

September 8, 2007

In the last 25 years, researchers have made considerable progress in understanding how children learn basic skills like reading and math and in particular, the relationship between acquisition of these skills and cognitive processes. The connections between cognition and learning have been particularly important for understanding the underlying processes that can lead to efficient learning as well as learning difficulties. As these relationships become better understood, so does our ability to teach children more effectively. That is, we should teach with an understanding of the skills that need to be learned and the cognitive processes (also known as abilities) that make learning possible. What impresses me most about Skatekids Online™ is that the authors of this exceptional instructional program have merged an excellent understanding of the academic skills like reading and math children must have with a modern view of what cognitive processes underlie acquisition of these skills.

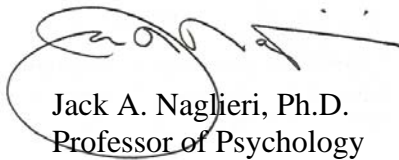
Skatekids Online™ takes the best of contemporary cognitive research and scientifically-based reading research and integrates them into a format today's students prefer: online video gaming. The underlying theory used by the developers of this program involves basic psychological processes like those I have described in many of the books and papers I have published on the PASS theory of intelligence. This theory has been extended to instruction in my book *Helping Children Learn* (Naglieri & Pickering, 2003) but Skatekids Online™ provides a much more direct way of teaching the basic academic skills and at the same time teaching children to use cognitive processes. Skatekids Online™ teaches children to be smart about how they solve problems; and the result is better performance.

Another feature of Skatekids Online™ that must be noted is the utility of this approach. First, it is inexpensive – a very important advantage especially for those populations of children that need the most help. Second, the program does not require a facilitator or teacher to oversee the child's progress. All of the skill building activities are embedded in an online virtual world much like today's

popular video games. The busy teacher may now allocate resources to teaching new content while her individual student can strengthen their individual academic skills. It is clear to me that SkateKids Online™ is a state of the art approach that teaches children to be smart about how they learn. Importantly, because it is based on years of research that has supported the tenets of the educational methods embedded in SkateKids Online™, I have complete confidence that this technology can greatly improve learning for children in K-12 education. For these reasons, I look forward to contributing my efforts to the continued development, research and adoption of this outstanding online approach to learning. Skatekids Online™ combines the best in academic instruction with the best in understanding how children learn to provide an educational environment that teaches children academic skills and at the same time *how* to learn. The result is a child who is smarter about learning.

I give Skatekids Online™ my highest endorsement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jack A. Naglieri', with a large circular flourish on the left side.

Jack A. Naglieri, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology
School Psychology Program Director