., Crosse, S. B., & Hantman, I. (2004b). *Toward safe and orderly schools: The national study of delinquency prevention in schools*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.

Greenberg, M., Domitrovich, C., & Bumbarger, B. (2001). The prevention of mental disorders in school-aged children: Current state of the field. *Prevention and Treatment, 4,* Article 1. http://journals.apa.org/prevention/volume4/pre0040001a.html

Herman, K. C., Lambert, S. F., Reinke, W. M., & Ialongo, N. S. (2008). Low academic competence in first grade as a risk factor for depressive cognitions and symptoms in middle school. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 55*, 400–410. doi:10.1037/a0012654

Hinshaw, S. P., & Scheffler, R. M. (2014). The ADHD explosion: Myths, medication, money, and today's push for performance. New York: Oxford University Press.

Huang, L., Stroul, B., Friedman, R., Mrazek, P., Friesen, B., Pires, S., et al. (2005). Transforming mental health care for children and their families. *American Psychologist, 60*, 615–627.

Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, *79*, 491–525. doi:10.3102/0034654308325693

Jensen, P. S., Arnold, L. E., Swanson, J. M., Vitiello, B., Abikoff, H. B., Greenhill, L. L., et al. (2007). 3-year follow-up of the NIMH MTA study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 46*, 989–1002. doi:10.1097/CHI.0b013e3180886d48

Jones, D. E., Greenberg, M., & Crowley, M. (2015). Early social-emotional functioning and public health: The relationship between kindergarten social competence in future wellness. *American Journal of Public Health, 105*, 2283–2290. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2015.302630

Kazak, A. E., Hoagwood, K., Weisz, J. R., Hood, K., Kratochwill, T. R., Vargas, L. A., et al. (2010). A meta-systems approach to evidence-based practice for children and adolescents. *American Psychologist, 65*, 85–97. doi:10.1037/a0017784

Maugban, R. R., Rowe, R., Loeber, R., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (2003). Reading problems and depressed mood. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, *31*, 219–229.

Nation, I. S. P. (2003). Vocabulary. In D. Nunan (Ed.), *Practical English language teaching* (pp. 129–152). New York: McGraw Hill.

Payne, A. A., Gottfredson, D. C., & Gottfredson, G. D. (2006). School predictors of the intensity of implementation of school-based prevention programs: Results from a national study. *Prevention Science, 7*, 225–237.

Pierce, K. M., Bolt, D. M., & Vandell, D. L. (2010). Specific features of after-school program quality: Associations with children's functioning in middle childhood. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *45*, 381–393. doi:10.10007/s10464-010-9304-2

Pelham, W. E., & Fabiano, G. A. (2008). Evidence-based psychosocial treatments for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, *37*, 184–214. doi:10.1080/15374410701818681

Salas, E., & Cannon-Bowers, J. A. (2001). The science of training: A decade of progress. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*, 471–499. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.471

Smokowski, P. R., & Bacallao, M. L. (2007). Acculturation, internalizing mental health symptoms, and self-esteem: Cultural experiences of Latino adolescents in North Carolina. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development, 37*, 273–292.

Yalom, I. D., & Leszcz, M. (2005). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy* (5th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Chapter 4
Why Can't I just Use Bits and Pieces of an Evidence-Based Program?

I'm using your book to organize our back-to-school kick-off activity. You emphasize that I must follow each and every step. You say, "don't use bits and pieces of the program if you want the program to work." I've always used a little of this and a little of that.

If you want the program to work and be effective, then you must use the program as it was written. If you change, alter, or pick and choose bits and pieces, then you are actually not running the *Camp Sharigan* program.

One example comes from a teacher who became really excited about the concept of *Camp Sharigan* at a mental health conference that I presented. She purchased the program packet. She went home, took out all of the hands-on creative art therapy projects, and in their place inserted worksheets that the students could do while sitting at their desks. She also placed a bowl of candy on her desk and told the children that each time they finished a worksheet during (her) *Camp Sharigan* time that they could have a candy treat. She even set a timer and said that the child who finished first would receive an extra treat.

Of course, the program was a disaster. Some of the children hurried to finish their first worksheet and get their candy reward. By the second or third worksheet, even those who were trying, were losing interest. Several children were upset and mad, saying it was unfair. One child was crying because she did not know how to read the questions on the worksheet.

The teacher then called me and said that my program did not work because she had tried it. She was very upset.

Why Can't I Change It?

Many teachers and group workers are puzzled why you cannot change evidence-based programs. If you change any portion of an evidence-based program or if the program is poorly implemented (the way in which you use the program),

you destroy the research-based benefits of the program (Kazdin 2008; Kratochwill 2007; Langley et al. 2010; McHugh and Barlow 2010; Riggs et al. 2010). For example, research showed that students who participated in *Camp Sharigan* out-scored children who participated in one-on-one tutoring (Clanton Harpine and Reid 2009). Yet, if you purchased the *Camp Sharigan* program packet but decided for some reason that you did not want to use the *vowel clustering* activities or follow the principles of intrinsic motivation and inserted contests and awards instead, you would not achieve the same results that have been achieved with *Camp Sharigan* because you are no longer using *Camp Sharigan*; instead, you are using YOUR version of the program, just as the teacher did in our opening example. Extrinsic rewards and competition destroy the therapeutic power of group process that is central to the effectiveness of *Camp Sharigan*. If you do not use *vowel clustering* and phonemic awareness, you will not be as successful as the research studies listed in this book.

I have used this program extensively in my research and my work for the past 15 years. I have worked with children and teens who have been expelled from the public school system in Tampa, Florida. I also took *Camp Sharigan* to Chicago to work with inner-city children from the projects and to the Bronx in New York where we worked with both children from public and private schools. Much of my research comes from my years of working in Ohio and Texas. We tested the *Camp Sharigan* program with low scoring at-risk readers in suburban Midwestern schools in Ohio and with Hispanic immigrant, English as a second language children in Texas. I have also used *Camp Sharigan* in my work in South Carolina. In all of our tests and research studies, *Camp Sharigan* participants outscored students receiving one-on-one tutoring and even those receiving special classroom "test prep" instruction (Clanton Harpine 2005). So yes, *Camp Sharigan* does work.

Why Does the Mere Purchase of an Evidence-Based Program not Ensure Success?

The battle cry for evidence-based programs is predominant throughout school-based settings. Funding sources, state and federal, encourage evidence-based pro-gramming. Schools and many community organizations demand it. While evidence-based programs are certainly preferable, mandated use of evidence-based programs does not assure program quality. How a program is used is what deter-mines whether the program is effective or not (Durlak and Dupre 2008).

A community worker bragged one day at a neighborhood meeting about how they were going to be running a new prevention group program for children. She, then went on to explain as others in the group asked questions, "Yes, we've purchased a program with the money we received through the grant, but we don't really plan to use it. We're just borrowing the name. We'll do homework, play

outside, and use the grant money to take field trips with the children. They love to go on field trips."

Why Is It Detrimental to Change Evidence-Based Programs?

In Chap. 1, we discussed the importance of the group, especially the group-centered prevention approach to using groups. In Chap. 2, we discussed how *Camp Sharigan* uses six different teaching methods to meet the diversity and needs of students. In Chap. 3, we discussed why combining learning and counseling was so essential for working with at-risk students. If we remove or change any of these three principles that *Camp Sharigan* emphasizes, then we are no longer using *Camp Sharigan*. The effectiveness of *Camp Sharigan* is the result of the combined strength of its parts.

Camp Sharigan is a portable, group-centered prevention program that incorporates learning and counseling in the same program. Combining learning and counseling strengthens a program's academic benefits (Jones et al. 2015; Baskin et al. 2010). *Vowel clustering* and intrinsic motivation are essential for the success that the *Camp Sharigan* program has achieved. If you take the creative art therapy projects out of *Camp Sharigan,* you will lose the advantages of hands-on learning. As my research with different teaching models demonstrated (see Chap. 3). Therefore, it is not possible to select bits and pieces or to change the program structure. *Camp Sharigan* has been designed and tested to be flexible and easy to use in all types of school and community settings, but it must be used as the program was designed.

The necessity was demonstrated when a counselor at a local school decided to use *Camp Sharigan,* but instead of using the program as written, the counselor added a "blended" version of whole language. Whole language and *vowel clustering* are total opposites as explained in Chap. 2. Of course, it didn't work. Therefore, the first principle for teaching at-risk students to read using *Camp Sharigan* is to use the program packet exactly as it is written.

Why Is a Program Packet Better Than a Training Manual?

Ready-to-use program packets allow you to use the program as it was intended and thereby enable you to reap the benefits of an evidence-based program. Program packets will reduce preparation time for school personnel conducting programs. Program packets will enable psychologists to develop evidence-based programs and insure that the program will be used as intended, thereby allowing evidence-based

results from research to benefit a larger number of children and teens at the local school level.

As evidenced by our examples, there is a very strong need for ensuring that evidence-based programs retain the original intent and structure of the program (Nation et al. 2003; Tobler et al. 2000). A ready-to-use program packet is one approach (Clanton Harpine 2011).

A program packet is a ready-to-use program. Everything is included, ready to take to the group, and use. All the practitioner must do is provide supplies—paper, pencils, scissors, and so forth. With *Camp Sharigan*, you may also decide to create a camp scene. It is not absolutely essential, but if you decide to create a camp, complete step-by-step instructions are included. As explained in the director's booklet, *Camp Sharigan* can be successful with or without the painted wall hangings. It is the program content that makes the program work—the group-centered structure, the hands-on creative art projects, *vowel clustering*, the *4-steps*, and workstations and the individual rotation system.

Camp Sharigan is a ready-to-use program packet (Clanton Harpine 2016). The *Camp Sharigan* program is written to incorporate both hands-on remedial reading teaching techniques and group counseling motivational techniques; therefore, the program addresses both educational needs and counseling needs of at-risk children. *Camp Sharigan* uses ten hands-on learning centers. The packet contains 10 ready-to-use booklets for each workstation that provide step-by-step instructions for students and those directing the program. The teacher, community leader, or counselor opens the packet, reads the director's handbook, organizes supplies, and lays out the booklets when they are ready to use the program. The packet includes game cards, stories, puppet plays; everything that is needed to run the program is included in the program packet. The counselor or teacher does not have to interpret the program or create curriculum for the program. Using a ready-to-use program packet insures that both the hands-on, at-risk teaching methods and the motivational group counseling techniques are used correctly because they are written into the workstation booklets. Local schools and community groups can receive the same results as I did in my testing.

The *Camp Sharigan* method cannot be converted to a one-on-one tutoring approach or a direct instructional classroom approach or a year-long after-school program. *Camp Sharigan* is a week-long, 10-hour hands-on reading camp that will only reach its full potential or give you the results that you desire when you use it as a group-centered prevention program.

References

Baskin, T. W., Slaten, C. D., Sorenson, C., Glover-Russell, J., & Merson, D. N. (2010). Does youth psychotherapy improve academically related outcomes?: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 57*, 290–296. doi:10.1037/a0019652

Clanton Harpine, E. (2005). After-school community-based prevention project. In C Paternite (Ed.), Using community science to promote school-based mental health. *Symposium conducted at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association*, Washington, D.C.

Clanton Harpine, E. (2011). *Group-centered prevention programs for at-risk students*. New York: Springer.

Clanton Harpine, E. (2016). *Erasing failure in the classroom, vol. 1: Camp Sharigan, a ready-to-use group-centered intervention for grades 1–3* (3rd ed.). North Augusta, SC: Group-Centered Learning.

Clanton Harpine, E., & Reid, T. (2009). Enhancing academic achievement in a Hispanic immigrant community: The role of reading in academic failure and mental health. *School Mental Health, 1*, 159–170. doi:10.1007/s12310-009-9011-z

Durlak, J. A., & Dupre, E. P. (2008). Implementation matters: A review of research on the influence of implementation on program outcomes and the factors affecting implementation. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 41*, 327–350. doi:10.1007/s10464-008-9165-0

Jones, D. E., Greenberg, M., & Crowley, M. (2015). Early social-emotional functioning and public health: The relationship between kindergarten social competence in future wellness. *American Journal of Public Health, 105*, 2283–2290. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2015.302630

Kazdin, A. E. (2008). Evidence-based treatment and practice: New opportunities to bridge clinical research and practice, enhance the knowledge base, and improve patient care. *American Psychologist, 63*, 146–159. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.63.3.146

Kratochwill, T. R. (2007). Preparing psychologists for evidence-based school practice: Lessons learned and challenges ahead. *American Psychologist, 62*, 826–843.

Langley, A. K., Nadeem, E., Kataoka, S. H., Stein, B. D., & Jaycox, L. H. (2010). Evidence-based mental health programs in schools: Barriers and facilitators of successful implementation. *School Mental Health, 2*, 105–113. doi:10.1007/s12310-010-9038-1

McHugh, R. K., & Barlow, D. H. (2010). The dissemination and implementation of evidence-based psychological treatments: A review of current efforts. *American Psychologist, 65*, 73–84. doi:10.1037/a0018121

Nation, M., Crusto, C., Wandersman, A., Kumpfer, K. L., Seybolt, D., Morrissey-Kane, E., & Davino, K. (2003). What works in prevention: Principles of effective prevention programs. *American Psychologist*, *58*, 449–456.

Riggs, N. R., Bohnert, A. M., Guzman, M. D., & Davidson, D. (2010). Examining the potential of community-based after-school programs for Latino youth. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 45*, 417–429. doi:10.1007/s10464-010-9313-1

Tobler, N. S., Roona, M. R., Ochshorn, P., Marshall, D. G., Streke, A. V., & Stackpole, K. M. (2000). School-based adolescent drug prevention programs: 1998 meta-analysis. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, *20*, 275–336. doi:10.1023/A:1021314704811

Index