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**The Use and Misuse of Computers in Education:
Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial of a
Language Arts Program¹**

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Abstract This paper presents the evaluation of the program Computers for Education. The program aims to integrate computers, donated by the private sector, into the teaching of language in public schools. The authors conduct a two-year randomized evaluation of the program using a sample of 97 schools and 5,201 children. Overall, the program seems to have had little effect on students' test scores and other outcomes. These results are consistent across grade levels, subjects, and gender. The main reason for these results seems to be the failure to incorporate the computers into the educational process. Although the program increased the number of computers in the treatment schools and provided training to the teachers on how to use the computers in their classrooms, surveys of both teachers and students suggest that teachers did not incorporate the computers into their curriculum.

JEL: C93, I21, I28

Keywords: education, computer programs, randomization

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