

JA BizTown[®]

Overview

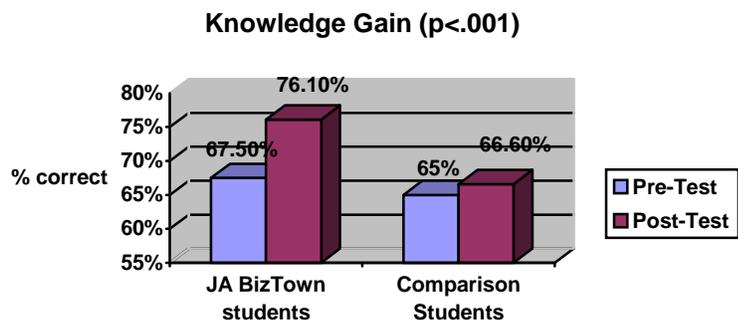
- *JA BizTown* provides an engaging introduction to the world of work and financial literacy for students in the fourth-through-sixth grades. This experiential-based program consists of 21 teacher-led lessons and an on-site simulation visit where students apply their in-class learning to a hands-on work situation.
- In spring 2008, a program evaluation was conducted to assess program quality and effectiveness. Data collection consisted of pre-/post-surveys, classroom and simulation observations, and focus groups/interviews.
- The evaluation was conducted by the Evaluation and Training Institute (ETI), a third-party consulting firm based in Los Angeles, with 33 years of experience directing studies covering educational, organizational, and social policy issues, and targeting the local, state, and national levels.

Sample

- A total of 52 program and 36 comparison classrooms from 10 different states participated in the evaluation.
- The evaluation included 747 pre-/post-matched pairs from participating students, 597 pre-/post-matched pairs from comparison students, 784 student post-program surveys, 32 teacher surveys, and 203 volunteer surveys.

Student Knowledge Gain

- To assess changes in students' content knowledge that occurred over the course of the program, a pre/post-test was administered. A sample of comparison students also took the pre/post-test to measure if students acquire the information outside of *JA BizTown*.
- As evidenced by the table to the right, program students significantly outperformed the comparison students. This knowledge gain demonstrates the significant impact *JA BizTown* has on students' knowledge of business, economics, personal finance, and work readiness.
- To measure the magnitude of program impact, the effect size was calculated for the program student's pre- and post-test scores producing an estimate of .53. An estimate was also calculated for the difference in gain scores between the program and comparison groups producing an effect size of .38. Both effect size estimates are meaningful and indicative of an influential experimental treatment.
- Additionally, students with previous JA experience outperformed those without previous experience on both the pre- and post-tests, demonstrating the sequential learning benefits of having multiple JA experiences.



Student Attitudes

- Students participating in *JA BizTown* became more confident in their academic abilities after participating in the program.
- Students who had participated in a JA program prior to *JA BizTown* were significantly more likely to indicate that they knew how to succeed in school. This suggests that participating in more than one JA program has a positive impact on students' attitudes toward school.
- Students who participated in *JA BizTown* indicated a high level of satisfaction with the program overall, rating the program an 8.6 on a 10 point scale.
- 95% of students said that they would recommend the program to a friend.

"We got hands-on experience in what would happen in real life." – Student

"A lot of times in school we're just learning things to learn them, but this time it feels like we're actually learning them for a purpose because we are going to do those kinds of stuff." - Student

Teacher Impact

- Teachers felt that the lessons and simulation successfully taught the students about financial literacy and the world of work.
- Teachers' agreed that *JA BizTown* was applicable to the real world and engaging for students.
- 97% of teachers stated that they would recommend *JA BizTown* to other teachers.

"The program makes my students see how math and reading are used in the real world." – Teacher

"The curriculum definitely opened up a lot of ideas for the future for my students." - Teacher

Other Evaluation Data

- An evaluation of the *JA BizTown* program was also conducted in Louisville, Kentucky, by the University of Louisville.
- To assess changes in students' content knowledge that occurred over the course of the program, a pre/post-test was administered. The pre-test mean score was an 8.3

and the mean post-test score was 11.74. The effect size, a measure that indicates the magnitude in the difference between the pre- and post-test means, was .68 which is considered a large effect.

- 97.4% of teachers agreed that *JA BizTown* met their expectations and that the program provided students an opportunity for hands-on learning and problem-solving.
- On a scale of 1 to 10, teachers rated the overall program a 9.4.

