

# Mat Man™ Teaches Children to Draw

Mat Man™ teaches children to draw and develop body awareness according to a recent unpublished pilot study.

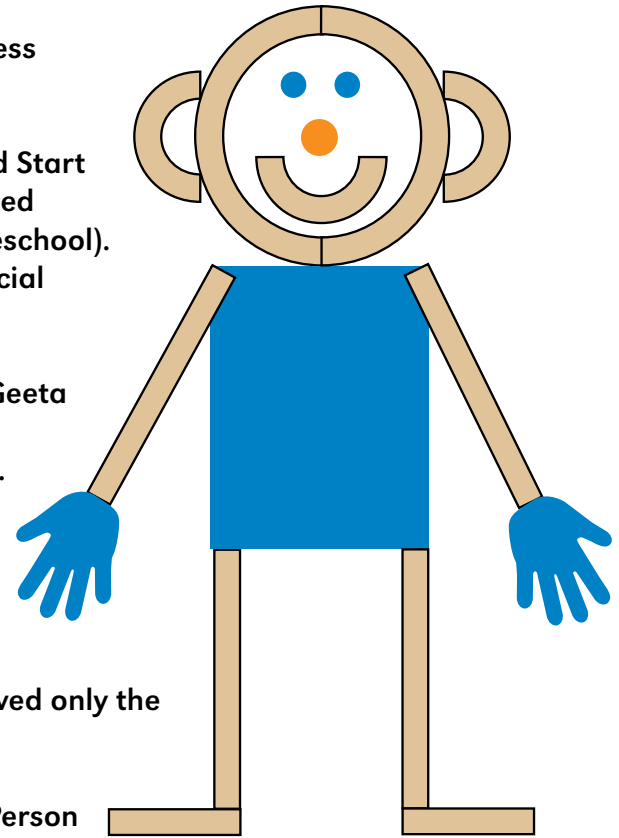
This study, conducted during the 2006-2007 school year in Head Start preschool classrooms in the Green Bay, Wisconsin area, examined thirteen children in each classroom (morning and afternoon preschool). The children were of diverse abilities, including general and special education students.

Over a 12-week period, students led by occupational therapist Geeta Bhojwani participated in Mat Man™ activities—a multisensory approach to drawing developed by Handwriting Without Tears®. Mat Man™ activities teach body awareness and include building Mat Man™ using manipulatives, singing, and drawing.

The morning class was the experimental group receiving weekly instruction with Mat Man™ activities. The afternoon class received only the traditional classroom curriculum.

All students were tested using the Goodenough-Harris Draw-a-Person Test (DAP) and Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration (VMI) for baseline (Sept. 12, 2006) and post study (Dec. 12, 2006) measurement scores. An additional DAP Test was administered to both groups six weeks following the conclusion of the study (Jan. 24, 2007) for retention measurements.

Following 12 weeks of instruction using Mat Man™ activities, the experimental group demonstrated overwhelmingly positive results. Children improved their scores on the DAP Test from baseline testing to the 12-week measurement by 299 percent (see Table 1a). In comparison, the control group had a modest improvement of only 80 percent (see Table 1b) over the same period. Overall VMI scores improved for both groups (see Figure 1). However, they did not demonstrate the same effects revealed by the DAP Test. In addition, the special education students in the experimental group outperformed their special and general education peers in the afternoon group by an average of 21 percent in their 6-week retention scores for the DAP Test (see Figure 2).



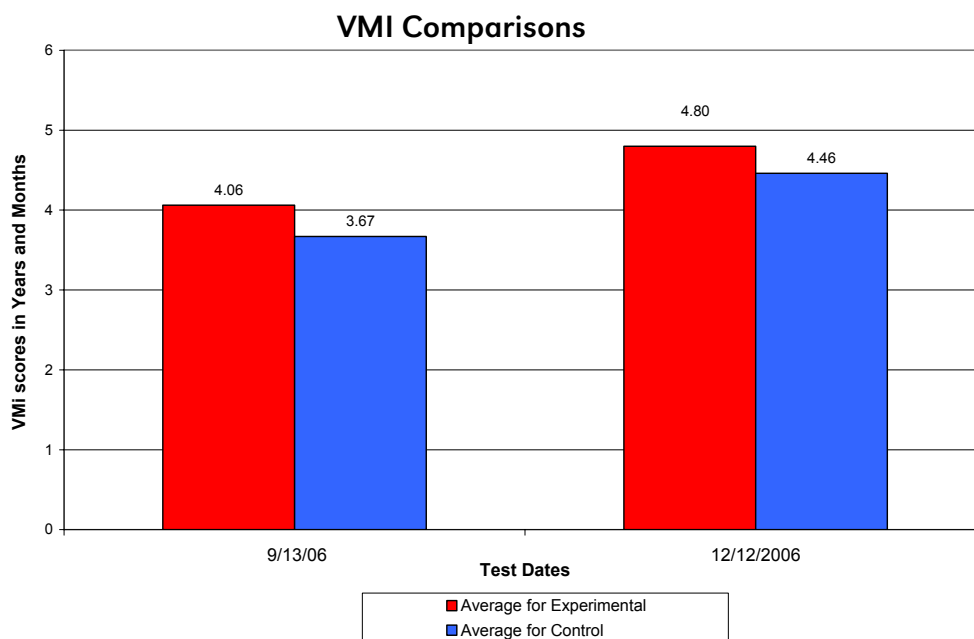
**Table 1a. Experimental Group Averages for Goodenough-Harris Draw-a-Person Test**

DAP Scores		Change
Baseline vs. Post Study	4.38/17.46	+299%
Baseline vs. Retention	4.38/16.08	+267%

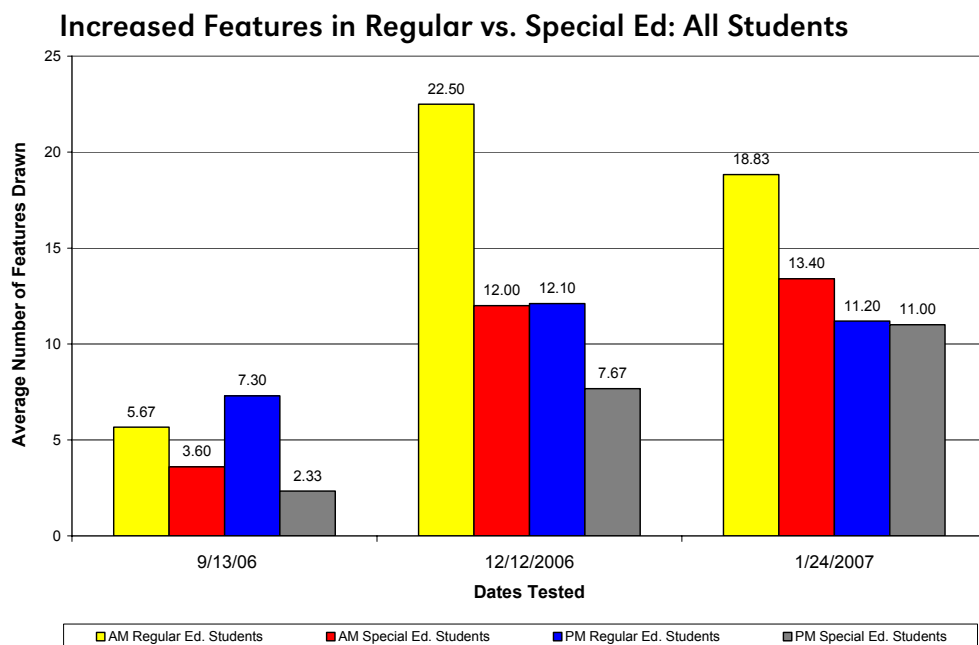
**Table 1b. Control Group Averages for Goodenough-Harris Draw A Person Test**

DAP Scores		Change
Baseline vs. Post Study	6.15/11.08	+80%
Baseline vs. Retention	6.15/11.15	+81.3%

**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



This study demonstrates the effectiveness of multisensory learning strategies compared to more traditional classroom methods, especially for young children. Drawing abilities continue to be a key indicator for school readiness.

The Handwriting Without Tears® Mat Man™ activity is a powerful tool for instruction in both preschool and kindergarten classrooms. This study also demonstrates the value of Mat Man™ activities for children of all abilities including those enrolled in general education, special education and inclusion model classrooms. In addition, children engage in an activity that is both enjoyable and that allows them to experiment and gain confidence with pre-writing skills.



**Mat Man™  
Before and After  
4 Year Old-Same Day**



*For more information about Mat Man™ or the complete Handwriting Without Tears® curriculum visit [www.hwtears.com](http://www.hwtears.com) or [www.getsetforschool.com](http://www.getsetforschool.com).*