Our education system has evolved over time and is still evolving today. As society changes, it is important to keep up with the way children are learning. After a decade or more of change, chalkboards are now considered outdated and are being replaced with smart-boards. Instead of going to the library, students use their laptops or iPads to find information. It is not uncommon to see a room full of students on their personal school-issued laptops. Schools are spending millions of dollars to equip classrooms with new innovations. Educators should be utilizing technology in every way possible and across all grade levels and curricular areas.

In early elementary school classrooms, students are building and developing basic literacy skills. Research has shown that phonics is a critical skill in beginning reading. One way early phonics instruction can be enhanced is through technology. Therefore, the purpose of my study will be to examine the effects of using an iPad as supplementary phonics instruction. Will this technology supplement increase literacy skills of at-risk prekindergarten students? Will students report more enjoyment when using technology? How will results from pretests and posttests compare to students who did and did not receive the intervention?

This study will be conducted at a Title I elementary school. The study will be conducted in a prekindergarten classroom, with approximately 25 students. The students’ ages will range from four to five years old. Five students will be randomly selected to
participate in working with an iPad on an application called *Phonics Island*. For six weeks students will spend thirty minutes, twice a week using the application. Students participating will include dual language learners and/or considered to be at-risk. The iPad application will be an addition to regular classroom instruction.

I will give all students in the classroom a pre-test, to determine their foundational reading skills. The test will examine students’ early literacy skills, specifically letter naming and letter sounds. I will randomly select five students from the classroom to participate in a technology-based intervention. The intervention will start after the pre-test. For the intervention, students will each use an iPad. They will spend approximately 30 minutes using *Phonics Island*. The application is designed to introduce students to basic literacy skills. Using the application students can learn to recognize letter sounds and trace letters in upper and lower case. The application is game-style, with animated instructions that require students to collect all the letters and find different animals on the island. There are seven levels, each with a different set of letters. When students complete every level, they will go back and practice each level again. After six weeks of using the iPad application all students will be given a post-test. This will test the same areas as the pre-test. In addition I will give a short survey to students who used the iPads, to gauge their preference in working with technology.