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Reading and the boy crisis : the effect of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books for independent reading on fifth-grade boys' reading attitude, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and fifth-grade teachers' reading beliefs and practices

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READING AND THE BOY CRISIS: THE EFFECT OF TEACHER BOOK TALKS,
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OF BOOKS FOR INDEPENDENT READING ON FIFTH-GRADE BOYS'
READING ATTITUDE, READING SELF-EFFICACY, AND
AMOUNT OF READING AND FIFTH-GRADE
TEACHERS' READING BELIEFS
AND PRACTICES

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Dissertation Abstract

Reading and the Boy Crisis: The Effect of Teacher Book Talks, Interactive Read-Alouds,
and Students' Unrestricted Choice of Books for Independent Reading
on Fifth-Grade Boys' Reading Attitude, Reading Self-Efficacy,
and Amount of Reading and Fifth-Grade Teachers'
Reading Beliefs and Practices

Boys, on average, score one and a half years below girls on standardized reading achievement tests from fourth through twelfth grade. Researchers have studied factors in the affective domain of reading to learn more about what may cause this national phenomenon, referred to as the boy crisis. This dissertation contains the results of a mixed-methods study designed to investigate the changes in 14 fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and to explore two fifth-grade teachers' reading beliefs and practices.

A 6-week classroom intervention of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading with unrestricted choice of books, and partner talk was implemented in two fifth-grade classrooms. Three of the six sets of book talks and read-alouds were in genres or text formats of high interest to the reluctant boy readers: graphica, information and sports, and scary/horror/mystery.

The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey and Reader Self-Perception Scale were administered before and after the intervention. There was a statistically significant change in the boys' reading attitudes on all scales on the ERAS and a statistically significant change in reader self-perception on the Progress subscale and Total on the RSPS.

One-on-one interviews were conducted with the reluctant boy readers before and after the study. The boys had a more positive attitude toward reading, a more positive self-perception as readers, and read more often and for longer amounts of time as a result of the intervention. Access to books of high interest, unrestricted choice of books, time in school for independent reading, and a perceived higher level of reading ability were the reasons given most often for the changes.

Both teachers' reading beliefs and practices changed. The teachers planned to continue the book talks and interactive read-alouds from a variety of genres and text formats, especially those of high interest to boys, and to give students time in school for independent reading without restricting their choice of books. A significant difference was teachers' positive change in attitude toward utilizing graphica in their classrooms.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's

dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee,

has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of

Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented

in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

     Cheryl L. Wozniak   December 10, 2010
Candidate   Date

Dissertation Committee

     Patricia Busk   10 December 2010
Chairperson

     Yvonne Bui   December 10, 2010

     Stephen Cary   December 10, 2010

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Charla Moran Rybczynski, whose life was a model of true perseverance. Even though you are not here with me to say so, Mom, I know you are proud of me.

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Never will I forget the day I met with Dr. Cary in his office to discuss possible

paths I could take as a researcher. At the time, I felt overwhelmed with ideas about what

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listened patiently and commented here and there on my ideas. Finally, he drew a heart in

the center of a piece of paper and said to me, "Cheryl, you need to find the heart of what

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when I wanted to give up, and never complained that my dissertation was so much the center of attention in our conversations. I know that our discussions about boys and reading are not over, but I look forward to the months and years ahead when we can relax more and sometimes *just have fun*.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The demands for 21st-century United States citizens to be literate have never

been greater. The explosion of technology, including the widespread use of the Internet,

requires schools in the United States to prepare students to be critical consumers of

media. The skills necessary to do so are complex and call for students to exercise higher-

level thinking (National Council of Teachers of English, 2008), yet many students have

not mastered basic literacy skills. Reading ability is a key factor in overall academic

success, and people of all ages lacking literacy skills often find themselves powerless in

today's society (Brozo, 2002).

The National Report Card published in 2009 by the National Center for Education

Statistics (NCES) reported a slight increase in reading scores for 9-year-olds, 13-year-

olds, and 17-year-olds compared with 2004; however, reading scores were not reported to

have shown a statistically significant difference at any level since reading scores were

first measured in 1971. On average, the reading test scores of students in the United

States continue to lag behind reading test scores of students in other nations.

Boys, in particular, consistently fall short on all measures of reading performance.

Boys, on average, read less than girls (Sullivan, 2003) and earn lower scores on

standardized reading measures. As in previous years, the 2009 National Report Card

reported a gender gap in reading scores, and the gap widened with age. Nine-year-old

girls' scores were 7 points higher, on average, than 9-year-old boys, 13-year-old girls'

scores were 8 points higher, on average, than 13-year-old boys, and 17-year-old girls'

scores were 11 points higher, on average, than 17-year-old boys (NCES, 2009). Since the

early 2000s, researchers have been asking that special attention be given to this national

problem, which they refer to as the boy crisis (Brozo, 2002; Gurian & Stevens, 2005;

Smith & Wilhelm, 2002; Sullivan).

Researchers have investigated three aspects regarding the gender gap in reading--

curricula, student reading materials, and teaching methods (Pollack, 1998)--and claimed

all are unsuitable matches for how boys learn best, and, therefore, boys would prefer not

to spend their time in school. Smith and Wilhelm (2002) reported that the males in their

study valued school and believed it was a necessary vehicle for achieving future success.

What these young men rejected was the type of reading that was required of them in

school. "School-sanctioned literacy practices" (p. 25) were in stark contrast to their out-

of-school reading practices. Booth (2002) raised the question, "How should we

accommodate 'life reading' resources in school, or should 'school reading' remain

disconnected?" (p. 105).

Some researchers are calling for an overhaul of the national English curriculum,

asserting that the national canon of literature that has been in existence since the 1960s

and 1970s pays little regard for gender or equity issues and should no longer be the

dominating force in United States language arts classrooms (Booth, 2002; Carter, 2008).

Researchers are calling for an expansion of in-school reading experiences beyond the

traditional English canon to include other genres, including popular culture (Stevens,

2001) and nonfiction (Sullivan, 2001), not only because they are of high interest to

students but also because reading these texts will build students' critical-thinking skills and will prepare them for more real-life reading.

Newkirk (2002) investigated the central idea: "What counts as literacy?" (p. xxi). More specifically, Newkirk questioned the narrow definition that schools use to justify using some reading materials, particularly some types of fiction, while excluding others, such as popular culture. Smith and Wilhelm (2002) advised that redefining literacy could allow one to explore the power that different types of texts have on engaging an audience of readers, especially boys. These researchers suggested that expanding the definition of literacy will give credibility not only to the passions and reading interests of boys but also to instruction in multiple forms of literacy and will prepare all students to be more functionally literate in today's society.

One consistent research finding is that girls and boys have different reading preferences and that the reading materials most utilized in schools match girls' reading interests. In general, girls prefer to read fiction, whereas boys choose to read nonfiction (Martino, 2003; Ryan, 2005; Sullivan, 2004). Other boys' favorites include humor, science fiction, and action-oriented stories. Researchers of boys' reading habits contended that boys' out-of-school reading interests often go unrecognized by teachers as valuable literacy practices (Booth, 2002; Farris, Werderich, Nelson, & Fuhler, 2009; Knowles & Smith, 2005). "Low-status narratives" (Newkirk, 2002) such as joke books, sports tables, media games, and plot-driven fiction often are frowned upon by language arts teachers, yet these are among some of the most popular types of materials read by boys. Comics, in particular, are banned reading material in many schools, despite their

appeal to boys, especially reluctant male readers (Merisuo-Storm, 2006; Nippold et al., 2005; Norton, 2003; Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1999). Worthy et al. (1999) reported that few classroom libraries contain comics and cartoon books, popular magazines, sports and car books, drawing books, scary books, and books on animals, all of which are reading materials favored by boys.

Highly effective language arts teachers use instructional methods that promote students' independent reading, such as book talks and read-alouds (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004; Wan, 2000); however, the books typically promoted are award-winning books and other titles that teachers consider to be outstanding pieces of literature (Albright & Ariail, 2005; Fisher et al., 2004). Teachers in the elementary- and early middle-school grades read aloud chapter books, picture books, and short stories more often than informational books (Yopp & Yopp, 2006) and other books of high interest to boys (Jacobs, Morrison, & Swinyard, 2000). Newkirk (2002) claimed there is a hierarchy related to the literacy experiences operating in language arts classrooms today, where all books are not created equal. Serious fiction and award-winning literature continue to hold more prestige than most other forms of print, especially graphica. For decades, teachers have viewed comics, now referred to in the industry as graphica, as inferior to other types of reading material, regardless of their appeal to boys, including reluctant boy readers, which refers to boys who are less motivated to engage in reading activities (Thompson, 2008). Some teachers have used comics successfully in the classroom (Booth, 2002; Ranker, 2007), but many teachers refrain from integrating these and other forms of popular culture into their instructional practices (Alvermann &

Hagood, 2000; Alvermann et al., 2007; Newkirk).   Newkirk challenged teachers to reconsider their roles in supporting a hierarchy that either implicitly or explicitly places this type of reading material above all other forms.

Purpose of the Study

The main goals of this study were to investigate the changes in 14 fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and to explore two fifth-grade teachers' reading beliefs and practices. This study was conducted in two fifth-grade classrooms with the following aims: (a) to compare fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading interests, (b) to compare fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading, (c) to measure the change in fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading when teachers conduct book talks and interactive read-alouds, provide time in school for independent reading, and allow unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading, (d) to measure the change in fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading when teachers conduct book talks and interactive read-alouds, provide time in school for independent reading, and allow unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading, (e) to measure the difference in the changes in reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading of fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer graphica with the changes in fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer other types of texts, and (f) to explore two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about conducting teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, providing time in school for independent reading,

allowing unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum. A 6-week intervention of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading, and partner talk was conducted. The reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading of the reluctant boy readers was measured using surveys, one-on-one interviews, and classroom observations. The teachers were interviewed before, during and after the study to learn about their reading beliefs and practices.

Theoretical Rationale

A gap in the literacy achievement between boys and girls has existed since the 1970s when students' reading achievement was first measured (NCES, 2009). From the 1980s through the 2000s, researchers have considered how personal factors, such as boys' attitude toward reading and their self-perceptions as readers (Henk & Melnick, 1995; McKenna et al.,1995), may contribute to boys' lower reading achievement. Reading behaviors such as the types of books boys choose to read, the amount of time boys spend reading, and boys' out-of-school literacy behaviors also have been studied (Worthy, Turner, & Moorman, 1998). Finally, researchers have studied environmental factors connected with the gender gap in reading: the English language arts curriculum, classroom reading materials, and instructional methods for teaching reading (Pollack, 1998). In this study on fifth-grade boys and reading, the interaction among these three areas related to reading--personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors-- were viewed through the theoretical lens of social cognitive theory.

Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory evolved from a long history of social learning theory under the domain of behaviorism: a group of theories in psychology that seek to explain the reasons why people or animals perform an action. The basis for social learning theory is that people learn from external behaviors, such as reinforcement or punishment, as well as learning by vicariously observing their social surroundings (Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). In contrast, social cognitive theory (SCT) focuses on an individual's inner awareness of self related to one's environment (Bandura, 2001). According to Bandura (1997), people's thoughts, beliefs, goals, and values motivate their behaviors.

One key assumption of social cognitive theory is outlined in Bandura's 1986 framework of triadic reciprocality. According to Bandura and others who support this social cognitive view of the world, "People are neither driven by inner forces nor automatically shaped and controlled by external stimuli. Rather, human functioning is explained with a model of triadic reciprocality in which behavior, cognitive and other personal factors, and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants of each other" (p. 18). The interaction between one's personal beliefs, behaviors, and the environment motivates people's actions. In any given situation, each factor contributes to the whole; however, one or two factors typically take on a more dominate role and influence one's behavior more than another factor (Bandura, 1989). Bandura referred to the dynamic interaction of these three factors—personal beliefs, behavior, and environment—as reciprocal causation. Coexistence of these factors, however, does not imply that each is of equal strength (Pajares & Schunk, 2001). At any point, one of the

three factors is likely to play a stronger role in determining one's behavior. Bandura posited that human beings are the determining agents of their own behavior (Bandura, 1989). Contrasting behaviorist theorists, social cognitive theorists believe that one's mind is a determining force in constructing one's reality. In other words, people are just as motivated to act because of their beliefs as they are motivated to act because of their social surroundings.

Related research on an important construct within social cognitive theory is self-efficacy. Bandura (1986) defined self-efficacy as, "People's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (p. 391). A person's level of perceived self-efficacy influences his or her choice of actions, amount of effort, and level of persistence. People with high self-efficacy believe they can accomplish a task, regardless of its level of difficulty. People with low self-efficacy avoid tasks that they perceive as challenging or give up trying in the middle of task when it become too difficult.

Based on the assumption that "the beliefs that children create and develop and hold to be true about themselves are vital forces in their success or failure in all endeavors and, of particular relevance to educators, to their success of failure in school" (Pajares & Schunk, 2002, p. 2), researchers have been studying the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on academic achievement since 1980. In a meta-analysis of studies published between 1977 and 1988, self-efficacy beliefs correlated positively with academic achievement where a higher correlation for college and high-school students was found than for elementary-school students (Pajares & Schunk, 2001).

Self-efficacy theory suggests that students' self-concept beliefs are domain-related (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007). For example, a student may have high self-efficacy in mathematics and science and low self-efficacy in reading and writing. Furthermore, students may perceive that they are highly efficacious when solving addition and subtraction problems but not when solving word problems that require them to add and subtract to solve the problem. Similarly, students may have strong perceptions of themselves when reading comics but not when reading their science textbook.

Reader self-efficacy is based on Bandura's theory of perceived self-efficacy. In self-efficacy theory, one's perceived self-efficacy affects the choices one makes, the effort one puts forth, how long one persists at a task, and the way one perceives his or her performance (Bandura, 1994; Pajares & Schunk, 2002), all factors that contribute to academic achievement (Schunk & Pajares, 2002). Reading self-efficacy refers to one's perception of self as a reader and one's ability to accomplish reading tasks such as reading long or challenging books, reading for long chunks of time, reading in a variety of genres, and independent use of reading strategies. Teachers can use a variety of instructional practices known to enhance students' reading self-efficacy. For example, teachers can use different levels of texts so students with different reading ability levels can experience success with text. Teachers can gauge students' progress as individuals rather than comparing them with their peers. Finally, teachers can teach reading strategies explicitly so students are prepared to tackle difficult texts on their own (Wigfield et al., 2004).

In a study of 350 third-grade students, researchers compared the effect of two models of reading instruction on students' reading motivation and reading comprehension (Wigfield et al., 2004). The researchers focused on two major constructs within reading motivation, intrinsic motivation and reading self-efficacy, both related to reading frequency and comprehension. The first instructional model was Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction, CORI, designed to develop students' intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy. The second model, Strategy Instruction (SI), also supported reading self-efficacy by teaching students to use reading strategies to build their comprehension. Results showed that students' self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation increased in CORI classrooms but not in SI classrooms. Wigfield et al.'s study contributed to the growing body of research on the relationship between methods of instruction, children's motivation, and academic achievement.

Similar relationships were examined in the current study on personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors related to reading. The model in Figure 1 visually represents the reciprocal interaction of these three sets of factors. The two personal factors related to boys and reading that were examined were boys' reading attitudes and their reading self-efficacy. Students' reading attitudes and their self-perceptions as readers have been studied by researchers for decades , yet these personal factors have been studied in isolation. In this study, boys' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy were measured before and after changes were made to the language arts classroom environment.

Personal Factors

Reading Attitude
↕
Reading Self-Efficacy

Behavioral Factors

Boys' Reading Interests
Graphica
Amount of Reading
Boys' Out-of-School Literacy
Activities

Environmental Factors

Language Arts Curriculum
Teacher Book Talks &
Interactive Read-Alouds
Independent Reading
Amount of Student Choice
Language Arts Teacher
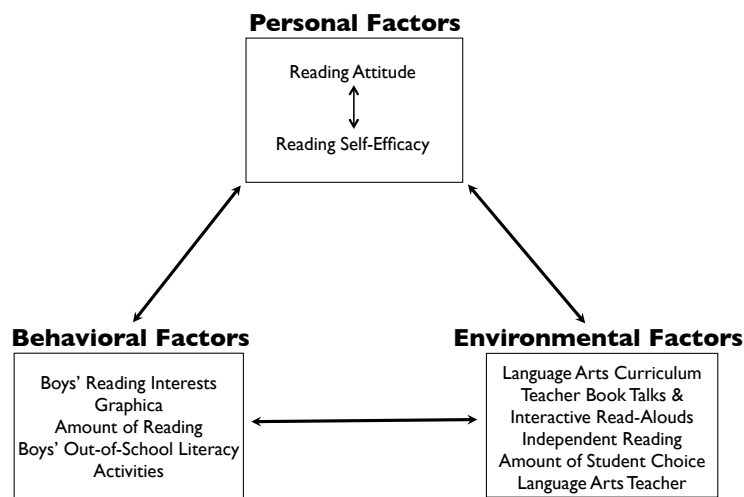
Figure 1. Reciprocal Interactions in Social Cognitive Theory Applied to Boys and Reading

The behavioral factors examined in this study were boys' reading interests, especially graphica, the amount of reading boys engaged in, and boys' out-of-school literacy activities. Newkirk's research (2002) suggests that boys' reading interests lead them to select certain types of reading materials more than others. One particular type of reading material boys favor is graphica (Cary, 2004). An important reading behavior is how much time someone spends reading (Allington, 2001), and boys' amount of reading is connected closely to what reading materials they are given to read (Worthy et al., 1999). Boys' out-of-school literacy behaviors show that boys do read for pleasure when they have the opportunity to read what interests them; however, what boys like to read often are not part of their in-school environment (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). In this study, boys' reading behaviors were examined when a change was made in the language arts classroom environment and boys were allowed to read what interested them.

The six environmental factors relevant to this study were the English language arts curriculum, teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading time provided in school, the amount of choice students were given to select reading materials that interested them, and the English language arts teacher. According to Gallagher, Cambourne, and Kiggins (2004), the reading selections included in literature textbooks and the books that teachers promote through book talks and read-alouds do not match what many boys like to read. Furthermore, when time is given in school to read, the reading materials boys prefer either are not permitted to be read or are not readily available in classroom and school libraries (Worthy et al., 1999). The English language arts teacher may believe that giving students a choice of reading materials is important, but many teachers do not implement practices that support their beliefs (Ryan, 2005). The conditions that exist within the language arts classroom and the lack of environmental support for boys' reading behaviors may influence boys' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy. This study investigated this triadic relationship.

<div align="center">Background and Need</div>

In 2003, the initial results of the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL), a comprehensive assessment that included survey items and literacy test questions, were published in *A First Look at the Literacy of America's Adults in the 21st Century* and reported the level of competency America's adults have in performing tasks related to print. This report, the first of its kind to be published since 1992, defined the role of literacy as, "the use of written materials to function adequately in one's environment and to develop as an individual" (U.S. Department of Education, 2005, p. 3) and expressed

the concern that adults who cannot perform basic literacy tasks are less likely to function well in the United States in the 21st century. Results of the NAAL survey showed, with just a few exceptions, that the percentage of adults, ages 16 and older, who scored at the below basic, basic, and intermediate levels increased one to four percent in the three areas tested; however, the percentage of adults who scored at the proficient level decreased or remained the same.

Meanwhile the push from federal politicians, the implementation of state content standards, and the use of high-stakes standardized testing to measure student achievement currently are what drive educational policy and curriculum. The *No Child Left Behind Act*, signed by President George W. Bush in 2002 and created to assure stronger accountability, charges all schools with the task of narrowing the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students and emphasizes the need to raise the achievement of minority subgroups, such as African American students, Hispanic American students, English Language Learners, and students receiving special education services, who traditionally perform lower than their European American, general-education counterparts (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Efforts like *No Child Left Behind* are intended to prevent the continued gap between the functioning literacy level of United States' adults and adults in other competing nations. In his first public address on education, United States President Barack Obama discussed education reform from preschool through higher education. He emphasized the need for citizens of all ages to further their education and called on all United States citizens to attend at least one year beyond high school or higher education or further job training to prepare them to

contribute to the 21ˢᵗ-century economy. To do so, all United States students must obtain

at least a high-school diploma; however, according to a report published by the Alliance

for Excellent Education (2008), more high-school students in the United States drop out

of school than students in any other nation belonging to the Organisation for Economic

Co-Operation and Development. At a time when the need for a literate population is at

an all-time high, fewer United States citizens are prepared to meet society's literacy

demands.

The Boy Crisis

Although the expectation is for all students to be literate, one half of the

population consistently outperforms the other (Sullivan, 2003). Research indicates that,

overall, girls consistently perform better than boys on most reading tasks. Data from the

U.S. Department of Education show that, overall, girls score higher on reading

achievement tests than boys, and the gap increasingly widens as students progress from

elementary to middle to high school (Digest of Educational Statistics, 2004). The gender

gap in literacy is an average of one and a half year's difference in favor of girls. Two-

thirds of all students receiving special education services are boys, and more boys than

girls repeat a grade in school (Gurian, 2003).

The concern about boys' academic performance is part of a larger concern over

boys' overall lack of school success, which has been labeled the boy crisis (Gurian &

Stevens, 2005; Sullivan, 2003). Researchers mostly agree that boys face unique struggles

in school that girls do not, yet there continues to be conflicting debate over the causes of

boys' struggles, with those at one end of the continuum stating that the problem stems

from purely biological differences between males and females and the opposite believing

the cause is due to the way society nurtures males and females to operate differently

within a prescribed set of social norms (Gurian, 2007; Kindlon & Thompson, 2000;

Pollack, 1998). Those supporting the nature side of the debate talk at length about boys'

rates of maturity, lack of impulse control, high energy levels, and overall tendency to be

more physical than girls (Kindlon & Thompon; Sullivan, 2002). Such traits are highly

valued on the playground but do not bode well inside many classrooms (Kindlon &

Thompon) where students often are required to sit quietly and read. The disproportionate

percentage of boys diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

compared with girls supports this claim (Gurian & Stevens). Boy advocates are

concerned that the school environment does not welcome males' natural behaviors,

thereby turning boys off to school at an early age (Pollack; Sullivan, 2003).

Those supporting the nurture debate claim that society's influence leads to certain

types of school failure for boys. School and, even more so, reading have been perceived

by many to be feminized activities. Some boys appear to have internalized such

perceptions and place peer pressure on other boys to not like school and school-related

reading (Sullivan, 2003). This ideology is further reinforced because most teachers,

librarians, and administrators are female. According to Sullivan, the lack of male role

models in education supports an underpinning in the United States that "the life of the

mind is women's work. It is noncompetitive, passive, and effeminate" (p. 57).

Gurian and Stevens (2005) have added a third factor to the "nature versus

nurture" debate. They referred to a "new gender science," a combination of both the

brain sciences and the social sciences, and asserted that children should be perceived "not as blank slates, nor as determined by genetics alone, but as creatures of three formative powers: nature, nurture, and culture" (p. 43). Most researchers agree that it is the culture of school that presents the biggest challenge for some boys. The cognitive development of males lags behind females; therefore, the elementary-school curriculum, with its emphasis on reading, writing, and verbal ability, tends to favor girls (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000).

The concern that boys will become turned off to school from an early age and lack the motivation to complete school successfully (Kindlon & Thompson, 2000) is not unwarranted; 80% of high-school dropouts are males Gurian & Stevens, 2005). Literacy skills gained in school are an important tool for overall life success; those with critical reading ability often enjoy the rewards of gainful employment and greater societal status, whereas those without strong literacy skills face not just academic failure but often a cycle of other types of failure (Brozo, 2002). Research shows that early and ongoing reading failure can be a precursor to unemployment, crime, and imprisonment. These societal issues give further cause for examining how the trend for boys' reading failures can be reversed.

To those still questioning whether there really is a boy crisis, researchers respond with a resounding yes (Gurian & Stevens, 2005). Sullivan (2002) proposed that "the remedy is reading" (p. 4) and claimed "a lack of reading may not cause all the problems for boys, but an active interest in reading is sure to be part of the solution" (p. 2). This study addressed the concern of researchers and many educators who consider some boys

to be higher risks for reading failure.

Personal Factors Related to Reading

Several researchers have investigated the role of motivation in an attempt to understand the gender literacy gap. Results of some studies suggest that reading achievement correlates with reading motivation (Cole, 2002; Gottfried, 1985; Thomas & Oldfather, 1997), and educators often consider what does and does not motivate students to read (Martin, 2003). Before Shapiro and White (1991) conducted their seminal research on reading attitude, few researchers had considered the role of the affective domains with respect to students' reading achievement, but today there is no paucity of research in the affective domains of reading. Theories of reading motivation encompass a variety of reading-related constructs, and reading attitude has received considerable attention (Kush & Watkins, 1996; McKenna et al., 1995; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004; Wigfield, 1997).

Since the 1980s, researchers have investigated the relationship between reading attitude and the factors of reading ability, age, and gender (Anderson, Tollefson, & Gilbert, 1985; Kush & Watkins, 1996; Love & Hamston, 2001; Martino, 2001; Power, 2001; Quinn & Jadav, 1987; Russ, 1989; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004; Worthy, 1996b). Some researchers purport that reading ability influences reading attitude. Good readers, they claimed, possess more positive attitudes toward reading, whereas poor readers possess negative attitudes toward reading. Researchers supporting this approach suggested that teachers focus their attention on improving reading ability to improve students' reading attitude. Other researchers professed the opposite relationship is true:

reading attitude influences reading achievement. These researchers believed that the more positive one's attitude is toward reading, the more proficient one is likely to be as a reader and suggested teachers consider ways to improve students' reading attitudes to increase students' reading achievement (McKenna & Kear, 1990; Quinn & Jadav; Sainsbury & Schagen). The research remains inconclusive about the reciprocal nature of reading attitude and reading achievement so additional research is still needed (Ivey, 1999a; Quinn & Jadav; Russ).

Unlike the mixed findings found in the correlation between reading attitude and reading ability, researchers in the 1990s and 2000s who investigated the relationship between reading attitude and age have found consistently that students' positive attitude toward reading declined from elementary to middle to high school (Kush & Watkins, 1996; McKenna et al., 1995; Shapiro & White, 1991). A few researchers found mixed attitudes toward reading (Ivey, 1999b; Oldfather, 1995), and one reported middle-school and high-school students having positive attitudes toward reading when reading outside of school (Bintz, 1993).

Of all factors related to reading attitude, research findings in the area of gender have been the most definitive (Love & Hamston, 2003; Martino, 2001; Power, 2001; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004). Studies conducted on reading attitude beginning in the 1980s (Anderson et al., 1985; Kush & Watkins, 1996; McKenna et al., 1995; Shapiro & White, 1991, Worthy, 1996b) and through the 2000s yielded the same result: overall, boys' attitudes toward reading are more negative than girls' attitudes toward reading. Most of these studies have been descriptive, using reading attitude surveys to measure

students' reading attitudes and comparing boys' reading attitudes with girls' reading attitudes. One such survey, the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990), was used to measure reading attitude in the current study.

A small number of studies conducted between the late 1990s and the late 2000s have included qualitative data from interviews with boys and girls. Findings from these interviews suggest that students' attitudes toward reading are not as straightforward as the descriptive survey data have shown. By having conversations with boys, researchers (Gallagher et al., 2004; Martino, 2001; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002; Worthy et al., 1999) have found that many boys who do not like reading in school do enjoy reading out of school.

Drawing upon years of reading motivation research, Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) developed a working definition of attitude toward reading, which embodied several motivation factors. Positive reading attitude was defined as "positive self-concept as a reader, a desire and tendency to read and a reported enjoyment of or interest in reading," and negative attitude toward reading was defined as "negative self-concept as a reader, a desire and tendency to avoid reading and a reported dislike of the activity" (p. 374). Although Sainsbury and Schagen embedded self-concept as a reader within their definition of reading attitude, other researchers view self-perception as a reader as its own reading construct. Henk and Melnick (1995) created an instrument to measure how students perceive themselves as readers. The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) is a 33-item survey that measures four subconstructs within reading self-efficacy: progress, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological state. Each of these are

discussed further in the methodology section in chapter III. According to Henk and Melnick, the RSPS "measures a dimension of affect that almost certainly influences attitudes toward reading. At the same time, the construct tapped by the Reader Self-Perception Scale is different enough to warrant special consideration" (p. 471). To ascertain a more comprehensive picture of the complexities surrounding boys' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy, survey data from the RSPS and the interview data from a small target group of reluctant boy readers were collected.

Although the current study focused on reading attitude and reader self-perception and did not measure reading achievement, underlying this work is the belief that additional research on the reading constructs within the affective domain of reading motivation will lead to a clearer understanding of the relationship between reading motivation and reading achievement.

Behavioral Factors Related to Reading

To learn more about why boys' reading scores might be lower compared with girls, researchers have studied several behavioral factors related to reading: boys' reading interests, especially graphica, amount of reading, and boys' out-of-school literacy behaviors. Research and common sense suggest that students are more likely to read books that they find interesting, yet students' reading interests are not promoted often in schools. Some researchers asserted that boys' reading interests are ignored especially (Newkirk, 2002; Taylor, 2004; Worthy et al., 1999). Boys like to read scary books, humor, comics, graphic novels, adventure, sports, and informational texts, but these are not the texts teachers typically assign to read during language arts instruction or the texts

that are on hand in teachers' classroom libraries for students to read during independent reading (Benton, 1999b; Love & Hamston, 2003; Martino, 2001; Merisuo-Storm, 2006; Nippold et al., 2005; Ryan, 2005; Ujiie & Krashen, 1996; Wicks, 1995). Furthermore, teachers who are interested in accommodating students reading interests may face barriers that prevent them from having such books on hand (Bintz, 1993; Flowerday & Schraw, 2000; Flowerday, Schraw, & Stevens, 2004; Martin, 2003).

Of all reading materials preferred by boys, none have been met with more resistance from teachers than comics. Since the explosion of comic book sales in the 1940s (Weiner, 2003), comic books have been one of the most popular reading materials for young adolescent males (Ujiie & Krashen, 1996). Nowhere is this popularity more evident than in comic book specialty stores throughout the United States, where young males flock to buy the newest comic books and hang out for hours discussing their favorite comic book characters with other comic book fans (Cary, 2004). Yet for decades, educators have viewed comics as inferior to most other types of literature (Cary; Nippold et al., 2005; Russikoff, 1994; Worthy, 1996a, 1996b; Worthy et al., 1999). Although the question whether comic books hold any educational value for children has been asked many times since comic books were first published, the anticomic book sentiment reached its peak when Dr. Fredric Wertham published *Seduction of the Innocent* in 1954. According to Wertham, comic books were the cause of the rise of juvenile delinquency (Wright, 2001). Before the comic book scare, between 80 and 100 million comic books sold each week, but in the years that followed, comic book distribution suffered a severe decline (Hajdu, 2008).

Although some teachers are finding success using comics and their full-length counterpart, graphic novels, in their instruction (Carter, 2008), many teachers remain resistant to using these forms of print in their classrooms (Cary, 2004). Carter offered possible reasons for such resistance: (a) a lack of understanding as to the benefits of using this visual medium as a means for visualizing text, (b) a fallout from the comic-book scare spearheaded by Wertham in the 1950s, (c) current state and district policies that prohibit or discourage the use of reading materials other than the state-adopted language arts textbook, and (d) few testimonials being offered by other teachers who have used comics and graphic novels successfully in their classrooms. Whatever the reason, reading researchers agreed that teachers need to reconsider the educational value of comics, especially considering their unrelenting popularity with boys (Worthy, 1996a, 1996b; Worthy et al., 1999).

Research on amount of reading suggests that, on average, girls read more than boys, yet many boys read extensively when they are reading for their own purposes (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). Unlike girls who read fiction to connect with the experiences of the main character and to analyze the character's thoughts and motivations (Sax, 2005), boys read to learn more about their hobbies and areas of personal interest, to solve problems, to get information about real-life events, and to acquire knowledge and share it with other boys. They view in-school reading as little more than a means to getting a grade and eventually graduating (Smith & Wilhelm), thus suggesting that boys read less overall.

For many boys, literacy is a social activity (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). Outside of

school, boys read the newspaper, sports pages, game manuals, and other types of nonfiction that are relevant to their personal lives.   They read information that can be incorporated easily into their daily interactions with friends. Boys with similar interests trade books and recommend reading material to one another. This social aspect of reading, however, often is not favored in school. When students read books of their choice during in-class independent reading, this time remains mostly silent. Researchers (Hicks, 2001; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Ryan, 2005; Worthy, 1998) suggest teachers not only provide classroom reading materials that align with both boys' and girls' reading interests but also consider that boys' purposes for reading differ from girls and find ways to accommodate boys' reading needs. Such modifications to traditional reading instructional methods may result in boys in-school reading behaviors aligning more with their out-of-school literacy behaviors. If this occurs, boys may engage more during literacy instruction and, ultimately, may experience greater reading success in school.

Environmental Factors Related to Reading

Several environmental factors related to reading may influence boys' reading behaviors. Of relevance to this study are the following five factors connected to the language arts classroom: the language arts curriculum, two instructional methods (teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds), independent reading time in school, amount of student choice of reading materials, and the language arts classroom teacher.

There is a widely accepted English curriculum in the United States, but researchers interested in boys' literacy success question to what degree this curriculum appeals to boys (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). At the elementary- and middle-school levels,

students read the state-adopted literature anthology and other teacher-selected reading materials, which primarily are narrative fiction (Benton, 1995a, 1995b; Bushman, 1997; Cope, 1997). In other middle schools and in most high schools, students typically read from a core set of novels, including the classics and other award-winning fiction (Booth, 2002; Brozo, 2002).

Newkirk (2002) argued against schools having such a bias where certain types of fiction, those that promote introspective thinking and deep expression of emotion and those that are heavily theme-based, are given an elevated status over other forms of print literacy. In the 2000s, books are valued more highly than magazines and other visual literacy sources (Gurian & Stevens, 2005), and serious fiction is considered more valuable than humorous text (Sullivan, 2003). Fiction is better than nonfiction (Sullivan, 2001), and anything related to pop culture is strictly forbidden (Alvermann & Hagood, 2000; Stevens, 2001). Some researchers suggested that alternate literacies be included as part of language arts instruction (Stevens, 2001). Others advocated for including more genres that appeal to boys (Newkirk; Worthy et al., 1999).

The mismatch between what students are required to read as part of the national English curriculum and the broad range reading interests students bring to the classroom has been cited by several researchers as one possible reason for students' lack of interest in reading (Gallagher et al., 2004; Ivey & Broaddus, 2000; Ryan, 2005; Stevens, 2001; Sullivan, 2001; Worthy, 1996b). Newkirk (2002), and other researchers (Carter, 2008; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002) are calling for an expansion of the definition of literacy: one that accepts a wide range of print and nonprint materials, that better meets the needs and

demands of people living in the 21st century, and that considers students' out-of-school reading interests (Gallagher et al.).

Two instructional methods that have been promoted in the reading research are teacher book talks and read-alouds (Keane & Cavanaugh, 2009; Lane & Wright, 2007; Lesesne, 2006; Trelease, 2006; Wan, 2000). Some teachers talk about books to entice their students to read. Some read aloud to model oral fluency and to build students' vocabulary and comprehension (Fisher et al., 2004). Although recommendations have been made by researchers and some classroom teachers, teachers continue to rely on more traditional approaches to teaching reading, such as answering comprehension questions and calling on students to read aloud in class (Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006; Lesesne, 2003; Routman, 2003). Even when teachers do read aloud and promote books, they typically read aloud chapter books or novels that are works of fiction (Ariail & Albright, 2006).

Another instructional approach that has been under debate since *No Child Left Behind* is independent reading in school. The research suggests that amount of time spent reading correlates with growth in reading (Allington, 2001; Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988), yet some language arts teachers are reluctant to forego instructional time to allow their students time to read in school. Krashen (2004) summarized the results of 54 studies that compared the reading comprehension level of students who were taught using traditional instructional methods for teaching reading and those who participated in free voluntary reading (FVR) programs in school. In 51 of the 54 studies, students who participated in some form of free reading performed as well as or better than students

who were taught reading through traditional teaching approaches. Krashen reported that

scores of no difference suggest that including free reading in a language arts program

leads to the same amount of growth as the other forms of instruction. He stated that the

additional benefits of pleasure and an increase in general knowledge are two reasons why

free reading program should be promoted over traditional approaches.

Three decades of research on sustained silent reading (SSR) was summarized in a

meta-analysis on the effects of SSR on students' attitudes toward reading. Results of the

meta-analysis suggested that SSR has a moderately positive effect on students' attitudes

toward reading (Yoon, 2002). The researcher recommended teachers ought to set aside a

designated amount of time in school where students are given an opportunity to read

books of their choice for pleasure to improve their reading attitudes. Although Yoon and

other researchers recommend more time for students to read in school, many language

arts teachers do not implement a period of free voluntary reading as part of their English

curriculum (Allington, 2001; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001).

In classrooms where students are given time to read, teachers often place

restrictions on the amount of choice students have over their reading selections.

Researchers have found that what many students prefer to read outside of school is not

what they are given to read during language arts instruction (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001;

Merisuo-Storm, 2006; Nippold et al., 2005; Ryan, 2005; Wilson & Casey, 2007).

Although teachers believe that choice is important for students to perceive they are

competent (Flowerday & Schraw, 2000), some teachers struggle with how to do so

(Heathington & Alexander, 1984). In their study of 49 middle- and high-school boys,

Smith and Wilhelm (2002) reported that most boys believed they were denied the opportunity for any personal choice within their school day. As a result, these researchers strongly advocated for more student choice with respect to curricular content; one area in particular for English teachers is text selection. Other researchers recommended that teachers provide their students with more opportunities within the school day to read materials of high personal interest (Alvermann, 2000; Broaddus & Ivey, 2002; Ivey, 1999b; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004; Strickland & Walker, 2004; Worthy, 1998).

Of all the factors related to the language arts classroom environment, the language arts teacher has the most relevance. To various degrees, it is the language arts teacher who decides what parts or how much of the English curriculum they will follow, which instructional methods they will employ, whether they will provide students time for independent reading in school, and how much choice they will allow their students to have when selecting books to read.

Researchers from the 1980s into the 2000s (Clary, 1991; Heathington & Alexander, 1984; Ivey & Broaddus, 2000; Oldfather, 1993; Worthy et al., 1999) have explored teachers' knowledge of students' reading interests and the potential benefits from allowing students to read self-selected reading materials in their language arts classrooms. Again, teachers stated that student choice of reading materials is important (Broaddus & Ivey, 2002; Ivey, 1999a; Oldfather), but interviews with teachers revealed two major barriers to putting this belief into practice: a lack of access to reading materials most preferred by students and pressure to cover language arts curriculum tested on district and state-mandated reading achievement tests (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). One

type of reading material in particular, graphica, consistently was absent from language arts classrooms and school libraries (Worthy et al., 1999). More research as to why teachers fail to put their beliefs about best practices to teach reading into practice is needed. In this study, two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about the use of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, giving students time to read independently in school and unrestricted choice of texts, and the integration of students' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum were explored.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the quantitative and qualitative data collection for this study:

1. What are fifth-grade boys' reading interests, and how do they compare with fifth-grade girls' reading interests?

2. What are fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading, and how do they compare with fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?

3. To what extent do teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school change fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?

4. To what extent do teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school change

fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?

5. To what extent is there a difference in the change in reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading for fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer graphica and fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer other texts?

6. What are two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, time provided in school for independent reading, an unrestricted amount of student choice of books, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum?

Significance of the Study

This study is important for five reasons. It not only contributes important findings to research on the teaching of reading but also suggests important changes be made to current language arts instructional practices.

First, current information on whether there is a difference in the reading interests, reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading for fifth-grade boys and fifth-grade girls was gathered. Past results of quantitative studies have indicated that, compared with girls, boys read different texts, hold more negative attitudes toward reading, have lower self-perceptions as readers, and read less; however, the results of qualitative studies have suggested that boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading are not as different when the conversation about reading includes boys' out-of-school reading interests. This mixed-methods study included both quantitative and qualitative data to learn more about boys' reading interests,

reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading compared with girls.

Second, the results of the study provided additional information on several research-based reading practices: teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, time provided in school for independent reading, and an unrestricted amount of student choice of reading materials. Each of the 6 weeks, students heard their teacher give book talks and participated in interactive read-alouds. Following each book talk or read-aloud, students were given time to read self-selected reading materials during independent reading. The data gathered in this study add to the body of research on effective instructional practices for teaching reading and may influence teachers who are reluctant to use curriculum outside of the scripted textbook to try one or more of these instructional approaches in their language arts classrooms.

Third, the study was a response to the call from researchers over the decades to integrate boys' reading interests into the language arts classroom. Results from past reading interest surveys and interviews with boys suggested that, for many boys, graphica, scary stories, humor, and informational books are their favorite reading materials; however, few of these types of reading materials were talked about or read aloud to students. The results of the Reading Interest Inventory given in this study indicated that graphica, informational and sports books, and scary/horror/mystery were of highest interest to boys and those books were selected for 3 of the 6 weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. This study was an important contribution for researchers and teachers interested in how language arts teachers might integrate boys' reading interests into their curriculum.

A fourth reason why this study is relevant is because the results support the work of researchers who promote graphica as a valid form of literature that deserves a rightful place in the language arts curriculum. For decades, educators have not welcomed forms of graphica into their classrooms, even though research suggests that many boys prefer this type of reading material. The results of the boys' reading interest inventories revealed that all the reluctant boys in this study enjoyed reading graphica; therefore, the book talks and interactive read-alouds during one week of the intervention were from a graphic novel or comic book. This study contributes to a growing body of research that suggests that graphica is a valuable text source and should be promoted more in classrooms. Results of this study may encourage teachers to put aside their biases about graphica and to find ways to integrate this text format into their language arts instruction.

A fifth reason this study is important is because it provided two teachers the opportunity to voice their beliefs and practices about teaching reading. At a time when the use of state-adopted reading materials and test preparation is dominating discussions on how to teach reading, this study explored teachers' beliefs and practices on using teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds as an instructional approach to teaching reading, providing students with time in school for independent reading of self-selected reading materials, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into their language arts instruction. Reporting the findings from these two fifth-grade teachers is an important step toward future research where teachers are invited to reclaim their voices in the debate over which research-based instructional practices best serve their students' literacy needs, especially those of their reluctant boy readers.

Definition of Terms

There are many definitions for the terms used in this study. The definitions

provided below are the ones used for this research.

Academic reading is the construct measured on the Elementary Reading Attitude

Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990) from ten questions about students' attitude

toward reading-related activities typically completed in school.

Alternate texts refer to texts that language arts teachers typically do no allow or do

not encourage students to read in school. Alternate texts were the types of texts used for

the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds in week 2 (graphica), week 4

(information and sports), and week 6 (scary/horror/mystery) of the intervention.

Amount of reading refers to the time students spend reading. In this study, amount

of reading was measured using a weekly reading log. Students were asked to write in the

number of minutes and number of pages they read each day.

Comic books are paperbook books that are published monthly with story lines that

typically continue from one month to the next (Thompson, 2008).

English language arts curriculum is the set of reading materials used during

reading language arts instructional time. These typically include a state-adopted reading

anthology and reading workbook. Teachers often supplement their instruction using

other curricular resources such as whole class novels, read-alouds, and other teacher-

selected texts (California Department of Education, 2009).

Fifth-graders are 10- or 11-year-olds students, either in the last year of elementary

school or the first year of middle school. The students in this study were enrolled in an elementary school.

Graphica is a medium of literature that integrates words and pictures to tell a story or provide information. It is an umbrella terms that encompasses several formats including single panel comics, comic strips, comic books, cartoons, and graphic novels (Thompson, 2008).

Graphic novels are similar to comic books but are longer and contain full-length story lines. Graphic novels are not limited to superhero stories but are written in a wide range of genres, such as biography, history, information, realistic fiction, historical fiction, and fantasy (Thompson, 2008).

Independent reading is an uninterrupted amount of time set aside within the school day for students to read books of their choice. Independent reading also is referred to in the literature as sustained silent reading and free voluntary reading. In this study, independent reading was the block of time when students were given an unrestricted choice of texts to read for 15 to 20 minutes following the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds provided 3 days per week (Krashen, 2004).

Interactive read-alouds are texts that are read aloud by the teacher and that include opportunities for students to respond to what was read. Before reading, the teacher plans a set number of times to stop and allow students to talk with a partner about the skill or strategy that is being practiced with the read-aloud. Researchers have suggested that effective book talks include several characteristics (Fisher et al., 2004). To insure consistency in the length and quality of the read-alouds, I wrote each of the

interactive read-alouds using the following guidelines: texts are selected with students'

interests and developmental levels in mind, texts are previewed and practiced by the

teacher before reading aloud, a clear purpose is set for conducting the read-aloud,

teachers model fluent oral reading, and teachers read with expression and animation. The

teachers received a video of an interactive read-aloud that served as a model for the read-

alouds in this study.

Manga is a full-length story that uses stylized Japanese illustrations. The main

characters have distinctively large eyes. Shojo manga is written for girls and features

girls as main characters. Shonen manga is written for boys and features boys as main

characters. Some manga are published in the Japanese format where the text is read from

right to left (Thompson, 2008).

Out-of-school literacy activities refers to the reading behaviors boys choose to

engage in outside of school. These differ from the assigned literacy activities they are

required to participate in when they are in school.

Picture books are texts that combine visuals with verbal narratives or information

to deliver a message. The standard length of a picture book is 32 pages.

Reader self-perception is a person's judgment of his or her reading performance.

In this study, reader self-perception is used synonymously with *reading self-efficacy*.

Reading attitude is the degree to which a person has a positive or negative

disposition toward reading. In this study, reading attitude was measured using the

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990). The ERAS has

20 items and uses a 4-point Likert-type scale with four Garfield expressions that

represent four dispositions toward reading: *very happy* (4), *happy* (4), *upset* (3), *very upset* (2), and *strongly disagree* (1). The ERAS consists of two subscales: academic reading and recreational reading. *Recreational reading* refers to the types of reading students participate in outside of school. *Academic reading* refers to the types of reading tasks completed in school. Students received a score for their overall reading attitude and a score for each of the two subscales.

Reading self-efficacy *is one's belief in his or her ability to accomplish reading tasks such as reading long or challenging books, reading for long chunks of time, reading in a variety of genres, and ability to use reading strategies independently. In this study, reading self-efficacy was measured using the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS; Henk & Melnick, 1995). The RSPS has 33 items and uses a 5-point Likert-scale: *strongly agree* (5), *agree* (4), *undecided* (3), *disagree* (2), and *strongly disagree* (1). The RSPS has four subscales: performance, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological state. *Performance* (9 items) measures students' perceptions of their present reading performance compared with their past performance. *Observational comparison* (6 items) measures students' present perceptions of their reading performance compared with other students' reading performance. *Social feedback* (9 items) measures students' perceptions of the feedback they receive from their teachers, peers, and family. *Physiological state* (8 items) measures students' perceptions during the process of reading. Students received an overall score for reader self-perception and a score for each subscale. In this study, reading self-efficacy is used synonymously with *reader self-perception*.

Recreational reading is the construct measured on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990) from ten questions about students' attitude toward reading-related activities done for pleasure.

Reluctant readers are students who are less motivated to read, have negative attitudes toward reading, perceive themselves as being poor readers, or choose to read less often (Reynolds, 2004). In this study, reluctant boy readers refers to the subset of boys who earned the lowest scores on the ERAS and RSPS and who were identified by teachers as displaying reading behaviors that suggested the boys did not like to read.

State-adopted reading materials are the reading materials produced by textbook publishing companies, approved by the state, and purchased for use in a school district. The state-adopted reading materials used in the school district in this study are produced by Houghton Mifflin.

Students' reading interests are the types of texts students prefer to read. In this study, students' reading interests were identified using the Reading Interest Inventory, which was was adapted from several published resources (Atwell, 1998; Fountas & Pinnell, 2001; Hildebrandt, 2001).

Teacher book talks are brief oral introductions to a book that are given by the teacher to entice students to read the text. The teacher book talks were written down in advance to insure that all book talks were delivered in a similar manner. Because people usually speak between 150 and 175 words per minute (Mitchell, 2006) and the book talks were intended to be approximately 5 to 6 minutes in length, in this study, the teachers book talks ranged in length from 750 to 1,050 words. The teachers received a video of a

teacher book talk that served as the model for the teacher book talks in this study.

Traditional texts refer to texts that language arts teachers typically allow or encourage students to read in school. Traditional texts were the types of texts used for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds in week 1 (realistic fiction), week 3 (historical fiction), and week 5 (fantasy) of the intervention.

Unrestricted choice of self-selected texts refers to students having the freedom to read any type of text they choose to read. In this study, students were not limited about which books they were allowed to read during independent reading time in school.

<div align="center">Organization of the Dissertation</div>

Chapter I outlined the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, theoretical rationale, background and need, and significance of the study. Chapter II includes a review of literature and provides a foundation for the components of the study. Chapter III contains the methodological steps followed in this study. The quantitative and qualitative results are presented in chapter IV. Finally, a summary of the study and results, limitations, discussion of findings, implications for educational practice, recommendations for future research, closing remarks, and afterword are presented in chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter contains a review of the most salient literature in the field of reading related to the three components of social cognitive theory: personal factors related to reading, behavioral factors related to reading, and environmental factors related to reading. Section one includes research on two personal factors related to reading: reading attitude and reading self-efficacy, also referred to in the literature as reader self-perception. Section two includes research on three behavioral factors related to reading: boys' reading interests, with an additional subsection on graphica, amount of reading, and boys' out-of-school literacy activities. Section three includes research on five environmental factors related to reading: the English language arts curriculum, teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, independent reading in school, amount of student choice of reading materials, and the English language arts teacher.

Personal Factors Related to Reading

Nearly two decades ago when Shapiro and White (1991) conducted their seminal research on reading attitude, few researchers had considered the role of the affective domains regarding students' reading achievement. Today, there is no paucity of research in the affective domains of reading. Theories of reading motivation encompass a variety of reading-related constructs, including reading attitude (Kush & Watkins, 1996; McKenna et al., 1995; Wigfield,1997) and reading self-efficacy (Bandura, 2001; Henk & Melnick, 1995). The following sections highlight research on two personal factors being measured in this study: reading attitude and reading self-efficacy.

Reading Attitude

Among other affective reading constructs, reading attitude has been correlated with reading ability (Martinez, Aricak, & Jewell, 2008). For over three decades, researchers have studied the reading attitudes of students of all ages--first through twelfth graders (Quinn & Jadav, 1987; Shapiro & White, 1991) and adults (Smith, 2001)--and of various ability levels--regular education students (Kazelskis, Thames, & Reeves, 2004; McKenna & Kear, 1995), gifted and talented students (Anderson, Tollefson, & Gilbert, 1985; Russ,1989); however, the relationship between reading attitude and reading achievement remains unclear. The span of research from the 1980s through the 2000s indicate researchers' continuing attempts to understand the role that reading attitude plays in students' overall reading performance.

In the 1980s and most of the 1990s, reading attitude was measured using survey instruments. In 1995, McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth conducted a national study to address the three problems they believed had contributed to previously inconsistent findings in the relationship between reading attitude and reading achievement: (a) "shadowy variables" that may or may not measure reading attitude, (b) inadequate reading attitude instruments, and (c) small sample sizes, as well as to explore unchartered areas related to reading attitude. The researchers sought to answer three questions: (a) What are the overall trends in recreational and academic reading attitude across elementary grades, (b) What is the developmental relationship between recreational and academic reading attitude and between reading ability, gender, and ethnicity, and (c) What effects on reading attitude can be ascribed to the use of basal reading materials?

The researchers administered the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, or ERAS, to over 18,000 first-grade through sixth-grade students in 229 schools across the United States. The ERAS is a 20-item Likert-type scale with four nodes represented by four different facial expressions of the cartoon character, Garfield, that measure strength of agreement or disagreement for the responses. The 20 items are subdivided into two categories with 10 questions in each category: academic reading attitude and recreational reading attitude. From the studies reviewed, the ERAS has been among the most widely used instruments for surveying students about their attitudes toward reading. Given the high measures of reliability and validity for this instrument, as well as its student-friendly format, the ERAS is the instrument that was used to measure students' reading attitudes in the current study. A more in-depth discussion of the reliability and validity measures for this instrument is found in chapter III.

Several findings from McKenna et al.'s (1995) study supported the need for the current study. First, a steady decline was found in academic and recreational reading attitudes of all students as they progressed from early-elementary to upper-elementary grades, regardless of whether they received instruction with or without a basal reader. The sample of students in this study included fifth-grade boys. According to the research, these boys are more at risk for having negative attitudes toward reading and lower reading achievement scores than they had in previous years. Second, girls have more positive attitudes than boys toward academic and recreational reading, and the gap in recreational reading attitude widens with age. Because it has been suggested that reading attitude correlates with reading achievement, it was necessary to find ways to mitigate

boys' negative attitudes toward reading. Third, poor readers' attitudes toward recreational reading decline more rapidly than good readers' attitudes toward recreational reading, and the gap widens with age; however, students of every grade level reported having more negative attitudes toward academic reading than the previous grade regardless of their ability level. The small subgroup of reluctant boy readers in this study was selected based on the results of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey that suggested they had poor attitudes toward reading. The boys completed the survey again after a 6-week classroom intervention. One limitation of McKenna et al.'s study was the reliance on one survey to identify students' reading attitudes. In the current study, interviews were conducted to learn why the boys gave the responses they did on the pre- and poststudy ERAS. The combination of survey and interview data provided more information on boys' reading attitudes than a single survey.

One inconsistent research finding was that students' attitudes toward reading declined as they progressed from elementary- to the middle-school grades; therefore, more research was needed to understand the individual student characteristics that may be contributing to the relationship between reading attitude and reading achievement. Kush and Watkins (1996) conducted a 3-year longitudinal study on reading attitudes of elementary students. One-hundred-ninety first- through fourth-grade students in a suburban school district in the Southwestern area of the United States completed the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990) in the fall of 1990-1991 school year and again in the Spring of the 1992-1993 school year. The classroom teachers read aloud the directions and practice items, and then the students

completed the 20-item survey on their own. Ninety-four percent of the students were European American, 4% Hispanic American, 1% African American, and 1% Asian American; no analysis was conducted on subgroups according to ethnicity. Researchers measured gender differences that would support or refute past research on boys' negative attitudes toward reading. One limitation of their study was the lack of diversity in the student sample. Although small, the sample in the current study was diverse.

Two major results emerged from the 3-year investigation. First, reading attitude scores on both subscales of the ERAS--the recreational subscale and the academic subscale--declined significantly for all students over the 3 years. Second, for gender, two findings emerged. Girls' reading attitude scores were more stable over time, and girls' recreational reading attitude scores were, on average, statistically significantly more positive than boys' scores. Considering these results, Kush and Watkins (1996) suggested that attention be given to boys who exhibit negative attitudes toward reading at an early age. Furthermore, they suggested that teachers consider two approaches to improving reading attitudes for all students: (a) classroom activities and instructional methods that might improve students' attitudes toward reading, such as avoiding the overuse of basal readers and worksheets, more shared book and social reading experiences, increased access to books, and more book choice and (b) more parental involvement. The study was a direct result of Kush and Watkins' (1996) call for teachers to consider new instructional approaches. In the current study, two instructional methods were used: teacher book talks and interactive read-aloud. Additionally, students were given access to books of high interest and were given unrestricted choice of books for independent

reading in school. Boys' attitudes toward reading were measured before and after to find out to what degree these pedagogical changes influenced boys' reading attitudes.

After years of examining reading attitudes from survey data and correlating the results with reading achievement measures, Worthy (1996b) took a different approach to trying to learn why some students have negative attitudes toward reading. From the results of a reading attitude survey administered to 130 sixth graders, Worthy identified eight boys and three girls with low reading attitude scores but average or above reading achievement to control for reading ability. First, the researcher observed students during their 90-minute English language arts classes to find out what types of instructional materials and activities were used by their teachers and to observe the students' levels of engagement with the materials and activities. Next, the researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with each of the 11 students. During the interviews, the researchers verified the students' reading abilities by having them read from a young adult novel. Then the researcher asked students to discuss their reading experiences, their reading habits at home and in school, their attitudes toward reading, and their reading preferences. The researcher also observed each student during one library period and during one free-reading period that teachers were asked to provide. Following the observations, the researcher interviewed each student a second time. Along with student interviews, the researcher also interviewed nine middle-school librarians.

Several important findings came from the interviews conducted in the Worthy (1996b) study, beginning with the interview results from students. Although the 11 students had experienced varied literacy backgrounds, there were many commonalities

among the students. Many had learned to read at an early age, owned books, were read to

as young children, saw their parents and relatives read regularly, and frequented the

library, all of which are conditions that are considered to lead to positive reading habits in

children. An analysis of the interview data led to the emergence of three central themes:

choice of reading topics and materials, opportunity to read in school, and access to

reading materials of interest. When asked about reading in school, all students mentioned

some positive reading experiences, including those who had reported low ratings on level

of enjoyment of in-school reading. Upon further examination, Worthy discovered that

students' positive reading experiences were related to some type of choice and interest in

the topics they were allowed to read. Although researchers advocate in-school reading,

neither of the teachers in the study provided a regularly scheduled block of time for

students to read in school. On the rare occasions when students were given time to read,

reading materials that they wanted to read were not on hand typically, and the classroom

library was not stocked with a wide range of reading materials that were of interest to

students. Finally, all 11 students expressed strong personal preferences for reading

materials; however, none of these types of materials were assigned to students to read in

school. Among the most popular types of reading for these 11 students were scary stories

and novels, popular magazines, comics, cartoon collections, drawing books, and

specialized series. Only two students reported having access to their preferred reading

materials outside of school; therefore, a lack of interesting reading materials may have

led to students' lack of desire to read.

　　After discovering that none of the 11 students had visited the public library in the

previous year and most lacked interest in their school library, Worthy (1996b)

interviewed nine middle-school librarians to learn what are librarians' perceptions about

middle-school students' reading attitudes and reading interests. Four topics emerged

from the interviews. First, all the librarians were aware of and concerned about the

decline in students' positive reading attitudes and reading interests as students progress

from elementary- to middle-school grades, and all were committed to helping students

maintain high levels of reading motivation. Second, all the librarians supported students

reading whatever materials interested them, even when this meant that students were not

reading what was considered to be acclaimed literature. Krashen (1992) coined the term

"light reading" (p. 92), which refers to reading materials such as comic books and

magazines, both of which fell into the category of materials most preferred by the

students in Worthy's study. Several of the librarians mentioned that light reading plays a

vital role in students' transition to other types of reading materials. Third, the librarians

were aware of what materials were most preferred by middle-school students and sought

to purchase the most popular materials for students to read. Each librarian named

essentially the same list of popular books: scary stories and books, followed by cartoon

collections, sports books and magazines, drawing books, series books, and popular

magazines. Fourth, all the librarians spoke of ordering multiple copies of popular books

but also shared the problems related to keeping popular reading materials on hand. All of

one librarian's 50 copies of the popular Goosebumps series were checked out at all times.

A different problem existed for cartoon collections, comic books, and popular magazines.

According to the librarians in this study, these reading materials fall apart easily and often

are not returned. To combat this problem, some librarians mentioned a system of keeping popular magazines behind the circulation desk only to be read inside the library; however, most of the librarians chose not to stock comic books at all.

Worthy (1996b) recommended several ways in which teachers and librarians can foster more positive reading attitudes in their students and promote more voluntary reading. These include teacher read-alouds, guided reading instruction, free choice of reading materials, and time in school for independent reading where students are given opportunities to read for enjoyment, allowed a choice of reading materials, and provided access to reading materials of high interest, including comic books and magazines.

No demographic data were provided on any of the participants in this study, so it is unclear for what population of students and teachers the results might be generalized; however, several components of Worthy's (1996b) research were valuable for the methodological design of the current study. Worthy conducted a mixed-methods study where she used the results of a reading attitude survey as one form of data and followed with classroom observations and interviews conducted with students and librarians to provide important information that cannot be gleaned from survey data alone. A mixed-methods approach was used in the current study. Worthy's study also highlighted the importance of collecting qualitative data from the adults who are connected closely to students' reading experiences. In the current study, one-on-one interviews were conducted with two fifth-grade classroom teachers. Worthy recommended four instructional approaches that teachers might implement to improve students' negative reading attitudes, three of which were used in the current study: teacher read-alouds,

students' free choice of reading materials, and time in school for independent reading where students were given opportunities to read for enjoyment and were provided access to reading materials of high interest, including comic books and magazines.

Ivey (1999b) conducted a 5-month qualitative case-study investigation of three sixth-graders that corroborated several of Worthy's (1996b) findings. Using purposive sampling, the researcher selected the students according to two criteria: (a) the students were able to verbalize information about themselves as readers that would contribute to the purpose of the study and (b) the students had experienced varying degrees of success as readers. One motivated female reader who was eager to read independently in school and at home, one struggling female reader who read reluctantly in school, and a male reader who was of average reading ability but who chose not to read most of the time were selected for the study. The researcher spent many hours observing and interviewing each student. Collectively, the results of the case studies provide a portrait of the complexities involved in understanding middle-school readers.

Using the constant comparative method of data analysis, four global findings emerged. Ivey (1999a) recommended to teachers how these generalizations can help them satisfy the needs of their most struggling readers. First, although the results of numerous studies suggested that middle-school students lose interest in reading, Ivey learned that struggling middle-school students do like to read when they have access to materials that match their areas of interest and their reading ability levels. The type of reading students are required to read in school--teacher-selected reading materials and the reading textbook--is what students do not like to read. Second, struggling middle-school

students want to share in literacy activities with their teachers and classmates. Ivey

suggested that introducing books and reading aloud to students is a powerful way to

foster literacy in all students but especially for struggling readers who benefit most from

their teachers modeling a love of reading. Furthermore, when teachers promote

interesting books through book talks and read-alouds, students are likely to do the same.

A third finding was that middle-school students prefer to read for real purposes. Old

practices such as round-robin reading or reading that focuses on isolated reading skills

are problematic for all students but especially those who already do not like in-school

reading. Instead, Ivey suggested that students should be given opportunities to share their

out-of-school reading interests and that these materials should be integrated into the

reading curriculum. The fourth finding was that, although there has been a decline in

students' attitudes toward reading and their amount of reading, students want to be good

readers. Ivey recommended that teachers rethink how their language arts classes might

look if they used a workshop approach where students are taught in small groups or

individually rather than every student getting the same type of instruction. In order for

this to happen, Ivey called for more teacher preparation in the teaching of reading and

more reading specialists and special education teachers to work with the students who

have the greatest reading needs.

Ivey's (1999b) study gave further support for the design of the current study. Ivey

used interview data to delve more deeply into the reasons why middle-school readers are

exhibiting negative attitudes toward reading, rather than collecting only survey data. Ivey

also recommended several instructional approaches that were utilized in my study:

teacher book talks and read-alouds, a choice of reading materials, and access to reading materials of high interest. Case-study research often includes a small number of participants; however, Ivey's sample of three students may be seen as a limitation of the study. In the current study, 14 reluctant boy readers were interviewed and observed in their classrooms to gain a broader perspective on their personal and behavioral factors related to reading.

Moving into the 2000s, researchers continued to study students' reading attitudes and the extent that reading attitudes have influenced students' achievement in reading. The following three studies, two conducted in the United Kingdom and one in the United States, all indicated that students' attitudes toward reading still have declined as they advanced through their school years and that negative attitudes toward reading have been an international concern.

In a study conducted in 2004 in the United Kingdom, Twist, Gnaldi, Schagen, and Morrison reanalyzed the items related to students' reading attitudes from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) to learn more about why students in England with high reading achievement did not have high reading attitude scores. The PIRLS provided a report on the reading achievement and reading attitudes of 10-year-olds from 35 countries. Of primary concern to the researchers was learning whether negative attitudes toward reading of 10-year-olds in England was a trend that had existed over time or whether poor reading attitudes were becoming increasingly problematic. Items from the survey were recoded from a 4-point scale (4= *agree a lot*, 3= *agree a little*, 2= *disagree a little*, 1= *disagree a lot*) to a 5-point scale (4= *agree a lot*, 3= *agree a*

little, 2= *missing*, 1= *disagree a little*, 0= *disagree a lot*). Results of the revised Students'

Attitudes to Reading index yielded even more bleak reading attitude scores for England;

an additional 13% of students were categorized as having low attitudes toward reading in

the reanalysis. Only two countries had equal or higher percentages of students in the low

reading attitudes category: the United States and the Netherlands. Confounding the

results was a lack of consistency in the responses for negative items given by low-

performing students, which suggests that some students may have had difficulty in

understanding the wording of the negative responses. Of particular concern was the item:

"I read only if I have to." In response to this finding, the researchers emphasized caution

when constructing survey items for children.

The results of this study indicated that more 10-year-olds in the United States

have negative reading attitudes than students of this age in 33 other countries; therefore,

this study highlighted the need for more research on students' reading attitudes in the

upper-elementary grades. The current study measured 10- and 11-year-olds' reading

attitudes and included an instructional treatment to investigate whether fifth-grade boys'

negative reading attitudes could be reversed. A limitation of the study was the reliance on

survey data only. In the current study, fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes were measured

using survey and interview data to gain a clearer understanding of the complexities

related to students' reading attitudes.

In a recent United States study, Martinez, et al. (2008) investigated the

relationship between reading achievement and reading attitudes. Extending beyond

research conducted by Kush, Watkins, and Brookhart (2005), the researchers

administered the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990) to 76

fourth-graders and the Curriculum-Based Measurement task in reading (R-CBM). Four

months later, in the Fall of the next school year, data from the students' performance on a

high-stakes reading achievement measure called the Indiana Statewide Testing for

Educational Progress-Plus (ISTEP+) were collected. The researchers had four research

areas of interest: (a) differences in reading attitudes by gender, (b) differences in reading

attitudes by achievement, (c) the relationship between reading achievement and reading

attitude in year one and any change in this relationship in year two, and (d) the degree to

which reading attitude combined with reading achievement predicted future reading

achievement. Means and standard deviations for the ERAS and R-CBM were computed,

and a multivariate analysis of variance was conducted to investigate the differences in

reading attitudes by gender and reading level.

Results confirmed several of the researchers' hypotheses. First, girls' attitudes

toward reading were statistically significantly higher, on average, than boys' attitudes

toward reading. Second, there was a statistically significant positive relationship between

academic reading attitude, recreational reading attitude, and both reading achievement

measures. The strongest correlations were between the recreational subscale for the

ERAS in the fourth grade and the reading achievement scores on the ISTEP+ in fifth

grade ($r = .46$). Third, there was no difference in the reading attitudes of good and poor

readers. Fourth, there was an interaction between reading attitude and reading

achievement; reading attitude in year one accounted for 22% of the variation in reading

achievement scores on the test taken 4 months later. The researchers called for two future

research actions to be taken. First was to investigate whether there exists a threshold level of reading failure at which students begin to dislike reading. Second, and of great relevance to the current study, was to what degree do the curriculum, classroom climate, and teachers' content knowledge about reading influence students' reading attitudes and their motivation to read both in and out of school. As outlined in the theoretical rationale for the current study, environmental factors such as the curriculum, classroom climate, and teacher behaviors interact and, therefore, influence students' personal factors such as reading attitude. The current study measured to what extent adding teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds to the classroom environment changed boys' attitudes toward reading.

Two limitations were evident in Martinez et al.'s (2008) study. First, the students self-reported their reading attitudes through survey data, but no further investigation was undertaken to learn whether students' observed behaviors matched their survey results. In the current study, students' reading behaviors were observed by the researcher 2 days per week. A small subset of 14 boys were interviewed before and after the study to learn more about why they responded the way they did on the prestudy and poststudy attitude survey. Their teachers also were interviewed to learn about the boys' reading attitudes. Second, the sample studied was predominantly European-American, therefore limiting the generalization of the findings. The current study took place in a school district with an ethnically diverse population of students.

Most of the previously reviewed body of literature on reading attitudes was not conducted by researchers to investigate reading attitude related to gender; however,

researchers consistently reported that girls' attitudes toward reading were higher than boys' reading attitudes. These results, combined with the national and international attention given to boys' lack of literacy success, may have led the following researchers to study the reading attitudes of boys. The final two studies on reading attitudes of boys offer specific reasons for why the current study focused on the reading attitudes of boys.

Although large-scale studies on reading attitudes (Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004; Twist, Gnaldi, Schagen, & Morrison, 2004) provide results that often are more statistically robust, small-scale studies provide their own contribution to understanding the phenomenon of why boys possess negative attitudes toward reading, even at such a young age. For example, in Lever-Chain's (2008) study, a small sample of students' reading attitudes were measured using survey data, and the results were followed up with one-on-one interviews with participants. The current study, although small in sample size, used both quantitative survey data and qualitative interview data from a cohort of 14 reluctant boy readers to contribute to this growing body of research on boys' reading attitudes.

Given the research on the wide range of reading interests of students and their choice to read different types of texts, Merisuo-Storm (2006) explored 145 fourth-grade Finnish boys ($n = 67$) and girls' ($n = 78$) attitudes toward reading and writing. Two additional purposes for the study were to learn what types of reading materials students preferred to read versus the types they preferred not to read and to learn what were the differences in the types of texts boys liked to read compared with girls. Merisuo-Storm adapted two instruments--the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear,

1990) and the Writing Attitude Survey (Kear et al., 2000)--to create a single instrument that would measure students' reading and writing attitudes. The revised instrument had two sections with 12 items each and used a 4-point scale, which forced students to avoid selecting a neutral response. Students were instructed to select the face of the teddy bear that best matched their opinion. For example, if the student loved doing the task, he or she should have selected the teddy bear's face that looked very happy and with the phrase "If you LOVE DOING what is asked, tick this picture" (p. 116). The first section contained items that measured students' opinions about reading different types of texts, and the second section contained items that measured students' responses to writing different types of texts. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was .84, which indicated high internal consistency for the items.

Results of Merisuo-Storm's (2003) reading and writing survey indicated that boys' and girls' attitudes toward reading and writing were statistically significantly different. Girls enjoyed reading more than boys. There was an even greater gender difference between boys' and girls' attitudes toward writing; girls enjoyed writing far more than boys. The only negative responses to the reading items were from boys. Girls' motivation for reading books and visiting the library was much higher than it was for boys.

Regarding the choice of texts, results showed that fourth-grade girls enjoy reading a wider range of texts than boys. Comics were boys' first choice of reading material, followed by humorous stories and adventure books. The girls' top three choices of texts were the same, but in a different order: adventure, humorous stories, comics; however,

girls also enjoyed reading other types of reading materials. Books that boys were not attracted to reading were poetry, stories, and fairytales. Girls were least interested in reading nonfiction and poetry. A high percentage of boys and girls were happy to read series of books, but more boys (93%) expressed an interest in series books than girls (81%).

Finally, the 12 students who had the most negative attitudes toward reading preferred reading comics more than any other reading material. Merisuo-Storm (2003) suggested that although society does hold comic books in high status, teachers may find it well worth their while to consider allowing students with lower reading ability to read comics as an entry point into reading more advanced types of literature. Furthermore, the researcher advocated for teachers to learn more about their students' reading interests.

Several aspects of Merisuo-Storm's research were of relevance to the current study. Given the increasing number of new digital forms of media available and the ever-evolving genres of literature, including the growing popularity of graphica over the last decade, research on students' reading interests is essential. Results of this study showed that comics, humorous stories, and adventure books were the top three favorite reading materials of fourth-grade boys in Finland. The current study investigated the reading interests of 52 fifth-grade students on the West coast of the United States, and, more specifically, the reading interests of 14 fifth-grade boys with negative reading attitudes and low reading self-efficacy. Unlike Merisuo-Storm's research that included only survey data, the current study included qualitative interview data to learn more about why the boys responded the way they did to the reading attitude survey items and how they

were changing as readers as a result of being able to read comics and other books of high interest in school.

Before the 1980s, affective factors such as reading attitude were not as primary of a concern; however, over time, educators have questioned to what degree the affective reading domain influences the cognitive reading domain. The previously reviewed literature on reading attitudes offers a solid but not exhaustive picture of how reading attitudes have been measured over the past 3 decades. A second affective reading construct is presented next: reading self-efficacy. Although the body of research on reading self-efficacy is not as extensive as the research on reading attitude, reading self-efficacy is becoming an important area of interest to reading researchers. Because of the close connection among affective reading factors, researchers often choose to study more than one construct, and some combine multiple reading constructs within one working definition. The current study measured reading attitude and reading self-efficacy as two separate reading constructs, but the review of reading self-efficacy begins with an examination of the work of researchers who have combined these two constructs.

Reading Self-efficacy

Drawing upon years of reading motivation research, Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) developed a working definition of attitude toward reading, which embodies several reading motivation factors, including reader self-perception. Positive reading attitude was defined as "positive self-concept as a reader, a desire and tendency to read, and a reported enjoyment of or interest in reading," and negative attitude toward reading was defined as "negative self-concept as a reader, a desire and tendency to avoid reading

and a reported dislike of the activity" (p. 374).

In a 5-year longitudinal study conducted in the United Kingdom, Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) collected data on 5,076 nine- and eleven-year-old students' reading attitudes. The researchers compared reading attitude scores from the time the survey was first given in 1998 to 2,307 nine- and eleven-year-old students enrolled in 28 schools with the time it was re-administered in 2003 to 2,364 nine- and eleven-year-old students who were enrolled in those same 28 schools. The survey consisted of 17 items with three response options: *yes*, *no*, *not sure*. Students responded to items such as: *I like reading stories*, *I think reading is difficult*, and *I think reading is boring*. Three questions were related with at-home reading and parent involvement. For example, students responded *yes*, *no*, or *not sure* to items such as *Grown-up at home reads to me* and *Grown-up at home listens to me read*. One question required students to respond *yes*, *no*, or *not sure* to six types of reading they engaged in at home: story books, comics, magazines, newspapers, information books, and poems. Finally, one question asked students to report how often they read at home: *every day*, *most days*, *not often*, or *never*.

According to Sainsbury and Schagen (2004), previous research on reading attitudes had not given adequate attention to which aspects of reading contributed most to a person's attitudes toward reading. After using factor analysis for the 18-item survey, three factors emerged: reading enjoyment ($r = .85$), support for reading ($r = .65$), and prefers comics/magazines ($r = .55$). These factors provided additional support for their working definition. Reading enjoyment, the first factor, accounted for 21% of the variation and aligned with feelings of enjoyment and a desire to read. The second factor,

support for reading, aligned with self-concept or self-efficacy of a reader, and accounted for 12% of the variation in the results. The third factor, prefers comics and magazines, was consistent with other surveys designed to measure students' reading interests.

Results of Sainsbury and Schagen's study (2004) indicated that, in the large sample of over 5,000 students whose reading attitudes were measured in 2003, both 9- and 11-year-olds showed generally positive attitudes toward reading. For nine-year-olds, 75% responded they liked reading silently by themselves, 72% responded *yes* to liking to read stories, and 71% responded *yes* to liking to read comics or magazines. Results for 11-year-olds differed only slightly. Seventy-four percent of 11-year-olds responded *yes* to liking to read by themselves, and 67% responded *yes* to liking to read stories. The highest response to any question was when 79% of 11-year-olds marked *yes* to liking to read comics or magazines.

Overall, in 2003, reading attitudes of 9-year-olds were more positive than were reading attitudes of 11-year-olds, and girls' reading attitudes were statistically significantly more positive than boys' reading attitudes. Eighty percent of nine-year-old girls responded *yes* to the item *I enjoy reading* compared with 63% of the boys; however, 71% of nine-year-old girls and boys responded *yes* to the item *I like reading comics or magazines*. Similarly for 11-year-olds, 73% of the girls compared with 59% of the boys responded positively to enjoying reading. The highest percentage of positive responses for 11-year-old girls and boys was in response to liking to read comics or magazines (girls = 82%; boys = 75%).

Next, a reading achievement measure was collected. A statistically significant

relationship was found between reading achievement and reading attitudes. A larger number of students with high reading ability (a) enjoyed reading stories more than students with low reading ability, (b) enjoyed reading comics and magazines more than students with low reading ability, and (c) liked reading silently to themselves more than students with low reading ability. More students with low reading-achievement scores responded positively to the following items: *I am not interested in books, I like watching TV better than reading books, I don't like reading at home*, and *I think reading is boring*. Overall, students with low reading attainment found reading to be more difficult and sought more help with reading than students with high reading ability.

When analyzing the change in reading attitude scores from 1998 to 2003, Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) found a statistically significant change in two of the three factors related to reading attitudes. The percentage of students who enjoyed reading declined in all four groups: girls and boys at ages 9 and 11. The group having the greatest decline was 11-year-old boys. There also was a decline in their need of support for reading, which indicates students in 2003 reported they were more confident about themselves as readers and perceived reading to be less difficult. There was little change related to the third factor, preference for reading comics and magazines, indicating that students continued to enjoy these types of reading materials. Results of Sainsbury and Schagen's longitudinal research suggest that students' negative attitudes toward reading may be declining even further, which gave additional support for the urgency of the study conducted. Of relevance to the current study were the results reported here on readers' self-perceptions, or reading self-efficacy. Although 11-year-old boys' enjoyment of

reading had declined, the results of the study suggest that these boys had maintained positive self-perceptions as readers. One limitation of these results is the self-reported survey data. Without any additional evidence from teachers, it is unclear whether the boys' classroom behavior supported their claim to be confident readers.

Logan and Johnston (2009) investigated the relationship between cognitive, behavioral, and affective reading factors: reading comprehension (cognitive), frequency of reading at home and library use (behavioral), and attitude toward school, attitude toward reading, competency belief, and perceived academic support from teachers and peers (affective). They also were interested in learning about gender differences.

Two-hundred-thirty-two students who ranged from 10 to 11 years of age and were enrolled in eight primary schools in England participated in the study. All students spoke English as their first language. First, the students took an untimed 45-item reading ability test, the Group Reading Test II, which measures word recognition, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. Second, the students completed a 12-item questionnaire that measured attitude toward reading (5 items), attitude toward school (5 items), competency beliefs (2 items), and peer-teacher support (2 items). The questionnaire also included five introductory questions to gather data on gender, age, primary language, frequency of reading, and frequency of library use. Several findings aligned with past research. First, results showed that girls had a higher reading ability, read more often, and held more positive attitudes toward reading and school. Small but statistically significant gender differences were found in students' reading ability; the mean for reading comprehension was 97.50 for boys and 100.96 for girls. Girls self-reported

reading more often than boys. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest, the boys' mean reading frequency was 3.21 and the girls' mean reading frequency was 4.00. Girls also self-reported more frequent use of the library than boys. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest amount of library use, the boys' mean library use was 2.48 and the girls' mean library use was 3.31.

Four distinct variables were analyzed: attitude toward reading, attitude toward school, competency beliefs, and perceived teacher and peer support. Because reading achievement has been found to correlate with several of these factors, the researchers controlled for reading ability when analyzing results in the four areas. For attitude toward reading, the boys' mean was 3.02, and the girls' mean was 3.38. For attitude toward school, the boys' mean was 3.09, and the girls' mean was 3.52. The boys' mean for competency beliefs was 3.79, and the girls' mean was 3.58. The boys' mean for perceived teacher and peer support was 3.66, and the girls' mean was 3.81. Although there was statistical significance in the gender differences for attitude toward reading and for attitude toward school, the differences were relatively small for this sample of students.

Next, the researchers measured the strength of the relationships between the four factors measured on the questionnaire and analyzed the results according to gender. High correlations between the three internal factors (attitude toward reading, attitude toward school, and competency beliefs) were found for both genders, but only boys' attitude toward school correlated with the external factor of perceived level of academic support ($r = .27$).

Of greatest relevance to the researchers were the relationships between the factors, rather than the relationship between gender and each individual factor. Reading ability correlated with attitude toward reading (.22), attitude toward school (.17), competency beliefs (.32), and frequency of reading (.32) but not with academic support. Furthermore, boys' reading ability correlated with their attitude toward reading (.29), attitude toward school (.22), competency beliefs (.29), and frequency of reading (.24), whereas, girls' reading ability correlated with competency beliefs (.37) and frequency of reading (.39). Further analysis of the correlations between frequency of reading and the other factors yielded two important findings. First, both genders' frequency of reading correlated with attitude toward reading (.50), attitude toward school (.34), and competency beliefs (.24) but not with academic support. Second, frequency of reading correlated statistically significantly higher with attitude toward reading for both boys (.44) and girls (.49).

Several of the findings from Logan and Johnston's study (2009) supported the rationale for the current research study. First, the results showed that girls, on average, continue to perform higher on reading achievement measures, read more frequently, and hold more positive attitudes toward reading than boys. Although the reading ability of girls was not statistically significantly higher than boys, there still is reason for concern that boys' scores continue to lag behind girls. Second, there was a greater gender difference in reading attitude than in reading ability. The difference in boys' and girls' reading ability was not as great as the difference in their attitudes. Although this result could be seen as positive, it is important to consider the age of the students in the study

and the potential for boys' negative attitudes toward reading to affect negatively their reading performance as they advance through the grades and reading tasks become progressively more difficult. Third, boys reported that they read less frequently than girls; however, boys read newspapers and other types of reading material often not recognized by teachers as being the type of reading that counts in school. For this reason, the gap between boys' and girls' frequency of reading may not have been reported accurately. More research is needed to investigate whether there is a gender difference in the frequency of reading when all types of reading are counted. Fourth, a strong positive relationship was found between reading ability and competency beliefs, and boys' reading ability correlated with their attitudes toward school. These findings suggest that, when boys do not perform well on reading achievement tests, there is the potential for them to develop poor self-perceptions as readers and for them to hold negative attitudes toward school in general. The collective findings of this study call for additional research on gender differences related to affective reading factors, such as reading attitude and reading self-efficacy, and behavioral reading factors, such as students' reading interests and amount of reading. The current study investigated all the above.

The following two studies measured students' self-efficacy related to reading after using instructional interventions. These are the first studies found for this review that involved the use of a treatment with pre- and postsurvey measures of an affective reading construct. Similar to the review of literature on reading attitude, in studies where multiple constructs were measured, only the results related to reading self-efficacy are reported in detail.

McCrudden, Perkins, and Putney (2005) conducted a 2-week intervention with 23 fourth-graders in a charter school located in the Southwestern area of the United States. All students were African-American, and the majority read below grade level. The purposes of the study were (a) to examine the effect of reading strategy instruction on students' self-efficacy and interest in the use of reading strategies and (b) to investigate whether an instructional design sequence could be integrated easily into an existing curriculum for a group of students who are considered at-risk for reading failure. Similarly, Nelson and Manset-Williamson (2006) conducted a 5-week intervention during summer intercession delivered one-on-one to 20 reading-disabled fourth through eighth graders: 15 boys and 5 girls and 17 European Americans and 3 African-Americans. The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of two reading interventions on students' reading self-efficacy, attributions for reading success and failure, and affect for reading. The independent variable was reading comprehension strategy instruction with two levels: explicit, self-regulatory strategy instruction and less-explicit strategy instruction. The researchers hypothesized that more explicit strategy instruction would empower students to perceive they were more in control of their reading; therefore, they believed that explicit, self-regulatory strategy instruction would increase students' reading self-efficacy, attributions, and affect for reading more than less-explicit strategy instruction.

Both sets of researchers sought to increase students' self-efficacy through instructional interventions. The results of McCrudden et al.'s (2005) classroom intervention showed an increase in both self-efficacy and interest but no improvement in

reading comprehension. The increase in self-efficacy from preinstruction (M = 18.87, SD = 2.03) to postinstruction (M = 20.78, SD = 2.83) was statistically significant. Nelson and Manset-Williamson's study resulted in a greater increase in reading self-efficacy for students who received less strategy instruction (t (9) = 2.09, p = .07, d = .66) than for those who received the explicit, self-regulated strategy instruction (t (8) = .07), but neither increase was statistically significant. Lack of a statistically significant difference may be due to the small sample size. The effect size is medium indicating practical importance.

Although the McCrudden et al.'s (2005) study did not measure reading self-efficacy as it was defined in the current study, it did measure self-efficacy as it related to one aspect of the reading process. Of greatest importance in both studies was their use of instructional interventions to increase students' self-efficacy as readers. Similarly, one aim of the current study was to implement a brief teacher-directed classroom intervention--teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds--and to measure any change in students' reading self-efficacy, students' reading attitudes, and their amount of reading.

In the two studies previously reviewed, the researchers measured self-efficacy for reading using two instruments radically different from one another. The instrument used by Nelson and Manset-Williamson (2006) consisted of reading passages at different grade levels and required students to respond to one to four questions, and McCrudden et al. (2005) developed their own instrument. These differences limit researchers' ability to compare reading self-efficacy across research studies. Recognizing the need for a more reliable and easy-to-use assessment that measures the multifaceted construct of reader

self-efficacy, Henk and Melnick (1995) created the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS).

Like the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, the RSPS has been tested systematically

and has been validated for its internal consistency as well as its reliability. One's reading

self-efficacy is connected closely to one's attitude toward reading; however, Henk and

Melnick purported that these two constructs are different enough to warrant the need for

two separate instruments.

The theory guiding the construction of the Reader Self-Perception Scale was

Bandura's theory of perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994). Perceived self-efficacy is a

person's belief in his or her own capability to perform a task at a particular level of

competence. One's perceived level of self-efficacy determines how positively or

negatively one thinks and feels and to what degree one is motivated to persist with a task.

The basic model of self-efficacy includes four factors that measure one's reading

capabilities: reading performance, observational comparison, social feedback, and

psychological states. Reading performance on the RSPS is defined as the difference in

how one perceives his or her current reading performance compared with his or her past

reading performance. Observational comparison is defined as the difference in how a

student perceives his or her reading performance compared with another student's

reading performance. Social feedback refers to any type of direct or indirect input about

one's reading that comes from the teacher, students, or family members. Physiological

state refers to a person's internal feelings experienced while reading. The RSPS includes

32 survey items that measure each of these four constructs: progress (9 items),

observational comparison (6 items), social feedback (9 items), and physiological state (8

items). In the current study, the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS; Henk & Melnick,

1995), designed specifically for use with intermediate grade students, was used to

measure reading self-efficacy. Research on the reliability and validity measures for this

instrument can be found in chapter III. A brief review of two studies--one small-scale

case study and one large-scale study--that utilized the RSPS to measure reading-self

efficacy follows.

Nes Ferrara (2005) conducted a case study of one 12-year-old girl who read one

year below grade level. The researcher was interested in learning more about the

personal experiences of a child with reading difficulties. During an 11-week intervention

period where an intensive one-on-one paired reading intervention was used for 30 to 40

minutes per day for 5 days per week to improve oral reading fluency, the RSPS was

administered three times to measure to what degree the intervention also influenced the

student's reading self-efficacy. Although the student's scores on the RSPS remained in

the average range throughout the study, the subscales provided valuable information for

the researcher. Results on Progress indicated that the student perceived she was

improving as a reader. Results on Observational Comparison revealed that the student

perceived she was not as competent of a reader as her classmates. Results on

Physiological States indicated that the student perceived she was highly anxious when

reading aloud. One-on-one interviews with the student revealed that the reason for her

anxiousness was because she was shy and because she believed that her teacher did not

like to hear her read. Thus, a combination of the quantitative survey data and the

qualitative interview data provided a more thorough answer to the researcher's question:

What is the lived experience of having problems with reading fluency? The nature of case study research does not allow for much generalization of these findings. In the current study, the researcher used the RSPS and one-on-one interviews to learn about the reading self-efficacy of 14 fifth-grade reluctant boy readers from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds.

In a large-scale study related to boys and reading, the RSPS was used to measure boys' self-efficacy. Sokal, Theim, Crampton, and Katz (2009) investigated the effects of male and female reading tutors on boys' reading achievement and their self-perceptions as readers. A total of 180 third- and fourth-grade boys, all considered to be struggling readers, participated over a 2-year period in a 22-week reading intervention. Half of the tutors were male, and half were female. The intervention consisted of 30 minutes of paired reading using texts that were of high interest to boys. No report was given as to the number of days per week that the tutors worked with the students. Boys in both groups--male and female tutors--made statistically significant growth in their reading achievement and their self-perceptions as readers in both years. The gender of the tutor was not a factor in the boys' growth in reading ability or reading self-efficacy. One limitation of the study was the lack of information provided on the boys' regular classroom reading experiences; therefore, it is uncertain whether other factors might have contributed to the increased growth in boys' reading achievement and reading self-efficacy.

In summary, the literature suggests that reading attitude and reading self-efficacy are important personal factors that influence students' reading achievement. Given the

disparity between boys' and girl's reading scores, it is imperative that researchers continue to study the conditions under which boys' and girls' attitudes toward reading and self-perceptions as readers will improve. The current study was a step toward understanding how the conditions within the language arts classroom can influence boys' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy.

Research on a second dimension of Bandura's social cognitive theory, behavior, is provided in section three, which includes the relevant literature related to reading behaviors that may influence boys' reading achievement: boys' reading interests, graphica, amount of reading, and boys' out-of-school literacy activities.

Behavioral Factors Related to Reading

To understand how boys' reading behaviors relate to their reading achievement, researchers have investigated boys' self-selected reading choices. Research and common knowledge of language arts classroom practices indicate that fiction dominates most of the reading in English classrooms, although many boys prefer nonfiction (Sullivan, 2001) and other light reading materials (Krashen, 2004) such as comic books, magazines, and humor. According to Sullivan, teachers avoid informational texts because they are less confident in how to use nonfiction in their classrooms. Teachers use fiction almost to the exclusion of every other type of reading material because text analysis of characters, plot, setting, theme, and other literary devices found in fiction is what is most comfortable for them. Light reading materials such as comics and magazines are less favored because teachers believe these materials lack the rich themes found in award-winning literature. All forms of graphica continue to be frowned-upon reading materials by some teachers

and forbidden by others. Yet research (Ujiie & Krashen,1996) suggests that avid comic book readers read more than students who prefer other reading materials. Of all reading behaviors, amount of reading correlates the highest with reading achievement. Many boys and girls choose to read outside of school, but often their reading choices do not match what they are required to read in school. The following review of the literature on boys' reading behaviors includes studies on boys' reading interests, especially graphica, amount of reading, and boys' out-of-school literacy activities.

Boys' Reading Interests

Some researchers have noted that the books and reading materials boys (and some girls) prefer to read are not found in school and classroom libraries. Worthy, Moorman, and Turner (1999) claimed "What Johnny likes to read is hard to find in school" (p. 12); therefore, they aimed to study the reading preferences of 419 sixth-grade students to inform teachers and librarians how they might choose more reading materials that match students' reading interests. Four research questions guided their investigation: What do middle-school students say they prefer to read? How are students' reading preferences related to gender, socioeconomic status, reading attitudes, and reading achievement? Where do students get their reading materials? How do students' reading preferences match what is available in their schools? To assess students' preferences of reading materials, the researchers used a combination of close-ended and open-ended measures. To measure students' reading preferences, the researchers used a two-part survey.

Part I was a list of types of reading materials and included both genres of children's literature typically found in past survey research (e.g., young adult literature,

science fiction or fantasy, poetry) and types of materials usually not included (e.g., comics, magazines, and books written for adults). Students were instructed to check all the reading materials they would choose to read if they had enough time and the opportunity. Students were asked to write the titles of materials for books written for adults and other kinds of reading materials.

Part II consisted of three open-ended questions: If you could read anything at all, what would it be? Who is your favorite author? Where do you usually get the materials that you read? Students were instructed to list only one reading material and the name of one author, which provided the researchers with data that allowed them to identify students' top reading preferences and additional evidence for any preferred reading materials that might have been overlooked in Part I.

To find out if there were differences between the reading preferences of students with low and high reading attitudes, the researchers administered the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990). To measure the match between students' reading preferences and the materials available in their school libraries, the researchers used data previously collected from interviews with librarians (Worthy, 1996b). To measure the match between students' reading preferences and classroom libraries, the researchers interviewed teachers about their students' most popular reading materials, the types and quantities of these materials on hand in their classroom libraries, how teachers acquired their reading materials, and their beliefs about students' reading preferences. Following the collection of data from students, the researchers visited the classroom and school libraries to view the type and amount of reading materials that matched the highest

ranking reading materials provided in the students' surveys.

The following results from students' survey data were found. Scary books or story collections ranked highest (66%), followed by cartoons and comics (65%) and popular magazines (38%). When asked if they could read anything at all, 124 students named scary books, 41 students named sports magazines or books, and 28 students named comics and cartoons. When the results were examined by gender, boys' top three reading preferences ranked in the following order: scary books, comics and cartoons, and sports. Girls' top three preferences were scary books, magazines, and comics. Both low- and high-achieving students preferred reading scary books and comics, as did students with low and high attitudes toward reading and students of both high and low socioeconomic status. More students in this study (56%) typically bought their reading materials rather than borrowing them from school, classroom, or public libraries (44%). Of all the resources students used to obtain reading materials, classroom libraries were lowest on the list (18%). Data collected on the match between the types of reading materials preferred by students and the availability of these materials on hand in school and classroom libraries indicated that all the school libraries had some of the scary book series that students preferred to read. Only one classroom and one library had the cartoons but they were not allowed to be checked out, and no school library or classroom had comics available for students to read. Similarly, the magazine titles preferred by students were unavailable.

When the researchers discussed with teachers and librarians' their level of awareness of their students' reading interests, both were aware of their students' reading

preferences, but they reported mixed feelings about the appropriateness of some of these materials being read in school. (See the review of Worthy (1996b) in section two on reading attitudes for a more in-depth discussion of the findings from librarians.) Teachers reported feeling pressure to read "quality literature" (p. 22) and did not consider students' top reading preferences to fall into this category. Quality literature was defined in a variety of ways, including "'something with educational content,' 'an award-winning book,' 'classics,' and 'at least not something frivolous'" (p. 22). Comics and the popular magazine titles listed by students were not considered quality literature. The researchers quoted one teacher who stated: "I want them to read an honest-to-goodness book. One of the reasons I'm kind of restricting the comic book and magazine format is I think you can really get into looking at the pictures and not reading the text" (p. 22). Teachers who supported having more of students' reading preferences on hand explained that there was little money available to buy these popular reading materials.

Worthy et al. (1999) recommended future research in the following areas: the reading interests of students from more diverse populations, factors that influence students' reading preferences over time, and more information on teachers' instructional practices, classroom contexts, and teachers' beliefs about students' reading and how they might be used productively in the classroom. The current study explored teachers' beliefs and practices after two instructional practices, teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, were introduced in their language arts classrooms. Teachers also discussed the changes in students' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading after the intervention.

One limitation of Worthy et al.'s (1999) study was that it was conducted prior to *No Child Left Behind*. The district where the current study was conducted is a Program Improvement district and is under review due to low reading test scores for certain subgroups of students. Teachers working in this district often discuss the additional stress they are under to cover the curriculum. They also believe they have less choice about deviating from the state-adopted curriculum. The current study allowed two fifth-grade teachers who have experienced these restrictions to discuss their beliefs and practices about making changes to the state-adopted reading curriculum.

In response to the national attention given to the boy crisis in Australia beginning in 2000, several researchers have studied the reading interests of boys and other reading-related factors. Although there are obvious limitations for generalizing the results of studies conducted in another country, a brief examination of these three Australian studies provides some insight into similar issues related to boys and reading in the United States.

Martino (2001) explored the role that masculinity played in boys' literacy practices by investigating boys' attitudes toward reading and their reading preferences. Martino collected 42 high-school boys' responses to three open-ended survey questions: (a) Do you enjoy reading? (b) What kinds of texts do you like to read? (c) Do you enjoy reading fiction, and, if so, what kinds? Eighteen or 42.8% of the boys claimed that reading was boring; however, many of these boys reported that they enjoyed reading readings sports and surf magazines and comics. Twelve boys or 28.6% reported enjoying reading and considered it an escape from the real world. The remaining group of 12 boys

(28.6%) did not reject reading completely but qualified their interest in reading as liking to read only particular types of texts: action, fantasy, science fiction, horror, and humor.

Manuel and Robinson (2003) also studied adolescents' reading choices and habits and their attitudes regarding the literature they read in their English classrooms and outside of the requirements of their school day. The researchers surveyed sixty-nine 12- to 15-year-olds about the average amount of time they spent reading per day, the types of materials they prefer to read, their favorite books, and their amount of computer use as a leisure-time activity. Forty-seven percent of the boys and 40% of the girls reported reading for more than 2 hours per day, and over 8% of boys reported reading more than 4 hours per day. Another key finding was that more than 40% of boys and girls reported that fiction was their most preferred reading activity.   Boys listed action or adventure, mystery, and fantasy as their top three fiction choices. Girls listed the same three types but rated fantasy ahead of the other two. In response to a question about the amount of computer-use during leisure time, about 50% of both boys and girls reported using the computer for at least one hour per day. Over 20% of boys reported more than 4 hours of computer use in one day compared with only 2.86% of girls. The type of computer activity was not measured, so it is unclear how much reading was involved during this time. Finally, when asked to rate themselves as readers, over two-thirds of boys and girls considered themselves to be good, very good, or excellent readers. No girls rated themselves as being poor readers compared with 5% of the boys. Several of the findings from this study contradict the commonly held assumptions about boys' negative attitudes and self-perceptions as readers, as well as their lack of interest in reading fiction. The

usual limitation related to self-reporting of survey data applies to this study. An additional limitation may have been the few number of categories students were given to report their preferred reading choices: fiction, nonfiction, poetry, magazines, newspapers, and Internet and multimedia.

In response to the disconnect between what secondary-school students prefer to read and what they are required to read as part of the standard English curriculum, Ryan (2005) examined students' text choices and reading experiences according to gender and socioeconomic status. In one-on-one interviews, the researcher was able to learn more from the 53 students about their reading preferences than what would otherwise be collected from only survey data. After transcribing and coding the interview data, two themes connected to the proposed study emerged. First, students enjoyed a variety of texts including several nontraditional formats, which included film, television, and computer-related reading such as creating their own websites, talking in chat rooms, and surfing the Internet. Second, students' gender identities as well as the connections they made to the roles of their parents influenced the types of texts they preferred. Girls commented about their "mums" liking to read more than their dads. Some girls talked about liking to read romance and other fiction, unlike their fathers who read informational texts. Boys considered reading to be something you do when you are bored and have nothing else going on, yet many of the boys researched and read texts related to their interests, like their dads.

Although the three studies were conducted in Australia with high-school boys and findings cannot be generalized to boys in elementary-school, several important

connections from these studies to the current study can be made. The mixed findings related to boys' reading interests, attitudes toward reading, and self-efficacy as readers served as a caution for me not to allow past research to predicate the findings of the current study. Second, the types of questions used to survey boys' reading interests informed the development of the Reading Interest Inventory used in the current study. Third, ongoing research on boys and reading reaffirms this is still an area of research need. Fourth, the researchers recommended that teachers should place more value on students' out-of-school reading interests. The current study was an additional step toward filling these research needs.

In a study in the Midwestern area of the United States, Farris, Wederich, Nelson, and Fuhler (2009) studied fifth-grade boys' reading preferences. All the researchers were teacher educators and formerly classroom teachers who recognized that they and many of the preservice teachers, all females, with whom they worked were unaware of what types of books were most appealing to boys. Aware of the research on the literacy achievement gap between boys and girls and about all the statistics that support the claim that boys are the newly disadvantaged gender when it comes to schooling, the researchers conducted a qualitative study using electronic mail dialogues between fifth-grade boys and female teacher education candidates regarding the books they were reading. The researchers had two purposes in mind: to examine the reading preferences of fifth-grade boys and to motivate inner-city boys to read more. Demographic data collected on the boys indicated that 64% of the boys qualified for free-or-reduced-cost lunch. Ethnic backgrounds of the participants were somewhat diverse: 17% African American, 19% Hispanic American,

and 54% European American. Academic data on reading performance showed that 57% of the boys met or exceeded the state's expectations for reading on grade level. When the study began, 27 boys agreed to participate; however, only 16 boys opted to continue the study for the entire 8 months of the school year.

The researchers provided collections of books for each of the two classroom teachers based upon the recommendations a variety of sources including experts on children's literature and lists of award-winning books. The classroom teachers and school administrators requested that more novels be provided than informational books because they wanted to be able to use the books for literature circles after the study ended. Two types of reading materials of high interest to boys were not allowed by the school district: magazines that were not educationally focused and comics. Email correspondences between the fifth-grade boys and their university email partners lasted from September through April. Because the term for the university students was over before the end of the study, new partnerships were formed midway. Then, several boys elected not to continue with the study. Students were required to email their university partners once per week. There were no requirements for how much the boys should write, only that they should describe what they were reading and write their reactions to what they had read. A cart of laptops was provided and emails were written during class time. Data collection included observation and field notes collected weekly, printed email correspondences between the boys and the university students, and one-on-one interviews with the boys about their reading preferences.

Six observations were made to learn about the boys' reading preferences. First,

many boys in this study relied heavily on the book covers and book layout. Lower-ability

readers selected books that were easier to read and had larger font size and more white

space. Second, boys liked reading books that were part of a series or that were written by

the same author. Third, boys wrote about books that had characters who faced and

overcame challenges. They also enjoyed reading multiple books with the same main

characters because they were able to follow the characters from one book to the next.

Fourth, boys enjoyed reading informational books, graphic novels, and graphic

nonfiction. Informational books with short passages supported with pictures were

popular. Fifth, several of the higher-level readers read books recommended through

classroom read-alouds. In turn, these boys recommended books to other boys. The

lower-ability readers relied mostly on the book recommendations from teachers, which

indicated that the teacher read-alouds were an effective way to promote books for both

high- and low-achieving students. Sixth, boys enthusiastically shared their ideas about

books after they had established a relationship with their university partners.

Overall, the teachers and researchers witnessed an increase in the boys'

motivation for reading and writing about what they had read. An added benefit for the

teacher credential candidates was that they engaged more in conversations with their

family members and friends about the reading materials boys prefer to read. A limitation

of the study was the high learning curve that boys faced while using the computers to

correspond their ideas. Their lack of typing skills and knowledge of how to send email

were major barriers early in the study, which may have impeded the amount and quality

of the email correspondences.

From the review of literature on boys' reading interests, more researchers have focused on secondary-school students' reading interests. The research has shown a decline in boys' attitudes toward reading as they progress from elementary to middle school. The current study provided more research on this population of students. Interviews were conducted and other qualitative data were collected to learn about fifth-grade boys' reading preferences. The voices of these boys adds valuable information toward understanding boys with negative reading attitudes and low-self efficacy as readers. Teacher read-alouds were found to be an effective tool for promoting books. The current study on the effects of teacher book talks and read-alouds provided additional information on this instructional technique. In Farris et al.'s study, one particular form of reading material, comics, was not able to be promoted through teacher read-alouds because it was forbidden reading material in the school district. The current study included all forms of graphica, including comic books, as part of classroom reading materials on hand for boys to read.

Due to the abundance of research supporting boys' interest in reading comics and other forms of graphica, the research related to these controversial forms of texts in present next. Also included are how some language arts teachers have used graphica as a means for helping to improve both the cognitive and affective dimensions of boys' reading.

Graphica

Ujiie and Krashen (1996) were interested in learning what influence students' comic book reading had on other types of reading. The researchers surveyed 571 seventh

graders from two schools on the West coast of the United States. One school was located

in an urban district where 82% of the students were eligible to receive a free or reduced

lunch. The other school was considered middle class and, of the 269 students surveyed,

156 were gifted and talented students (GATE). The researchers conducted their study for

two purposes. First, they wanted to learn what were the differences in the amount of

comic book reading for students in each socioeconomic group. Second, they questioned

whether a relationship existed between comic book reading, book reading, and reading

for enjoyment. The participants completed a survey with the following four questions:

How often do you read comics? How often do you read for pleasure? Do you like to

read? and *Do you read books?*

Due to the overwhelming majority of positive responses to question one that came

from boys, the researchers analyzed the data from only the boys' surveys. The

researchers reported no statistically significant difference in the amount of comic book

reading between the boys from two different schools. Boys in both groups owned comic

books and read them often despite the difference in their socioeconomic status. Data on

how often the boys read for pleasure showed that boys in both groups who reported

reading more comics also spent more time overall reading for pleasure. Of the "heavy

comic book readers" who attended the Chapter I school, 54% responded that they read

for pleasure on a daily basic, compared with noncomic book readers where only 16%

reported reading for pleasure each day. Similar results were found at the middle-class

school. Sixty-five percent of the heavy comic book readers read daily compared with

33% of noncomic readers. Most startling were the number of boys who were noncomic

readers who reported reading once a month or never: 64% at the Chapter I school and 50% at the middle class school. At both schools, there was a statistically significant relationship between the amount of comic book reading and reading for enjoyment. Thirty-four percent of the heavy comic book readers from the Chapter I school and 62% of the heavy comic book readers from the middle-class school responded yes to liking to read, whereas only 4% of the noncomic readers from the Chapter I school and 21% of the noncomic readers from the middle-class school liked to read. In response to the final question whether the boys read books, more of the heavy comic book readers from both the Chapter I and middle-class school (49% and 69%, respectively) reported reading books than did the noncomic readers from each school (32% and 46%, respectively).

The findings from Ujiie and Krashen's (1996) research suggest that boys who are avid comic book readers engage in reading more often, like to read more, and read more books. Given the research showing the correlation between amount of reading and reading achievement, this important finding should not be overlooked by teachers. Although this study was conducted during the 1990s, recent research has shown that comic book reading is still a favorite among boys. The current study provided up-to-date data on boys' interests in reading comic books and other forms of graphica. Ujiie and Krashen's study was limited to the most popular type of graphica popular in its time: comic books. Since 2000, graphic novels and manga increasingly have become popular with boys and girls of all ages. In the current study, all forms of graphica were included.

In her study of avid Archie comic book readers, Norton (2003) aimed to find out what motivated Archie comic book fans to read the Archie comics and what insights this

group of readers might offer teachers. The participants were 34 Canadian elementary-school students in the fifth ($n = 4$), sixth ($n = 23$), and seventh grades ($n = 7$). Fifteen students were boys, and 19 were girls. Thirteen of the students were learning English as their second language (6 boys and 7 girls). The participants completed a questionnaire and participated in interviews.

From her data collection, three findings emerged. Norton's (2003) first finding was that the Archie comics appealed to the students for three reasons: humor, interesting characters, and pictures. The students thought the stories were funny, and they enjoyed getting to know the characters. Some of the English learners mentioned that the pictures helped them understand what they were reading. The second finding was that these Archie comic book readers had formed a social reading alliance where they borrowed and traded Archie comics, recommended comics to one another, and talked at length about the Archie stories they had read. Reading Archie comics was not an isolated reading activity. The third finding was that these students had come to realize that some literacy practices were acceptable in schools whereas others were not. The Archie readers were well aware that most teachers and parents believed that reading comics was a waste of time, and reading chapter books was more highly favored.

In response to her findings, Norton (2003) offered three ideas for teachers to consider. First, when students are free to read the texts they enjoy, they have more ownership over their reading. Whether it is Archie comics, another comic series, or another type of text, if students are able to choose, they most likely will read more and be more engaged while reading. Teachers, therefore, should pay attention to their students'

reading interests and find out what students are reading outside of school. Second, Norton suggested that teachers expand their definition of literacy to include other types of print, as well as a wide range of multimodal texts. Although the traditional genres of print still have their place, students need to learn how to construct meaning from a wider range of media. Third, Norton called for more research in the area of comics to find out why this medium continues to be rejected by so many teachers and to learn more about how comics might be integrated into the language arts curriculum.

One limitation to Norton's (2003) study was its focus on girls. The current study offered a response to Norton's suggestions for more research and was focused primarily on boys' reading interests, which included a strong preference for reading graphica. First, in the current study, all students were given the choice to read whatever texts interested them during their independent reading, including any text they wanted to bring in to read from home. Second, the two fifth-grade teachers in the study learned about their students' reading interests because the students were given the time in school to select and read from a range of books in the read-aloud library. Third, all the reluctant boy readers in the study enjoyed reading graphic novels and comics so one of the week's teacher book talks and read-alouds were focused on graphica. Fourth, this was the first time these students had seen their teacher encourage them to read this type of text, which validated their reading choices. For these reasons, the current study was a next step toward gathering some of the much-needed research Norton requested.

Although there exists a stigma connected with cartoons, comic strips, comic books, and graphic novels, some teachers have taken a bold leap and have used these

forms of graphica in the classroom. The next two studies, both conducted in classrooms

with ESL (English as a Second Language) students, are examples of how comics can be

used to teach students at both ends of the learning ladder: primary students and college

students. Although a limitation of the first study is its focus on primary-aged students,

the results of one classroom teacher's use of comic books as read-alouds provide

meaningful insights into the use of this instructional method.

Ranker (2007) conducted an 8-month qualitative investigation in one primary

classroom. The participants were the first graders who were bilingual and were learning

English as their second language and their classroom teacher. Ranker visited the

classroom one or two days per week for approximately 2½ hours each day to learn how

the teacher conducted her reading and writing workshop with ESLs. The following

discussion represents only one aspect of Ranker's findings: the teacher's use of comics to

teach reading. Ranker reported what he learned when he observed the teacher read aloud

comic books to teach three different reading concepts: story structure, critical reading,

and textual features of dialogue.

The first read-aloud was from one of the Spider-Man comic books where the

teacher taught students that all narratives have a central problem and resolution. The

particular Spider-Man issue the teacher selected featured another well-known superhero,

Storm, who is part of a popular series called the X-Men. The students were engaged

during the read-aloud and responded to the teacher's question as she nudged them to

identify the problem in the story. When the read-aloud was finished, she asked them a

series of questions that helped to scaffold their discussion of the resolution. The students

went on to write stories of their own during writer's workshop that had a problem and resolution. Some of the students wrote their own superhero stories. Because the teacher and students had brainstormed a list of qualities of superheroes in previous lessons, the students were able to use the chart of superhero characteristics along with their new knowledge of the problems superheroes face and successfully write their own stories.

Through a second series of comic book read-alouds using issues of Hulk and Wild Girl, the teacher taught her students to read (and listen to) stories while exploring the role of traditional gender stereotypes. After reading a Hulk comic that also included Catwoman, she posed the question to her students, "Who is stronger, Catwoman or Hulk?" When most of the students responded that Hulk was stronger because of his physical attributes, the teacher followed up with a read-aloud where Wild Girl exhibited another type of strength. During writer's workshop, the teacher encouraged the students to include strong characters in their own writing and suggested that while they are reading they look for characters who show different types of strength.

The third read-aloud featured a comic the teacher had created--the story of her birthday party. The lesson was designed to teach the way the text features of dialogue are represented differently in comics and in prose writing. The teacher used a large poster board to display the story and drew a line down the center. On the left side of the board she wrote the dialogue inside the speech bubbles, and on the right she wrote the same dialogue inside quotation marks. As she read aloud her story, she explained the differences between the two types of text features. She asked students where they had seen each type of dialogue and encouraged them to incorporate dialogue into their own

writing during writer's workshop.

The teacher was successful in using comics as read-alouds for several reasons. First, the comic read-alouds were interesting and engaging for students. Second, the students learned how to read comic books so they could be more successful reading them on their own. Third, the use of visuals in the comic read-alouds supported the comprehension of these ESL students. Fourth, each read-aloud served the greater purpose of teaching a high-level literacy skill. Finally, the read-alouds served as a model for students' writing. The researcher concluded that there were many benefits to using comic books as classroom read-alouds and suggested that more teachers consider using comic book read-alouds to support students' literacy learning.

Ranker's (2007) study highlighted an essential component of the current study: the use of nontraditional types of books as teacher read-alouds. Most often teachers read aloud picture books and novels. Rarely do teachers use nontraditional types of reading materials such as comic books, magazines, and other reading materials that are highly popular with students. In the current study, graphica was the most popular type of text identified by boys on the Reading Interest Inventory; therefore, graphica was selected as the first nontraditional text used in the 6-week intervention of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds.

Ranker's study of one teacher's use of comic books as read-alouds suggests that comic books can be an effective form of literacy to teach a variety of reading skills to young students. A quantitative study where another form of graphica, comic strips, was the treatment method used to increase the reading comprehension skills of college

students is Liu's study with English as a Second Language (ESL) students. In 2004, Liu conducted an experimental study with college-aged ESL students to test the effectiveness of comic strips as a tool for increasing students' reading comprehension. His research questions were What effect does presenting text with comic strips have on L2 (second language) students' reading comprehension? and Does using comic strips with a text geared toward the student's proficiency level improve the student's reading comprehension more than using comic strips with a text that is either above or below the student's proficiency level? He hypothesized that comic strips would help low-level L2 students improve their comprehension of high-level texts, but comic strips would not help high-level L2 readers improve their comprehension of low-level texts.

The participants were 107 students enrolled in summer ESL classes at a large university in the Southwest. Results from a writing placement test and two portions of the California English Language Development Test (CELDT; California Department of Education, 2010) were used to group students into two clusters: low intermediate (53 students) and high intermediate (54 students). The experimental design included three factors, each with two levels: level of English proficiency (high or low), text difficult (difficult or easy), and visual support (with or without comic strips). The researcher randomly assigned 13 to14 students into one of four treatment groups: T1, low-level text only; T2, low-level text with comic strips; T3, high-level text only; and T4, high-level text with comic strips. The following instruments were used: one low-level text of 250 words and basic vocabulary and syntax, one-high level text of 300 words with more complex vocabulary and syntax, and one comic strip. The instruments were field tested

with five English learners and modified before the study began. Data were collected over a 2-week period using immediate recall protocols (IRP). Students read the text that matched their treatment and took the amount of time necessary to complete the reading. Immediately following, students wrote everything they could recall. Data from 2-way and 3-way analyses of variance were used to analyze phrases of text. These were rated by level of importance to the overall meaning of the passage. A value of 4, for example, was assigned to essential information, whereas a value of 1 was assigned to information considered trivial or secondary to the story's overall meaning.

There were two major findings. First, there was a statistically significant positive difference in the percentage of correct recalls between the group of low-performing students who read high-level text with the support of comics and the low-performing students who read high-level text without visual support. Second, high-performing students recalled more of the text without comics, regardless of whether the text was high-level or low-level. According to the researcher, the findings implied that textbook developers should use caution when including visual support. Although the study suggested that cartoon visuals can support low-level L2 students' understanding of complex text, it also may be that this type of visual might overload high-level L2 readers and prevent them from challenging themselves to work through the complexities of higher-level reading.

The results from Liu's (2004) study suggest that the use of comics may be beneficial for supporting less proficient L2 learners' reading comprehension of high-level text, which may lead some teachers to consider using visual supports, such as comics and

graphic novels, as part of their instruction. Many English-only students also struggle to comprehend what they read, so these forms of graphica could support their reading comprehension as well.   Furthermore, reluctant readers often are not interested in reading what is typically part of the canon of literature read in English classrooms. Reading comics or graphic novels may increase reading comprehension because students might be more engaged in their reading. Given the high percentage of English learners in the district where the current study was conducted, Liu's findings on the use of comics and graphic novels to increase reading comprehension is relevant to this study, in spite of the difference in the age of the participants.

Liu's study using comic strips with English learners adds to the growing body of research on the use of graphica to support the literacy learning of second language learners. Of special importance is that it is one of only two studies found that use graphica in an experimental design. The second experimental study is now presented in this last research study on graphica.

Using a quasi-experimental design, Edwards (2008) conducted an 8-week study that measured the effect of reading graphic novels and comics during free voluntary reading on students' reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and intrinsic reading motivation. The sample consisted of four intact groups of seventh graders from four regular English language arts classrooms ($n = 148$). A wide selection of graphic novels and comic books at a range of reading ability levels was provided for students in each of the three treatment groups so that students in each of the three intervention classrooms had access to the same number of books and selection titles.

Group one ($n = 45$) received the intervention of graphic novels and comics during free voluntary reading. Each student received his or her own bag of books, and the bags were rotated among the students each week. Students were given a minimum of 10 minutes of free voluntary reading time where students were asked to read the graphic novels and comics provided. Teachers could choose to provide more than this amount of time. Group two ($n = 31$) received the intervention of free voluntary reading only. The same amount of graphic novels and comic books were on hand and available for students to read during free voluntary reading, but students also were allowed to read any text of their choice. Group three ($n = 37$) had access to graphic comics and novels but no time additional time for free voluntary reading beyond what the teacher already had put into place was asked to be provided in school. Group four ($n = 35$) was the comparison group and received no intervention.

Three other instruments were used to measure the dependent variables. To measure reading comprehension, researchers compared the results of comprehension exercises. To measure vocabulary development, students took a pre- and post-Vocabulary Assessment Test. To measure students' reading motivation, students completed the Motivation to Read Questionnaire before and after the study. To measure the total amount of time spent reading, students were asked to complete a reading log that included the title of the book, amount of time spent reading, a reaction to the book, and space to write their reasons for not reading any of the graphic novels or comics if they chose not to read one of the books provided. Finally, teachers kept a log that listed the amount of time students read each day.

Data were analyzed using the following procedures: repeated measures analysis of variance (comprehension and vocabulary), multivariate analysis of variance (reading motivation), and analysis of variance (amount of reading). These data analyses showed that no statistically significant differences were found between the levels of the independent variables for the dependent variables. Reading graphic novels and comic books for at least 10 minutes each day did not have an impact on students' reading comprehension, vocabulary development, or reading motivation of the seventh-graders in this study. Qualitative results from the self-reported reading logs suggest that the intervention of graphic novels and comic books had the potential for making a greater difference. Many students indicated they enjoyed reading these forms of graphica and would have read more if they had been given more time to read in school.

In addition, a small subset of students (*n*=20) were asked to respond to some questions after completing the Motivation to Read Questionnaire. Responses to such questions as "Do you feel that you are more motivated to read now?" "Do you feel you are a better reader now?" and "What did you think of the material included in the study?" provided the researcher with additional insights into students' interest in reading the graphic novels and comic books. The majority of students responded positively about their growth as readers, and many expressed how much they enjoyed reading the graphica. Further evidence of their interest in graphica was that several students bought their own copies of some books so they could read them at home.

Teachers also were asked for feedback on what they noticed about the reading behavior of their students, and two major findings emerged. First, teachers noticed that

students in all the classes, not just those who had received the intervention of graphic

novels and comics, were reading graphica during their free time. Second, a close

examination of the teacher logs showed that many teachers increased the amount of time

they provided for free voluntary reading from 10 minutes to 15 or 20 minutes. These

results suggest that future research is needed to find out more about how graphic novels

and comics influence the reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and reading

motivation of seventh graders.

Although the current study did not measure students' reading achievement, the 6-

week mixed-methods design did measure a change in boys' reading beliefs in two areas:

reading attitude and reading self-efficacy. Also, interview data were collected during

one-on-one interviews with reluctant boy readers, all of whom enjoy reading graphic

novels and comics, thereby adding support for Edwards' (2008) hypotheses.

Given the research indicating the high interest in reading comics, especially from

boys, and the increased popularity of graphic novel since 2000, it was not surprising that

graphica was one type of text of high interest to the reluctant boy readers. The studies

reviewed in this section on graphica showed an increasing interest from educators to

reconsider the role that graphica might play in literacy instruction. The current study

provided an opportunity to learn what two fifth-grade teachers believed about the use of

graphica in the language arts classroom before and after the study began and how using

teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds on graphica changed these teachers' beliefs

and practices about this highly controversial text format.

The students in Edwards study (2008) indicated that they would have read more if

they had been given more time in school to read the graphic novels and comics. Because

amount of reading has been correlated with reading achievement, it follows that amount

of reading is an important reading behavior to consider. The research on amount of

reading, another behavioral factor that was measured in the current study, is presented in

the next section.

Amount of Reading

Most educators widely accept the claim that people learn to read by reading, and

there is no shortage of research that purports how volume of reading leads to higher

reading achievement. Krashen (2004) summarized the results of 54 studies that

compared the reading comprehension scores of students who were taught in traditional

reading programs that emphasized comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling,

with the reading comprehension scores of students who were taught through an approach

that emphasized some form of free voluntary reading in school. In 51 of the 54 studies,

students who engaged in more reading during the school day scored just as well or better

on reading achievement measures as students in traditional reading programs. Allington

(2001) reported the results from a series of studies he conducted on the difference in the

volume of classroom reading of high- and low-achieving elementary-school students.

The average high-achieving student read three times as much per week in school as the

average low-achieving student. In the 2000 National Assessment of Education Progress

(NAEP)--*The Nation's Report Card--Fourth Grade Reading Highlights,* it was reported

that there was a consistent, positive relationship found between amount of reading and

reading achievement. Fourth graders who reported reading 11 or more pages per day

performed higher, on average, on the standardized reading achievement measure than students who had read fewer pages per day. Overall, since 1992, there has been a steady increase in the average number of pages fourth-grade students report reading daily. This section of the review of the literature begins with a piece of seminal research on students' reading growth related to their amount of reading and is followed by studies since 2000 that further suggest the correlation between volume of reading and reading achievement and the discrepancy between boys' and girls' amounts of reading.

Before Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding's (1988) seminal work, little research had been conducted on the amount of reading outside of school and its effect on reading achievement. In a study of 155 fifth graders, the researchers examined the relationship between students' out-of-school activities and their reading achievement. For a time ranging from 8 to 26 weeks, students kept daily logs on the number of minutes they spent engaged in a variety of out-of-school activities, such as listening to music, eating dinner, reading books, and watching television. The average number of minute spent on each activity was correlated with the change in students' reading proficiency from the end of second grade to the middle of fifth grade using three achievement measures: the Metropolitan Achievement Test, a vocabulary measure, and a measure of reading rate. Reading books outside of school strongly correlated with reading proficiency; therefore, the researchers concluded "time spent reading books was the best predictor of a child's growth as a reader from the second to the fifth grade" (p. 297). One limitation of this study was the self-reported reading log data. In the current study, data collected on the self-reported reading logs were unreliable and could not be used.

Little and Hines (2006) studied an out-of-school reading program that implemented a Schoolwide Enrichment Model-Reading Framework (SEM-R) to find out whether time spent reading improved students' oral reading fluency beyond the level of expected growth for the given time. The purpose of the SEM-R Framework is threefold: (a) to encourage students to read more challenging books independently, (b) to improve students' oral fluency and comprehension skills, and (c) to increase students' enjoyment for reading. Similar to a reading workshop model (Calkins, 2001), the SEM-R framework consists of three phases: exposure, supported independent reading, and choice components. In Phase 1, the teachers give brief book talks and read aloud short passages from a variety of texts. Each book talk or read-aloud includes a reading skill or strategy lesson intended to extend students' reading skills. In Phase 2, students participate in an extended period of independent reading time, up to 45 minutes by the end of the 12 weeks, reading self-selected books of their choice. Teachers circulate and assist students with selecting books that are appropriately challenging and hold short reading conferences where they ask students to discuss what is happening in the book and to read aloud a short piece of text. In the final part of the reading conference, the teacher discusses some reading strategy, asks a higher-level question about the text, and makes connections between that book and other books and reading experiences. In Phase 3, students choose from a menu of options for how they can extend their reading experience. Sample extension activities include creating artwork, writing about the reading, or talking with someone about their reading.

One hundred fifty-five students in grades 3 through 6 from eight schools in a

Northeastern state in the United States participated in the 12-week program. Students were asked by teachers to participate if they had shown an interest in reading, if they demonstrated competent skills in reading, and if they were capable of reading independently for an extended amount of time. A measure of oral fluency for each student was conducted in the first 2 weeks and last 2 weeks of the study. Students of all grade levels demonstrated statistically significant gains in their oral fluency, as was expected. What was of greater relevance to the researchers was that at two grade levels, grades 3 and 5, students made statistically significant gains in oral fluency, on average, that were greater than those of a national norm group of students. Students in grades 4 and 6 also made greater gains, on average, than the norm group; however, their gains were not statistically significant. There was no difference within the groups. Girls and boys made equal gains, as did students from different socioeconomic groups.

Two limitations of the study need to be considered. First, only students with strong positive reading habits were invited to participate. Similar results may not have occurred if the sample of students had included low-achieving readers, reluctant readers, or readers with negative attitudes toward reading. Second, the same reading passages were used for the pre- and postreading fluency measure; therefore, there is some chance that students recalled the passages from the earlier reading, which may have inflated their final scores.

Three connections can be made between this study and the current study. First, teacher book talks and read-alouds were used to introduce students to a variety of book titles and genres. Second, a chunk of independent reading time followed each book talk

and read-aloud. Third, students' amount of reading was measured to investigate if there

was a change in the amount of reading. Researchers called for further research on how

the structure of SEM-R, which includes teacher book talks and read-alouds and

independent reading, affect students' attitudes toward reading. The proposed study was

one step toward learning to what degree one sample of students' attitudes toward reading

changed under these conditions.

In 2008, Reis, Eckert, McCoach, Jacobs, and Coyne studied the effect of the

SEM-R Framework on third graders through sixth graders' oral reading fluency, reading

comprehension, and reading attitudes. A 14-week intervention using the three phases of

the SEM-R Framework (see Little & Hines, 2006) was used within the school day. The

results from two different groups of students--the comparison group, who had 2 hours of

the basal reading program, and the treatment group, who had one hour of the basal

reading program and one hour of the SEM-R--were compared. Oral fluency was

measured using one-minute pre- and postreading fluency passages. Reading

comprehension was measured using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Attitude

toward reading was measured using the ERAS (McKenna & Kear, 1990). The

researchers found a statistically significant difference between the two groups' oral

reading fluency, but no statistical differences in their reading comprehension scores or

their reading attitude scores. No rationale was given for why the reading attitude scores

of students in the treatment group were no different from the students in the comparison

group. Possible reasons may have been a lack of teacher proficiency in using the SEM-R

Framework, the continued use of the basal reading program, the use of teacher book talks

or read-alouds that were not of interest to students, or the lack of familiarity with the expectations for behavior and performance during independent reading. The current study provided another opportunity to measure whether teacher book talks and read-alouds followed by a scheduled period of in-school independent reading influenced students' attitudes toward reading. In the Reis et al. (2008) study, students in the treatment group switched classes with students in the control group; therefore, some interaction may have occurred. In the current study, there was no control group. Students in the two fifth-grade classrooms received the same treatment, and it is unlikely that students from the two schools interacted during the study.

Although research supports the need for increased amounts of reading to improve reading ability, boys, on average, read less than girls. Nippold, Duthie, and Larsen (2005) examined the amount of time sixth graders spent reading for pleasure each day and the types of materials they most enjoy. They also wanted to learn what were the reading preferences of students when they engage in reading for pleasure and what other activities might interfere with the amount of time students have available to read. One hundred sixth graders and 100 ninth graders responded to three survey items. First, researchers asked students to select from a list of activities how they spent their free time. Second, students were asked to estimate the amount of time they spent outside of their school day reading for pleasure, for example, none, 5 to 10 minutes, 10 to 20 minutes. Third, the students were asked to select from a list the types of books they enjoyed reading. The students were given the option of other for each of the questions.

As with the students surveyed by Anderson et al. (1988) almost 20 years prior,

some of the most popular out-of-school leisure activities were listening to music and watching television. A new popular activity was playing computer games. Fifty-one percent of the students indicated that reading was one of their leisure-time activities. Their preferred reading materials included magazines (63%), novels (52%), and comics (41%). There was a statistically significant main effect for gender and amount of time spent reading: boys selected the option "none" more often than girls. One limitation of this study is that students were not asked to indicate how much time they spend doing their homework. Given their ages, it is possible that students spent a substantial amount of time reading for school-related reasons. Some students may not have had much time remaining to do more reading. Some English language arts teachers assign 30 minutes of reading a book of their choice as homework. Students may have considered this task not to be recreational reading, even if they were given the choice of reading whatever they prefer. The current study attempted to measure students' amount of reading in school and at home and results were to be analyzed by gender to learn whether the fifth-grade boys in the current study read more than fifth-grade girls. Due to students' errors on their reading logs when self-reporting their amount of reading, amount of reading at home could not be analyzed.

Results of the Nippold et al. study (2005) reinforce the claim made by researchers who have studied boys' reading habits that boys read less than girls (Sullivan, 2003); however, results of other studies suggest that boys engage in many literacy-related activities outside of school (Gallagher et al., 2004; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). These studies are explored in the final section on boys' out-of-school literacy activities.

Boys' Out-of-School Literacy Activities

Given the research on the differences in the amount of reading for boys and girls, for both academic and recreational reasons, Love and Hamston (2003) examined leisure reading habits of 75 boys and their families. Using questionnaire and qualitative interview data collected from the boys and their parents, the researchers learned that most of the boys were capable readers; however, the parents considered their sons to be reluctant readers because they chose not to read even when they were highly capable. Through interviews with the boys, the researchers learned that all of these boys chose to read a variety of texts, especially electronic media or blended forms of print and electronic text, in domains that were of importance to them, such as sports, cars, games; however, their parents failed to recognize these literacy activities as being valuable reading. Often, parents tried to intervene and force their sons to read what parents considered to be "privileged" forms of literacy--all printed media and most of which were novels. Electronic forms of reading such as email, websites, chats, text-based computer games, and computer magazines consistently were rejected by parents as being inferior to print-based reading materials that students were responsible for reading in school. Love and Hamston warned educators of the dangers of viewing leisure reading as no more than the choice of reading traditional print-based materials. They claimed that by ignoring the domains of interest to boys, especially those communicated through contemporary forms of electronic print, educators may alienate boys from school. One limitation of this study is that educators in Australia may view leisure reading differently than teachers in the United States.

Smith and Wilhelm (2002) conducted a year-long study of 49 7th- through 12th-grade males who attended school at four different sites in three different states: an urban high school with a population of mostly African American and Puerto Rican Americans, a comprehensive regional suburban high school with a diverse student population, a rural middle and high school, and a private all-boys middle and high school. About one-third of the boys were in one of each of three ability levels of school performance--high-achieving, average-achieving, and low-achieving--and represented four different ethnicities: European Americans ($n = 32$), African Americans ($n = 10$), Puerto Rican Americans ($n = 5$), and Asian Americans($n = 2$). The purpose of Smith and Wilhelm's study was to contribute to the research on boys and literacy, and, more specifically, to provide qualitative data that offered a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities related to boys' underachievement in school-based literacy activities. Furthermore, being high-school English teachers themselves, the researchers conducted the study to help English teachers reflect and improve upon their current teaching practices in ways that might better serve the males they teach.

The researchers collected four sets of data. The first data set were the results of a series of literacy activities that the boys ranked according to enjoyment level and the corresponding interviews where the boys discussed their rankings. The second set of data were the boys' responses to a set of profiles of different males engaging in literacy activities. The boys read each profile and responded during one-on-one interviews how each profile was like or not like them and whether they admired or did not admire the behaviors of the males in each profile. The third data set consisted of the literacy logs

that each boy kept of their daily reading and writing activities, one-on-one interviews between the boys and researchers every 4 to 6 weeks, and the researchers' observations of the boys in and out of school. The fourth set of data were the recordings of the participants' think-aloud responses to four different types of stories that offered a range of plot and character types.

The results of Smith and Wilhelm's (2002) study were published in their popular book *"Reading Don't Fix No Chevys": Literacy in the Lives of Young Men.* Only the research findings most relevant to the current study are presented here. First, although they had many difference, the boys in the study shared several characteristics: needing to be challenged, wanting to be competent and in control, valuing clear and immediate feedback, enjoying being fully absorbed in an experience, and needing to be social. Second, the boys recognized the importance of and valued school and literacy, even though most merely went through the motions to complete assigned school tasks rather than fully engaging in them the way they would out-of-school literacy activities of their choice. Third, all the boys experienced meaningful interactions with a variety of texts; however, it is doubtful that most of these texts are taught or even valued within the formal context of school.

In response to their findings, Smith and Wilhelm (2002) made several suggestions for how teachers might change their practice. Some are changes that the researchers believe teachers can make fairly easily, but others they acknowledged would require significant departmental changes and would take years to implement. One of these significant changes is a call for English teachers to rethink the definition of literacy in a

way that includes all forms of communication, including music, video, the visual arts, and technology, rather than simply print. According to the researchers, redefining literacy is important for four reasons: (a) it allows teachers and students to expand and explore together more types of texts, (b) it validates more boys' identities as readers and provides for them a place within the English classroom where they can discuss texts that matter to them, (c) it allows teachers to build upon boys' interests and literacy strengths and serves as a conduit to a deeper understanding of more traditional texts, and (d) it better prepares students to function in a world where literacy is far more broadly defined than it is in school. Smith and Wilhelm called on teachers to consider that they are teaching individuals the content of English and that both students and content are equally important.

A second finding from Smith and Wilhelm's study (2002) is that boys are motivated to learn by solving real-life problems. Outside of school, boys would go to great lengths to find answers to their questions; therefore, the researchers suggested that teachers organize their curricula in ways that promote student inquiry. Given the right context, boys will read widely and engage in whatever literacy activities necessary to answer their own questions.

A third finding was the powerful role of student choice, which brought into question who should be selecting the texts that are read in the English classroom. Historically, teachers, the heads of English departments, or both decide which books will be read in English classes. The results of their study caused Smith and Wilhelm (2002) to question all of their past practices regarding text selection and to suggest that teachers

reconsider these practices as well: providing a wider range of genres, reconsidering

teaching texts that are at too high of a difficulty level for most students, offering a

balance of texts that are shorter in length with those that are longer, including some

humorous texts, and allowing students to make choices about their in-school reading.

Finally, their research findings raised questions about how curricula ought to be

delivered and the types of activities that ought to be part of the English classroom

operations. First, teachers should activate boys' prior knowledge of the topic being read

and frontload students with information when boys lack knowledge of their own.

Second, teachers must find ways to make classroom learning a more social activity. All

the boys in the study led literate lives outside of school; these home literacy activities

were highly social, embedded within meaningful contexts where they read and wrote for

real purposes. Creating classroom environments that replicate these conditions may lead

boys to engage more in school-related literacy activities.

Several of the findings from Smith and Wilhelm's (2002) study supported the

need for the current study. The researchers called for teachers to consider boys' reading

interests and to include a balance of reading materials and literacy-related activities in the

English language arts classroom. Smith and Wilhelm studied 7th- through 12th-grade

boys; however, the same claim is reasonably true for elementary-school teachers. In the

current study, fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading interests were used to select the

teacher book talks and read-alouds in weeks 2, 4, and 6. Second, the researchers called

for more student choice. The students in the current study were free to select the reading

materials of their choice for the 20 minutes of independent reading each day. One

limitation of the Smith and Wilhelm study was the lack of teacher voices in response to what the researchers had learned from the boys. In the current study, two fifth-grade teachers were interviewed before, during, and after the study to find to what extent their beliefs and practices had changed regarding students' unrestricted choice of reading materials and integrating boys' reading interests into the language arts instruction.

In 2004, Gallagher, Cambourne, and Kiggins explored the conditions that motivate boys' out-of-school literacy behaviors and the degree of congruence between boys' out-of-school literacy preferences, referred to as alternate literacies, and school-based literacy practices. Inspired by the recurring research finding that boys who show little interest in school-related literacy can engage deeply in out-of-school literacy-related activities (Martino, 2003; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002), the researchers conducted case studies of three grade 4 boys from one public school in New South Wales, Australia. The researchers believed that teachers should be motivated to help their male students become more invested in literacy, but, instead, they questioned whether teachers' adherence to print-based materials as the most valued curriculum was part of what caused boys to feel alienated from school-related literacy activities. To answer their research questions, the researchers collected five forms of data: interviews, classroom observations, students' reflections, work samples, and teacher documents. The researchers interviewed the boys about the range of literacy experiences they engaged in outside of school and how they perceived their in-school literacy practices. The researchers observed the boys in class and recorded field notes. They analyzed the boys' reflections about their in- and out-of-school literacies. Last, they collected documents from teachers that were related to the

curriculum and analyzed the students' work samples.

One limitation of the Gallagher et al. (2004) study was the small sample size. Case studies with only three fourth-grade boys make the findings from this study less generalizable; however, two key findings emerged from the data collection that provide insight into the current study. First, when students' interests were integrated into the school literacy curriculum, the boys were more engaged and more motivated. In the current study, reading engagement emerged as an important change in students' reading behavior. Second, although their teacher was aware of the boys' alternate literacy interests and worked to incorporate them into classroom literacy assignments, more effort was needed school wide to integrate alternate literacies of high interest to boys with their in-school literacy practices. In the current study, one fifth-grade teacher voiced her concern about being the only teacher to change her literacy instructional practice.

Section three of the literature review outlined studies in four areas related to boys' reading behaviors: boys' reading interests, graphica, amount of reading, and boys' out-of-school literacy activities. The final section of the literature review contains studies related to the third dimension of social cognitive theory: environment. Although the home environment and several aspects of the school environment have been shown to play an important role in boys' literacy development, the current study was limited only to factors related to the English language arts classroom environment.

Environmental Factors Related to Reading

Central to the current study were the conditions present in the English language arts classroom environment. Although each English language arts classroom

environment is different, the assumption made in this study was that certain aspects are present in most English language arts classrooms and play an integral role in this study. The following section of the literature review focuses on the following classroom conditions: English language arts curriculum, teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, independent reading, students' unrestricted choice of texts for independent reading in school, and the English language arts classroom teacher.

English Language Arts Curriculum

In response to the findings of Gallagher et al.'s (2004) case-study research of three grade four boys' alternate literacy practices, the researchers developed a model outlining how teachers, parents, and the school at large can work together to promote higher levels of literacy engagement for boys called the "Ideal Model for Engaging Boys in the Literacy Classroom" (p. 13). As seen in Figure 2, the researchers used the image of an inverted triangle to represent how three components--whole-school activities, classroom activities, and literacy activities--might come together to provide a model for meaningful literacy experiences for boys. The top, widest area of the triangle contains whole-school activities where the entire school staff works as a team and with parents to improve boys' literacy. The middle area of the triangle contains classroom activities, which include a variety of instructional approaches to promote boys' literacy engagement, not only in reading but also across the curriculum. The bottom area of the triangle contains literacy activities, which include criteria for planning literacy activities that are most relevant to boys. Although the researchers presented their model as a "hypothetical 'ideal' model" (p. 12) of how parents, teachers, and schools can work
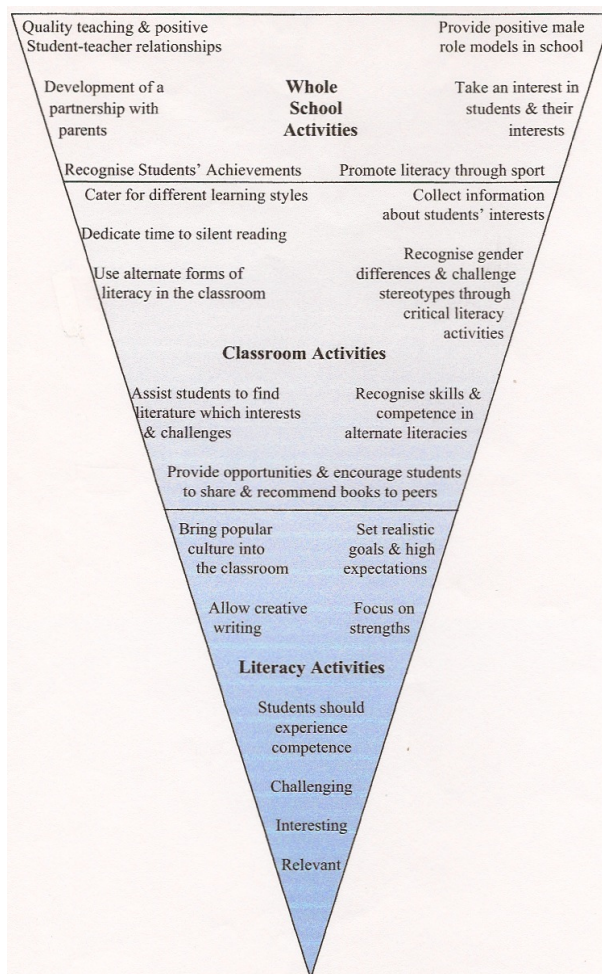
Figure 2. Ideal Model for Engaging Boys in the Literacy Classroom

together to address the boy crisis related to literacy, the model may serve as a valuable

tool for helping teachers who are interested in changing their classroom practices.

Furthermore, they were not alone in their belief that the English language arts curriculum

needs to be rethought. Two other

models on how one might view the English curriculum are presented in this review.

Similar to Gallagher et al. (2004), Newkirk (2002) promoted an expansion of the

narrow definition currently held by English teachers for what is literacy when he

promoted what he referred to as "low-status" (p. xv) narratives that are enjoyed by many

boys: comics, gaming books, sports tables, action-filled plots, and joke books. His

interviews with boys and girls provided valuable insights into understanding boys'

literacy interests, especially with popular culture, led him to publish his results in a book

for parents, educators, and anyone interesting in learning more about the genres that boys

choose and why they choose them.

    To illustrate his views on the radical changes that he would like to be

implemented in schools--not just the English classroom, but in all classrooms--Newkirk

created a model he called "The Permeable Curriculum" (see Figure 3).
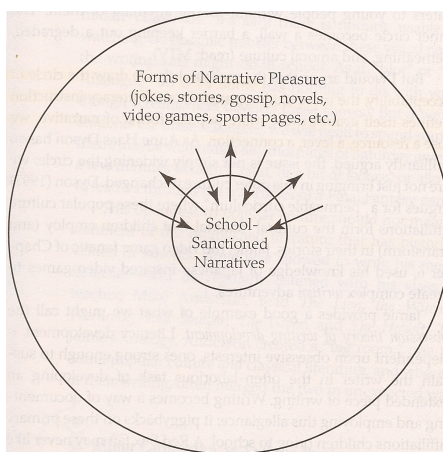
Figure 3. The Permeable Curriculum

    The model contains two concentric circles. The large outer circle represents all

forms of communication available to society, including the written word, visuals, and oral

activities, and the smaller inner circle represents the "school-sanctioned" (p. 170) reading

materials that are used to measure students' literacy ability. Although Newkirk did not

suggest that all modes of communication in the outer circle be re-sanctioned as

acceptable in-school reading material, he asked educators to consider widening the small,

inner circle of acceptable school reading materials to include a greater number of

literacies so that students whose primary reading interests are not narrative fiction will

not continue to be alienated from the literacy club.

A third researcher and former middle- and high-school English teacher, Carter

(2008) made this claim about the standard English curriculum:

> There are those who say the canon is dead, but in many classrooms, it is alive
> and well in one form or another. In the way in which English language arts
> departments and school districts determine booklists, reading lists, and what
> is deemed acceptable literature, it is very much alive" (p. 55).

To illustrate his point, Carter (2008) developed a series of visual models depicting

the canon in English language arts education, or the adopted curriculum. For many years,

the high-school canon and reading anthologies consisted primarily of classical literature

written by dead European men. Carter's pictorial of this is a giant white jawbreaker that

once was nearly impossible to break (see Figure 4).
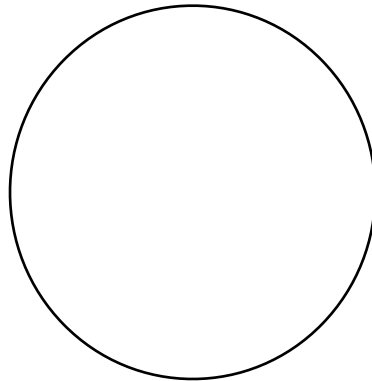
Figure 4. Jawbreaker

Eventually, the canon evolved to include some works of literature written by

women and minority writers from African American, Asian American, and Latino

American cultures, as well as other underrepresented groups. His visual depiction of this

expansion is a multicolored swirled lollipop where each shade represents one of many

voices and perspectives that account for how literature should be studied within

classrooms, as well as new approaches to literary criticism (see Figure 5).
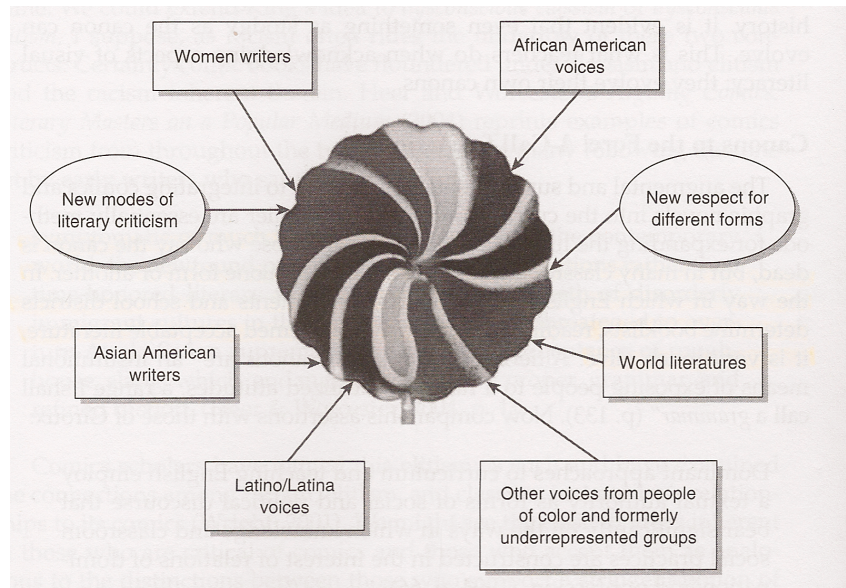
Figure 5. Multicolored Swirled Lollipop

In this model, teachers embrace an even greater expansion of the canon by

recognizing what he refers to as the "canon-curriculum-culture connection" (p. 57).

Because Carter's area of interest and expertise is in sequential art or visual media, his

model also emphasized graphica as one of the key cultural mediums that he believed

should be incorporated into classroom reading experiences.

In his final model, which he represented as a "pinwheel lollipop" (see Figure 6),

teachers would expand their restricted views of literacy to include comic strips, comic

books, graphic novels, and picture books and would view literary analysis as an

understanding of not only traditional texts but also all forms of texts.
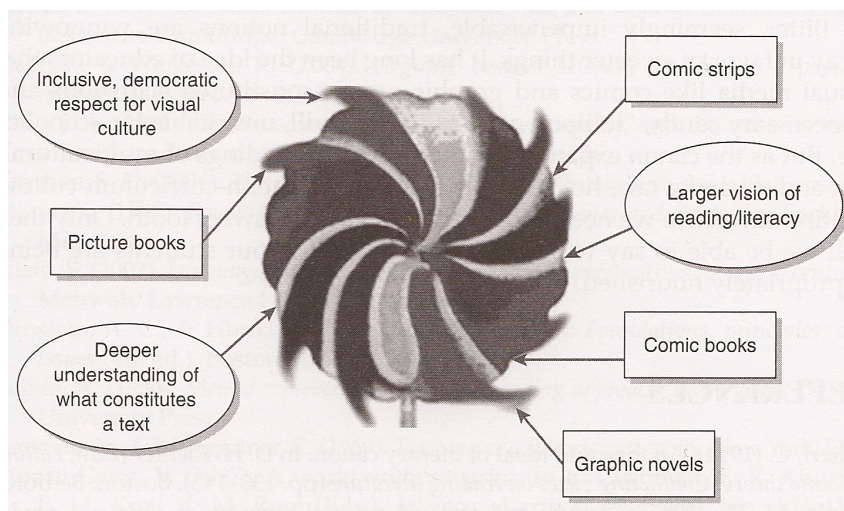
Figure 6. Pinwheel Lollipop

Collectively, the ideas presented by these researchers represent a growing outcry for English teachers, English department chairs, and curriculum developers to expand their definitions of what does and does not qualify as worthwhile reading. This notion of an expanded definition of literacy was relevant to the current study where the individual interests of reluctant boy readers were used to select the teacher book talks and read-alouds for weeks 2, 4, and 6 of the intervention. One final research study where a large sample of high-school students were asked to voice their reactions to a career of experiencing the standard English curriculum is now presented.

Cope (1997) sought to find out how traditional school practices and the English curriculum affected the reading development of 272 twelfth graders. Students were asked to respond to the prompt: Tell me about your experiences with reading. Through written responses, Cope learned about the students' reading experiences spanning all of their years in school. Results of the reading autobiographies showed most of students' memories associated with reading in school were negative. Cope listed four areas that

surfaced as being the most troublesome for students: (a) assigned reading, such as

Shakespeare and Dickens, that was too complex for the students' grade level and too

disconnected to their everyday lives, (b) spending too long on a single work of literature

to the point of over-analysis, which led to students disliking the book, (c) writing book

reports, and (d) being forced to read aloud in front of peers. Cope claimed that these

traditional English teaching practices lead students to have a negative attitude toward

reading, instead of fostering a lifelong love of reading that extends beyond students'

English classroom experiences.

Cope (1997) offered teachers the following practices to counteract traditional

methods that turn students off to reading: (a) reserve Shakespeare and Dickens for a 12th-

grade British literature course offered for students who are interested in this genre and

select books for whole-class reading from the wide range of contemporary adolescent

literature that is developmentally appropriate for the students' grade level, (b) assign

reading response journals where students have an opportunity to give their interpretation

of the literature rather than learning only the teachers' interpretation, (c) confer with

students about their reading or write responses in students' reading response journals, (d)

read aloud to students to help students connect with more difficult selections and to

model a love of reading, and (e) allow students to select books of their choice and

provide time in school for them to read these books. Of direct relevance to the current

study are Cope's recommendations for how teachers might counteract students' negative

school reading experiences, which include the use of read-alouds, students' choice of

texts, and time provided in school for students to read, all of which were integral parts of

the current study. Although Cope's study gave voice to students' reading experiences,

one limitation to the study was the lack of face-to-face conversations with students.

Written responses from students could have been misunderstood or taken out of context.

In the current study, one-on-one interviews were conducted so followup questions could

be asked when misunderstandings occurred.

Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds

In 1985, the Commission on Reading stated "the single most important activity

for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to

children (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985, p. 23). There has been a wealth

of discussion about the value of teacher read-alouds in the literature (Ivey, 2003; Lane &

Wright, 2007; Lesesne, 2006; Wan, 2000); yet there are few empirical studies that report

whether read-alouds are being used in classrooms. All the studies presented in this

review have been conducted since 2000, indicating that teacher read-alouds have gained

renewed interest in the field of reading research.

In a study of 1,874 elementary teachers of students in kindergarten through sixth

grade, Jacobs, Morrison, and Swinyard (2000) aimed to learn how frequently and what

types of read-aloud practices were being used in elementary classrooms. The national

survey contained 8 items that asked teachers to respond to the number of times in the past

10 days of teaching they had used any of the listed read-aloud activities. Five of the eight

items were related to genres of writing; for example, "How many out of the last 10 school

days did you read aloud a picture book to your class?" The other genres were short

stories, children's novels, children's informational books, and textbooks. The remaining

three items aimed at finding out how often teachers (a) read books of students' choosing, (b) introduced new books in class, and (c) recommended specific book titles.

The results of the study showed a statistically significant linear relationship between grade level and the frequency of time spent reading aloud. The higher the grade level, the less often teachers read aloud to their students, except textbook reading. Teachers read aloud picture books (an average of 6 out of 10 days) and novels (an average of 5 out of 10 days) more often than informational books (an average of 3 out of 10 days). Primary teachers introduced and recommended books more often than intermediate teachers. In the intermediate grades--4, 5, and 6--introducing books and recommending books ranked in the lower half of the eight read-aloud activities. Reading students' student-selected books ranked seventh or eighth in all intermediate grades. The current study used teacher book talks and read-alouds in genres of interest to boys, including informational books. Jacobs et al. (2000) considered introducing books to children and recommending book titles as read-aloud activities because they are additional ways to share book experiences with students. In the current study, both teacher book talks and interactive teacher read-alouds were categorized as read-aloud activities. The researchers noted in the discussion section that read-alouds are not as common of a practice in elementary classrooms as they had expected, despite the claim that read-alouds are an effective approach to teaching reading.

Two limitations of the Jacobs et al. (2000) study are those typically found in survey research. First, the results attained are those provided by teachers who chose to participate in the study. Possibly the teachers who did not participate may have

responded differently. Second, the teachers may have misinterpreted some of the

questionnaire items. In the current study, two fifth-grade teachers were interviewed

directly to find out their beliefs and practices about teacher book talks and interactive

read-alouds and how these instructional practices improved their students' reading

attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. Their voices help advocate for

read-aloud practices to be implemented more often in upper-elementary classrooms.

     In a similar study in 2005, Albright and Ariail explored how often and what texts

middle- school teachers read aloud to their students. One hundred forty-one teachers in

three middle-schools in Texas completed a survey that asked teachers to provide

demographic information and their professional development background in reading

aloud to students. One yes or no question was asked of teachers regarding reading aloud.

"Do you read aloud to your students?" If teachers answered no, they were asked to select

among four reasons listed or to complete an answer of their own. If teachers answered

yes, they were asked three additional questions giving further information as to (a) why

they read aloud, (b) how often they read aloud, and (c) the types of texts they read aloud.

Eighty-five percent of the middle-school teachers reported reading aloud to their students.

Ninety-six percent of English teachers reported reading aloud to students. The number

one type of text middle-school teachers read aloud to students was the textbook. The

type of text English teachers read aloud most were historical fiction chapter books. Few

of the book read aloud were informational. Less than 25% of the teachers read aloud

picture books, magazines, or newspapers. The top three reasons teachers selected from

the list of reasons given for why they read aloud were (a) to model good reading

practices, (b) to make texts more accessible to readers who cannot read, and (c) to ensure

or increase students' comprehension of the text. Reasons for not reading aloud to

students were that it was not appropriate in their subject area and they never thought to do

so. No teacher believed reading aloud was not an important instructional practice. In the

discussion section, the researchers noted that their open-ended questions related to

reading aloud left it open to teachers to interpret what does it mean to read aloud to

students. Because many of the teachers included reading aloud the textbook and

directions for assignments such as worksheets, the positive response to how many

teachers read aloud may have been inflated.

The researchers conducted a similar study of middle-school teachers (Ariail &

Albright, 2006) and when they posed the yes or no question asking teachers if they read

aloud to their students, they provided the following definition: "Reading aloud refers to

the teacher reading aloud texts such as fictional and nonfictional literature, poetry,

magazines, newspapers, etc. to students. We do not include reading aloud selections from

textbooks, except literature anthologies. We also do not include reading aloud items such

as directions or announcements" (p. 87). Although the percentage of teachers who

reported yes to reading aloud was not as high as the first study, 72% of the 476

respondents reported reading aloud to their students. For those teachers who taught

English, 96% said they read aloud to their students. The top reasons for reading aloud

were to promote a love of literature, reading, or both (18%) and to enhance understanding

or comprehension (15%). Once again, the most popular type of text read aloud by

English language arts teachers were chapter books or novels (39%) and for history and

science teachers were information or nonfiction books (16%). One limitation of this study is that all respondents were attendees at a middle-school conference. Because attending the conference is not a requirement for middle-school teachers, this sample may represent more teachers who go above and beyond what is required to learn more about best teaching practices, and, therefore, may be more aware of the research supporting teacher read-alouds.

Noting that in past research on teacher read-alouds, no one had studied which read-aloud processes were most appropriate, Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey (2004) conducted a two-phase study on interactive teacher read-alouds. The researchers studied the read-aloud procedures used by 25 teachers considered to be "experts." These were teachers who had been identified by their principals as being model teachers of best practices or whose students consistently performed above the school average on reading achievement measures. Each teacher was observed by two researchers, and seven common characteristics were identified among the experts as what constitutes a good read-aloud experience for students.

Several of these characteristics are relevant to the proposed study and are explained in detail in chapter III. One of the seven common characteristics was the type of text selections the expert teachers chose to read aloud. These texts were mostly award-winning books. One limitation of this study, therefore, is the lack of variety in the text formats that teachers read aloud. In the current study, the two teachers read aloud graphic novels and informational texts that contained pictures, which both teachers found to be more challenging to read aloud.

After completing phase one of their study, Fisher et al. (2004) wanted to learn how widespread are the practices of the read-aloud experts they had studied. In phase two, they observed 120 teachers from grades three through eight to learn how these teachers' read-alouds compared with the read-alouds of the 25 expert teachers. They found that these teachers were consistent in their use of animation and expression, discussion of the texts, and their choice of interesting text selections; however, the teachers did not preview and practice the text consistently before reading, provide models of fluent oral reading, and connect their read-alouds to other literacy-related activities. Just over half of the teachers set a clear purpose for reading aloud for their students. As noted by the researchers, some of the characteristics of good read-alouds were shared by the larger sample of teachers in the study, but there was much room for teachers to improve upon their read-aloud teaching experiences.

In an attempt to insure the best experiences for the teachers and students in the current study, I discussed with the two fifth-grade teachers the research on the essential components of interactive read-alouds and provided each teacher with a DVD that included a teacher modeling an interactive read-aloud according to the essential components.

Following each teacher book talk and interactive read-aloud, the intervention for the study included time for students to read independently. A review of the literature related to independent reading follows in the next section.

Independent Reading

When the National Reading Panel (2000) published its report on best practices in

the teaching of reading and failed to include independent reading in this category,

researchers and teachers who have considered this instructional practice sacred were

outraged (Garan & DeVoogd, 2008). According to the Panel,

> There has been widespread agreement in the literature that encouraging students
> to engage in wide, independent, silent reading increases reading achievement.
> Literally hundreds of correlational studies find that the best readers read the most
> and that poor readers read the least. These correlational studies suggest that the
> more that children read, the better their fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
> However, these findings are correlational in nature, and correlation does not imply
> causation. No doubt, it could be that the more that children read, the more their
> reading skills improve, but it is also possible that better readers simply choose to
> read more. (p. 12)

The Panel concluded by saying, "In sum, methodologically rigorous research

designed to assess the specific influences that independent silent reading practices have

on reading fluency and other reading skills and the motivation to read has not yet been

conducted" (National Reading Panel, p. 13). As part of the *No Child Left Behind Act*

(2001), all federally funded research in education had to be scientifically based; only

experimental or quasi-experimental studies were acceptable research designs and

preferably those that included the random assignment of individuals. Notwithstanding

the Panel's report, researchers continue to study independent reading using a variety of

methodological designs to learn more about how this instructional practice contributes to

students' reading achievement. More recent research studies on independent reading, or

sustained silent reading, are included in this literature review.

Trudel (2007) noticed that each year she had implemented sustained silent reading

with her third graders the same pattern of behaviors repeated themselves. One group of

students, typically her best readers, remained on task during the 15-minute period,

whereas other students exhibited behaviors that frustrated her. Some students, although

they appeared to be engaged in their reading, were reading books that either were above

or below their independent reading-ability level. Other students were out of their seats

searching for a book, day after day, and rarely settled in to read for any chunk of time.

Finally, there were the students who were seated throughout the room, but, instead of

staying on task and reading, they were talking more to the students nearby than actually

reading. Trudel was aware of the research supporting time spent reading in school as a

means of building students' vocabulary, comprehension, and reading fluency, but she was

concerned whether sustained silent reading, or SSR, was a valuable use of time. Upon

further investigation of the literature on time spent reading in school, Trudel decided to

try a more structured approach to providing students with in-school reading known as IR

or independent reading. There are five key elements of an effective independent reading

program (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001): (a) teacher support with students' text selections, (b)

student-kept reading records, (c) students' self-reflections on their reading, (d) shared

mini-lessons and discussions by teachers and students, and (e) teacher-student

conferences.

　　　To evaluate which approach to in-school reading was most effective, Trudel

(2007) compared her 16 third graders' reading attitudes and reading behaviors during and

after 5 weeks of SSR with their reading attitudes and behaviors during and after 6 weeks

of IR. Trudel measured reading attitudes in two ways. First, students completed a

reading attitude survey at the end of SSR and again at the end of IR. Second, Trudel

recorded her observations of students' attitudes and collected interview data at the end of

the study. Trudel measured reading behaviors in three ways. First, she kept a journal of

her observations of students' text choices and the amount of time they remained on task.

Second, she collected and analyzed what students had recorded in their reading

notebooks. Third, she kept a record of the discussions she had with students during

reading conferences.

The results of the reading attitude survey showed a minimal decrease in 11 of the

16 students' reading attitude scores after 6 weeks of IR. Trudel's classroom observations

and interview data contradicted these findings. She had observed more students talking

about what they were reading and showing more enthusiasm for their text choices during

IR than during SSR and that during the final interview several students perceived

themselves as having a more positive attitude toward reading during IR.

The results of students' reading behaviors were grouped into four categories:

amount of on-task and off-task reading behaviors, students' text choices, teacher-student

discussions, and student-response documents. The mean for the amount of on-task

behavior during SSR was approximately 84%. All but one student was on task 72% or

more of the time; three students remained on task during SSR over 90% of the time.

Students exhibited even more on-task behavior during IR with 14 of the 16 students

increasing their total amount of time on task. One particular student increased on-task

behavior from 59% during SSR to nearly 83% during IR. Trudel observed that during IR

students selected more texts that matched their reading-ability level. She reported that

during SSR several students of average or higher reading ability chose to read comics that

were below their reading level, but during IR these students selected books other than

comics. The comic books Trudel mentioned having in her classroom library were Garfield and Calvin and Hobbes collections, both of which she referred to as being more suited for lower-ability readers. There was no mention of whether comic books at higher reading levels were on hand for students to read. Trudel's response to students' interest in reading comics was similar to the research on teachers' dissatisfaction with students' desire to read comic books more than other types of books that have been deemed more worthwhile reading.

Trudel's analysis of her discussions with students suggested that higher quality conversations occurred during IR than during SSR largely due to teacher-student discussions being an integral part of the IR model; however, Trudel noted that some teacher-student discussions took place during SSR as well. The same results were found for the students' reading responses. Students were not required to write responses to what they had read during SSR so a comparison of quantity of responses does not apply. What was notable was that many students opted to write more than the required number of reading responses during IR, which suggested positive change in reading behavior. Although Trudel's dual role as teacher and researcher was a limitation in her study, the components of her structured Independent Reading period informed the current study design: teacher book talks or interactive read-alouds, time in school for independent reading, and partner talk about what students had read.

Kelly and Clausen-Grace (2006) measured the degree of change in students' ability to monitor their thinking processes during reading. One of the two researchers began to question how her third-grade students were progressing in their reading

comprehension of self-selected books and to what degree they were implementing successfully the self-monitoring reading strategies she had taught them during their sustained silent reading time.

The researcher used the Developmental Reading Assessment for grades 4 through 8 (DRA 4-8) to measure students' reading engagement and reading comprehension. The DRA Student Reading Survey included questions in two areas: wide reading and self-assessment and goal setting. The wide-reading portion of the survey asked students to discuss their recent reading experiences, that is, titles of books they had read and the genres and authors they enjoyed reading. The self-assessment and goal-setting section of the survey asked students to identify their strengths and weaknesses as readers and then to develop a plan to improve in their weak areas. Using the rubric provided, the teacher-researchers identified at which reading engagement level--intervention, instructional, independent, advanced--students were performing in each of the two areas. A total engagement score was found by adding the results of the two rubric scores. Results of the survey showed that although 76% of the students were at the independent level for wide reading, students were reading unchallenging texts in a narrow range of genres: mostly fantasy and realistic fiction. Furthermore, students were unsure how to monitor their comprehension and, overall, had a poor perception of reading. Of greater surprise were the results for their self-assessment and goal setting. Sixty-seven percent of the students scored at the two lowest levels: intervention or instructional. Students had a limited understanding of what it meant to monitor their comprehension, and many simply parroted back the strategy language they had been taught in class.

To measure reading comprehension, students read the DRA-leveled passages, made predictions about their reading, and responded to literal and inferential comprehension questions. An overall percentage of comprehension accuracy was attained. From the survey and oral fluency measurement, teachers had a comprehensive snapshot of each student's reading progress.

Recognizing a need for improvement in all reading areas, the teacher-researchers used what they knew to be successful components of the reading workshop model and redesigned their SSR block. The new SSR instructional approach, R^5, which stood for read, relax, reflect, respond, and rap was implemented for 10 to 15 minutes, 3 days per week. Students read self-selected texts and practiced the strategies they were taught (read and relax) while the teacher circulated the room and took a "status of the class" (Atwell, 1998), recording what each student was reading to monitor whether the students were making good book choices and progressing in the amount of pages they were reading. After reading, students reflected on their strategy use and recorded their thinking, as well as the book title and genre, in their reading logs (reflect and respond). The teacher circulated during this time to assist students and to monitor their responses. Finally, students paired up with another student to share an interesting response from their reading. Students were responsible for listening carefully to their partners so that during the final phase, the whole group share, students who were called upon could report what their partner had shared (rap).

Students made statistically significant gains in their reading progress using the new R^5 SSR approach. The students were reassessed on the DRA 7 months after the

study began. All students scored at the independent or advanced levels for wide reading and self-assessment and goal setting. The percentage of students who were able to list three or more genres they had read increased from 38% to 61%, and seven new genres were listed that had not been named by students before. In reading comprehension, 95% of the students scored at the two higher levels--independent or advanced levels--in the areas of prediction, summary, and literal comprehension. Seventy-nine percent scored at the independent or advanced level in interpretation. The greatest gain was in metacognitive awareness. Previously, 11% of the students scored above at the independent or advanced level. On the reassessment, 95% of the students scored at the independent or advanced level, and no student scored at the intervention level. No demographic data were given for the sample in this study; therefore, generalizations cannot be made from this group of third graders to students in other settings. Teachers who work with high numbers of English learners or students with special needs may not make the same amount of gains as the students in this study. In the current study, 40% of the students were English learners.

In the previous two studies, students received several positive benefits from their teachers retooling their SSR block. This finding was relevant to the current study. Although it was not within the scope of the current study to include Structured Independent Reading (Trudel, 2007) or R^5 (Kelly & Clausen-Grace, 2006) for the 15-minute independent reading block that followed each teacher book talk and read-aloud, two components were used to promote a more positive independent reading experience for the students and teachers. In both studies, records were kept of the students' in-class

reading and text selections. In the current study, the students kept a record of their independent reading where they recorded the title of the book, author, and genre on their reading log, similar to what was done in each study. Second, in both studies, students talked about their reading. In the current study, students talked briefly with a partner and shared something interesting they had read before completing their reading logs.

An essential component of both independent reading structures was students' self-selected choice of reading materials. No restrictions on the type of reading materials were mentioned, so it is assumed that nontraditional forms of reading materials were permitted. Central to the current study was students' unrestricted choice of reading materials for independent reading.

Students' Unrestricted Choice of Texts for Independent Reading

Two studies presented in previous sections of this literature review revealed the importance of student choice of reading materials (Worthy, 1996b; Worthy et al., 1999). This section of the literature review includes two additional studies relevant to this important topic.

Stewart, Paradis, Ross, and Lewis (1996) noted that many of the junior-high-school students who had struggled in reading also had a history of failing their reading classes. To counteract this pattern, the researchers--two classroom teachers and two university professors--designed a literature-based developmental reading program and wanted to learn if there were improvements in the students' reading ability, and, if so, from the students' perspectives, what attributes of the program contributed most to their reading improvement. The participants were 49 seventh, eighth, and ninth graders who

attended the only junior high school located in a small rural area of Wyoming. The

reading component of the Metropolitan Achievement Test and the Gates-MacGinitie were

used to measure students' reading progress. Other reading data were collected from a

variety of resources: a pre- and postreading inventory on students' reading interests and

reading habits, goal-setting records, reading logs, response journals, teachers' anecdotal

notes on students' progress, and students' end-of-year evaluations of themselves and the

literature-based reading program. After the program had been implemented for 3 years,

the researchers conducted end-of-year semistructured interviews with all students to find

out from their perspectives how they had improved as readers and to what degree the

students attributed their improvements to the literature-based reading program. Some

phenomenological questions were asked to ground students in their own lived

experiences and with the hope that, by doing so, students would discuss their literacy

experiences more authentically.

When students were asked whether their reading ability had improved, since

being enrolled in the literature-based program, 44 of the 49 students responded positively.

Students reported five areas of reading improvement: reading rate (42 of 44 students),

silent reading fluency (26 of 44 students), increased reading recall and comprehension

(37 of 44 students), oral reading fluency (10 of 44 students), and improvement in overall

school performance (23 of 44 students). When students were asked which aspects of the

literature-based program they attributed their increase in reading ability, students cited

four: student *choice* of reading materials (27 of 44 students), an *interest* in wanting to

read and in the books they were given the freedom to read (29 of 44 students), *time* to

read in school (20 of 44 students), and reading *practice* (33 of 44 students). Several students discussed how the literature-based reading program was the first class where they had been given time to read in school and had been able to choose books that were of interest to them. Finally, the researchers reported that the students' gains on all the standardized achievement reading tests were equal to the gains students had made in the past reading program. Although past students had not been interviewed to find out their perspectives on the old reading program, the researchers' anecdotal evidence and previous experiences indicated that past students had not experienced the same affective gains in reading as the students in the study.

Stewart et al. (1996) noted that despite similar past research findings, which suggested the need for a change in the content and structure of English language arts classrooms, classroom practice continued to promote a more teacher-centered approach to teaching reading. Stewart et al. created a model that embodied the attributes of their literature-based reading program. The researchers recommended that teachers consider how including more student choice of reading materials and more time to practice reading in school might lead to increased reading proficiency and might empower students to become life-long readers. The current study considered strongly the reading interests of boys, provided all students with the choice of reading materials, and allotted time for students to read in school.

A list of the literature available to students in the Stewart et al. (1996) study was not provided; therefore, one limitation of the study may be that students were not given access to a wide range of reading materials that matched all students' reading interests.

The researchers advocated that students should have choice of books and access to high interest reading materials, but often the books provided for students to choose from are books that are deemed acceptable by teachers. In the current study, books were selected from three types of genres and text formats that were identified by a subset of reluctant boy readers to be their favorites.

In a study of younger students, Turner and Paris (1995) examined which literacy tasks motivated students to want to read and write more. Over a 5-day period in 12 classrooms, 84 six-year-old students were observed and interviewed about the types of reading and writing tasks they were given. Considering their findings, the researchers classified the classrooms according to the amount of choice students were given when asked to complete the literacy tasks. In some classrooms, students were given a choice of tasks and had control over the product and process, which were referred to as open tasks. In other classrooms, students were given tasks that required them to find the one right answer or complete the process in only one way. These were referred to as closed tasks. The researchers found that students in classrooms who engaged in open tasks were more motivated to participate in literacy tasks and were more engaged during the process of their literacy learning. Turner and Paris believed that choice was the strongest factor that contributed to students' positive motivation. Students in classrooms that were given open tasks chose the texts that matched their reading interests and their reading levels. They chose the types of texts they wanted to read to practice their oral fluency. Students also chose texts that helped them learn more about the topic they had chosen to write about. Students in these classrooms completed more challenging literacy tasks, took more

control in making decisions about their literacy tasks, had more opportunities to construct their own meaning from the tasks, and, consequently, were more motivated to learn. In contrast to the open literacy tasks given in some classrooms, students in other classrooms were given little or no choice of reading topics, reading materials, or the processes for how to complete reading tasks. Students in classrooms who offered closed literacy tasks were less challenged and had little control over how they could complete the literacy tasks, consequently, students were less motivated to learn. Students in Turner and Paris' (1995) study were several years younger than the students in the current study. Younger students often show high levels of enthusiasm for learning; therefore, they may have been motivated more easily when given a choice of literacy tasks. The current study examined three aspects of fifth-grade students' literacy motivation when given their choice of reading materials: students' attitudes toward reading, students' reading self-efficacy, and students' amount of reading. During interviews, teachers discussed the positive effect of choice on their students' motivation to read.

The studies in this section included discussions about the role that students' choice of reading materials played in students' reading motivation and suggested that choice of reading materials is an essential component of a reading program. The degree to which student choice of reading materials is allowed depends on the practices and beliefs of teachers. The final section of this review of literature focuses on the English language arts teacher.

English Language Arts Teacher

Of all aspects of the English language arts classroom environment, the beliefs and

practices of the English language arts teacher are among the most important. Studies that have examined teachers' beliefs about the key components of a language arts program and what practices teachers engage in the most were important to this study. Of special interest were studies that investigated teachers' use of book talks and read-alouds and the amount of time teachers allow for independent reading with students having a choice of reading materials.

Worthy et al. (1998) investigated the degree of teachers' use of self-selected reading practices. The participants were 35 sixth-grade teachers from nine schools in the Southwestern United States, many of whom implemented some degree of self-selected reading (SSR) in their classrooms. Collectively, these classroom teachers taught approximately 80 classes of 20 to 30 sutdents. The researchers aimed to learn: (a) the frequency of teachers' use of self-selected reading, (b) common characteristics among classrooms where teachers use self-selected reading practices, (c) what teachers believe are the most important features of self-selected reading, and (d) what do teachers identify as the roadblocks that prevent them from implementing self-selected reading. Data were collected from one-on-one interviews with teachers. Additional data from a previous study (Worthy, 1996b) on middle-school librarians' views about students' reading habits also were considered.

Interviews with teachers yielded a range of teachers' beliefs and practices on how to teach reading at the middle-school level. Twenty sixth-grade teachers (57%) used an instructional approach to teaching reading based on students' preferences of novels that related to either a topic or genre being studied. Although the researchers did not indicate

so, it is assumed that the topic or genre was chosen by the teacher and a variety of novels related to the study were presented for students to choose from. Eight teachers (23%) taught reading using the basal reader, an anthology of reading selections published for each grade level. Five teachers (14%) used class sets of novels to teach reading. Two teachers (6%) used a highly scripted commercial reading program to teach students who were low achieving.

In addition to the instructional approaches mentioned, many of the sixth-grade teachers in the study implemented some amount of self-selected reading, also referred to in the literature as sustained silent reading, DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), and independent reading. The degree to which teachers in this study allowed time for self-selected reading in school varied widely. The highest percentage of teachers (49%) gave students 10 to 30 minutes per day to read in school, either as part of sustained silent reading or within a reading workshop model, whereas 10 teachers (29%) gave students time to read only when teachers finished their reading instruction or when students returned from visiting the school library every 2 to 3 weeks. Four teachers allowed time for silent reading two to three times each week; four teachers gave time for students to read one day per week.

Regardless of the amount of time teachers gave students to read, some common features of teachers' beliefs and practices related to self-selected reading emerged from the interviews. First, teachers who implemented self-selected reading on a routine basis believed that providing a regular block of time for students to read in school was essential to improving both reading attitude and reading achievement. Second, teachers believed

that allowing students to choose their own reading materials was an essential component of self-selected reading. Teachers reported that students preferred the following types of reading materials: (a) Goosebumps series and other scary stories, (b) series books, (c) adult novels and books that were movies, (d) comics and cartoon collections, (e) magazines on teen issues, sports, and entertainment, (f) picture books, and (g) informational books about sports and animals. Third, teachers spoke of the value of modeling the enjoyment of reading. Several teachers read while their students read. Some teachers read the same books their students preferred reading in order to be more connected to the students' reading experiences. Fourth, teachers spoke of assigning reading responses that were not just busy work but were meaningful and that students enjoyed. Written responses to a list of comprehension questions diminished a students' enjoyment for reading. Fifth, teacher and student book talks and teacher read-alouds were approaches that improved students' reading attitudes and promoted more reading.

As previously reported, 10 teachers of the 35 did not give students time to read on a regular basis and 4 teachers set aside only one day per week for self-selected reading. These teachers and others reported a variety of factors that prevented them from implementing self-selected reading more often, even though they recognized that the research has suggested that providing students time to read in school is an effective teaching practice. In the interview process, teachers gave four reasons for why implementing SSR was a challenge. Most often mentioned was the challenge of finding enough time to allow students to "just read." Teachers discussed the pressure they perceived to cover the curriculum and teach all of the reading skills that would be tested

on the statewide reading achievement test. Second, some mentioned a fear of parents, administrators, and other teachers believing that self-selected reading is enrichment and not instruction. Although many teachers believed that it was important for students to choose their own reading materials, most teachers restricted which of students' reading preferences were acceptable choices for in-school reading either some or all of the time. Teachers preferred that students read more fiction than nonfiction, more quality literature and award-winning books than series books, and books with mostly words but few or no pictures. Teachers also encouraged their students to read a variety of genres and authors to expand their reading experiences and to be prepared for the state reading test. Third, teachers discussed the challenge of meeting the instructional needs of students with a wide range of ability levels all taught in the same classroom. Some teachers struggled to have texts on hand that were of a range of reading levels, and others believed that students with low reading ability could not read for extended periods of time. Finally, providing enough reading materials to meet the reading interests of students was a challenge to implementing a successful self-selected reading program. Teachers relied on the school library to have a selection of reading materials for students; however, results of the researchers' interviews with librarians indicated that the most popular texts often were checked out and that other popular reading materials such as magazines, comics, and cartoon collections were not stocked in school libraries. Teachers bought many of the texts that were on hand in their classroom libraries. A survey of the teachers' libraries showed that their classroom libraries consisted mostly of young adult novels. Some teachers stocked some of the reading materials most popular with students such as scary

books, informational texts, and books in a series. The most rare-to-find reading materials in language arts classrooms were adult novels, popular magazines, comics, cartoon collections, and picture books.

Several aspects of the Worthy et al. study (1998) pointed to why the current study was conducted. First, the Worthy et al. study highlighted the conflict between teachers' beliefs and practices related to providing students time to read in school. The current study offered further insights into the challenges teachers face when trying to match their beliefs about teaching reading with their actual reading practices. Second, teachers in the study reported that one of the major barriers to providing students with self-selected reading was the availability of reading materials of high interest to students. In the current study, teachers were given reading materials that were matched to the reading interests of the students with special consideration given to what was of high interest to the 14 reluctant boy readers being studied more closely. Third, the Worthy et al. study was conducted just prior to *No Child Left Behind* and the push for accountability systems connected to standardized reading achievement scores. Teachers mentioned the pressures they perceived to cover curriculum in order for students to perform well on standardized reading tests, but the teachers in the described study believed in providing students choice of texts and were allowed to do so. The current study was conducted in a district that is currently in Program Improvement. Program Improvement is a classification schools are placed in when they fail to meet the criteria for making yearly progress toward all students being proficient in reading and mathematics by 2014. School districts and individual school sites that are in Program Improvement are given a set of guidelines

intended to lead to increased test scores. The current study provided a description of two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about teaching reading while operating under the mandates and restrictions that exist within the present educational climate.

A limitation of the Worthy et al. study was that the reseachers relied heavily on teachers' interview responses. No evidence from classroom observations was reported so it is unknown to what degree teachers' actual practices aligned with their self-reported teaching practices. The current study included multiple sets of data collection on teachers' beliefs and practices about teaching reading: teacher interviews before, during, and after the study and the researchers' observations and field notes. Multiple forms of data provided a broader perspective on the relevant aspects of the study.

In a much larger study with over 1,700 middle-school students, Ivey and Broaddus (1999) researched students' in- and out-of-school reading practices to learn what were the most common instructional practices in middle-school language arts classrooms. According to the researchers, the type of curriculum and instruction being provided in language arts classrooms did not match the needs of the middle-school readers being served. The four common classroom practices cited as being at odds with what motivated middle-school students to read were (a) teachers implementing a "one-size-fits-all" curriculum where the language arts textbook or basal reader was the main text utilized for instruction, (b) students having limited access to reading materials related to their reading interests, (c) students not being given a choice in what they could read and what they were able to discuss about their reading, and (d) teachers who failed to make independent reading a priority in their reading instruction.

Ivey and Broaddus (2000) recommended four teaching practices for building a strong reading program. First, teachers should make independent reading the cornerstone of their middle-school reading instruction, rather than a supplemental reading activity. Students' choice of self-selected reading materials would serve as the reading curriculum, and students would read for large chunks of time during their language arts instructional block. The role of the teacher would be to get to know their students individually as readers. While students were reading, teachers would conference with students about what they were reading, listen to students read, and recommend other books related to students' reading interests.

Second, English language arts teachers need to make it a practice to know which texts students enjoy reading not only traditional literature but also texts that might appeal to reluctant readers. Teachers should build classroom libraries that consist of many types of reading materials--magazines, informational books, newspapers, comics, picture books--and a variety of genres--realistic fiction, historical fiction, fantasy, science fiction, biographies, poetry, plays--that match a wide range of students' reading ability levels.

Third, the researchers suggested that teachers change their approach to teaching reading and include four components of reading instruction typically not found in middle-school language arts classrooms: teacher read-alouds of fiction and nonfiction texts, time for students to practice reading easy texts to build their oral fluency skills, connecting reading instruction with writing instruction, and explicit word study instruction: word analysis, spelling, and vocabulary.

Their fourth pillar of a strong reading program was getting to know students as

readers and writers. Although this task can seem daunting for teachers working with large numbers of students, the researchers suggested teachers confer one-on-one with students during independent reading. The researchers also recommended studying one or two unskilled readers in-depth as a means of getting to know the complexities of the range of middle-school students whom they serve. They believe that English language arts teachers should align their instructional practices with the beliefs that led many of them to want to teach reading: the belief that all students are capable of becoming life-long independent readers. The current study explored the beliefs and practices of two fifth-grade reading teachers and the degree to which they integrated students' choice of reading materials into their language arts curriculum. Through a closer examination of 14 reluctant boy readers, the teachers and researcher gained greater insight into the degree to which integrating boys' choice of reading materials changes boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading.

McKool and Gespass (2009) explored the relationship between teachers' personal reading behaviors and their language arts instructional practices related to reading. The researchers posed four research questions: *Do teachers engage in reading as a leisure activity? Do teachers who read for pleasure use more instructional strategies associated with best practices than teachers who do not read for pleasure? Is there a difference between the instructional practices used by teachers who value reading in their own lives and those who do not?* and *Is there a difference between teachers who read for pleasure and those who do not in terms of how they motivate students to read?* Sixty-five female elementary teachers from three states who taught grades four, five, and six completed a

questionnaire that contained several closed-ended questions and two open-ended questions: *How do you motivate your students to read?* and *Over your years of teaching, what is the one thing you do on a consistent basis that you feel has the greatest impact in promoting more engaged reading in your students?* Descriptive data analysis methods were used to investigate the quantitative questions and the constant comparative analysis method was used to examine the results of the open-ended questions.

The results showed that 29% of the teachers read for 30 minutes or more per day, and 41% read for less than 10 minutes per day. Of that 41%, 26% or 17 teachers reported not reading for pleasure at all. Teachers who read for pleasure for more than 30 minutes per day used a greater number of instructional methods that have been described in the literature as best teaching practices than teachers who read for less than 10 minutes per day. One-hundred percent of the teachers who read more than 30 minutes per day provided time for their students to read independently during the school day, 89% talked about their personal reading experiences with the students, and 100% recommended specific book titles to their students. In contrast, of the teachers who read for pleasure less than 10 minutes per day, 50% provided time for their students to read independently during the school day, 50% talked about their personal reading experiences with the students, and 33% recommended specific book titles to their students. Responses to the open-ended question about how teachers motivate their students to read showed that 50% of the teachers surveyed, which included about an equal number of teachers who read more than 30 minutes per day and teachers who read less than 10 minutes per day, used extrinsic rewards such as points, candy, and awards of other types; however, all seven of

the teachers who read more than 45 minutes per day relied only on instructional practices that are designed to increase students' intrinsic motivation for reading. These instructional methods were book discussions, book recommendations, and students' choice of reading materials.

The extent to which English language arts teachers believe in reading daily is important, but what seems to be of greater significance is the degree to which they put their own beliefs into practice by reading themselves. McKool and Gespass (2009) suggested that teachers who are avid readers themselves will use instructional practices that promote more student engagement in reading. Although the current study did not measure teachers' out-of-school reading habits, it did explore how teachers' beliefs align with their teaching practices. If teachers believe that students need to read more, then it should follow that teachers will provide time in school for students to read; however, research has shown that teachers' beliefs do not align always with their practices. A limitation of the McKool and Gespass study was that teachers self-reported their survey responses, but no classroom observations were made to measure to what degree teachers' responses matched their actual practices. In the current study, each teacher was observed for approximately 45 minutes per day 2 days per week. The researcher's observations provided additional support for the validity of the teachers' interview responses.

Summary

The basis of social cognitive theory provides a critical lens in which the dynamics related to boys and reading can be viewed. Bandura (1989) posited that the interaction between one's personal beliefs, behaviors, and the environment motivates a person's

actions. Two personal factors related to reading are one's attitude toward reading and one's self-efficacy as a reader. Researchers (Henk & Melnick, 1995; Kush & Watkins, 1996; Martinez, Aricak, & Jewell, 2008; McKenna & Kear, 1995; Wigfield, 1997) have studied the relationship between students' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy and students' reading achievement. Results from these studies have been inconclusive, but some researchers have suggested that there is a positive correlation between students attitude toward reading, their self-perceptions as readers, and their reading ability. Students who view reading positively and believe they are good readers read more, which leads to growth in reading.

Results of research on boys' reading interests have indicated that boys reading interests are different than girls' reading interests (Farris et al., 2009; Marino, 2001; Ujiie & Krashen, 1996). Boys enjoy scary stories, informational texts, sports, and humor. One particular form of text that boys enjoy is graphica. Outside of school, many boys lead highly literate lives. Results from some studies (Smith & Wilhelm, 2002; Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1998) suggest that boys do not read less than girls, but, rather, boys choose to read texts that do not match the texts that are considered in school to be "real reading."

One environmental factor, the English language arts curriculum, may alienate boys from wanting to read in school. Traditional approaches to teaching reading such as reading aloud from the reading textbook are not engaging for boys. Although researchers (Ivey, 2003; Lane & Wright, 2007; Lesesne, 2006; Wan, 2000) have suggested that teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds are valuable approaches to teaching

reading, few teachers use book talks and read-alouds as a regular part of their

instructional practice (Albright & Ariail, 2005; Fisher et al., 2004; Jacobs, Morrison, &

Swinyard, 2000).

In some classrooms, teachers provide students with time to read independently;

however, girls engage more often in reading than boys. Researchers (Gallagher,

Cambourne, & Kiggins, 2004; Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1998) suggest that boys'

lack of engagement is not because they dislike reading but, rather, because boys are not

given the choice to read the materials they prefer to read. In classrooms where some

choice of texts is given, students may not have access to texts that are interesting to them.

The amount of choice students are given for what they can read in school is

dependent highly on the beliefs and practices of their teacher. Some language arts

teachers believe choice is important and put few, if any, restrictions on students' choice of

texts for independent reading, and other teachers limit the texts their students can bring to

school. One type of text that has been censored is graphica. Comic books and cartoons

are commonly forbidden reading material in language arts classrooms. Even in

classrooms where students are given an unrestricted choice of texts for independent

reading, few teachers integrate students' reading interests into the language arts

curriculum.

After a review of the literature on the personal, behavioral, and environmental

factors related to boys and reading, the need for the current study was evident. No

studies were found where teachers integrated students' reading interests into their teacher

book talks and interactive read-alouds, especially not texts that were of high interest to

boys. One study (McKool & Gespass, 2009) was found on teachers' beliefs and practices related to independent reading and students' reading interests; however, more research is needed to understand why few reading teachers integrate students' reading interests in their curriculum.

Chapter III follows with a description of the methodology that was used to investigate the personal, behavioral, and environmental factors related to boys and reading and to explore teachers' beliefs and practices related to teaching reading.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The literature review for my study highlighted the multifaceted nature of the

phenomenon being investigated: the reciprocal relationship of reading motivation and

reading achievement, the contradiction between students' reading attitude and reading

self-efficacy survey results and students' interview statements, the disconnect between

what teachers believe might motivate students to read more and what teachers put into

practice in their language arts classrooms, and educators' ongoing backlash toward

graphica as acceptable reading materials, despite their popularity with young adolescents,

especially reluctant boy readers. I believed that conducting a study that included

quantitative and qualitative data collection was the best way to respond to the call for

research on the integration of students' reading interests and students' choice of reading

materials within the language arts classroom.

The aims of this mixed-methods study were (a) to compare fifth-grade boys' and

fifth-grade girls' reading interests, (b) to compare fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls'

reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading, (c) to measure the change

in fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and

amount of reading when teachers conduct book talks and interactive read-alouds, provide

time in school for independent reading, and allow unrestricted student choice of books for

independent reading, (d) to measure the change in fifth-grade reluctant boy readers'

reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading when teachers conduct

book talks and interactive read-alouds, provide time in school for independent reading,

and allow unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading, (e) to measure

the difference in the changes in reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of

reading of fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer graphica with the changes in fifth-

grade reluctant boy readers who prefer other types of texts, and (f) to explore two fifth-

grade teachers' beliefs and practices about conducting teacher book talks and interactive

read-alouds, providing time in school for independent reading, allowing unrestricted

student choice of books for independent reading, and integrating boys' reading interests,

including graphica, into the language arts curriculum.

The remaining contents of this chapter include an overview of the mixed-methods

research design, researcher's background, sample, protection of human subjects,

instruments, research questions, and proposed data analysis. To reinforce the equal

weight of the two methods and simultaneous collection of data, I integrated the

discussion of quantitative and qualitative data collection throughout the rest of this

chapter. When both terms are used, the term quantitative will be listed first, followed by

the term qualitative. This ordering is intended to provide ease and consistency for the

reader; no level of hierarchy should be inferred.

<div style="text-align:center">Mixed-Methods Research Design</div>

In this study of two fifth-grade classrooms, I used the triangulation mixed-

methods design (Creswell, 2003) where quantitative and qualitative data were collected

concurrently. Equal priority was given to the quantitative and qualitative data, and

findings from both were integrated and compared.

A model of the overview of the mixed-methods research design for this study is

provided in Figure 7. I developed this model according to the 10 guidelines for drawing

visual diagrams for mixed-methods studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Quantitative

and qualitative research methods were given equal priority; therefore, both words in the

diagram are capitalized. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously,

so I used a plus sign, rather than an arrow to show their relationship.

Mixed-Methods Triangulation Design

QUAN	**+**	**QUAL**

Quantitative Data Collection	**Qualitative Data Collection**
ERAS (pre-post)	Reading Interest Inventory (pre)
RSPS (pre-post)	Teacher Interviews (pre-mid-post)
Reading Interest Inventory (pre)	Student Interviews (pre-post)
Reading Logs (weekly)	Classroom Observations (weekly)
Book Talks & Read-Alouds Ranking (post)	Book Talk and Read-Aloud Log
Library Circulation Cards	Teacher Reflections

Quantitative & Qualitative Data Results Compared

Quantitative Data Analysis ←——————→ Qualitative Data Analysis

Figure 7. Mixed-Methods Triangulation Design

Several sets of quantitative data were collected to measure the personal,

behavioral, and environmental factors related to reading. The Elementary Reading

Attitude Survey and Reader Self-Perception Scale were administered to measure two

personal factors related to reading: reading attitude and reading self-efficacy. The

Reading Interest Inventory was administered to measure one behavioral factor: reading

interest. I collected weekly reading logs and tracked the read-aloud library circulation

cards to measure one behavioral factor: amount of reading. The ranked order survey was

administered to measure two environmental factors: teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds.

Qualitative data also were collected to measure the personal, behavioral, and environmental factors related to reading. Open-ended responses on the students' reading interest inventories were used to learn about one personal factor: reading attitude. Interview data from the 14 reluctant boy readers, interviews with the two teachers, observation field notes, and teachers' reflections provided information about all three sets of factors. The teachers' weekly log was used to learn about two environmental factors: teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds.

A list of the instruments and the time of the quantitative data collection is on the left of Figure 7. The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) was given before and after the intervention to measure the change in students' reading attitudes. The Reader Self-Perception Scale was given during the week of baseline data collection to measure students' self-efficacy as readers before the intervention began. The RSPS was given at the end of the study to learn to what extent there was a change in students' self-perceptions as readers after the intervention. The Reading Interest Inventory was given during the week of baseline data collection to find out what types of texts students liked to read.

Each week I collected students' in-school and at-home reading logs to learn what and how much students were reading. Total number of pages read and how many minutes also was measured. At the end of the study, I asked the students to rank from highest to lowest their favorite weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. I

also collected the library circulation cards from the read-aloud library collection. The

library circulation cards were a set of 4 x 6 index cards, one card for each title in the read-

aloud library collection, that contained the circulation information for that book: date

checked out, student's name, and a star or some notation indicating whether the student

completed the book.

On the right of Figure 7 is the list of the qualitative data and time of data

collection. The Reading Interest Inventory, which required written responses to a few

open-ended questions, was given before the intervention to compare what fifth-grade

boys in this study liked to read compared with fifth-grade girls. Teacher interview data

were gathered before, during, and after the 6-week intervention. I conducted teacher

interviews before the intervention to explore what were the beliefs and practices of the

two fifth-grade teachers about their use of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds,

their provisions in school for independent reading and amount of student choice of self-

selected texts, and their thoughts about integrating students' reading interests into the

language arts curriculum. The teacher interview data collected during and at the end of

the intervention was to learn if the two teachers' beliefs and practices had changed as a

result of my study.

To learn more about reluctant boy readers, I studied more closely a small cohort

of boys from each classroom who were identified as reluctant readers. This

determination was made based on the results from the Elementary Reading Attitude

Survey and Reader Self-Perception Scale, the boys' reading achievement scores, and

teacher observations earlier in the year. Six boys in one classroom and eight boys in the

other were identified. I interviewed the 14 boys at the beginning of the intervention and after the intervention ended. Some of the poststudy interviews were conducted in two parts, and others were conducted all in one session. This separation occurred for two practical reasons. First, I was on site and available to begin interviews immediately after the intervention ended, but I had not administered the poststudy interviews that were part of the poststudy interview discussion; therefore, I interviewed all the boys who were available and asked them the first set of questions that did not rely on the postsurvey data results. Second, five of the boys at one of the school sites were not enrolled in the homeroom of the teacher in the study and, therefore, had to be pulled out of class. To limit the amount of disruption to their learning, these boys were interviewed the following week after the surveys had been completed and all questions were able to be asked in one interview session.

I visited each classroom 2 days per week to collect field notes. The first observation was on the first day of the week when the teachers conducted their book talks. The second observation was the following day when teachers did their first interactive read-aloud. To help insure fidelity for completing the intervention on the days when I did not observe, the teachers completed a weekly log on their book talks and interactive read-alouds where they recorded their level of preparedness, the engagement level of students, their fluency and expression, and comments on what worked well and what they could have improved.

I had hoped to explore any change in teachers' beliefs and practices through teacher reflections. I asked the teachers to write a minimum of once per each week in

response to three prompts: *Discuss any changes in your beliefs and practices about teaching reading that you believe are a direct result of the current study. In what ways are teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading, and students' choice of reading materials influencing your beliefs and practices about teaching reading?* and *What changes have you seen in your students' reading attitudes, self-perceptions as readers, amount of reading, and other reading behaviors?* The teachers agreed to do so, but neither teacher remembered to record their reflections in a journal. Instead, both teachers shared their thoughts with me directly in two ways: informal conversations during field observations and emails.

<p align="center">Sample</p>

Convenience sampling was used to select the participants for my study. I teach in an urban district in the East Bay area of San Francisco. I also work as a literacy consultant for a suburban district in the East Bay. I chose to select the urban district over the suburban district because of the diversity of students' ethnicities and wider range of reading attitudes, reader self-perceptions, and reading achievement levels typically found in urban school settings.

I had intended to study two sixth-grade classrooms because the literature suggests that middle-school students have more negative attitudes toward reading. I contacted the district office and the middle-school principals, but upon learning the purposes of my study, I was told by the person in charge of approving research in my district that the Director of Secondary Education would never agree to give consent for me to conduct my study at the middle-school level because the secondary director does not believe that

students should be given time to read independently in school or a choice of the books they read. I revised my plan and changed the sample to fifth-grade students. I met with the Director of Elementary Education who gave me consent and selected two fifth-grade teachers whom she believed would be suitable for the study: Mrs. Vacca and Mrs. Labelle (pseudonyms). The director indicated that her criteria for selection were teachers who were not new to the profession, teachers who did not teach at a school that recently had been sanctioned by the state or federal government as an underperforming school, and teachers who, from her experience, were open to trying new instructional approaches to teaching language arts. I contacted the principals at the two sites, and both granted their consent. When I contacted Mrs. Vacca and Mrs. Labelle to ask if they would be willing to participate in my study, they both agreed.

For the purposes of this study, the two school sites were given the following pseudonyms: Payton Elementary and Delrado Elementary. The district has a diverse population of students, and both schools have a population of English learners close to or above 50%. Demographic data for the district and the two schools are found in Table 1. Maximum class size in the district for students in fourth and fifth grade is 31 students.

Mrs. Vacca was one of two fifth-grade teachers at Payton Elementary. She had 29 students enrolled in her fifth-grade homeroom class; one student left during English language arts to go to a reading intervention and two other students joined her language arts class from the other fifth-grade classroom. Of the 30 students in Mrs. Vacca's language arts class, 28 students and their parents gave consent to participate in the study. Mrs. Labelle taught fifth graders at Delrado Elementary along with two other teachers.

Table 1
Demographic Information for District and Two Schools in 2008-2009

2008-2009	District	Payton	Delrado	Study Participants
Student enrollment	11,996	482	578	52
Number of teachers	560	26	31	2
African American	14.0%	5.8%	7.4%	11.5%
American Indian	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%	0%
Asian American	11.3%	28.4%	5.5%	25%
Filipino American	7.4%	10.2%	4.8%	7.7%
Hispanic American	48.8%	30.3%	57.1%	38.5%
Pacific Islander	1.8%	1.7%	1.4%	0%
White	13.5%	15.1%	19.6%	17.3%
Multiple or No response	2.6%	8.3%	3.8%	NA
English Learners	30.8%	55.8%	44.8%	40%
Students on free or reduced lunch	46.2%	40.2%	47.9%	Confidential

Students at Delrado were leveled by reading ability and switched classes for English language arts. Mrs. Labelle taught the high-strategic learners. These are students whose scores on multiple measures of standardized reading achievement tests suggest that these students are reading approximately one year below grade level. When the study began, Mrs. Labelle had 27 students. One boy moved the day after the study began, and one parent did not give consent. Midway through the study, one boy moved out of the strategic-level class, so the total number of participants from Mrs. Labelle's class was 24. Table 2 contains the gender and ethnicity for the students who participated in each

Table 2

Demographic Information for the Student Sample

2009-2010	Payton	Delrado	Total
Boys	11	15	26
Girls	17	9	26
African American	2	4	6
Asian American	12	1	13
Filipino American	2	2	4
Hispanic American	9	11	20
White	3	6	9
English Learners	11	8	19

classroom. The number of students who were learning English as their second language also is provided.

At each site, a subset of reluctant boy readers was selected to be studied more in depth. Six of the 11 boys from Payton Elementary and 8 of the 16 boys from Delrado were selected based on the following criteria: low to average scores on at least one of the two subscales of the ERAS, low to average scores on one or more of the subscales of the RSPS, and teacher recommendations. The 14 boys chosen to be studied in-depth met at least two of the three criteria. Both teachers recommended boys based on data and classroom observation for one or more of the following: low performance on reading tests, negative attitudes toward reading, low reading self-efficacy, or a reluctancy to engage fully during language arts instruction. Table 3 contains the criteria for the 14 boys who were selected to be studied more closely. From this point forward, this group of boys is referred to as the reluctant boy readers.

Table 3

Criteria for Selecting the Reluctant Boy Readers

Reluctant Boy Readers	School	ERAS			RSPS				Teacher Comments
		Rec	Acad	GP	P	OC	SF	PS	
Alex	D	A	A	4	L	A	A	L	Low performance on reading tests, lack of participation, low reader self-perception, negative reading attitude
Charlie	D	L	A	3	L	L	L	L	Lack of participation, low reader self-perception, negative reading attitude
Donny	P	A	H	5	H	L	A	A	Low performance on reading tests, negative reading attitude, low reader self-perception, lack of engagement
Eric	D	A	A	3	L	L	L	H	Low performance on reading tests, some lack of participation, low reader self-perception, negative reading attitude
Isaac	D	H	H	4	L	L	A	H	Poor reading behaviors--not seeming to know how to choose books or how to complete a book
Jonathan	P	A	A	4	L	L	L	A	Low performance on reading tests, negative reading attitude, low reader self-perception, lack of engagement, inconsistent performance
Julius	D	L	A	2	L	L	L	A	Low performance on reading tests compared to ability, low reader self-perception, negative reading attitude
Kevin	P	L	L	3	L	L	L	L	Negative reading attitude, lack of engagement during English language arts
Marcus	D	L	L	2	L	L	L	L	Low performance on reading tests, lack of participation, low reader self-perception, negative reading attitude
Mathias	P	A	A	4	L	L	A	L	Negative reading attitude, lack of engagement during English language arts
Mike	D	A	A	5	H	A	H	L	Low reader self-perception, negative reading attitude

Table 3 continued

Reluctant Boy Readers	School	ERAS			RSPS				Teacher Comments
		Rec	Acad	GP	P	OC	SF	PS	
Nathan	P	A	A	4	L	A	L	L	Low performance on reading tests, negative reading attitude, low reader self-perception, lack of engagement during English language arts
Swenson	P	A	A	3	L	L	L	L	Low performance on reading tests, some lack of engagement during English language arts
Willis	D	A	A	4	H	A	L	A	Low reader self-perception, negative reading attitude

P represents Payton Elementary; D represents Delrado Elementary; H, A, and L are high, average, and low; and the numbers on General Perception ranged from 5 (highest possible response) to 1 (lowest possible response)

Protection of Human Subjects

This mixed-methods study included two fifth-grade teachers and their students. When obtaining consent from these participants, all guidelines for the protection of human subjects as outlined by the American Psychological Association (2001) were followed.

Participation in all aspects of the study was voluntary. To begin, consent was obtained from the district office, the elementary-school principals, and two fifth-grade teachers (see Appendix A for all consent forms). Upon approval by the Institutional Review Board of the University of San Francisco, all students and their parents were asked to sign consent forms. Additionally, a small number of boys who were interviewed from each of the two classrooms and their parents were asked to sign interview consent forms.

There were no anticipated risks associated with the study; however, I believed that

students could become uncomfortable discussing their negative attitudes toward reading, their low self-perceptions as readers, or their lack of reading with a researcher. I reassured students that the purpose of my study was not to judge their reading attitudes and behaviors, but, instead, to learn from students what were their attitudes toward reading and reading behaviors inside and outside of school. Regarding the teacher interviews, it was possible that the teachers would question their past beliefs and practices and express some level of frustration regarding the complexities of the issues being discussed. When so, I reassured the teachers that the purpose of was not to judge their beliefs and practices but, instead, to listen to where their beliefs and practices originated and whether they were experiencing any change in their beliefs and practices as a result of the study. Because I had had 21 years of teaching experience working with upper-elementary and middle-school students and teachers, I did not anticipate having difficulty communicating with the students and teachers in a manner that would put them at ease.

Several steps were taken to insure confidentiality of the data collected from teachers and students. Each piece of student data was coded with a label that identified the student by gender, school site, and classroom number. Hard copies of all survey data were kept in a locked file cabinet in my home. A list of students' names and their matching code numbers was kept in a separate document and was stored separately from the hard copies of student data. The list of students' names was destroyed once all data were collected.

The original audio files from the interviews were stored on my laptop computer,

and a backup of the original audio files was stored on an external hard drive. The external hard drive was kept in a locked file cabinet in my home. Hard copies of the interview transcripts were secured in the same cabinet, and electronic versions of the transcripts were saved in my laptop computer and backed up to an external hard drive. For verification of the study's results, audio recordings will be saved for one year after the study, upon which the audio files will be deleted.

Researcher's Background

In qualitative research, researchers must consider their prior knowledge and work experiences, as well as any values and biases they bring, which may influence the study (Creswell, 2003). I brought many experiences that were relevant to my study that I believed should be revealed as part of the research process.

I have been an upper elementary- and middle-grades educator for 21 years, and English language arts has been my area of expertise for over half of my career. I have lived through the paradigm shift from teaching language arts through a more whole-language-based model of instruction, which was prevalent in the late 1980s through the 1990s, to the current standards-based accountability era, where textbooks and highly scripted reading programs are the more favored instructional tools by some administrators. Students' reading achievement levels always have been important to teachers and parents, but, in the high-stakes testing era of the early 21st century, reading test scores have been scrutinized by politicians, home owners, the media, and society-at-large. Since 2000, I have observed in my and my colleagues' classrooms the number of boys who are disinterested in reading. I have studied the data that report the high number

of students considered to be struggling readers, as measured by state testing measures, and a high percentage of these students are boys. In my district, reading intervention classes are filled disproportionately with boys who score low on the California Standards Test and who appear to have negative attitudes toward reading.

At the same time, I have witnessed first hand the enthusiasm of boys when they are reading and discussing books and other reading materials that relate to their interests. In my own classroom, I allowed boys to read what they liked: books of scary stories, magazines of wrestlers and sleek cars, joke books, comics books, graphic novels, and books on animals, planets, war, video games, and other nonfiction topics, but I never considered integrating what boys liked to read into my instructional plan. Like so many of my colleagues, for years I coveted the award-winning books and other prized adolescent literature that teachers and librarians across the country passionately read aloud to their students. Like others, I placed more value on realistic and historical fiction (as was quite evident by the hundreds of books in these genres that lined my book cases), whereas genres like science fiction, fantasy, horror, humor, and informational text were given less attention.

From 2005 to 2009, in my work as a middle-school literacy coach and elementary-school reading specialist, I observed these genre biases in other teachers, and I began to question to what degree boys' reading achievement scores accurately reflected their true reading ability. Were boys' reading achievement scores, their attitudes toward reading, their self-perceptions as readers, and the amount of reading they engaged in at school accurate gauges of boys' reading, or did these measures reflect boys' performance

on and attitudes toward the kinds of reading tasks they were expected to complete in

school? I began to consider what it might look like if more teachers were aware of boys'

out-of-school reading interests and purposes for reading and whether teachers would

integrate boys' reading interests into the English language arts curriculum if they knew

that doing so might improve boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of

reading. This research is a first step toward answering my questions.

<div align="center">Treatment Procedures</div>

My study took place in two fifth-grade classrooms for a total of 10 weeks. Table

4 is an overview of the 10 weeks. The study began the first week of February with 2

weeks of baseline data collection. During the first week, I visited each school 3 days for

approximately 50 minutes each day. The first day, I administered the ERAS. The second

day I administered the RSPS. The third day I administered the Reading Interest

Inventory (Appendix B). As part of the administration of the Reading Interest Inventory,

I showed students two examples of each of the genres or text formats included in the

survey.

The sample reading materials that I held up for students to preview were the same

40 texts that were referred to with students as "the first read-aloud library." For the

remainder of this discussion, the 40 titles are referred to as the "original read-aloud

library" (see Appendix C for all read-loud library titles). Beginning the third day of the f

study and throughout the study's entirety, the titles in the original read-aloud library were

available for students to check out and read in school and at home.

Table 4
Timeline for Data Collection

Week	Day	Research Activity	Time Allotted
		Baseline Data Collection	
1	1	Administered ERAS	50 min
	2	Administered RSPS	50 min
	3	Administered Reading Interest Inventory and introduced the first Read-Aloud Library	50 min
		Interviewed teachers one-on-one	30-45 min
2	1	Introduced routines for independent reading, partner talk, and reading logs; observed students participating in these routines	45 min
		Interviewed boys at each site	2 hours
	2	Observed independent reading, partner talk, and completion of reading logs	45 min
		Interviewed boys at each site	2 hours
		6-Week Intervention Begins	
3	1	Realistic fiction teacher book talks	10 min
(Week 1 - Traditional Text)		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
		Interviewed boys at each site	2 hours
	2	Read-aloud: *Shiloh*	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	3	Read-aloud: *Hoot**	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
4	1	Graphica teacher book talks	10 min
(Week 2 - Alternate Text)		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	2	Read-aloud: *Amulet*	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	3	Read-aloud: *Superman for All Seasons**	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
5	1	Historical fiction teacher book talks	10 min
(Week 3 - Traditional Text)		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	2	Read-aloud: *Number the Stars*	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	3	Read-aloud: *Sweet Clara and the FreedomQuilt**	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min

* On these days, the researcher was not present to observe the intervention.

Table 4 continued

Week	Day	Research Activity	Time Allotted
6	1	Information and Sports teacher book talks	10 min
(Week 4 - Alternate Text)		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	2	Read-aloud: *Year in Sports 2010*	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	3	Read-aloud: *Guinness Records Gamer's Edition**	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
		Interviewed teachers one-on-one	30-45 min
7	1	Fantasy teacher book talks	10 min
(Week 5 - Traditional Text)		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	2	Read-aloud: *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	3	Read-aloud: *Tuck Everlasting**	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
8	1	Scary/Horror/Mystery teacher book talks	10 min
(Week 6 - Alternate Text)		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	2	Read-aloud: *Bites: Scary Stories to Sink Your Teeth Into*	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
	3	Read-aloud: *New Moon**	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
9	1	Administered ERAS	20 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
		Interviewed boys at each site	1.5 hours
	2	Administered RSPS	20 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
		Interviewed boys at each site	1.5 hours
	3	Administered Ranked Survey on Favorite Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds	10 min
		Independent reading, partner talk, reading logs	25 min
10	1	Interviewed boys at each site	2.5 hours
	2	Interviewed boys at each site	2.5 hours

* On these days, the researcher was not present to observe the intervention.

During week 2 of baseline data collection, the teachers and I introduced the procedures for independent reading. Students received their first set of reading logs, and I modeled for students on the overhead projector how to complete their reading logs.

To help students keep track of their different logs, their in-school reading logs were photocopied on green paper and their at-home logs were photocopied on pink paper. Students were told that any type of reading in school and at home was acceptable, including online reading at social network sites such as My Space and Facebook, emails, instant messaging, and texting on cell phones. Students were very excited about the unrestricted reading requirements and asked many questions.

One difference existed between the two fifth-grade classes related to independent reading and reading logs. Before the study began, neither teacher had given her students time within the language arts or literacy block, the 2-hour block of instructional time dedicated to teaching language arts, to read independently; however, the teacher at Payton reported that she sometimes gave the students in her homeroom class (most of whom also were in her language arts block) time to read in school during other parts of the day. Students at Payton also were required to complete a reading log for at-home reading prior to the study. The teacher at Delrado, however, reported that never had she given her literacy students time to read in school and was not aware of whether either of the other two fifth-grade teachers at her site gave their students time to read while in their homeroom classes. Because she was concerned that her students would not know how to use the independent reading time productively, beginning one to 2 weeks prior to the beginning of the study, she gave the students in her literacy block some class time to read. In addition to independent reading time being introduced during week 2, students also were taught that partner talk was a designated 3- to 5-minute time period after independent reading for them to share with a partner something about what they had read.

There were no guidelines or restrictions put on the content of what was shared during partner talk. To summarize, each day during week 2, students were given three of the four pieces of the intervention: 15 to 20 minutes of independent reading, 3 to 5 minutes to talk with a partner, and time to complete their in-school reading logs. The piece left to be introduced was the teacher book talk and the interactive read-aloud.

The intervention for the study began the third week of February and lasted for 6 weeks. Regardless of whether the students' parents gave consent for their data to be used in the study, all students participated in the 40-minute intervention 3 days per week. On the first day of each week, the teachers delivered a set of book talks (7 to 10 minutes), and on 2 subsequent days the teachers conducted an interactive read-aloud (8 to 10 minutes). The teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were followed up with 15 to 20 minutes of independent reading in school where students were given an unrestricted amount of student choice of reading materials and access to books of high interest, 3 to 5 minutes of partner talk, and time for students to fill out their in-school reading logs. Occasionally students' at-home reading logs were filled out in school because students had forgotten to record their reading at home.

During weeks 1, 3, and 5 of the intervention, the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were on "traditional texts." In this study, traditional texts refer to the books that often are promoted by language arts teachers as good books for students to read. In fifth grade, these books typically are award-winning chapter books, books written by authors who have won an award, and books that are on state-recommended grade level reading lists. Traditional literature for the book talks and interactive read-

alouds given during weeks 1, 3, and 5 were selected in the following manner. First, I conducted an online search on the California Department of Education website and generated a list of recommended read-aloud books. When I met with the two teachers, I gave them a copy of the list of books and asked them to check off the books they liked to read aloud, talk about, and recommend to their fifth graders. I also talked informally with the two teachers to find out what genres of books they prefer reading aloud to students. Their responses matched what has been reported in the literature on teachers' book preferences, and realistic fiction (week 1), historical fiction (week 3), and fantasy (week 5) were selected as the traditional texts for the book talks and interactive read-alouds in the study. Three titles in each of these genres were identified from the list of books found on the CDE website. In addition to the three books that were used for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, 27 other books were selected for each of the read-aloud libraries on traditional literature (see Appendix C). I selected most of these titles based on the ease of their availability through the Scholastic book clubs and a local bookstore. A few titles were ordered from an online book store.

During weeks 2, 4, and 6, the teachers conducted book talks and interactive read-alouds from "alternate texts." In this study, alternate texts refer to books that often are of high interest to students and less favored by teachers. The alternate texts that teachers used to conduct the book talks and interactive read-alouds were based on the results of boys' reading interest inventories. Particular titles, authors, and genres that were of interest to a small subgroup of reluctant boy readers were given first priority for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds during weeks 2, 4, and 6.

On the first day of the week, the teachers conducted book talks on three different titles or series of books. I wrote each set of teacher book talks and delivered them to the teachers the week before the teachers conducted them. The teacher book talks were between 800 and 1,150 words and were intended to last no more than 10 minutes; however, periodically during the book talks the teachers added in a few of their own comments, and one teacher had to stop and remind students to remain quiet due to their excitement during the book talks in the alternate weeks, so occasionally the book talks extended beyond the allotted time. The teachers were given the choice either to follow the book talk as written or to use the outline version of the teacher book talk and present the key ideas substituting words that more closely resembled their own words. Both teachers elected to read the book talks as written and indicated that they would be doing so each week, so I no longer continued creating an outline version after the second week of the study.

On the second and third days of language arts class, the teachers conducted an interactive read-aloud from one of the three titles that had been recommended to students during the teacher book talks. Interactive read-alouds are read-alouds included time for students to talk with a partner about the reading. For example, the teacher read aloud a few paragraphs, then stopped and asked the students to predict what was going to happen next. During this time, students turned and talked with a partner about their predictions.

In the research conducted by Fisher et al. (2004), the researchers reported that in order for read-alouds to be most effective, each read-aloud also should include an instructional purpose for the students. Prior to the beginning of the intervention, I met

with the teachers, and they identified the following list of reading skills or strategies to be incorporated into the interactive read-alouds: using personal experience and background information along with evidence in the text to make predictions and inferences (weeks 1 and 2), using text features to understand fictional and informational text (weeks 3 and 4), and understanding how a character's traits and motivations affect the plot of a fictional text (weeks 5 and 6). For each interactive read-aloud, the teacher read a few paragraphs, then stopped and prompted the students to think about an idea in relation to the teaching point of that week. To scaffold students' partner discussions, the interactive read-alouds included directions with sentence starters such as, "Partner A, make a prediction about what you believe might happen next. Begin your sentence like this: I predict...or I have a feeling that..." Each interactive read-aloud was planned out in such a way that the teacher knew at what point to read aloud and where to stop for students to turn and talk with a partner and practice the skill or strategy being reinforced. Like the teacher book talks, the interactive read-alouds lasted approximately 10 minutes. I was unable to observe on the third day of the intervention; therefore, I created a teacher book talk and interactive read-aloud reflection log. The log served as a means for insuring fidelity for the third of intervention and as a data source for how teachers perceived themselves as carrying out the criteria for successful book talks and interactive read-alouds.

After the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, the students were given 15 to 20 minutes in class to read independently any self-selected reading materials of their choice. Each day, students were reminded that they could read any book from one of the read-aloud libraries, the classroom library, the school or public library, or a book

they brought from home. After the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, students had the opportunity to select a new book or continue reading a book they had begun already. When a student selected a text from the read-aloud library, the teacher recorded the student's name on the library circulation card that matched that book. Each teacher developed her own library checkout system.

While reviewing the literature on best practices during independent reading, I found two teacher behaviors that were the most common. Either teachers served as role models by reading independently with students, as in sustained silent reading, or teachers talked with students about the texts they are reading, as in self-selected reading or reading workshop. Because this study was not intended to measure teacher behavior during students' independent reading, the teachers were free to choose whether they would read alongside the students, talk to students about the texts they were reading, or some combination of both. After checking in and out books, the teacher at Payton always sat at her desk and read a book of her choice. The teacher at Delrado used most of the time to circulate the classroom and record the books that her students had selected from the read-aloud library. During this time, she sometimes asked her students a question or commented to them about the books they were reading. At the end of each independent reading period, the students were given 3 to 5 minutes to talk with a partner about what they read. The content of their partner discussion was not directed or monitored formally.

After partner talk, the students were directed to complete their reading logs by writing the date, title, author's name, number of minutes and number of pages read. The student also were asked to indicate from where they had accessed the reading material:

read-aloud library (RL), classroom library (CL), school library (SL), public library (PL), home library (HL), a friend's library (FL), or other library (OL). In addition to recording their in-school reading, students recorded any reading they did outside of school. Students' reading logs were collected on the first day of each week, and new logs were given out the same day. When students forgot to bring back their logs on the first day of the week, they were encouraged to submit them on another day.

To summarize, the intervention lasted approximately 40 minutes and included either a teacher book talk or interactive read-aloud, 15 to 20 minutes of independent reading, partner talk, and time to complete an in-school reading log. The study was designed to include 3 days of the intervention over 6 consecutive weeks, but both teachers reported that they chose to give their students an additional day for independent reading, partner talk, and reading log recording.

<div align="center">Instruments</div>

The following instruments were used in the data collection for my study: Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (quantitative), Reader Self-Perception Scale (quantitative), Reading Interest Inventory (quantitative and qualitative), weekly reading logs (quantitative), a ranked item survey on students' favorite teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds (quantitative and qualitative), and semistructured interview protocols for the teacher and student interviews (qualitative). Teacher reflection journals (qualitative) were intended to be used, but neither teacher remembered to record her reflections in a journal.

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) was administered before the 6-week intervention began to measure the personal factor: attitude toward reading. The ERAS, developed by McKenna and Kear (1990), consists of 20 items using a 4-point Likert-type scale that match four different Garfield expressions ranging from *very happy* to *very sad*. Ten of the items are related to students' attitude toward recreational reading, or reading for fun, and the other 10 items are related to students' attitudes toward academic reading or reading for school. Recreational subscores and academic subscores are totaled for each student. Possible scores in each category can range from 10 to 40. Composite scores range from 20 to 80.

The ERAS was administered to a large national sample of over 18,000 first-through sixth-grade students in the United States. Reliability coefficients were found for each grade level on the total scale and on each subscale using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Except for first and second graders' responses on the recreational subscale, all coefficients were .80 or higher.

Several measures were taken to test the construct validity of the instrument by McKenna and Kear (1990). To test the construct of recreational reading, data were compared for students who had library cards with those who did not. Students who had library cards had statistically significantly higher recreational subscores (M = 30) compared with students who did not have library cards (M = 28.9). A similar comparison was made between students who currently had books checked out from the school library (M = 29.2) and those who did not (M = 27.3). A third test was to compare students by

their amount of television viewing. Students who reported viewing less than an hour of television per evening had statistically significantly higher recreational reading scores (M = 31.5) compared with students who reported watching 2 hours or more of television each evening (M = 28.6).

To test the validity of the academic reading construct, the researchers compared the results of the academic reading scores on the survey with students' reading ability. Students' reading ability was reported by teachers. Students were categorized as having high, average, or low overall reading ability. The subscale mean for high-ability readers (M = 27.7) was statistically significantly higher than the mean for low-ability readers (M = 27.0).

Further testing was conducted to investigate the relationship between subscales. Although it was reasonable to believe that the two scales were related, some difference should have existed in order to insure that the instrument measured two separate constructs. The correlation coefficient for the subscales was .64. Given the reliability and validity measurements reported, the ERAS appeared to have validity and reliability evidence to measure students' attitudes toward recreational and academic reading.

I administered the ERAS on the first day of the study and again after the sixth week of the intervention. I followed the directions as written and read aloud each item. I also used the overhead projector to display the survey so students were able to follow along. I reminded the students of the coding system (4, 3, 2, 1) and asked them to select the Garfield expression that best fit their response to the reading attitude item. For ease of reporting the scores for each student, I converted the raw scores to qualitative data

grouped into one of three categories—high reading attitude, average reading attitude, or low reading attitude. Students with a subscale score between 31 and 40 were categorized as having high reading attitudes toward either recreational or academic reading. Students with a subscale score between 20 and 30 were categorized as having average reading attitudes toward either recreational or academic reading. Students with a subscale score between 10 and 19 were categorized as having low reading attitudes toward either recreational or academic reading. Students with a composite score between 61 and 80 were categorized as having overall high reading attitudes. Students with a composite score between 40 and 60 were categorized as having overall average reading attitudes. Students with a composite score between 20 and 39 were categorized as having overall low reading attitudes. The results of the ERAS were one of the criteria the teachers and I used to select the target group of boys to be studied more in-depth.

Reader Self-Perception Scale

The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS; Henk & Melnick, 1995) was administered before the intervention began to measure the personal factor: reading self-efficacy. The RSPS is a 33-item survey that evaluates students' self-perceptions as readers along a continuum of responses: *strongly agree* (5), *agree* (4), *undecided* (3), *disagree* (2), and *strongly disagree* (1). The RSPS has one item on general progress and four subscales that align with the four domains of self-efficacy: performance, observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological state. Progress (9 items) measures students' perceptions of their present reading progress compared with their past reading progress. Observational Comparison (6 items) measures students' present

perceptions of their reading performance compared with other students' reading performance. Social Feedback (9 items) measures students' perceptions of the feedback they receive from their teachers, peers, and family. Physiological State (8 items) measures students' perceptions during the process of reading. Students received an overall score for reader self-perception and a score for each subscale.

Several steps were taken to provide reliability evidence for the RSPS. The instrument was administered to a sample of 625 fourth, fifth, and sixth graders in two school districts. This first round of results yielded reliability coefficients in the mid .70s range; however, some of the items did not fit the scale so they were omitted. When the items for each subscale were factor analyzed, the results for observational comparison, social feedback, and physiological state clearly indicated these were separate constructs; however, results for the performance scale did not. This scale was altered and a new construct was created: progress. The revised scale was administered to 1,479 students fourth through sixth graders in a variety of school districts. The analysis of reliability scores indicated higher Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .81 to .84, and factor analysis indicated that each of the four subscales measured a separate construct related to reading self-efficacy, which provide evidence of construct validity.

Before administering the survey, I read aloud the test directions, and students completed the sample together. I read aloud each item, and students circled their responses. The results of the RSPS were the second criteria the teachers and I used to select the target group of boys.

Reading Interest Inventory

The Reading Interest Inventory (Appendix B) used for this study was one I created by adapting several reading interest surveys available for teachers (Atwell, 1998; Fountas & Pinnell, 2001; Hildebrandt, 2001) and used to measure the behavioral factor: reading interests. To verify the quality of the survey, I sent the first draft to 10 teachers who I considered to be experts in teaching reading and asked them to provide me with feedback on the content and format of the reading interest inventory. These experts were third- through sixth-grade teachers and university professors who teach reading in their university's teacher credential program. Given their recommendations, I made several modifications to the survey. First, I added two new response options when students responded whether they liked reading a particular genre. Rather than giving them two options of *yes* or *no*, four categories were available: *yes*, *no*, *sometimes*, and *never tried it*. Other categories of genres and text formats were suggested so I added: fantasy, scary/ horror, picture books, online materials, comic strips, single panel comics, and manga.

The final version of the survey consisted of two parts. Part one included 13 open-ended questions about students' reading interests and reading habits. Part two included a list of types of texts, and students were asked to circle the answer that applied. As I administered this portion of the Reading Interest Inventory, I introduced and held up two examples and asked students to circle the answer that applies to them: *yes*, *sometimes*, *no*, and *never tried it*. Part two also included space for students to write in titles of texts they liked reading in that genre; however, few students included this additional information. The genres and text formats that had the highest frequency of yes responses on the

Reading Interest Inventory reported by the reluctant boy readers were the genres and text formats that I selected for the book talks and interactive read-alouds conducted by the teachers during weeks 2, 4, and 6. These were graphica (week 2), informational and sports (week 4), and scary/horror/mystery (week 6).

Weekly Reading Logs

Three days per week following independent reading, the students recorded information about their reading. Students recorded the date, title, author, number of minutes read, number of pages read, and the library location from which they checked out their reading material (Appendix D). Students also recorded this set of information after reading at home. These data were used to collect information on students' reading interests, the amount of time they spent reading each day, and where they found their reading materials.

Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds

On the first day of each week, the teacher gave brief oral introductions to three new texts. In this study, these are referred to as teacher book talks. I wrote the teacher book talks to insure that all book talks would be delivered in a similar manner. The teacher book talks ranged in length from 800 to 1,000 words and took about 8 to 10 minutes to conduct.

In Fisher, Flood, Lapp, and Frey's (2004) study of 25 expert teachers who implement interactive read-alouds on a regular basis, the researchers created a list of seven essential components for effective interactive read-alouds. Six of the seven components were observed in this study: choosing texts of high interest to students,

previewing and practicing reading aloud the text, establishing a clear purpose for reading, modeling oral fluency, modeling reading with expression, and discussing the text. Due to time constraints, the seventh component, writing about what you heard, was not part of the intervention in this study but could be investigated in future research.

Several steps were taken to insure the interactive read-alouds were conducted according to the six criteria. First, I trained the teachers on how to conduct the book talks and interactive read-alouds. I wrote a sample set of book talks and one interactive read-aloud, and a colleague videotaped me as I taught my fourth-grade class. I gave the teachers a copy of the book talks and interactive read-aloud (see Appendix E) and a copy of the DVD to view. I also provided them with a list of the seven components recommended by Fisher et al. (2004) and checked in with the teachers before and after the first set of book talks and interactive read-alouds to answer their questions.

To address the idea of student interest, the interactive read-alouds were selected in two ways. Interactive read-alouds for weeks 1, 3, and 5 were selected from a list of titles recommended on the California state department of education's website. The list included 131 read-aloud titles that are recommended as high interest texts for students in grades 3 to 5. The interactive read-alouds for weeks 2, 4, and 6 were selected from the titles listed on the reading interest inventories belonging to the subset of boys identified as reluctant readers.

To insure that the two teachers in the proposed study had adequate time to preview and practice the book talks and interactive read-alouds so they could be read fluently and with animation and expression, I provided the teachers with the new set of

interactive read-alouds the week prior to delivery.

Establishing a clear purpose for the book and the lesson was an essential component. An integral part of the interactive read-alouds conducted by the teacher experts was some reading skill or strategy that was being modeled by the teacher or that students were practicing, and the purpose was told directly to the students. The research purpose for selecting the interactive read-alouds was to compare the students' responses with traditional genres and titles of texts typically used as interactive read-alouds with students' responses to nontraditional genres and texts not typically used as interactive read-alouds; however, it was important that each read-aloud also has an instructional purpose for the students. For this reason, I discussed with the two fifth-grade teachers which reading standards they preferred to be taught and together we decided upon one reading skill or strategy to be the focus of two week's worth of interactive read-alouds. Due to the limited amount of time for each read-aloud, time spent on each lesson may not have matched the time typically given by the expert teachers in the study. The final criteria, discussing the text, was embedded within the interactive read-alouds where students took turn discussing their ideas with a partner. The teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds are found in Appendix F.

Ranking of Favorite Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds

At the end of the 6-week intervention, the students were asked to rank the list of texts that were presented in the book talks and interactive read-alouds (see Appendix G). These data were used to measure whether there was a difference in students' reading preferences for the texts that were presented during weeks 2, 4, and 6 compared with the

texts presented during weeks 1, 3, and 5. Also, the reading attitudes, reader self-perceptions, and amount of reading for students who preferred the texts presented in weeks 2, 4, and 6 were compared with the reading attitudes and reader self-perceptions of students who did not prefer the texts presented during these weeks. The open-ended question provided more information for why certain texts were preferred over other texts.

Semistructured Teacher-Interview Protocol and Text Set

I conducted one-on-one interviews using semistructured teacher-interview protocols (see Appendix H) with the two fifth-grade teachers at four points in my study: before the 6-week intervention began, at the end of week 4 after the book talks and the two interactive read-alouds had been completed, one month after the intervention ended, and one month and a half after the intervention ended. All the interviews were recorded using a digital handheld microphone to capture the teachers' exact words. The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. Later, repetitions and incomplete phrases were omitted to make the transcripts easier to read.

To learn more about the texts that these fifth-grade teachers preferred to use when teaching reading and their beliefs about student choice of reading materials, I used a text set (see Appendix C, numbers 1 to 40) that consisted of 40 texts from various genres to guide our discussion. The purpose of the text set was to provide teachers with a reference point for our conversation. Because a key component of the study was students' choice of reading materials, the text set contained titles that represented many genres from a wide range of reading materials and titles that researchers have found to be of high interest to boys. The text set also included some texts that teachers regularly use as part

of their English language arts instruction. To gather data on teachers' attitude toward

graphica, the text set included nine texts from this category. Each text was numbered for

easy reference during the interview discussion and for data analysis.

Teacher Reflection Journals

I had intended to explore teachers' beliefs and practices by reading the responses

teachers wrote in their reflection journals. I asked the teachers to write as much or as

little as they chose in response to three prompts: Discuss any changes in your beliefs and

practices about teaching reading that you think are a direct result of the current study. In

what ways are teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading, and

students' choice of reading materials influencing your beliefs and practices about

teaching reading? Have you seen any changes in your students' reading attitudes, self-

perceptions as readers, amount of reading, or other reading behaviors? If yes, then

describe the changes. I offered to provide each teacher with a journal to record their

reflections, but both told me they had journals of their own. Neither teacher remembered

to record any reflections. Instead, about midway through the intervention, each teacher

agreed to send me emails about anything they believed was relevant to the study.

Semistructured Boy-Interview Protocol

I used a semistructured open framework (see Appendix I) to interview 14 fifth-

grade reluctant boy readers. This framework allowed flexibility in boys' responses but

ensured more consistent data collection across participants. Some of the interview

questions were developed from a previous small-scale study where I interviewed two

fifth-grade boys about the types of texts they liked to read during independent reading in

school. Those interview questions led to valuable data collection so I used them to guide

the student-interview protocol for this study. Student interviews were audio recorded

using a digital handheld microphone to record the participants' exact words. Audio

recordings were transcribed verbatim.

To gather qualitative data on boys' choice of reading material, I discussed with the

boys what they liked to read. I also provided the interviewees with the same text set used

during the teacher interviews (see Appendix C, numbers 1 to 40). Having the text set

available during the student interviews provided the boys with a reference point for our

conversation when discussing their choice of reading materials; however, more

conversation was necessary when explaining that these texts were meant only to represent

a variety of text formats and not exact titles.

To gather qualitative data on students' attitudes toward reading and self-

perceptions as readers, I asked general questions about whether the student liked to read

and how the student perceived himself as a reader. I also had on hand the student's

ERAS and RSPS results and asked specific questions about the boys' responses.

Classroom Observations

During each observation, I recorded all information that I believed would help me

understand the relationship between the personal, behavioral, and environmental factors

that were at work within each classroom. One week before the intervention began, I

observed in each classroom to gather data on the classroom environments and collected

baseline data on two separate days while students read independently.

During the 6 weeks of intervention, I visited each classroom the first day of the school week when the teachers conducted the teacher book talks and the following day when the teachers conducted their first interactive read-aloud. There were five purposes for these observations. First, they served as checkpoints to validate the integrity of the study design. Second, I was able to see firsthand students' responses to the intervention. Third, I had the opportunity to gather data on the focus group of boys who were being investigated in the study. Fourth, I gathered informal data on teacher behaviors during the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, as well as during independent reading. Fifth, being present in the classrooms once per week provided me with a context for understanding the statements made by teachers and students in the final interviews.

<center>Research Questions</center>

In this study, I collected quantitative and qualitative data to answer the following research questions:

1. What are fifth-grade boys' reading interests, and how do they compare with fifth-grade girls' reading interests?

2. What are fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading, and how do they compare with fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?

3. To what extent do teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school change fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?

4. To what extent do teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school change fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?

5. To what extent is there a difference in the change in reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading for fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer graphica and fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer other texts?

6. What are two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, time provided in school for independent reading, an unrestricted amount of student choice of books, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum?

Data Analysis

This section includes the methods of data analysis used to answer my six research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used in my study. Because equal weight was given to the quantitative and qualitative data that were collected, both types of data-collection methods are discussed within each section whenever this applies.

Boys' and Girls' Reading Interests

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to answer question #1: *What are fifth-grade boys' reading interests, and how do they compare with fifth-grade girls' reading interests?* Two sets of quantitative data were analyzed to answer this research question. First, boys and girls' responses to the 23 categories of texts that students

circled on the Reading Interest Inventory were compared using a chi-square test.

Students were given 4 category options: *yes*, *sometimes*, *no*, *never tried it*. To learn what

were the differences in the boys and girls' responses, a chi-square test was performed.

For analysis purposes, the categories *yes* and *sometimes* were collapsed, as were the

categories of *no* and *never tried it*.

The second source of quantitative data analysis was students' responses to which

texts they were interested in reading from the Original Read-Aloud Library that was

shown to them in the first week of baseline data collection. A frequency distribution table

with the students' responses to each title and classification of genre or text type was used

to compare boys' text preferences with girls' text preferences.

Boys' and Girls' Reading Attitudes, Reading Self-efficacy, and Amount of Reading

Three sets of quantitative data were collected to answer question #2: *What are*

fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading, and how

do they compare with fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and

amount of reading? Before beginning analysis of the data, the pretest scores on the

boys' and girls' ERAS and RSPS in the two classes were compared using the

independent-samples *t* test. No statistically significant differences were found; therefore,

data from the boys and girls in each class were combined for the descriptive analysis. All

analyses were conducted using .05 level of significance.

The first set of data were scores from the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey:

the recreational subscore, the academic subscore, and the composite scores. To learn

what were the reading attitudes of the boys compared with the girls, the scores in each

subcategory for the boys' surveys were compared with the scores in each subcategory for the girls' surveys using an independent-samples *t* test. Also, the composite scores for the boys were compared with the composite scores for the girls using an independent-samples *t* test.

The second set of quantitative data collected was from the Reader Self-Perception Scale. To learn what were the reader self-perceptions of the boys compared with the girls, the scores in each of the four subcategories for the boys' surveys were compared with the scores in each subcategory for the girls' surveys using an independent-samples *t* test. Also, the composite scores for the boys' composite scores were compared with the composite scores for the girls using an independent-samples *t* test.

The third set of quantitative data collected were the in-school and out-of-school reading logs. To learn what was the boys' amount of reading compared with the girls' amount of reading, I attempted to calculate the average number of minutes boys read in school and at home each week, as reported on the boys' reading logs, and compare it with the average number of minutes girls read in school and at home, as reported on their reading logs. To find the average number of minutes students read in school, I added the total number of minutes they recorded on their logs and divided the total by the number of days they read in school each week. I used the same process to learn the average number of pages students read. After several weeks of working with the reading log data, I concluded that the reading log data were unreliable and could not be used to answer the research question. These reasons are discussed in chapter IV.

Change in Boys' and Girls' Reading Attitudes, Reading Self-efficacy, and Amount of Reading After the Intervention

Quantitative data from three sources were collected to answer question #3: *To what extent do teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school change fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?* First, to measure the change in boys' and girls' reading attitudes, the pretest scores on the boys' Elementary Reading Attitude Surveys were compared with their posttest scores, using a dependent-samples *t* test. The same comparison was made between the pretest and posttest scores for the girls.

Second, to measure the change in boys' reading self-efficacy, the pretest scores on the Reader Self-Perception Survey were compared with their posttest scores, using a dependent-samples *t* test. The same comparison was made between the pretest and posttest scores for girls.

Third, to learn whether the teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and unrestricted choice of reading materials during independent reading time in school changed boys' amount of reading, I planned to compare the average number of minutes the boys read the first week with each consecutive week to learn whether there was an increase in boys' amount of reading during the 6-week intervention. Also, I had planned to compare the amount of time boys spent reading in week 1 and week 6 using a dependent-samples t test. As discussed in the previous section on the data analysis procedures for question #2, the reading log data were unreliable and, therefore, were not analyzed.

Change in Reluctant Boy Readers' Reading Attitudes, Reading Self-efficacy, and Amount of Reading After the Intervention

Three sources of quantitative data and qualitative data from pre- and poststudy interviews with the target group of 14 reluctant boy readers were collected to answer question #4: *To what extent do teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school change fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?* To measure the change in the 14 reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, I compared their pretest scores on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey with their posttest scores, using a dependent-samples *t* test. To measure the change in the 14 reluctant boy readers' reading self-efficacy, I compared their pretest scores on the Reader Self-Perception Scale with their posttest scores, using a dependent-samples *t* test. To learn whether the teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and an unrestricted amount of choice of reading materials during independent reading time in school changed the reluctant boy readers' amount of reading, I had planned to compare the average number of minutes the boys read the first week with each consecutive week. Also, I had planned to compare the amount of time boys spent reading in weeks 1 and 6 using a dependent-samples *t* test. As discussed in the section on the data-analysis procedures for question #2, the reading log data were unreliable and, therefore, could not be analyzed.

Qualitative data from one-on-one interviews with each of the 14 reluctant boy readers also were used to measure the change in the boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. I conducted interviews during the first 2 weeks of the study, before the intervention began, and during the last 2 weeks of the study, after the

intervention had ended. I reviewed all the boy transcripts multiple times for accuracy and removed the disfluencies (ums, word fragments, and stutters) to make them more readable; however, I kept the colloquialisms (gonna, wanna, etc.) to maintain the natural voice of the speakers.

When analyzing the qualitative data, I considered how the boys' responses related to the theoretical framework for my study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). To facilitate the coding process, I used HyperRESEARCH, a qualitative analysis software program, as I read through 7 sets of boy transcripts looking for themes. I started with 7 of the 14 interviews and generated a preliminary set of codes. Next, I compared the set of codes with the personal, behavioral, and environmental factors I had listed in each of the three areas of the study model. Wherever I found a code whose meaning matched a factor listed in the model, I revised the codes to match the original wording for consistency throughout the study. For example, when reading a response from a boy who discussed how much he was reading in school or at home, I originally coded it as *time spent reading*. After reviewing the model, I changed that code to *amount of reading* so it matched the terminology used throughout the study. I kept any codes that were not included already in the model. Then I reread the same set of interviews and began recoding so they would reflect the revised set of codes. During this process, I noticed that some codes were redundant and others represented ideas that had surfaced only in one boy's interview. I revised some of the language of the codes and narrowed the code list so only the most important ideas were given codes. I also created 3 sets of narrative codes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) to capture themes that were important ideas but were

outside of the three areas discussed in the model: personal, behavioral, and environmental reading factors. The three narrative codes were *boys and reading*, which captured what the boys believed was important for teachers to know about what boys like to read, *message to teachers about reading*, which revealed anything that boys said they wanted teachers to know as a result of participating in the study, and *misconception about the question*, which captured any point in the conversation where I realized that the student had misunderstood either a question that I had asked or a question that had been asked in one of the reading surveys.

Using this revised set of codes, I continued on and read the other 7 boys' transcripts searching for additional themes. During this process, it became evident that the variables I was measuring in the study--reading attitude, reader self-perception, amount of reading--should be coded further according to when in the study the boys gave their responses. For this reason, I added a process code (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) indicating the passage of time. For example, the original code *reading attitude* became two new codes--*reading attitude before the study* and *reading attitude after the study*--to differentiate between the boys' responses about their attitudes toward reading before the study began and their attitudes toward reading after the study ended.

By the end of the third round of coding, a few themes were deleted, themes were revised to be more succinct, and new themes emerged. I obtained a frequency report to find out how many times each theme had been coded and deleted any theme that had a low frequency. I had created the code *school library* but deleted that code after finding it had been mentioned only once (1). I also deleted *knowledge of kinds of books available*

(1), *making a connection to the reading* (2), and *partner talk* (2). I had created a code for the *language arts teacher*; however, the boys discussed such a range of topics related to their teacher that one general code *language arts teacher* no longer captured the distinctions in their responses. Instead, I created three separate codes--*teacher change, teacher's attitude toward comics*, and *teacher book preferences*--and deleted the general code *language arts teacher*.

Two new themes emerged during this round. Several boys mentioned the books in the read-aloud library or referred to the fun books that I brought in, so I created a code called *read-aloud library books*. The third theme that emerged was *reading ability.* As with the other two personal factors--*reading attitude* and *reader self-perception*--the general code of reading ability was changed and coded as *reading ability before the study* and *reading ability after the study* to indicate at what point in time the boys discussed reading ability.

After completing this round of coding, I created a table that included the name of the code, an abbreviation for the code, a description of what each code meant, and one or more examples from the transcripts to further explain each code. This table served as the training tool for the verification process.

Two teachers participated in the coding verification process. The first coder was the program director of a university teacher credential program and university professor. She conducted a qualitative study as a doctoral student and was familiar with the qualitative coding process. She also had 25 years of teaching experiences, many of which were teaching fifth grade. The second coder was an elementary teacher in the East

Bay area of San Francisco who had 8 years of teaching experience, 5 of which were as a fifth-grade teacher. She also was a colleague of mine who had been familiar with the content of my study from its inception.

Twenty-one percent or three complete sets of boy transcripts were verified. A complete set of transcripts included one prestudy interview and one or more poststudy interviews. Due to time constraints and availability of the interview participants, several of the poststudy interviews had been conducted on more than one day, but all boys were interviewed before and one or more times at the end of the study. I wrote each boy's name on a sheet of paper and randomly selected three sets of transcripts for the verification process: Julius, Donny, and Mike.

The entire verification process for the three complete sets of boy transcripts spanned a one-month period. To begin the coding verification process, we met and I presented the boy transcripts coding guide to the two coders. I explained the overarching categories of personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors and how they connected to the study, went through each of the 29 codes reading the descriptions and examples, and checked in throughout the process to answer the coders' questions. We began by coding the first three pages of Julius' transcripts together. We read through the transcripts aloud, discussed what we were seeing, then used the abbreviations from the coding guide to code each chunk of the transcript. Next, the coders read through the next two pages and coded on their own. We had many different codes but after discussing those pages we completely agreed on the codes assigned. We decided to continue the process of coding only two pages at a time. At the end of our first 4-hour

coding session we had coded only the prestudy for Julius, and the coders believed they needed more time with me before coding on their own. We met 2 days later and repeated the process of coding two to three pages at a time and finished coding the rest of Julius' transcript. We had reached about 60% agreement when coding each section on our own, but, after discussion, we consistently reached over 90% agreement on the codes. We ended that session and decided to code the first three pages of Donny's prestudy interview on our own.

Within the next week, each coder electronically sent me their codes and notes. I compiled the codes, added notes about my codes, clarified the coders' misunderstandings about certain codes they had been misinterpreted, and noted codes that they had overlooked. At that juncture, we had agreed at varying levels (see Table 5 for levels of agreement); however, after discussion, we agreed on all the codes. Neither coder was confident at this point in her ability to capture all the nuances that I had been seeing from the boys' responses, so we decided to repeat the process and code only the next three pages. I compiled the codes and notes they sent me, then we met to discuss our responses and finish the rest of the transcriptions. After much discussion and more practice, we moved on to the final boy transcript, Mike, and coded the entire transcript with 95% consistency. codes that included the words *before the study* and *after the study,* so the codes were changed to say *prestudy interview* and *poststudy interview* to clarify that the code referred only to the point in time at which the boys reported their answers to the interview questions. Second, one coder believed that it would be valuable to know about boys' reading interests reported before the study compared with boys' reading interests

Table 5

Level of Agreement for Coding of Boy Transcripts

Boy Transcript	# of Pages	Agreement Before Discussion	Agreement After Discussion
Julius	3	Training pages	
	3	Training pages	
	2	Training pages	
	3	60%	95%
	4	62%	95%
Donny	3	62%	95%
	3	68%	100%
	2	74%	100%
	5	90%	100%
Mike	13	93%	100%

reported after the study, so code *2a*, *reading interests*, was changed to code *2aa*, *reading interests (prestudy interview)* and code *2ab*, *reading interests (poststudy interview)*. The code *3f* was changed from *teacher's attitude toward comics* to *teacher's attitude toward graphica*. Finally, the codes *3h, access to high-interest reading materials* and code *3i, read-aloud library* were collapsed into one code. The read-aloud library was included as one set of high-interest reading materials to which the boys referred. A copy of the final codes for the boys' transcripts is found in Appendix J. I proceeded to code the remaining 11 boy transcripts using the coding guide.

In addition to the boys' interview data, I considered the teachers' responses from the second and third set of interviews as well as their informal email correspondences reporting the changes in boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of

reading. This third set of data served as a means for triangulating the data collected on the differences in the change of boys' reading attitudes, self-perceptions as readers, and amount of reading when their teachers integrated reading materials of high interest to them during the teacher book talks and read-alouds.

Difference in the Change for Graphica and Nongraphica Readers

If the sample of boys who prefer graphica compared with the sample of boys who did not prefer graphica had been of reasonable size for comparison of change of scores, an independent-samples *t* test would have been used to answer question #5: *To what extent is there a difference in the change in reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading for fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer graphica and fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer other texts?* On the Reading Interest Inventory, 23 of the 24 boys with survey responses marked *yes* that they enjoyed reading graphic novels, 17 of the 24 marked boys marked *yes* that they enjoyed reading comic books and 4 more boys marked that they *sometimes* liked reading comic books, 15 of the 24 marked *yes* that they enjoyed reading comic strips and 4 more marked that they *sometimes* liked reading comic strips, and 10 of the 24 boys marked *yes* that they enjoyed reading single panel comics and 4 others marked that they *sometimes* liked reading single panel comics. Due to the overwhelming majority of boys who had an interest in reading some form of graphica, the prestudy and poststudy scores on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey and Reader Self-Perception Scale for boys who prefer graphica and boys who preferred reading other genres could not be compared. Amount of reading could not be compared for this reason and because the reading log data were not reliable.

Teachers' Reading Beliefs and Practices

To explore teachers' beliefs and practices related to teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, students' unrestricted choice of texts for independent reading, and the integration of boys' reading interests into the language arts curriculum, I collected three sets of data. First, one-on-one interviews with the two fifth-grade teachers were recorded at four points throughout the study. The first interviews were conducted during the first week of the study, the second interviews were conducted after the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds ended during week 4 of the intervention, the third interviews were conducted 6 weeks after the study had ended, and the last eacher interviews were conducted 3 weeks later after the teachers had read through all of their boys' transcripts. I reviewed the teacher transcripts multiple times for accuracy and, again, removed the disfluencies but kept the colloquialisms.

When analyzing the teacher interviewees' responses, I considered the theoretical framework for my study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) and the themes that had emerged from the boys' transcripts.   I also looked for new ideas that emerged from the teacher interviews. Using the software program, HyperResearch, I created codes for the independent and dependent variables in my study: teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, time in school for independent reading, amount of student book choice, reading attitude, reader self-perception, and amount of reading. I also created codes for students' reading interests, students' interest in graphica, and students' reading behaviors because these themes had been relevant in the boys' transcripts. Furthermore, I coded all of these themes as prestudy, midstudy, and poststudy to identify the point in time when

the teachers made statements about each of these ideas.

As I read, I found that several of the ideas discussed by the teachers fit these codes, but I also found many other themes emerging. When I had finished reading the first teacher interview, I had created over 50 codes. I went back and reread the first interview, checked to see if the codes I had created still fit, and added new codes that had emerged while reading on. I continued reading, adding codes and making changes to the codes I had created. By the time I had finished reading the next three teacher interviews, I had 61 codes, which I believed was too many codes to work with in an efficient manner. At this point, I made two major changes. First, I removed all the prestudy, midstudy, and poststudy labels for the codes. Second, I found that many of the additional codes I had created for the emerging themes matched the themes that I had coded as personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors in the boys' transcripts. For consistency and to help streamline the discussion between the boys' transcripts and teachers' transcripts, I decided to maintain most of the codes that I had used for the boys' transcripts.

One major change in the teacher transcripts coding was the expansion of the area on the language arts teacher. In the boys' transcripts, there were three teacher themes: *teacher change, teacher's attitude toward graphica,* and *teacher's book preferences*. I started with these three themes and added six other codes: *teacher's attitude toward teaching reading, self-perceptions as a teacher of reading, ability as a teacher of reading, future planning, other teacher reading behaviors, and barriers*. I also added the theme *other student reading behavior* because both teachers discussed other types of behaviors

that had not emerged from the boys' transcripts. Given these revisions, I reread four of the eight teacher transcripts and recoded them using the new set of 24 codes.

The same two coders verified the two sets of teacher transcripts, and we engaged in a similar process for reaching coding consensus using the set of codes (see Appendix K). Table 6 is an overview of our levels of agreement at each step of the verification process.

Table 6
Level of Agreement for Coding of Teacher Transcripts

Teacher Transcript	# of Pages	Agreement Before Discussion	Agreement After Discussion
Mrs. Vacca	1	Training pages	
	2	Training pages	
	2	65%	
	2	71%	95%
	4	83%	100%
Mrs. Labelle	9	88%	100%

After the initial training, we continued to stop and verify our codes. After we reached over 80% agreement, we continued coding the remainder of the teacher transcripts on our own. I had planned to use the teacher reflection journals as a second data set. Instead, I analyzed the email correspondences the teachers sent me using the same themes that had emerged in the teacher transcript analysis. A third set of data were the pertinent field notes that were recorded during the weekly classroom observations. These field notes served to triangulate the data and provided further support for the themes that had been coded.

In summary, a mixed-methods research design was used to measure boys' and girls' reading interests, reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. Changes in these personal factors for boys and girls were measured after a 6-week intervention of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading in school, and unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading. Changes in 14 reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading also were measured. Teachers beliefs and practices about conducting teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, providing students with time in school to read independently, allowing unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum were explored. The results for the research questions are reported in chapter IV and discussed in chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This mixed-methods study was conducted for six purposes. First, I wanted to

learn what were the reading interests of fifth-grade boys and how did they compare with

fifth-grade girls' reading interests. Second, I sought to learn what were the reading

attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading of fifth-grade boys and how did

they compare with fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount

of reading. Third, I aimed to measure the extent to which teacher book talks, interactive

read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of texts during independent reading in

school changed fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-

efficacy, and amount of reading. Fourth, I wanted to measure to what extent teacher book

talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books for independent

reading in school changed the reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of

reading of 14 reluctant boy readers. Fifth, I sought to measure the difference in the

changes in reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading of reluctant

fifth-grade boy readers who preferred graphica with the changes in fifth-grade reluctant

boy readers who preferred other types of texts. Sixth, I wanted to explore two fifth-grade

teachers' beliefs and practices about teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, students

unrestricted choice of texts for independent reading, and integrating boys' reading

interests, including graphica, into their language arts instruction.

Fifty-two fifth-grade students and two fifth-grade teachers participated in the

study. Students' reading interests were measured at the beginning of the study using a

Reading Interest Inventory that I adapted from several published reading interest surveys. Reading attitudes were measured using the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990) and reading self-efficacy was measured using the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS; Henk & Melnick, 1995) before and after a 6-week classroom intervention of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and time in school for independent reading where students were not restricted in their choice of book selections. Amount of reading was measured before, during, and after the intervention using a weekly reading log where students self-reported the number of minutes and number of pages they read each day. Throughout the study, the teachers recorded on index cards, referred to as library circulation cards, the students' book selections from the read-aloud library collection. After the 6-week intervention ended, students' preferences for which teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were their favorites were measured using a ranked order checklist.

I interviewed 14 boys who were identified as reluctant readers using three criteria: low to average scores on the ERAS, low to average scores on the RSPS, and teacher recommendations. The 14 boys chosen to be studied in-depth met at least two of the three criteria. Both teachers recommended boys based on the survey data I collected and their observations of one or more of the following: low performance on reading tests, negative attitudes toward reading, poor self-perceptions as readers, or a reluctancy to engage fully during language arts instruction.

I interviewed the two fifth-grade teachers before, during, and after the 6-week classroom intervention. The teachers completed the ranked order checklist indicating

their favorite weeks for doing the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. I also kept field notes on the teachers' comments throughout the study as they commented about what they were witnessing in their classrooms. Neither teacher recorded any notes in the teacher journal as had been discussed at the beginning of the study. Instead, both teachers occasionally sent me emails commenting on the changes that were occurring in their classrooms, either overall in student behavior or related to specific students.

This chapter contains the results from the Reading Interest Inventory (quantitative), students' reading preferences from the First Read-Aloud Library, the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (quantitative), the Reader Self-Perception Scale (quantitative), in-school and out-of-school reading logs (quantitative), the library circulation cards (quantitative), the students' and teachers' ranked ordered checklist for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds (quantitative), and the interview data from the 14 target boys and the two fifth-grade teachers (qualitative). The quantitative analyses for the Reading Interest Inventory were conducted using frequency distribution tables and a chi-square test. The analyses of the ERAS and the RSPS results were conducted using an independent-samples t test. The analysis of the library circulation cards was conducted using a frequency distribution table. The analysis of the rank-ordered teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were analyzed using a frequency distribution table. The interview data for the 14 boys and 2 teachers were analyzed using the qualitative software analysis program HyperResearch.

Assumptions

To conduct a quantitative analysis of students' reading interests using the chi-

square test, only the assumption of independence of observations must be satisfied. A comparison was made between a sample of 26 fifth-grade boys and 26 fifth-grade girls. Independence of observations was satisfied because each student completed the survey only one time. As an exact test was used, no other assumptions were necessary.

To conduct the quantitative analysis using an independent-samples *t* test, three assumptions must be satisfied. A comparison was made between a sample of 26 fifth-grade boys and 26 fifth-grade girls. First, the researcher must establish that there is independence within the individuals in the sample where no member of one population can be part of the other, as well as independence between genders. Independence of responses was assured as students completed the surveys individually, and males and females, by nature of gender, are independent.

Second, the researcher must establish that the scores in each population represent a normal distribution. If each sample is greater than 30, then the assumption of normality is satisfied. In this case, the number of males and females for the gender comparison is close to 30. If statistical significance is found, then there is a greater possibility of a Type I error if the normality assumption is not satisfied.

Third, the assumption of equal population variance must be satisfied. Because the sample sizes are equal, the independent-samples *t* test is robust regarding violation of this assumption.

To conduct the paired-samples *t* test, two assumptions must be satisfied: independence between observations and normal distribution of difference scores. Independence between observations is satisfied because the boys completed the surveys

individually. Because the number of reluctant male readers was less than 30, the paired-samples *t* test was not robust, and the results were checked using the Wilcoxon nonparametric test.

An independent-samples *t* test was used to determine whether the data from the two groups of students could be combined as one group or would need to be analyzed separately. Twenty-eight students at Payton participated in the study. Eleven were boys and 17 were girls. Twenty-four students at Delrado participated in the study. Fifteen were boys and 9 were girls. There were no statistically significant differences between the reading attitude scores or the reader self-perception scores of the students in the two classes and, therefore, the two classes were combined to make one group of 26 boys and 26 girls.

The remaining section of this chapter contains the results related to each of the six research questions. When both quantitative and qualitative were collected to answer the question, the quantitative data are reported first.

Research Question 1

Research on the behavioral factor, reading interests, suggests that boys and girls do not prefer to read the same types of genres and text formats. One purpose for this research was to learn to what extent these fifth-grade boys' and girls' reading interests align with past research. Two sets of data were collected to answer the question: *What do fifth-grade boys prefer to read, and how do their reading interests compare with fifth-grade girls' reading interests?* First, students completed the Reading Interest Inventory. The survey items of relevance for this study were students' responses to the 23 categories

of texts listed at the end of the Reading Interest Inventory. For each of the 23 categories,

students were asked whether they like reading that type of text. Their choice of responses

were *yes*, *no*, *sometimes*, *never tried it*. Table 7 contains an overview of the responses to

the 23 categories of texts listed on the Reading Interest Inventory. Fifty of the 52

students completed the survey; two boys were absent on the day the survey was

administered. One of the boys absent was identified as a reluctant reader; therefore, the

total number of reluctant boy readers with reported reading interests on the Reading

Interest Inventory was 13.

The traditional texts are the three genres most preferred by the two fifth-grade

teachers in the study. These three types of texts, which were identified during

conversations with the two teachers before the study began, were the genres selected for

the three sets of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds conducted in weeks 1, 3,

and 5. The results of the boys' and girls' responses to realistic fiction were similar.

About half of each group said *yes* they read realistic fiction and the other half said

sometimes they like to read realistic fiction. The same was true for the reluctant boy

readers.

The boys' and girls' responses for historical fiction also were similar. One-third

of the boys and girls responded *yes* and another third responded *sometimes* to liking to

read historical fiction. The other third of both the boys and the girls either responded *no*

to liking to read historical fiction or had *never tried it*. The same range of responses

existed for the reluctant boy readers. More girls than boys responded *yes* to liking to read

fantasy; however, in all three groups, most students liked to read fantasy at least

Table 7
Reading Interests of Fifth-Grade Boys and Girls

Type of Text	Boys (*n* = 24)				Girls (*n* = 26)				Reluctant Boys (*n* = 13)			
	Y	S	N	NTI	Y	S	N	NTI	Y	S	N	NTI
Traditional												
Realistic fiction	11	11	1	1	13	13	1	0	6	6	0	1
Historical fiction	8	8	5	3	8	9	5	4	3	4	4	2
Fantasy	11	8	5	0	17	9	0	0	6	5	2	0
Alternate												
Graphica												
Graphic novels	23	0	0	1	15	3	3	5	13	0	0	0
Manga	5	6	4	9	7	2	4	13	1	4	2	6
Comic books	17	4	3	0	5	8	5	8	10	1	2	0
Comic strips	15	4	2	3	9	10	3	4	8	2	1	2
Single panel comics	10	6	3	5	8	3	1	14	5	2	1	5
Information & sports												
Informational books	13	6	3	2	2	15	7	2	7	4	1	1
Video gaming books	18	3	2	1	8	5	7	6	11	0	1	1
Sports information	13	7	4	0	3	7	8	8	11	0	1	1
Scary/Horror/Mystery												
Scary/horror	18	6	0	0	12	7	2	5	11	2	0	0
Mystery	18	5	1	0	16	8	2	0	10	2	1	0

Table 7 continued

Type of Text	Boys (n = 24)				Girls (n = 26)				Reluctant Boys (n = 13)			
	Y	S	N	NTI	Y	S	N	NTI	Y	S	N	NTI
Other												
Action/adventure	13	9	2	0	15	4	4	3	6	6	1	0
Award-winning book	12	8	2	2	11	13	1	1	7	3	1	2
Biography	8	5	7	4	2	18	4	2	3	2	5	3
Humor	20	4	0	0	19	7	0	0	9	4	0	0
Magazines	12	11	0	1	14	7	2	3	7	5	0	1
Newspapers	7	8	5	4	2	13	6	5	5	3	2	3
Online materials	13	4	4	3	13	8	3	2	7	1	2	3
Picture books	17	6	1	0	16	7	2	1	10	3	0	0
Poetry	7	6	6	5	17	4	2	3	4	1	3	5
Science fiction	7	10	6	1	1	3	16	6	3	4	5	1

sometimes. Of the three traditional genres, fantasy was the only genre that every student had tried reading.

The alternate texts listed in Table 7 were the texts used for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds given during the 6 weeks of the intervention. Of the 23 categories of texts presented to students, those most preferred by the reluctant boy readers were graphic novels (13), video gaming books (11), sports (11), scary/horror (11), mystery (10), comic books (10), and picture books (10). Rather than selecting only three categories from the seven categories most preferred by the reluctant boy readers, similar types of texts were combined. Combining text categories also broadened the book selections available to be purchased for the read-aloud libraries. Graphic novels, manga,

comic books, comic strips, and single panel comics were combined into one category,

referred to as graphica, and were the first set of alternate texts used for the teacher book

talks and interactive read-alouds during the 2nd week of the intervention. The category

of informational books included video gaming books and sports information that were the

alternate texts introduced during the 4th week of the intervention. Scary/horror and

mystery were combined as the alternate texts for the teacher book talks and interactive

read-alouds during the 6th week of the intervention.

     Most forms of graphica were popular with the boys. All the reluctant boy readers

and all the other boys except one who had *never tried it* said *yes* they liked reading

graphic novels. The girls' responses for graphic novels were more diverse; however,

many girls also responded *yes* to liking to read graphic novels. All three groups had a

range of responses for manga. This category had the most number of students who had

never tried it. Many of the girls also had *never tried* reading single panel comics. Given

the high number of boys who preferred reading graphica, this text format was the first

alternate set of texts used for the intervention.

     More types of informational texts were preferred by boys than girls. Half or more

of the boys responded *yes* to liking informational books, video gaming books, and sports

books compared with eight or fewer girls who liked reading these types of texts. All but

two of the reluctant boy readers preferred reading informational texts at least sometimes,

and all but two reluctant boy readers responded yes to liking to read video gaming book

and sports. For this reason, these three types of informational books were combined into

one category and were the alternate texts used for week 4 of the intervention.

Scary/horror books and mystery books were favored by all three groups of students. They were the second most preferred type of books for boys after graphic novels. Mysteries were the second most preferred type of books for girls after fantasy. All the reluctant boy readers indicated *yes* or *sometimes* to liking to read scary/horror books, and all but one of the reluctant boy readers indicated *yes* or *sometimes* to liking to read mysteries. For this reason, scary/horror books and mysteries were combined into one category and were the alternate texts used for week 6 of the intervention.

Two other types of texts were preferred by all three groups of students: humor and picture books. All students in the study responded yes or sometimes to liking to read humor. For this reason, several of the books included in the graphica collection were humorous texts. Picture books were also popular with both groups. All but one boy and all but three girls in the study responded yes or sometimes to liking to read picture books. Because graphica was selected for the first alternate week, picture books were not selected as a second alternate week for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds.

Because the sample size is small and the number of responses to some categories is small, categories were collapsed in order to have a 2 by 2 table where the Fisher's exact test could be performed to test for statistical significance. Responses *yes* and *sometimes* were combined, and *no* and *never tried it* were combined. When the overall error rate was controlled across the 23 chi-square tests, only science fiction (chi-square = 15.75) and sports (chi-square = 10.47) indicated statistically significant differences in preferences for boys and girls. Girls were proportionally less likely to prefer to have read science fiction and sports.

A second data set was used to answer the question about students' reading interests. On the third day of week 1 of baseline data collection, after the students completed the Reading Interest Inventory, students were given a list of the 40 titles of texts that were included in the First Read-Aloud Library and were asked to circle the titles of any texts they might want to read. No specific number of titles was given for students to circle; students simply were asked to circle all the titles they found interesting enough to read. Table 8 includes the 40 texts with their genre or text format and the frequency for which the boys and girls circled each title.

Four of the six traditional book titles were of interest to about one-fourth of the girls; however, few boys were interested in reading any of the traditional books in the first set of books from the read-aloud library. In the first set of alternate texts, graphica, five of the eight titles were of interest to 25% to 50% of the boys. The two most popular titles for both groups of boys, *The Avengers: Heroes Assembled* and *Marvel Adventures Super Heroes*, differed from the two most popular titles selected by girls, *Ultra Maniac*, a shojo manga book, and *Dennis the Menace*. A similar number of boys and girls were interested in reading *Out from Boneville* and *Superman: The Dailies 1940-1941*. Five of the six boys who selected *Superman: The Dailies 1940-1941* were reluctant boy readers.

Only one book title from the informational books and sports category was selected by multiple students in all three groups: *Guiness World Records 2010: Gamer's Edition*. None of the other titles were of interest to more than one or two of the reluctant boy readers. The number of students who selected titles in the scary/horror/mystery category titles was similar for all three groups. The scary/horror titles were more popular

Table 8
Favorite Texts in the First Read-Aloud Library

Type of Text	Titles of the Texts	Boys (n=26)	Girls (n=26)	Focus Boys (n=14)
Traditional				
Realistic fiction	*Because of Winn Dixie*	1	6	1
	Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key	1	1	1
Historical fiction	*Dear America*	1	5	0
	The Watsons Go to Birmingham 1963	0	1	0
Fantasy	*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*	2	6	2
	Warriors- Into the Wild	2	7	1
Alternate				
Graphica				
Graphic novels	*Out from Boneville*	6	5	2
	The Avengers: Heroes Assembled	10	1	7
Manga	*Kyuma! (shonen manga--male protagonist)*	0	4	0
	Ultra Maniac (shojo manga--female protagonist)	1	11	0
Comic books	*Archie Marries Betty: "The Wedding"*	0	6	0
	Marvel Adventures Super Heroes	12	3	8
Comic strips	*Superman: The Dailies 1940-1941*	6	8	5
Single panel comics	*Dennis the Menace*	5	12	3
Information & sports				
Informational books	*Eye Witness: Vietnam War*	4	2	1
	Inventions	3	2	2
Video gaming books	*Guiness World Records 2010: Gamer's Edition*	15	11	10
Sports	*Everything Kids' Soccer Book*	1	2	1
	Two-Minute Drill	1	1	1

Table 8 continued

Type of Text	Titles of the Texts	Boys (n=26)	Girls (n=26)	Focus Boys (n=14)
Scary/Horror/Mystery				
Scary/horror	*Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*	10	9	7
	Goosebumps: Piano Lessons Can Be Murder	6	5	5
Mystery	*Nancy Drew: The Secret of the Old Clock*	0	2	0
	Hardy Boys: The Tower Treasure	3	1	1
Other				
Action/adventure	*Stormbreaker*	3	5	1
	Island- Book One: Shipwreck	3	4	1
Award-winning book	*Bridge to Terabithia*	2	8	2
	Maniac Magee	0	3	0
Biography	*Princess Diana*	0	6	0
	Jeff Corwin: A Wild Life	1	0	0
Humor	*The Adventures of Captain Underpants*	10	7	6
	The Really Stupid Joke Book	7	14	4
Magazines	*National Geographic Kids*	3	1	2
	Fantasy Baseball 2010 Draft Guide	4	2	4
Newspapers	San Francisco Chronicle	0	1	0
	Local weekday newspaper	1	1	1
Picture books	*Moonpowder*	1	6	1
	Long Shot	4	2	2
Poetry	*Where the Sidewalk Ends*	3	15	3
Science fiction	*Animorphs*	2	1	1
	Star Wars the Clone Wars: Grievous Attacks	6	0	3

with all three groups than the mystery titles. Half of the reluctant boy readers were interested in reading *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark.*

The only titles in the Other category that were of interest to the boys in the study

were *The Adventures of Captain Underpants* (38%), *The Really Stupid Joke Book* (27%), and *Star Wars the Clone Wars: Grievous Attacks* (23%). For each of these three titles, half or more of the boys that made these selections were reluctant boy readers. Two of these three titles, *The Really Stupid Joke Book* (54%) and *The Adventures of Captain Underpants* (27%) also were popular with the girls. The other titles selected the most times by girls were *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (58%) and *Bridge to Terabithia* (31%).

<div align="center">Research Question 2</div>

Research on two personal factors related to reading, reading attitude and reading self-efficacy, suggests that girls have a more positive attitude toward reading and more positive self-perceptions as readers. Research on one behavioral factor related to reading, amount of reading, suggests that girls read more than boys. A second purpose for this research was to learn whether the fifth-grade girls in this sample had more positive reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy than the fifth-grade boys and whether the fifth-grade girls read more than the fifth-grade boys. Several sets of data were collected to answer the question: *What are fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reader self-perceptions, and amount of reading, and how do they compare with fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?* The quantitative results for each variable in this research question is reported in its own section. The first section is reading attitude, followed by reading self-efficacy and amount of reading.

<div align="center">*Personal Factor: Reading Attitude*</div>

To learn what were fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes and how they compared with fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, 26 boys and 26 girls completed the Elementary

Reading Attitude Survey before the 6-week intervention. Independent-samples t tests

were used to compare the means of the reading attitudes of boys and girls. The means

were compared to test for a statistically significant difference between the reading

attitudes of boys and girls. According to the literature on reading attitude, on average,

girls' attitudes toward reading are more positive than boys; therefore, I anticipated there

would be a statistically significant difference between the boys' and girls' scores on the

pretest of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey.

As seen in Table 9, the pretest means for the boys are in the average range (20 to

30). When compared with the girls' pretest means, there is no statistically significant

difference on either of the subscales or the total score; however, the means for girls are

slightly higher on the recreational scale and the total score. The pretest means for girls

are in the average range.

Table 9
Means, Standard Deviations, and *t*-test Results for the Pretest Elementary
Reading Attitude Survey

Pretest Reading Attitude Scales	Boys		Girls		t
	M	SD	M	SD	$df = 50$
Recreational	27.37	6.05	29.46	5.47	1.31
Academic	27.33	4.64	27.19	4.42	0.11
Total	54.69	10.04	56.65	8.76	0.75

Personal Factor: Reading Self-Efficacy

To learn what were fifth-grade boys' perceptions of themselves as readers and

how they compared with fifth-grade girls' self-perceptions, 26 boys and 26 girls

completed the Reader Self-Perception Scale before the 6-week intervention.

Independent-samples *t* tests were conducted to assess differences in means for the reading

self-efficacy of boys and girls to investigate whether there was a statistically significant

difference between the reading self-efficacy of boys and girls. According to the literature

on reading self-efficacy, on average, girls' self-perceptions as readers are higher than

boys; therefore, I anticipated that there would be a statistically significant difference

between the boys' and girls' scores on the pretest of the Reader Self-Perception Scale.

The Reader Self-Perception Scale contains 5 subscales: General Perception,

Progress, Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, and Psychological State. As seen

in Table 10, the pretest means for boys and girls are similar on all the RSPS scales. When

compared with girls' pretest scores, there is no statistically significant difference for the

boys' pretest scores on any of the subscales or Total.

Table 10
Means, Standard Deviations, and *t*-test Results for the Pretest Reader
Self-Perception Scale

Pretest Reader-Self Perception Subscale	Boys		Girls		*t*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*df = 50*
General Perception	3.96	0.87	3.88	0.82	0.33
Progress	38.00	4.58	38.47	4.99	-0.35
Observational Comparison	19.00	3.93	19.42	4.67	-0.35
Social Feedback	31.08	5.21	30.27	4.77	0.58
Psychological State	31.08	6.61	31.46	6.46	-0.21
Total	123.12	14.75	123.50	16.15	-0.09

Behavioral Factor: Amount of Reading

In this study, amount of reading was to be measured using weekly reading logs for in-school and out-of-school reading; however, the reading logs were not reliable for several reasons.   First, some students recorded consecutive dates that totaled more than 5 days in a school week for their in-school reading logs and more than 7 days in a week for their out-of-school reading logs; therefore, an accurate average number of minutes read in school and at home could not be determined. Second, some students recorded dates that were not part of that calendar week whileothers forgot to record some dates. Without an accurate number of days read per week, an accurate average could not be calculated. Third, several students read large amounts of graphica that resulted in high average amounts of reading some weeks compared with low average amounts of reading other weeks. For example, when a student read all of *Dennis the Menace,* a single panel comic, the average number of pages read per day was over 100 pages. A reasonable comparison, therefore, could not be made between graphica and other types of texts.

A second source of data for comparing the amount of reading of boys and girls is students' open-ended response to item 5 on the Reading Interest Inventory: *How much time do you spend reading each day?* Students wrote in their responses, either indicating an exact amount of time they read or a range of time. Students reported their amount of reading in minutes or hours. Table 11 is an overview of students' responses for item 5 on the Reading Interest Inventory for amount of time spent reading.

As seen in Table 11, the same number of boys as girls reported spending 45 minutes or less per day reading. More than twice as many boys than girls read 45

Table 11
Amount of Time Students Spent Reading Per Day

Amount of Time Spent Reading	Boys ($n=25$)	Girls ($n=26$)
Less than 30 minutes	5	3
Exactly 30 minutes	5	5
30 to 45 minutes	3	5
45 to 60 minutes	5	0
Exactly 1 hour	2	3
1 to 2 hours	4	7
More than 2 hours	1	3

minutes to 1 hour per day. The number of girls who reported they had read more than

one hour per day was two times greater than the number of boys who reported they had

read more than one hour per day.

Research Question 3

A 6-week intervention that changed three environmental--teacher book talks,

interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent

reading--was introduced to find out *To what extent do teacher book talks, interactive*

read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading

change fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading

and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?

The quantitative results for each dependent variable in this research question are reported

in its own section. The first section is reading attitude, followed by reading self-efficacy

and amount of reading.

Personal Factor: Reading Attitude

To learn to what extent teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students'

unrestricted choice of books during independent reading changed the reading attitudes of

the 26 fifth-grade boys and the 26 fifth-grade girls in the study, paired-samples *t* tests for

each group were conducted to compare the means and standard deviations of the

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey given before and after the 6-week intervention.

The boys' means were compared to investigate whether there was a statistically

significant difference between boys' reading attitudes before and after the 6-week

intervention. I hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant difference

between the boys' pre- and posttest scores on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

after the 6-week intervention where boys were given time and access to books of their

choice. As seen in Table 12, there was a statistically significant difference between the

pretest and posttest reading attitude scores on the Recreational subscale of the ERAS and

the Total; therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Both Cohen's effect sizes are

moderate for these results. As there is a concern regarding the assumption of a normal

distribution given the small sample size, Wilcoxon tests were conducted with the same

statistically significant results indicating that a Type I error is not relevant.

The girls' means were compared to investigate whether there was a statistically

significant difference between the girls' reading attitudes before and after the

intervention. I hypothesized that there would be no statistically significant difference

between the girls' pre- and posttest scores on the ERAS because the girls' reading

Table 12

Pre- and Posttest Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Scores for Boys

| Reading Attitude Scales | Pretest | | Posttest | | t | Effect |
	M	SD	M	SD	df = 25	size
Recreational	27.37	6.05	29.73	5.54	2.18	* 0.43
Academic	27.33	4.64	27.50	7.23	0.13	0.02
Total	54.69	10.04	57.23	11.44	2.92	* 0.57

*Statistical significance when the overall error rate is controlled at .05.

attitudes already would be positive. As seen in Table 13, there was a statistically

significant difference between the pretest and posttest reading attitude scores on the

Recreational subscale of the ERAS. The effect size is moderate for this result. As there

is a concern regarding the assumption of a normal distribution given the small sample

size, Wilcoxon tests were conducted with the same statistically significant result

indicating that a Type I error is not relevant.

Table 13

Pre- and Posttest Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Scores for Girls

| Reading Attitude Scales | Pretest | | Posttest | | t | Effect |
	M	SD	M	SD	df = 25	size
Recreational	29.46	5.47	31.98	4.32	2.73	* 0.54
Academic	27.19	4.42	28.17	4.52	1.15	0.23
Total	56.65	8.76	60.15	7.85	2.21	0.43

*Statistical significance when the overall error rate is controlled at .05.

Personal Factor: Reading Self-Efficacy

To learn to what extent the intervention changed the reading self-efficacy of the 26 fifth-grade boys and 26 fifth-grade girls in the study, paired-samples *t* tests were conducted for each group to compare the means and standard deviations of the Reader Self-Perception Scale that was given before and after the study.

The boys' pretest and posttests means were compared to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the boys' reader self-perceptions before and after the intervention. I hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant difference between the boys' pre- and posttest scores on the RSPS after boys heard teacher book talks, participated in interactive read-alouds, and were given time in school for independent reading and access to a wide range of books. As seen in Table 14, there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest reader self-perception score on Progress but not for any of the other subscales. The effect size was moderate for this result. Although not statistically significant, Observational Comparison had a moderate effect size. No statistical significance may be due to small sample size. When Wilcoxon tests were conducted, the same statistically significant result was found.

The girls' pretest and posttest means were compared to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the girls' reader self-perceptions before and after the intervention. I hypothesized that there would be no statistically significant difference between the girls' pre- and posttest scores on the Reader Self-Perception Scale after the 6-week intervention because the types of girls books preferred to read were the books most commonly promoted by their teachers. As seen in Table 15, there was a

Table 14
Pre- and Posttest Reader Self-Perception Scores for Boys

Self-Perception Scales	Prettest		Posttest		t $df = 25$	Effect size
	M	SD	M	SD		
General	3.96	0.87	4.08	0.80	0.65	0.13
						*
Progress	38.00	4.58	40.88	3.76	3.24	0.63
Observational Comparison	19.00	3.93	20.88	5.00	2.62	0.51
Social Feedback	31.08	5.23	32.54	6.22	1.54	0.30
Psychological State	31.08	5.22	31.85	6.44	1.12	0.22
Total	123.12	14.75	130.23	16.9	1.24	0.24

*Statistical significance when the overall error rate is controlled at .05.

Table 15
Pre- and Posttest Reader Self-Perception Scores for Girls

Self-Perception Scales	Prettest		Posttest		t $df = 25$	Effect size
	M	SD	M	SD		
General	3.88	0.82	3.92	0.74	0.23	0.04
						*
Progress	38.46	4.99	40.12	4.76	3.00	0.59
Observational Comparison	19.42	4.65	20.23	5.29	1.32	0.26
Social Feedback	30.27	4.77	30.88	4.78	1.04	0.20
Psychological State	31.46	6.46	31.92	6.03	0.44	0.09
Total	123.50	16.15	127.08	13.64	1.83	0.36

*Statistical significance when the overall error rate is controlled at .05.

statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest reader self-perception

score on Progress but not for any of the other subscales. The effect size for this result

was moderate. Although not statistically significant, there was a small effect size for

Total. Wilcoxon tests confirm these results.

Behavioral Factor: Amount of Reading

To learn to what extent the intervention changed the amount of reading of the 26

fifth-grade boys and 26 fifth-grade girls, in-school and at-home reading logs were

collected; however, due to the high number of errors students made when self-reporting

the amount of minutes read and amount of pages they read each week, the reading log

data could not be used. A second source of data available is the circulation of books from

the read-aloud library reported in Table 16.

Table 16
Read-Aloud Library Book Circulation

Gender	Week 1 Realistic Fiction	Week 2 Graphica	Week 3 Historical Fiction	Week 4 Information & Sports	Week 5 Fantasy	Week 6 Scary/Horror/ Mystery	Totals
Boys	37	231	7	116	28	81	500
Girls	40	204	26	78	49	65	462
Total	77	435	33	194	77	146	962

When a student checked out any of the 220 books in the read-aloud library

collection, the teachers wrote the student's name on a corresponding index card. When

the student returned the book, the teacher usually asked whether the student had finished

reading the book. If the student responded yes, the teacher usually wrote a star on the

index card next to the student's name. If the student responded no, the teacher usually

asked about how many pages the student had read and recorded that amount on the card. Due to some inconsistency in this data collection, an exact number of books the students finished could not be determined.

Table 16 contains a summary of the number of books checked out from the read-aloud library over a 4-month period categorized by boys and girls and by the 6 types of texts presented during the 6 weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds and the percentage of books that were finished. As seen in Table 16, girls checked out more books from the traditional genres of realistic fiction, historical fiction, and fantasy; whereas, boys checked out more books during the 3 weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds from the alternate genres and text formats of graphica, information and sports, and scary/horror/mystery.

<div align="center">Research Question 4</div>

A 6-week intervention was introduced where changes were made to three environmental factors: language arts curriculum, specifically the addition of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, amount of time in school for independent reading, and amount of student choice of books. After the 14 reluctant boy readers participated in the intervention, I wanted to learn: *To what extent do teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school change fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading?* Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to answer this question. The results are reported as follows: reading attitude quantitative results, reading attitude qualitative results, reading self-efficacy quantitative results, reading self-

efficacy qualitative results, amount of reading quantitative results, amount of reading

qualitative results.

Reading Attitude Quantitative Results

In Table 17 is a summary of the Elementary Reading Attitude pretest and posttest

means for the reluctant boy readers. As would be expected, the reluctant boy readers

have means on the Elementary Reading Attitude pretest in both Recreational and

Academic that are lower than the total group of boys. The standard deviations are

smaller as well. On the posttest, Recreational mean is less than the total group of boys;

however, the difference in the means from pretest to posttest for the reluctant boy readers

is almost two times greater than the difference in the means from pretest to posttest for

the total group of boys. The Academic posttest mean is the same for both groups;

therefore, the difference in the Academic posttest means for the reluctant boy readers is

greater than the difference in the Academic posttest means for the total group of boys.

The reluctant boy readers have a statistically significant change in reading attitudes. This

change is not only statistically significant but also practically important as the effect sizes

Table 17
Pre- and Posttest Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Scores for the
Reluctant Boy Readers

Reading Attitude Scale	Pretest		Posttest		t $df = 13$	*Effect size*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Recreational	24.14	5.43	28.71	5.40	3.43*	0.92
Academic	24.71	3.71	27.64	4.63	4.83*	1.30
Total	48.86	8.48	56.36	9.25	4.64*	1.29

*Statistically significant when the overall error rate is controlled at .05.

are very large. As the sample size is small, the assumption of a normal distribution might have been violated. Wilcoxon tests were performed with a statistically significant finding for all three reading attitude scales, thus confirming the *t* test results.

Reading Attitude Qualitative Results

Interviews with the 14 reluctant boy readers were conducted before and after the 6-week intervention of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading in school. In both sets of interviews, I discussed with the boys their attitudes toward reading. We also looked at their pre- and poststudy responses on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. The reluctant boy readers' responses were coded as Reading Attitude Prestudy and Reading Attitude Poststudy to distinguish between responses that were given before and after the intervention. Table 18 includes the frequency distribution for the number of times each boy gave a response coded as Reading Attitude and the 14 boys' responses before and after the intervention when I asked: *Do you like reading in school?* In the prestudy interviews, four boys responded yes to liking reading. Two of these boys indicated the reason was because of the books they were able to read. Two boys responded negatively. The other eight boys responded with conditional statements indicating they "kind of" like to read or "sometimes" like to read. Three boys gave a similar response to Donny's: "It mostly depends what I'm reading."

In the poststudy interviews, 13 of the 14 boys responded *yes* to liking reading. One boy responded *no* and explained that he had not found many types of books he liked to read. Of the 13 boys who responded favorably, 8 of them gave a reason connected to

Table 18
Boys' Attitudes Toward Reading in School

Reluctant Boy Readers	# of Reading Attitude Responses Prestudy Interview	Prestudy Interview: Do you like reading in school?	# of Reading Attitude Responses Poststudy Interview	Poststudy Interview: Do you like reading in school?
Alex	4	It's okay, like when I get a new book, I just read it almost all day.	4	Yes, because it's fun, and I like it.
Charlie	4	I don't like some of the book. And a couple of the books, like scary books and some action, I like those kind.	7	Yeah, cause you brought lots of good books, and I like reading them.
Donny	4	I like it a little bit. It mostly depends what I'm reading.	7	I do, because we have different books, and it's more exciting. The books we used to have weren't that much. We were told to read them.
Eric	6	Yes, because they have a lot of interesting books.	9	Yes, cause I like reading cause you could figure out what interesting stuff about books there is.
Isaac	1	I do like reading in class, but sometimes I need help in reading in class and sometimes it frustrates me cause I don't know the word, and when I ask for help, Mrs. Labelle tells us we're about to be done and I understand her, but sometimes it's just frustrating cause words are hard for me.	5	Yes, I love reading because reading helps me a lot and because it actually is fun. It helps us in many ways, and it's fun because you can find books that you think are interesting that have many topics that you would like to learn about or that you already know.
Jonathan	3	Kinda. Yeah. Yeah, I like it.	10	I like reading. The reason why is because it puts aside homework, everything in class, and just relaxes me.
Julius	4	Yes.	11	Yes, because there's some certain books that I like to read all the time. And it's really fun.

Table 18 continued on next page

Table 18 continued

Reluctant Boy Readers	# of Reading Attitude Responses Prestudy Interview	Prestudy Interview: Do you like reading in school?	# of Reading Attitude Responses Poststudy Interview	Poststudy Interview: Do you like reading in school?
Kevin	2	I don't like reading that much cause I think it's kind of a waste of time. So I'd rather watch TV and play games and video games.	9	I like reading now cause the new books, they're fun to read and sometimes I can't put the book down cause I'm in the best part of the book that I really, really like.
Marcus	6	No. Because I don't like reading.	9	Not really because there's not a lot of things I like to read.
Mathias	4	Yes, because it makes me feel better and more relaxed because all the other stuff that we're doing is more hard and you gotta think of it. And reading is just really relaxing and, yes, it's basically why I just like reading.	9	I would say yes because it's funner than most subjects, and it helps you get better at reading. You can relax too while you're reading. It's not like it's difficult as math where you have to think all the time. It's just... It's funner.
Mike	4	Sometimes I do like reading because there's nothing else to do, but sometimes at home I like to read for fun.	9	I do like reading now because I can read different kinds of books that I like.
Nathan	3	Yeah, I only like reading interesting books, not like if it's boring, I don't like reading.	11	Yeah, now I like reading cause before I really never liked to read, and now since you bring all the new books, I like reading now.
Swenson	4	I like reading other books. It's fun.	7	Yes, because it's relaxing, and you don't have to worry about anything and sometimes you sink into the book.
Willis	4	Yes, I do because it is fun, and you can learn new things.	8	I do like reading because it's fun, and I like seeing what happens in books.

the "different books" brought in for them to read. Four boys mentioned a change related

to higher levels of reading ability. Two boys said it is because reading relaxes them.

Three boys said they liked reading because "it actually is fun."

During the poststudy interview, I asked the boys if they believed their attitude toward reading had changed since the study began. In Table 19 is a summary of the reluctant boy readers' responses to the question: *Do you think your attitude toward reading has changed during the last two months? If so, how?* Thirteen of the 14 boys said that their attitudes toward reading had changed in a positive manner. One boy responded "no." As seen in Table 19, the additional comments the boys gave explaining why their attitudes had changed were the interesting books, reading more, a higher level of reading ability, being given free time in school to read, and because "it's fun."

In the poststudy interviews, I showed the boys their pre- and poststudy ERAS responses and asked the boys to discuss why they believed their answers had changed. Table 20 contains the reasons the reluctant boy readers gave for why their attitudes changed in a positive manner. Any references made to Garfield's face changing from *upset* to *slightly upset*, *happy*, or *very happy* indicates a change from a negative attitude to a positive attitude. The most frequent responses the boys gave for why their answers changed on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey was because of the new books (13 responses) I had brought in for them to read. Two other reasons that were given more frequently also were connected to the intervention: time to read in school (5 responses) and choice of books (5 responses). Another frequently given response was related to a gain in the boys' reading ability or greater understanding of what they were reading.

Not all responses on the poststudy Elementary Reading Attitude Survey indicated positive changes. Some of the boys responded more negatively to an item on the poststudy survey compared with their previous responses. I asked them in the poststudy interview to explain all their positive and negative changes. I learned that the boys'

Table 19

Change in Boys' Attitudes Toward Reading in School

Reluctant Boy Reader	Do you think your attitude toward reading has changed at all in the last 2 months? If so, how has it changed?
Alex	Yes, because I realized it's more fun.
Charlie	A little bit. Cause I've been reading a lot lately.
Donny	Yeah, it's changed a lot, because now I've wanted to read some more and not like I used to, cause I'd usually not read and do other things instead, but now I mostly read.
Eric	Yes. Because I see how some of the books that I never read are really interesting.
Isaac	Actually, yes, it has changed a lot because I liked to read--I loved reading, but I had trouble on it. I would read very slow, and I really got mad, and I didn't have the patience to read. I would read, but it kind of made me feel mad and, like I'm not a good reader, because when I tried to read I would always stumble over words. And I'd say, "I just said that word," and "I just got that word and I forgot," and it made me feel bad. But now that I'm reading at like 178 words per minute or 160 words per minute from 98 words per minute, I can read very faster, understand what I'm reading, and get in the words that I need.
Jonathan	I kind of like reading more. I like reading a lot more, actually, because Mrs. Vacca neeeever really gave us free time to read at all.
Julius	Yes. Because the books I liked, I read them, all of it, and then I understood books more, and they're really fun.
Kevin	Yes, cause now I'm starting to read bigger books than I used to.
Marcus	No.
Mathias	I think it's changed a lot when I look at these because, I never really thought of how much I really liked it that much. So, yeah, I think my attitude's been changing about it. I would say it changed for the positive.
Mike	I think it did change. I like it. I like reading more because I can read different kinds of books.
Nathan	Yeah, it changed a lot in reading. Because before I really did not like reading, and then now I like, at home, I just read a lot and more than I used to cause I really never used to read at home unless my parents told me to.
Swenson	Positively, because it's fun to read all the books that you bring! And the different types of books I never saw those before.
Willis	Yes, because I got to read different kinds of books that I don't have at home and other books.

reasons for the positive changes matched what I had witnessed in field observations but

some of their reasons for the negative changes were due to situations not connected with

Table 20

Reasons for the Positive Change in the Posttest Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

Reason for the Positive Change	# of Times Response Was Given	Sample Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers
New books	14	For the first survey, number 7, "How I feel about summer vacation?" I put the maddest Garfield. And then number 7 in the second survey, summer vacation, I put a really happy, because I like the books that Mrs. Wozniak brought, and I kept on reading.
Higher reading ability	6	Before I had the books, I didn't like reading at home, even though it's not the read-aloud books, but still I enjoyed reading. Cause the read-aloud books, they make me more understand about the reading.
Choice of books	5	I put the really, really upset one, and then now I put the sort of upset one. And I think because… Oh, how should I say it? Reading is kind of more funner than playing to me, just a little bit, because you really get, cause I get to read whatever I want now, and I'm happy with that.
Time to read in school	5	I think I've changed in the feeling of reading in school because the books we have, they're different than we usually read. Cause when we used to read, we didn't read as much, until now, and the feeling when it's time to read, I really like it now because we really didn't have any time to read. But we'd have to read a story that we'd have, we'd have questions on.
Variety of books available	3	I think it's because I didn't really know how many different types of books there are. Like graphic novels, I really like those, and the realistic fiction, I like those, and picture books, I like them, too. And I'd say cause in the beginning when I took the first test [survey], I didn't really know how many book types there were, so I didn't really know that much.
Reading more	3	Number 13, I put the kinda sad Garfield, because reading in school, because I don't really read, I just did my homework. Like if he [the student's homeroom teacher] gave us a choice of reading or doing homework, and I chose doing homework. But now I choose, all the time, reading.
Knowledge gained from reading	2	Number 11, I put, when the teachers asked questions about the books, I put the saddest, the kinda sad. And the second survey I put the happiest, because now I understand the books more.
Getting used to reading	2	Cause I'm getting used to reading. Some books I like, and some book I kinda like.
Liking to read now	2	Cause I like reading books a lot now.

Table 20 continued

Reason for the Positive Change	# of Times Response Was Given	Sample Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers
Reading is fun	2	Because reading's now kinda fun for me. That's not how I felt about it two months ago.
Read-alouds	1	I chose the happy one, and then [prestudy survey] I chose the slightly unhappy. Because Mrs. Vacca, she does read-alouds and she explains different books, and she's pretty happy, too, now.

the study. Table 21 is a list of the reluctant boy readers and reasons they stated for

marking a response that suggested they had a more negative attitude toward reading after

the study had ended.

As seen from the responses in Table 21, there were no common reasons given for

why boys' responses were more negative; however, three common themes surfaced from

the boys' explanations of their negative responses. First, the boys interpreted the

question in a more literal manner rather than thinking generally about how to respond to

the question. An example of this was when Swenson said that he liked reading aloud less

after the study because he was older and reading aloud was for younger children. The

second overarching thread was that the boys considered individual circumstances at that

point in their lives when responding to the question, instead of responding in a way that

represented their reading attitude most of the time. An example of this was when Mike

said that he liked reading less at home now because he is busy with flag football and

hockey practice. The third common theme that surfaced was that the boys had a different

interpretation of what they question was asking compared with what was likely to have

been the intent behind the survey question. For example, when Nathan explained why he

responded more negatively that he does not like starting new books as much as he did

Table 21

Reasons for the Negative Change in the Posttest Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

Reluctant Boy Reader	Sample Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers Giving Their Reasons for Having a More Negative Response on the Poststudy Elementary Reading Attitude Survey
Alex	No responses that were more negative
Charlie	No responses that were more negative
Donny	No responses that were more negative
Eric	I: This is how you did feel about reading for fun at home. Before you said you would really like reading for fun at home. So what happened? S: It changed. I: Why? S: Cause I like having fun at home, like playing board games, and stuff.
Isaac	S: Here's one, number six. This one I changed it a little bit. The question is, "How do you feel about starting a new book?" I used to love being happy starting a new book. Now I don't really like it cause I love books and I want to stick with them forever because I read the whole book. It's like, "Oh I know the whole book now Table 20 continued--so awesome!"
Jonathan	S: "How do you feel about reading your school books?" Let's see… Because I really don't like historical fiction or anything like that. I: So does that mean your school book, like your Anthology or the literature book has that in it? Is that what you don't like reading? S: Hmmm. No, I like reading, it's just that… [long pause] I: Is that the school book you don't like reading? The reading textbook with all the stories? S: Yeah. I don't like reading the school textbooks that much.
Julius	I: [Researcher and student looking at his negative response to the question: *How do you feel about reading workbook pages and worksheets?*] But you still don't like workbook pages do you? S: No. [Student laughs] I: [Interviewer laughs] I don't blame you. I don't either.
Kevin	I: This one here you said that you were a little upset about reading your schoolbooks, but now you don't like them at all. Why'd that answer change? Which books are you talking about? S: Science books and social studies. I: You like those even less now? S: Mhmm.
Marcus	I: What do you notice about your different answers on the last page? How did they change? S: [Long pause] I don't like reading in class. I: And why do you think that went down, even though I brought in all those new books? S: Cause I finished reading the book I wanted to read.

Table 21 continued

Reluctant Boy Reader	Sample Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers Giving Their Reasons for Having a More Negative Response on the Poststudy Elementary Reading Attitude Survey
Mathias	I: You would be *really* okay with a teacher asking you questions about what you read, you said before, but now you're feeling like you really wouldn't like that so much. Do you have any idea why your attitude changed about that? S: I think it's just cause it's kinda like repeating what I already read and did already. I guess my attitude's change because of that. I: So, does that mean you wouldn't want to stop and take the time to talk about it. I'm not sure I know what you mean about taking the time. S: Yeah, I think that it's what you meant, like I didn't really want to take the time or something like that.
Mike	S: Number 3 [How do you feel about reading for fun at home?], because now that I'm playing sports more, like hockey and flag football, I don't really like to... I like to read, but not during my practice time I can't because my practice time is sort of all day, so I don't have enough time to read.
Nathan	I: Before you said you would really like reading different kinds of books, but this one, your idea changed. Why do you think that you would like reading different kinds of books a little less now? S: Cause now I like if there's a series of books, I like to just to keep finishing them, not stop and get a different kind of book, cause I wouldn't get to know it, and how it ends, and what happens to them.
Swenson	I: Here it says you feel less happy about reading out loud in class now then you used to. Do you know why? S: I think because I'm getting older, you know? Only kindergartens does that, so it's like a kiddie thing, so I don't like it.
Willis	No responses that were more negative

before the study, it was because he now prefers to continue reading all the books in a

series once he finds a series he really likes.

Reading Self-Efficacy Quantitative Results

Table 22 is a summary of the Reader Self-Perception pretest and posttest means

for the reluctant boy readers. As with reading attitudes, the reluctant boy readers' self-

efficacy pretest scores, as measured by the means on the Reader Self-Perception Scale,

are lower than the means for the total group of boys. Most of the standard deviations,

however, are larger than the standard deviations for the total group of boys. On the

Table 22

Pre- and Posttest Reader Self-Perception Scale Scores for the Reluctant Boy Readers

Reader Self-Perception Scale	Pretest		Posttest		t $df = 13$		Effect size
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
General	3.57	0.94	4.00	0.88	1.58		0.42
Progress	36.79	4.95	41.79	3.19	4.34	*	1.16
Observational Comparison	17.86	3.76	20.29	4.60	2.34		0.63
Social Feedback	29.14	6.25	30.79	6.64	1.37		0.37
Psychological State	28.14	7.56	29.93	6.73	2.18		0.58
Total	48.86	8.48	56.36	9.25	4.64	*	1.24

*Statistical significance when the overall error rate is controlled at .05.

posttest, all but one of the subscale means are less than the means for the total group of boys; whereas, the differences in the means on all differences in the means from pretest to posttest for the total group of boys. There is a statistically significant change in reader self-perception on the Progress subscale and for Total. This change is not only statistically significant but also practically important as the effect sizes are very large. Even though not statistically significant, there are moderate effects for Observational Comparison and Psychological State subscales. As the sample size is small, the assumption of a normal distribution might have been violated and resulted in a Type I error; therefore, Wilcoxon tests were preformed with a statistically significant finding for all five reader self-perception scales, thus confirming the *t* test results.

Reading Self-Efficacy Qualitative Results

I conducted interviews with the 14 reluctant boy readers before and after the

intervention to learn more about any change in their reading self-efficacy. Table 23

contains the 14 boys' responses after the intervention when I asked them how they saw

themselves as readers at that point compared with 2 months prior when the study began.

Several factors contributed to some boys being interviewed on two separate occasions.

As a result, some boys discussed their change in reading self-efficacy as readers in both

interviews. When this occurred and there was different information provided in their

responses, both of their remarks about their change in reading self-efficacy were included

in Table 15.

In summary, every boy perceived himself as having made at least one positive

change as a reader, but four key themes emerged from their responses: increased amount

of reading, higher reading ability, more positive attitude toward reading, and enjoyment

of a wider variety of books. Seven of the boys said they read more than they had before

the study. Six boys believed they had a higher reading ability after the study than before

the intervention began. Six boys liked reading more. Four boys enjoyed reading a wider

variety of books. When the boys were asked in two different interviews about their

reading self-efficacy, their responses were consistent, although several boys gave

additional information why their reading self-efficacy changed when they had been asked

the question more than once.

During the poststudy interviews, I showed the boys their prestudy and poststudy

Reader Self-Perception Scales and asked them to tell me what they noticed. Some of the

boys looked at each item and discussed their changes in detail; however, fewer boys

responded to as many of their changes on the Reader Self-Perception Scale as they had

Table 23
Change in Boys' Reading Self-Efficacy

Reluctant Boy Reader	Poststudy Interview Have you changed at all as a reader over the last 2 months? If so, how have you changed?
Alex	Yes. I like to read more. Go reading! Go reading!
Charlie	Yeah, cause a couple months ago I barely read. Now, since you came, I've been reading a lot.
Donny	Yeah, I think I've changed because I've loved, I've liked reading now, and it's really caught my attention. I think I've liked reading more because I've read a lot of books, and I'm on a long one called Twilight New Moon. And I really like it even though I'm still at the beginning, I'm looking forward to finishing it.
Eric	Yeah, I've been reading a lot more books. Kind of. Cause when I first wasn't reading books, I wasn't really interested in books. And then when I was reading books, I got really interested in reading them.
Isaac	Yes, I have noticed that after the last 2 months of me reading I've noticed that I can read faster now with the books that I've been reading. And all the books that I've been reading, it helps me, especially with my talking. It helps me say words correct, and it helps me a lot in when I go to middle school next year. And once I'm done with middle school and I go to high school, it will help me very much. And I really thank you for that.
Jonathan	Yeah, I really did not like reading at all then, and now I like reading a lot. I like to read more. I've read now mostly all the books at home. And then, I used to have, I've only read all my comic books and then all the other ones I had, I never really liked. And now I'm reading them all.
Julius	I changed a lot! Cause when you didn't come, I never read anything. I just watched TV, played outside. I never read, once. [Now] sometimes I sit down and read a book. And, then for like thirty minutes, I go outside. And I just watch TV for 30 minutes too. Yes, because I read a lot of books. I kept on reading books 'til I understand more words like… I read a lot. So now I understand everything that happens in the books.
Kevin	Yeah, I see a change. I see me reading more books than I used to. Yeah, I like to read more kinds of books now. And 2 months ago, I didn't really like reading.
Marcus	I got better at reading.
Mathias	Well, I didn't really like to open up and try new books, but now I wanna read a whole bunch of new books I never tried before. So, it's just gonna be more of like a range of variety of books. I think I improved on a lot because we're reading more and we get more strategies on how to read tougher situations. Like, in paragraphs, if we don't understand it, we can read around it to figure out what it really means.

Table 23 continued

Reluctant Boy Reader	Poststudy Interview Have you changed at all as a reader over the last 2 months? If so, how have you changed?
Mike	I think I am a better reader than I used to be.
Nathan	Yeah, I see a difference now cause I'm reading a lot more than before. Like 2 months ago I didn't read and now I changed and read a lot more.
	Yeah, I did, cause before I didn't really like to read. And now, I like reading now cause before I never used to like to read, and now I do.
Swenson	Yeah. I can understand more words than I used to. And I understand what the story is about and what's the main characters and what's the main idea and hows it go with the title. I understand more of them.
	I started to know more words than I used to, and I started to know types of books and how it's like, or how it's different from others. Like Amulet and Amelia Rules, the type is different, but they kinda, like, herotastic and fantasy.
Willis	Yes, I do, because now I like reading different kinds of books, and I got to know to read different books.
	I think I like books now, and I like reading in my free time, because I like reading the... like you have to figure out the riddle, and see if you were right.

about their changes on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. This might have occurred for two reasons. First, due to time constraints and the length of the RSPS (33 items), I did not encourage the boys to discuss in detail every item that changed. Second, the format of the RSPS--12 items listed on the front of the page and 21 items listed on the back of the page--may have made it less appealing for the boys to stop and discuss each response. Even though there were constraints, a few boys still commented in detail on many of their changes; whereas, others commented only on a few or summarized their changes by making statements such as "There are a lot more agrees and strongly agrees (Al)" without giving any detailed reasons.

Table 24 is a summary of the frequency of the boys' responses and the themes that emerged from their reasons for why they had changed as readers. The most frequently given reason for higher reading self-efficacy was because many of the boys perceived

Table 24

Reasons for the Positive Change in the Posttest Reader Self-Perception Scale

Reason for the Positive Change	# of Times Response Was Given	Sample Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers
Higher reading ability	16	I: You just had one [change] on the whole [front of the poststudy survey] that you *strongly agree,* and that's *I'm getting better at reading.* Can you tell me about that? S: I know that I'm getting better cause I know I'm reading more books, and I'm understanding more words and the books I'm reading. (Kevin) I: *I strongly agree that I don't have to try as hard as I used to.* So why is that? S: Because I can read better now. I: And how do you think that happened? S: By reading more books. (Marcus) For numbers 10 and 11, those both went up. You now *strongly agree* you don't have to try as hard as you used to. S: I think I do know a little bit more than other kids because in our literacy classrooms, some kids have to stop and try to figure it out. But I think I know it, and I say it. (Mike) On number 3, I think Mrs. Vacca thought my reading was fine because I keep getting better and better at reading instead when I came here, so I picked that was different. (Swenson) I: You *strongly agree* that when you read you can figure out words better than other kids. And you *strongly agree* that when you read you don't have to try as hard as you used to. So I'm wondering if you can explain why that changed. S: Cause before I was kinda struggling with words. And then when I start reading more, I start to get them, and I'll look in the dictionary sometimes. Like before, if I didn't get the word, and now, I get like most of the words, and I get them better now. (Nathan)
Someone else's positive perception	8	Number 30. First, I put *strongly disagree* because some kids just, when I was reading, they turned around and did something else. And now when I read they just pay attention. (Julius) Well, I think, I changed them [my responses on the postsurvey] because I see how my teacher enjoys hearing me read, and I can. I know that she doesn't think my reading is bad, but it's not really good either. (Donny) People in my family say that I'm a good reader. I really do think that my parents think I'm a very good reader because I read to my cousin and he goes yay! (Willis) On number 31, I was *unsure*, but now I *strongly agree* cause now that I've read faster to my family, now my brother's all like, "What?" When I'd have to read, and he'd listen to me and say, "Oh, okay, that was fast." Quick and easy, it only took 10 minutes, 15 minutes, when it used to take 30 minutes, 40 minutes. (Isaac)

Table 24 continued

Reason for the Positive Change	# of Times Response Was Given	Sample Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers
Reading more books or reading more often	8	I: *People in my family think I read pretty well.* You *strongly disagreed.* But look! What happened that you now *agree* that people in your family think you read pretty well. Did your mom or someone say something to you? S: I read more at home. I: Do you? And what does your mom think about that? S: She says I'm a good reader. (Marcus) S: For numbers 26, 27, and 28 changed. I: And why do you think that happened? S: Cause I started reading, and I found out that I could read better. (Eric) S: Number 6 was *disagree*, now *strongly agree*. I: And why is that? *When I read I can figure out words better than other kids.* S: Cause I've been reading a lot, and I... [but] lots of words I don't know yet. (Charlie)
Reading is relaxing	3	I: *Reading makes me feel good.* The first time you were *undecided.* But then, look at this time. S: *Strongly agree.* I: And why's that? S: Because when I read, I just relax, and then I just read the book, and I don't pay attention to anything else. I just pay attention to the book. (Julius)
Choice of books to read	2	I enjoy reading better than I used to because before you came, Mrs. Wozniak, we didn't really, we couldn't really, read the books that we wanted to. But now we can read different kinds of books. (Mike)
Time to read in class	2	*When I read I don't have to try as hard as I used to. Agree.* [prestudy response] *Strongly agree.* [poststudy response] Oh, because we've been reading. [We have] reading free time. And I think it helps us read, get better at it, better and better and better because we can read chapter books, all sorts of cool books. (Jonathan)
Greater variety of books to read	1	S: Yeah. It is much, much easier for me now. It's, like, 90% easier. I learned more words, and sometime I don't know what a word is and I ask my dad. I: So, do you have any idea why you've gotten so much better at reading over the last two months? S: I think because I've read different type of books and understand what the author is saying, so I get better and better. And I read lots of books. (Swenson)
Like reading	1	On number 32, I enjoy reading very much now, and then back then I didn't really enjoy reading. (Willis)

that their reading ability had improved. The areas of reading improvement were oral

fluency, reading comprehension, the ability to pronounce harder words, and better

understanding of what words mean. Embedded within several responses were secondary

reasons for an increase in self-efficacy. For example, when Kevin explained why he

strongly agreed he was getting better at reading, he said it was because he could

understand more words (*Higher reading ability*), but he also said it was because he was

reading more books (*Reading more books or reading moreoften*). When Marcus

explained why his mom perceives him to be a better reader (*Someone else's positive

perception*), he said it was because he is reading more at home (*Reading more books or

reading more often*). When a boy's response included more than one reason, his response

was coded for all categories that applied.

Not all responses on the poststudy Reader Self-Perception Scale were positive

changes. Some of the boys responded more negatively to an item on the poststudy survey

compared with their prestudy response. I asked them in the poststudy interview to

comment on both positive and negative changes; however, once again, fewer responses

about negative changes on the Reader Self-Perception Scale were discussed compared

with the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. Table 25 is a list of the boys and either the

frequency of more negative responses on the poststudy RSPS if they did not discuss any

negative changes or a reason they stated for marking a more negative response.

As seen from the responses in Table 25, only a few boys commented on a negative

change; however, a few themes were found in their responses. Of the six boys who

discussed a negative change in their reading self-efficacy, four had a different

interpretation of either a word in the survey item or the overall intent of the survey

question, which led them to give a more negative response to the question than they

would have given had they not misinterpreted the statement. Two boys who responded

Table 25
Reasons for the Negative Change in the Posttest Reader Self-Perception Scale

Reluctant Boy Reader	Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers Explaining Their Reasons for Giving a More Negative Response on the Poststudy Reader Self-Perception Scale
Alex	No responses changed to be negative on the poststudy survey
Charlie	Five responses changed to be more negative but student did not discuss reasons why
Donny	One response changed to be negative but student did not discuss reason why
Eric	Two responses changed to be more negative but student did not discuss reasons why
Isaac	No responses changed to be negative on the poststudy survey
Jonathan	S: Number 1, I think... I don't know. I really don't think I'm a good reader, but I kind of do, but I don't want to brag or anything cause I don't really know. I: So, is that why you're undecided now? S: Yeah, that's why. I: Well, let me ask you this, do you think you're a good reader of comic books? S: Sort of. I: And do you think you're a good reader of Batman? S: Okay. I: So why is that bragging? S: [long pause] Hmm…I'm not even…well… I: Do you think you're a good reader of historical fiction? S: No! I: So it sort of depends the on what you're reading. S: Exactly. I: But what if the question said *I think I'm good at reading the books I like to read.* S: Then I would have put *agree*.
Julius	Two responses changed to be more negative but student did not discuss reasons why
Kevin	I: Before the study when you answered *I feel good inside when I read,* you *disagreed*. And you still *disagree* with that. So, even though you're saying you like reading, you don't feel good inside while you're doing it? S: I don't know what I feel like. Sometimes I feel good, and sometimes I kinda feel bad cause there's killing in it, cause of the actions and I don't know what the feeling is. It's like in the middle. I: Okay. So you just said something really important that helps me understand. You said, "I don't feel so good when there's killing in the story." So this question really is about how you feel as a reader. The question isn't asking about how you feel about what's happening in the story. Okay? So if I was to ask you, "Do you feel okay inside, or how do you feel about your own ability to read? If we didn't talk at all about the content about what you are reading, would that make any difference in your answer? S: I think if it makes me feel happy then, yeah.

Table 25 continued

Reluctant Boy Reader	Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers Explaining Their Reasons for Giving a More Negative Response on the Poststudy Reader Self-Perception Scale
Marcus	I: When I read *I recognize more words than I used to*. You had said that you *strongly agree*. But now you only *agree*. You don't feel as strongly about it. Do you know what happened? S: No.
Mathias	S: Reading makes me feel happy inside--undecided, disagree. I think I was undecided at the time, but when I disagreed I think I meant cause I thought I was more relaxed than happy. Like, I was just laying, sitting back and just reading and when I was undecided, I was, like, didn't really know what I was feeling. I: Okay. But, see for this time, when you answered this last week, if I said to you, "Does reading make you feel happy inside?" You're saying, "No, it doesn't." Right? S: Yes. I: Okay. And tell me why reading doesn't make you feel happy inside. S: Well, it makes me feel more relaxed than happy, and, yeah, that's it... I: But does it make you feel unhappy? S: No, it doesn't make me feel unhappy. It's just that I'm feeling more relaxed than anything.
Mike	I: So I'm noticing that for number 6 you still don't think reading is relaxing. So tell me about that. What's not relaxing? S: I don't think reading is relaxing because when I start to read, if I don't like the book, I'll put it down and I'll read it, but I won't get in the mood to go to bed or something like that. I: Oh, you mean it doesn't make you tired? S: Yeah, it doesn't make me like relaxed kind of. I: Is your understanding of the word "relax" just that it puts you to sleep? S: Just like makes me feel comfortable, kind of. I: Okay, so would it be true that it's the opposite, so when you say *strongly disagree* that would mean that reading doesn't make you feel relaxed at all. It's like it makes you feel nervous and anxious and uncomfortable. S: Mhmm, a little bit. I: And, how does it make you uncomfortable? S: Well, it doesn't make me uncomfortable now, but it makes me uncomfortable because I didn't really like to read before. I: So now... Cause here you still said you strongly... S: Oh, that one, yeah… I thought, oh I mixed up the things. I: Okay. S: Yeah, it's supposed to be kinda like *disagree*. Kind of… I: And why is it that you *disagree*, that reading is relaxing for you now? S: I don't know really. I: Cause it's sort of like it should be for some things relaxing. Sort of like, "Yeah, I'm okay with it. I feel comfortable doing this." S: Now I do, but if we took another one, I would've put *agree* because now I feel more comfortable about reading different kinds of books.

Table 25 continued

Reluctant Boy Reader	Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers Explaining Their Reasons for Giving a More Negative Response on the Poststudy Reader Self-Perception Scale
Nathan	I: Before you said you *strongly agree* that you feel calm when you read, but now you're not sure, so I was wondering what happened to change that. And, also, now when it says *reading makes me feel good*, you *disagreed* with that, so that sort of surprised me.

S: Reading sometimes it makes me feel good, and sometimes it doesn't. It depends about what book I'm reading, and if I get to finish it or not. And… [pause] What was the other one?

I: Yeah, the other one was *I feel calm when I read*. You *strongly agreed*, but this time you were *undecided*.

S: Oh, actually I kind of do feel calm when I read because I'm just sitting there, just reading, and nobody's bothering me or anything. So I think I would change this one to agree. Maybe you were going on to the next one and I was still on it, so I just accidentally circled the wrong one.

I: Alright, and then back to what you said about reading making you feel good. You said *when I read a book I like*. Maybe you forgot that when we answered all these questions I was hoping you would just answer them with the idea that all the questions were related to reading all the books you like, and all the questions were just about books you like if you could choose them all the time.

S: Oh, cause before I thought it was just like text books, what I would like and I didn't know it was like any books I liked. So I would like to read any books that I want and not like text books cause before I didn't know whatever book we wanted, not only just the ones the teachers gives us to read.

I: Alright, so you think if you answered the questions that way, do you see any questions then on here that you would answer differently if you knew now that when I mean reading, I mean reading all the books that you love, that you choose? Do you see some things that you would change?

S: Um… (long pause) I don't think there's any that I would change.

I: Just that one, that's the one we were just talking about.

S: Yeah, just that one. And…

I: So what would you say instead? "Reading makes me feel good." How would you answer that?

S: It does make me feel good, so I would put either agree or strongly agree. Nathan |
| Swenson | Four responses changed to be more negative but student did not discuss reasons why |
| Willis | And on number 6, I couldn't decide because I think I can read words already pretty well, so I don't know if I can read better. |

more negatively to a statement about their reading ability explained that they were not

sure about their ability level. One student realized he had circled a negative response in

error. One student did not give a reason why he had responded negatively.

Amount of Reading Quantitative Results

In this study, the change in the reluctant boys' amount of reading was to be measured by comparing the boy's weekly reading logs for in-school and out-of-school reading from the beginning of the study to the end; however, the reading logs were not reliable and could not be used to measure the change in amount of reading. A source of data on the reluctant boy readers' amount of reading before the study is the boys' self-reported amount of reading recorded on the Reading Interest Inventory completed the first week of the study. As seen in Table 26, all but three of the reluctant boy readers reported that they read less than 45 minutes per day. Overall, when compared with the other 12 boys in the study, the reluctant boy readers read less per day.

Table 26
Amount of Time Spent Reading Per Day Before the Intervention

Amount of Time Spent Reading	Boys ($n = 12$)	Girls ($n = 26$)	Reluctant Boys ($n = 13$)
Less than 30 minutes	1	3	4
Exactly 30 minutes	2	5	3
30 to 45 minutes	0	5	3
45 to 60 minutes	4	0	1
Exactly 1 hour	0	3	2
1 to 2 hours	4	7	0
More than 2 hours	1	3	0

Table 27 contains information from an alternate data source used to learn about the reluctant boy readers' amount of reading. The 14 boys checked out 303 books from the read-aloud library. As seen earlier in chapter IV in Table 16, the total number of read-

Table 27
Read-Aloud Library Book Circulation for Reluctant Boy Readers

Reluctant Boy Reader	Realistic Fiction	Graphica	Historical Fiction	Information & Sports	Fantasy	Scary/Horror/ Mystery	Total
Alex	1	6	0	14	2	5	28
Charlie	1	18	0	11	0	9	39
Donny	0	8	0	3	0	1	12
Eric	0	14	0	3	0	1	18
Isaac	5	10	3	4	5	5	32
Jonathan	1	16	1	2	2	1	23
Julius	2	13	0	2	0	4	21
Kevin	0	8	1	5	1	1	16
Marcus	3	2	0	2	0	2	9
Mathias	4	9	0	3	3	2	21
Mike	2	12	0	10	0	3	27
Nathan	3	6	0	5	1	5	20
Swenson	1	17	0	1	3	4	26
Willis	0	5	0	2	1	3	11
Total	23	144	5	67	18	46	303

aloud books checked out by the 26 boys was 500; therefore, the reluctant boy readers checked out 61% of the total number of read-aloud library books selected to be read by boys. Graphica were the most popular books checked out, followed by information and sports and scary/horror/mystery. The total number of books selected by the reluctant boy readers from genres and text formats in the alternate read-aloud libraries was 257 compared with the 46 books they checked out from the traditional read-aloud libraries.

Amount of Reading Qualitative Results

In the final interviews, I did not ask the boys directly how much they had read. Instead, I looked for evidence of their amount of reading from responses to other interview questions or from their discussions about change in reading attitude and reading self-efficacy as they compared their pre- and poststudy ERAS and RSPS results. Table 28 contains the frequency for how many times each reluctant boy reader discussed his amount of reading in the poststudy interview and one example of what each boy stated about his own amount of reading. All 14 boys mentioned at least once that they had read more since the study began. Eight boys discussed their amount of reading as a reason for a change in reading attitude. The other six boys mentioned amount of reading when explaining why they had changed as readers.

Research Question 5

Considering the research on teacher' negative attitudes toward one area of students' reading interests, graphica, I anticipated that the two fifth-grade teachers in the study may not allow their students to read graphica or that they might limit the amount of graphica their students were allowed to read in school. As part of the intervention in this study, students were given an unrestricted amount of choice for in-school and at-home reading. I also anticipated that graphica would be popular with at least some group of boys in the class and that one of the sets of alternate texts included in the first read-aloud library collection would be graphica. Given the contrast in graphica not being permissible before but now allowed during the study, I sought to learn *To what extent is there a difference in the change in the reading attitude, reading self-efficacy, and amount*

Table 28

Amount of Reading for Reluctant Boy Readers

Reluctant Boy Reader	# of Times Response Was Given	Sample Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers
Alex	2	I: Do you think you've changed at all as a reader over the last 2 months? S: Yes. I: And how? How would you describe the change? S: I read more.
Charlie	4	I: Overall, do you see yourself differently now as a reader compared with the kind of reader you were a couple months ago? S: Yeah, cause a couple months ago I barely read. Now, since you came, I've been reading a lot.
Donny	5	I: Overall has your attitude toward reading changed at all over the last two months? S: Yeah, it's changed a lot, because now I've wanted to read some more and not like I used to, cause I'd usually not read and do other things instead, but now I mostly read.
Eric	4	For number 7, I first didn't like it [reading], and then I started reading more, and then I liked it. And I changed, instead of reading instead of playing, I changed it to kind of happy cause I learned a lot about new books.
Isaac	1	I: What have you enjoyed about reading class over the last two months? S: What I've enjoyed about reading is that we get to express our feelings into the book and read a lot of books and understand our comprehension of reading books and also in real life cause books can also help us in real life.
Jonathan	4	I: Have you noticed anything different about yourself in reading class or anything different about you as a reader that's changed over the last two months? S: I like to read more. I've read now mostly all the books in my... at home. I've only read all my comic books and then all the other ones I had, I never really liked. And now I'm reading them all.
Julius	5	S: Number 5 [How do you feel about spending free time reading a book?], the first time I put the maddest Garfield, and the second one I put the happiest Garfield. I: And why did that change? S: Because I read the books, and I started reading more and more. And then I just liked all the books.
Kevin	5	I: Do you see yourself any differently now as a reader now compared with the kind of reader you were two months ago? S: Yeah, I see a change. I see me reading more books than I used to.
Marcus	2	I: What happened that you now agree that people in your family think you read pretty well. Did your mom or someone say something to you? S: I read more at home.

Table 28 continued

Reluctant Boy Reader	# of Times Response Was Given	Sample Responses from Reluctant Boy Readers
Mathias	3	I: If you had to explain why your attitude changed about any of these things, do you have any ideas what may have caused you to have an attitude change toward reading? S: I think it's cause we're reading more. We have a more wide open story range. Cause we would read more books because we see how fun they can be.
Mike	2	For number 22, I don't think I read more than other kids, but I do now, because I take my time and just read more.
Nathan	3	I: Has your attitude toward reading changed at all in the last two months? S: Yeah, it changed a lot in reading. Because before I really did not like reading, and then now I like, at home, I just read a lot and more than I used to cause I really never used to read at home unless my parents told me to.
Swenson	2	I: Can you think of the reasons why you've gotten so much better at reading over the last two months? S: I think because I've read different type of books and understand what the author is saying, so I get better and better. And I read lots of books.
Willis	2	On number 16, it changed like how do you feel when it's time for reading in class? Now I love reading in class, but before I used to kind of like it.

of reading for fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer reading graphica and fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer reading other texts? To find out which boys liked reading graphica, all the students who were present completed the Reading Interest Inventory during the first week of school. After identifying the reluctant boy readers and examining their responses to the Reading Interest Inventory, I learned that the 13 boys with survey responses marked *yes* indicating that the enjoyed reading graphic novels; 11 said *yes* or *sometimes* they liked reading comic books; 10 indicated *yes* or *sometimes* they enjoyed reading comic strips; and 7 boys stated *yes* or *sometimes* they enjoyed reading single panel comics. Manga was the only type of graphica that did not have more than a majority of boys who indicated *yes* or *sometimes*. Only 2 boys indicated *no* to liking manga and the other 6 had *never tried it*. Due to the overwhelming majority of reluctant

boy readers who had an interest in reading some form of graphica, this question could not be addressed.

<div align="center">Research Question 6</div>

As part of this study, I wanted to explore teachers' beliefs and practices about the personal, behavioral, and environmental factors related to reading, so I asked: *What are two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, time provided in school for independent reading, an unrestricted amount of student choice of books, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum?* Three sources of data were collected to answer this question. First, I have the transcripts from the individual interviews with each teacher that I conducted at four points during the study: during the first week, after the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds conducted at the end of week 4, 6 weeks after the intervention had ended, which was the students' last week of school, 3 weeks later after the teachers had had the opportunity to read their set of boys' transcripts. The second source of data are the emails the teachers sent me during the study; these were in lieu of more formal journal entries. The third source of data are the fieldnotes where I took notes on the informal conversations that I had with teachers when I visited the school sites. Each of the following sections include interview data; the other sources of data are included in each section when applicable.

<div align="center">*Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds*</div>

In the initial interviews, I asked each teacher to tell me about any type of teacher book talk or read-aloud she had conducted in the past. Mrs. Vacca gave short book talks

for each title that she introduced to her students when her students participated in

literature circles each trimester. The content of the book talks mostly was a brief idea of

what the book was about. She used the read-alouds from Houghton Mifflin, her district's

state-adopted reading textbook, which meant that she read aloud an entire story as a way

to introduce to her students the new theme for the stories the students would be reading

over the next 6 weeks.

Mrs. Labelle said that her booktalks were "informal, at best" where she would say

to her students something like "I bought this cool new book. I think you might like it

guys. It's sitting up here," in which case she told me that her students often would lose

interest in the book and forget it was up on her whiteboard ledge. Her read-alouds were

more formal. She sometimes used a book other than the reading textbook, such as *In the

Land of the Lawn Weenies,* to teach a reading strategy such as inferring. From this book,

she would read one short story in its entirety and stop and ask students to make an

inference from what she was reading.

When I interviewed Mrs. Vacca after she had conducted the teacher book talks

and interactive read-alouds for week 4, she told me that she was happy with how both

were going. She felt that the teacher book talks provided for her in the study were better

prepared than the ones she gave and planned that over the summer she would select

which books and research the ideas to talk about related to the books she would introduce

the following year. For the interactive read-alouds, she liked teaching a reading

comprehension strategy combined with enjoying the content of the story. She referred to

her teaching as "fragmented and compartmentalized" and saw the interactive read-alouds

as "a much more integrated, and I'm guessing more effective technique because [the students are] keeping all of that active, as opposed to just what the skill of the week is." Previously, all of her read-alouds were of the whole book, but she indicated that she planned to switch to reading shorter portions of text and planned to work on her own interactive read-alouds in the summer. She also said that both the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were having positive effects on her students.

> The more we do the book talks and the more we do the read-aloud activities, the better the conversations are about the books that they're reading. They are really excited about talking about their books. And they share pretty relevant and rather deep thinking on many of their parts. So that's the part I never did before, and I would continue that for sure.

Mrs. Labelle liked the teacher book talks more than she thought she was going to, but she raised a concern that talking about three books was too much information for students to take in all at once. She also wondered where she would find the time to write them. She had many positive things to say about the interactive read-alouds. She liked the focusing on teaching one reading strategy every 2 weeks. She liked the teacher modeling part during the interactive read-aloud and suggested we do that both at the beginning and at the end of each read-aloud. She told me, "I would absolutely do the read-alouds. They're absolutely much more effective. They're what I hoped my read-alouds before would be and never could get there."

When I interviewed the teachers after the study had ended, I asked each of them if they had conducted any teacher book talks or interactive read-alouds on their own. Mrs. Vacca had done a few read-alouds to introduce the literature circle books at the end of the year. Mrs. Labelle had not. She talked about her plans for writing her own book talks

and interactive read-alouds for next year but had not done any on her own since the study ended.

Finally, I asked them what were their current beliefs about giving book talks and interactive read-alouds and how did they think they might put their beliefs into practice next year. Mrs. Vacca now valued teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds and planned to use them as part of her regular instructional practice.

> I've come to understand how necessary they [teacher book talks] are to get the kids really to look at the book other than just the cover. I'm also, through your examples, been able to see how you can use it to teach language arts, which was not something I had really thought about a lot before. And so I think they're wonderful. I mean they are really a rich source of genuine writing for the kids to look at when we're looking at language arts skills and standards that they can get connected to.

Mrs. Labelle also had several positive comments about the teacher book talks.

> I think book talks are a lot more powerful than I ever thought they were. I taught book talks that weren't book talks. I don't know what I was doing, but they weren't book talks. They weren't quick enough. I think I gave too much away, or I gave too little away. Like I didn't write it to make them interested. I kinda was like, "Oh, well this is kind of cool," or I would tell them practically all about the book, and then it was no wonder they're not interested. They kinda heard everything already. The book talks were amazing... I would say probably the second most powerful thing in the study. And I'm absolutely doing them next year. In fact, one of the things I have to do before I leave here this week, or next week, is pull out all the books I want to make book talks for next year so that they're ready to go, cause I love them. The only thing I can see as a problem for a regular classroom teacher is just making them. Having to, you know, having to sit down and think about them, and figure out which books you're gonna do, and the prep ahead of time. But it was awesome. It made a big difference, I think, for how they engaged in the books.

Mrs. Vacca discussed her future plans for using teacher book talks with her students. She sees the teacher book talks as a way to introduce her library to them one genre at a time. She plans to use the book talks she was given in the study and add to her repertoire of

teacher book talks by writing her own.

Regarding the interactive read-alouds, Mrs. Vacca shared with me her belief and stated in a way that she would pass on to a colleague who might be interested in using interactive read-alouds in their classrooms.

> This is a great way, number one to introduce... It hits two things or three things at once. It gets them excited about the book; it gets them focusing on the skills you're trying to teach them otherwise; and because they can share their ideas they're learning, not only what I'm saying to them, but they're learning from each other, and I think it probably raises their skills considerably.

When discussing how she would put her belief about the value of teacher interactive read-alouds into practice, she told me her plans to make a major change in the way she teaches her reading units the following year.

> This is the first year, instead of doing the back-to-school thing from the Houghton- Mifflin, I'm gonna do (hopefully we'll get them) the class set of *Bone*. And so we're gonna do the interactive read-alouds all the way through *Bone* to learn number one how to read graphic novels, for those who haven't. They're wonderful! I mean, as we have talked, inference is such an important part of those, so I'm looking forward to it. I've actually started writing out my notes for each page of what we're gonna do. And so we'll read it as a class, and we'll have those interactive. And I want to get to continue that then with every book that we read as a class. I'm actually kind of tossing around the idea of… I have, up until now, used all the stories in the adoption. I may drop one out for each [theme] and do something else, a shorter book, or something because I'm getting tired of the adoption, but, also, I think the other books that we're reading are so much richer in being able to make real predictions instead of sort of canned predictions.

For Mrs. Labelle, the interactive read-alouds were her favorite part of the study and had plans of her own to write more for next year.

> I wasn't just reading out loud. I was teaching them in a... They couldn't get very bored, or very off task, because I was stopping every minute or two with a little snippet. And so they kind of got a little taste of each book without the whole book, but they also had to think. They couldn't just sit there for 20 minutes while I read a chapter getting bored, which was very different than any read-aloud I'd

ever done.... I absolutely want to do this. Actually that's the other thing I'm going to... I have to finish those books so I can write the interactive read-alouds, which was awesome. I just hope I can do as good a job as the study was.

Time in School for Independent Reading

In the initial interview, I learned that before the study neither teacher gave her students time in school during the 2-hour language arts block for independent reading. Both teachers said it was because of a lack of time, not because they did not believe it was good for students to have time in school to read. Mrs. Vacca told me that she tried to give her homeroom students 30 minutes of silent reading outside of the language arts block once or twice a week. Her homeroom students were the same students she taught during the language arts block except for two students who came to her for language arts from another fifth-grade classroom and one student in her homeroom class who left to go to a reading intervention class during Mrs. Vacca's language arts instructional time. During silent reading, students had to stay in their seats and read a book of their choice that was at their lexile level. Lexiles are numbers that correspond to a student's readability level as indicated by a student's performance on a computerized reading test. The test adapts its test questions according to a student's performance while taking the test. When students answer several questions at a particular level correctly, the subsequent questions they answer are more difficult. In Mrs. Vacca's and Mrs. Labelle's district, it is required that all students in second grade and up take the computerized test in the fall, winter, and spring. Both teacher mentioned in our discussions this computerized test several times, as well as the California Standards Test, and how the tests drove their decisions as reading teachers.

Mrs. Labelle's language arts class consisted of students from all 3 fifth-grade classes, so her homeroom and language arts classes were different. She told me almost apologetically that students in her language arts class are never given time to read books of their choice in school and rarely are the students in her homeroom given time for independent reading in school.

> I'm almost sad to say this, they tend to, at least in my classroom, they tend to only read the textbook. Every once in a while we have, you know, I'll be working with some kids at the back table or something like that and then they have time to silent read. But very rarely do they actually have a structured silent reading period.

As we talked more, I learned that 4 or 5 years prior, or maybe longer, Mrs. Labelle gave her students 20 minutes after lunch for silent reading. She explained that there was no structure to that time and that she often used it to catch up on some work of her own. Because she knew that her language arts students would be reading for an extended period of time during the study, she had been giving them a 20-minute block of time to read for a week or two before the study began. She wanted her students to get used to the expectation that independent reading time was quiet and they had to be reading. In our conversation, she reflected on this fifth-grade class's school experience at Delrado and realized that they may never have been given a consistent time to read books of their choice in school. Mrs. Labelle said ever since the district had mandated teaching Houghton-Mifflin, which she said could easily take up the entire 2 hours of language arts, that "it just kind of seemed like we just didn't have the time to possibly even think about it much less actually do it on any regularly scheduled amount of time."

I talked with Mrs. Labelle about her thoughts on giving students time for

independent reading during school after she had finished the fourth set of teacher book

talks and interactive read-alouds. At that point in the study, her language arts students

had been given 4 days per week for 20 minutes a day to read in class because she had

chosen to give her students an additional day beyond the days allotted for the book talks

and interactive read-alouds in case time had run short on any of the other days. When I

asked her if her thoughts about time for independent reading had changed, I learned that

she had come to realized how much students want to be given time to read in school.

> I don't think I realized how many of these kids craved it. I mean they... even when you hadn't introduced all the books yet, they were like, "Silent reading time, silent reading time, silent reading time," and they were really... obviously I didn't realize how much they missed it. I mean they just... I just, I honestly hadn't realized it. I didn't think they... especially some of the kids in my class. I didn't think they would have cared. And they really... they went nuts. They just went nuts.

Given what she had witnessed so far in the study, she already was trying to figure out

how she would fit independent reading into her language arts block the following year.

She tentatively was considering adding it in 2 days per week because she could not

believe the reaction she had seen in her students since they had been given time this time

to read.

> I mean, one time we got really close to almost not having any independent reading time   after a read-aloud, cause we had just had to keep stopping cause they were really interrupting, and they went nuts! It was like I told them that we were not having lunch time that day or something, they just went nuts. They thought the world was ending, and it was like, "Wow, you guys are really into this." It isn't just, you know, new books or something. It's really, they really, really were into it. So my eyes have been opened to that. I'm absolutely gonna have... I just have to find a way to do it. I just have to find some way of doing it, even if it's not during my literacy block. If it's a block I do in my homeroom class, something because they gotta... they need this. They need this.

When I spoke with Mrs. Vacca, she told me her beliefs about independent reading had not changed, but what was different was her commitment to making time for it.

> I think I just have to make time for it, because I know I need to. And so, some other things are sort of going by the side, or things are taking longer, and that's okay. I think the twenty minutes per day... I would love to do it every day, if I could, and I may just have to make that. It'll be in some ways easier if it's outside of the language arts block, because then I can involve all the kids in it, and I don't necessarily have to impact just the ELA curriculum.

As we talked more, it became evident why she intended to make a change in her reading practice. When I asked her how she thought the parts of the study were going, she shared enthusiastically the way her students' attitudes toward reading and her attitude toward teaching reading had become more positive.

> I love it. The kids cannot wait for you to come in. "Is she coming in today?" and if you are, "Yay!" and if you're not, "Aww." (Laughter) So they're loving it. I'm much more excited about reading right now, or their reading right now, because it's opened up a lot of new areas that I would've not gone into before. They're more enthused. I had Mathias today, who picked up *Copper* at the beginning, and was finished with it by the end of the day. I had Joey, who picked up another book and read the whole thing, today. And they didn't have lots and lots of extra time, but they had some. And that was the first thing they pulled out. And these are boys that are not necessarily usually readers. So it is so exciting to do this.

We also discussed the students' reading engagement level. Mrs. Vacca stated that before the study when she gave her students time to read, she estimated about 80% of the students actually would be reading, whereas others would wander off or do other things. Here is how she described students' behavior during independent reading.

> Now, they are all… I mean I'll look up, cause I get involved with my reading, I look up and they are totally engrossed. I mean there's not a looking at each other, nothing. They are totally in there. So, yeah, there has been improvement in that, being able to choose what they want to read for the most part. The only restriction is, is the book available? But, other than that, they are able to pick

things that they really enjoy reading. And they are, absolutely. And when I have to stop them during class it's, "Awww!" (laughter)

Mrs. Labelle shared a similar reaction from her students regarding independent reading in an email she sent me on March 10, 2010.

Today my class BEGGED me for more reading time. At one point I told them that we had to move on or they were going to have a lot of homework and the majority asked for more homework!!! Marcus is totally into *Hoot* (although not reading it fast)... and he was   one of the ones asking for more time!!! It's starting to spill over to their other work. A few of them have chosen to read *Dear Mr. Henshaw* ahead of us, just 'cause they like it!!! You gotta write a book about this!

In the final interviews, the teachers and I spoke again about their beliefs and practices related to independent reading. I asked them to discuss what had happened in their classrooms since the study had ended. I wondered whether they had continued to give their students time to read in class or if they had returned to their previous practice. Mrs. Labelle told me that she did give her students time to read but that it was less structured time. She talked about how all the end-of-the-year interruptions to the schedule and having to do test preparation for the state reading test prevented her from giving her students the independent reading time she had wanted to give them after the study was over. She wanted to provide next year's students with a set time for independent reading, every day, that was not interrupted so the students could count on it. She told me that giving students this time sends a message to students as to the value of reading.

I think if they can't count on that time it, I think it shows how much you value it. If you don't value it by not giving the time to it, they don't see it as being valuable and you don't give them the time to even get good at it.

She discussed further how this impacted students and how she and her colleagues need to

reconsider their past practice of not giving students time to read in school.

> If [we] don't value independent reading time by saying, "Oh, if we have time. When you finish the workbook page, go do…" and then that's the only reading they get to do it hurts in two ways. The kids [that] are the slower workers, either because they're EL or they're slower readers, in general, or whatever, will never get to be reading anything they like. And even the kids [that] do, it sets a tone. If you value it, they value it more. And I realized how much they need to have that time. Some of them talked about it. "We read for a whole hour. It was so awesome!" It was like, wow! I mean, you remember that 2, 3, 4, 5 weeks later. It made a difference to me how much they valued that time.

In my final interviews with Mrs. Vacca, I learned that she believed she had no

choice but to give her students time for independent reading in school, although it was

not always within her language arts block. When I asked her what has been happening in

her room since the components of the study had formally ended, I learned that

independent reading had remained a part of her instructional practice.

> In some sense, they've ended and in some sense, this class will never be the same because they will not let me not do silent reading. I mean, they are so enthused about reading. There's never complaining, "Oh, let's do some silent reading," they never go, "Ugh." It's always, "Yeah!" And so when we stop, it's always that. And I need to be more conscious of the talk after they read. That's the one piece of it that I keep forgetting. We did lit circles this last couple weeks, and so I did some book talks for the kids to know which books they wanted to read. And they just love reading. I mean it is an entirely different class than at the beginning of the year.

She now believed that giving students time to read in school was something students

needed to have and was going to make it work within her school day next year wherever

she could make it happen. Her preference would be to schedule it within her language

arts block. When I asked her what we say to teachers who think the way she had before

the study and who believe that they cannot give up instructional time to allow students to

read independently in school, she shared with me her own evolution of thinking about

how to "get through" the curriculum but still provide time for students to read.

> This is something I have to think about over the summer, but I'm thinking more and more... While I think being consistent with the adoption is probably a good thing, at the same time, the quality of the stories, just by virtue of the fact that they have to be short, is not the same as what we're reading in our library. So what I would probably say is, you know, maybe cut back on some of that adoption reading and use some of the time, at least, to give them independent choice. And being able to do that reading independently, I think, honestly will benefit them as much.

Unrestricted Amount of Student Choice of Books

In spite of the current educational climate where many teachers are highly concerned about their students' performance on standardized reading tests, there are teachers who provide time in school for their students to read independently. Providing time for independent reading time in school does not guarantee, however, that students are given free choice in what they are allowed to read. In this study, I wanted to learn what were teachers' beliefs and practices about students' unrestricted choice of books for independent reading.

Mrs. Vacca told me that she gave somewhat strict guidelines in so far as students were required to read books at the reading level both for in-school reading and for at-home reading. Aside from this, she considered herself to give students "pretty good choice."

> As far as at-home reading, otherwise I'm pretty free because I figure their parents are there, and if they see something is not appropriate they will, hopefully, step in. Here, other than it needs to be a book, and often my reluctant readers I'll say that book could be about sports or it could be about science or it could be about whatever. It doesn't have to be a fiction book. I let them have pretty good choice, other than it has to be at their reading level.

As we continued the interview, I learned that Mrs. Vacca had other restrictions that she

had not considered when I first asked her about allowing students free choice. She had

told her students they could not read the Goosebumps series because she had heard that

the author, R.L. Stine, writes a book a week so she believed that these books were

formulaic and not quality literature. She did not allow students to read Captain

Underpants books because she believed the books were written at a third-grade reading

level. Graphica was not allowed at all.

> I had kind of banned graphic novels mostly because of the content, not because of
> them being graphic novels. But, I guess in my thinking, I thought of them, not
> as chapter books, and that I wanted to make sure the kids got the enjoyment
> of reading a real book-- a real book with chapters and plot, and all that. And
> I haven't opened them up, so I just made a supposition, not based on any
> experience at all.

Given the amount of graphica choices in the first read-aloud library, I wondered what

Mrs. Vacca thought her students would say about being given the opportunity to read

books that had not been allowed. Even though she previously was reluctant to use these

types of texts previously, I was surprised to learn that she was looking forward to seeing

their positive reactions.

> They're gonna think they died and went to heaven. They're going to love being
> able to read comics. They're gonna love that, I would think. They're going to
> love *Captain Underpants* because they haven't had a chance to do that. They're
> gonna love everything. They get really excited about books, thank goodness.
> And so I kind of expect that they'll be excited, just the volume. I get two or
> three books from Scholastic, and they're all excited. So the volume will be. And
> then the variety, I think especially this one. If they don't realize it's a gamer's
> thing, they'll go, "Uh huh." And then when they see it, it's like, they'll be
> shocked. They'll be just shocked. It will be wonderful.

When I asked Mrs. Labelle about her beliefs and guidelines regarding student

choice of books, she told me that she puts few restrictions on what her students read "just

as long as it's appropriate for school." Even then, she said that she would restrict

something only if it becomes a problem. One example she gave was when a group of

boys became obsessed with wrestling magazines. She believed they were only flipping

through the pictures and not really reading, so she took the magazines away and did not

allow the students to have them until the end of the year. The other type of text that she

named was comic books.

> I think I've kind of steered away from [comic books] usually cause I think they're
> mostly not reading. And I think I have a lot of parents [that] have said, you know,
> that's not reading when I've mentioned that to them. Or other teachers, or my
> principal, you know, they're not reading, they're not reading. That's for home.
> And so I think I've kind of steered away from them.

One particular form of graphica, manga, was forbidden because in her mind these books

were intended for older teenage boys and college-aged boys.

Aside from those, she said she placed few restrictions on any genres, especially if

they owned books and wanted to read what they had at home. Although she did admit

that "every once in a while, I will... I think I have kind of an unconscious idea of what

kind of book I want them to be reading. And so sometimes I think I steer them in that

direction." Upon further discussion, I learned that Mrs. Labelle did have other

preferences for the types of books her students would choose to read. She wanted them

to read books that were rigorous, such as a biography, although she said that the genre

was less important to her than the vocabulary of the book and the book's length and ratio

of pictures to the amount of text.

> There are some books that are honest-to-goodness chapter books. They have, you
> know, a lot of... there might be some pictures to extent, but the vast majority of
> the book is text. Or like the DK nonfiction books, I think of them as being more
> rigorous because even though there's a lot of pictures to it, the text is dense on the
> sides. There might be a picture to help you or to make you be more interested but
> the text is more complex. It's not... it seems like they're gonna learn something

from it. They're gonna learn a new vocabulary word. They're gonna have to try a little bit harder with the reading. It's not just flipping through the pictures.

In the second round of interviews, we revisited the teachers' views on unrestricted choice of books. I asked each teacher, "Have your thoughts about limiting students' reading choices changed? From Mrs. Labelle response, it was evident that her beliefs had changed substantially.

> Oh, absolutely. Especially cause I think I understand more, particularly about, like manga, and more of the graphic novels. I think I understand more about what's available out there. And I'm looking forward to the summer.... and definitely expanding the collection with some of the books now, and going to the comic book stores, you know, in Concord or whatever, and going "Okay, what's appropriate, and obviously there's some books out there that are really appropriate. Absolutely, I mean, I don't think I'd restrict it at all right now. I think I'd only restrict it if there seemed to be a big-big problem, and if I'd already talked to them about it, and say, 'Hey, do you understand this is a real book? And you, if you want to read it, great, but you need to read it like a real book and not just do the flip-a-rama or whatever.' ...But I don't think I'd restrict it at all. Certainly not the graphica anymore. Really, it's really opened my eyes to how age-appropriate it can be.

Like Mrs. Labelle, Mrs. Vacca had a different viewpoint on what she would restrict her students from reading. When I asked her about her beliefs on limiting students' reading choices, I learned that she, too, had a different perspective.

> Obviously they've changed. Today, we were talking about something and I said... Oh, they have to make a book, and it has to be a picture book about one of the HM stories, and I said, "Think about how graphic novels tell you the story without words sometimes." And so, yes, I'm all in favor of graphic novels now that I know how difficult they are.

Not only had her viewpoint changed with regards to allowing students to read graphic novels, but she realized that she had unconsciously not promoted other types of books because she did not enjoy reading them.

I think probably the scope has increased a lot. And I realized that when I was going through my library just to get kind of weeded out. I have no graphic novels. I do have a fair amount of nonfiction, but I don't have a lot of the science fiction and fantasy because I don't read it. And so I tend, I guess, to pick up on the things that are Newbery award winners, or other teachers have recommended, or things that I think are good. And so I've left out a whole... several sections that they seem to be really excited about. And noticing how much they enjoy them and really get involved, and that they are in fact at their reading level. I think that was my other concern, that they were simple and because I had never seem them, that they were much easier. I will let them read *Captain Underpants* now. If they're gonna be at our reading level, that's okay. So all of that kind of went away.

By the third interview, Mrs. Vacca had acted upon her belief that students should have other types of books to choose from to read in her room, and she had completely reorganized her classroom library. I first became aware that she had made some type of a change in her library when she told me in an email on April 2, "We're going to be reading in ELA today and fixing up our "new" library--the books you brought in and the books I'm keeping from my old library. The kids are really excited!" When I visited her classroom after spring break, I was surprised to see how much change she had made. She had gone through all of her own books and recategorized them according to the six genres/text formats used in the study and had arranged them on bookshelves accordingly. A chart hung on the window near the library with the list of book types and a key that was color coded so students could identify easily the genre/text format of each book. Each book in the library had the color code on its outside pages. The title of each book in her library was on its own index card, and the index cards were put into 5 x 7 inch binders. Each table group was in charge of managing one binder of cards so students went to the corresponding table group to check out the genre or text format of their

choice: realistic fiction, graphica, historical fiction, information and sports, fantasy, and scary/horror/mystery.

When I asked Mrs. Vacca about giving students unrestricted choice for independent reading, I was surprised to hear that even though she had made all the changes in her classroom library, she still planned to require students with higher reading levels to read higher level books.

> I had a whole idea [about giving students unrestricted choice] and then we got our NWEA tests back and, not that that is driving all my thinking, but it was an interesting thing. My upper readers didn't do well. My lower readers did fine. So I'm thinking I'm gonna split the difference a little bit. The lower readers jumped. So clearly, what we were doing really works with them. And I think maybe for the upper readers, I'm just gonna push them a little bit to read maybe a little bit harder books, so bringing back in their lexile level at… for the upper readers just so they can continue to progress and not just… because it was almost to a person. The ones that were good readers went down in their score, which makes no sense, and the low ones went up. So I think next year I wanna really look at that and say, "Okay, what's happening?" and maybe experiment and see what happens with it.

In the last interview I had with Mrs. Vacca, when I asked her how her reading instruction might change, she told me, "I'm going to, for sure, leave out at least one of the adoption selections for each [theme] and focus more on the independent reading. I'm going to give them free choice in what they choose to read." Her response may have been a result of reading the interview transcripts of her reluctant boy readers. While reading the boys' transcripts, she learned that the boys "loved having the free choice. That was a huge part of it that if I totally open it up, then they're going to find things that they like to read." In the final interview, Mrs. Vacca did not mention the boys' lexile levels or limiting what they could read based on their reading level.

In my third interview with Mrs. Labelle, she told me she could not imagine not

having choice now that she had seen what a positive difference it had made with her

students.

> It was amazing.... I mean, I've always let my kids be able to choose most books. And I   would sometimes have a requirement, "Okay, well, this month you must try one of this genre." But it opened up... I mean they went crazy over some of those books that I'm like, I know the school doesn't have very much of. And I think I even changed some other teachers' minds when they saw those kids going crazy about it, and I could explain to them, well, wait a minute. I could actually... Captain Underpants isn't the super easy book we thought it was.

She was excited that she was beginning to reach some of the teachers with whom she

worked most closely, although she was not sure they were going to go out and purchase a

variety of graphica titles for their libraries the way she had been and was planning to do

more in the future.

In the final interview, I asked her what were some of the most important ideas she

had learned from reading the interview transcripts from her reluctant boy readers. Her

first response was that students need to be given a choice of books to read and time in

school to read them.

> Across the board, the importance of choice in what they're reading. Both a variety and amount of the books that were available. The amount of time given. They don't want 5, 10 minutes. They want at least half an hour to be able to read, which makes sense because if you think about it if you're sitting down to read, I don't want just 5 minutes and then you pull me away to do something else. I want to be able to get into what I'm reading.

Mrs. Labelle believed that choice was even more important for the reluctant boy readers

to get hooked on reading. She told me that before the study she had given little thought

to boys having different reading interests than girls, although she had recognized that

many boys were not proficient readers. Evidence of the trend for boys to perform lower

on standardized reading tests compared with girls was evident in her language arts class.

She was responsible for teaching those the students who were reading about one year

below grade level as measured by the state standardized reading tests scores and the

students' scores from the computer test taken three times each year. In her language arts

class, 18 of her 27 students were boys. Given her experience in the study, she now saw it

as part of her role as a teacher to reach the group of boys who, upon first glance, did not

exhibit a level of enthusiasm for reading.

> I think, like anything else, we do special things for kids who are learning English
> or other things. I think we need to be aware of it. And I think especially in
> elementary where the vast majority of teachers are girls, I think it's something
> that we need to be much more conscious of than we are. Choice and certainly
> certain kinds of genre are much more important to them than I ever would have
> thought. I knew there were books that they liked more than others, but I didn't
> think how much they liked, I mean, how much they varied to certain genres that
> aren't in most classroom libraries. They aren't in most school libraries. And, gee,
> I wonder why they don't wanna read, then, cause if [boys] don't see themselves
> being interested in the books then. That's how you get interested in reading, is by
> finding books that you like and you stick with them and you build up a stamina to
> them. And if you don't do that, if you can't find a book that you like, you're not
> going to be able to do it.

Mrs. Labelle now viewed herself as an advocate for her reluctant boy readers, as

well as all her students, and hoped she could convince her colleagues to offer their

students a choice in what they read the way she planned to do with her students in the

future.

Integrating Boys' Reading Interests into the Language Arts Curriculum

In the first interviews with both teachers, I asked them what materials they used to

teach the reading standards. Both teachers used Houghton-Mifflin, the state-adopted

textbook materials bought by their district. Mrs. Vacca taught reading for 1 hour and 30

minutes of the 2-hour language arts block. She started with a grammar warmup, then

moved on to the reading selection for that week. The students learned the new

vocabulary, read silently or with a partner, and completed the comprehension questions.

If students needed help, Mrs. Vacca would assist them. After the reading portion,

students spent about 30 minutes working on grammar, word work, or spelling. Mrs.

Vacca also taught reading for a 3- to 4-week session each trimester using literature

circles.

Mrs. Labelle followed a similar schedule, although she never mentioned using

literature circle books. She began her literacy block with a 15-minute grammar warmup

followed by 10 minutes to correct the students' answers. She follows the district pacing

guide for reading and reads the Houghton Mifflin literature selections. Students complete

other Houghton-Mifflin reading activities to learn other reading skills standards. The last

30 minutes of her literacy block are devoted to writing.

I wanted to learn whether the teachers used any literature other than the textbook

to teach reading so I began with an open-ended question asking them when what

materials other than the state-adopted textbook had they used to teach reading. Then I

displayed before them the 40 books that were in the first read-aloud library. These texts

included books from traditional genres like realistic fiction and historical fiction, classic

fantasy titles like *Tuck Everlasting,* and Newbery award-winning books such as *Bridge to*

Terabithia and *The Watsons Go to Birmingham--1963*. The text set also included books

from alternate genres that are popular with upper elementary-school students such as

scary and horror books, informational books like *Guiness World Records* books, sports

information books and sports magazines, and alternate text formats such as graphic

novels, comic books, comic strip books, manga, and single panel comics. From their

responses, I learned that Mrs. Vacca had used realistic fiction, historical fiction, some

National Geographic for Kids magazines, some informational books like almanacs,

adventure books, biographies, and award-winning books. Her selections were based on

other teachers' recommendations, her own book preferences, and feedback from students.

Mrs. Labelle had used realistic fiction, historical fiction, some nonfiction books or picture

books when studying the American Revolution, some fantasy, and a few award-winning

books. She said she tried to select books that would hook her students and make them

want to read.

Then I asked each teacher which types of books on display had they either

consciously decided not to use to teach reading because they believed the books were not

appropriate teaching material or which types of books had they just never considered

using. Mrs. Labelle had never taught reading using a comic book or any type of graphica

or anything sports-related. When Mrs. Vacca responded to my question, she discussed

the books she had restricted her students from reading: books not at her students' lexile

levels, Goosebumps books, Captain Underpants, magazines, and graphic novels.

When I asked the teachers which of the books on display they believed their

students liked to read, Mrs. Vacca predicted that her students would like everything. She

was unsure about two of the graphica titles--*Superman: The Dailies from 1940-1941* and

Dennis the Menace: 1951-1952--because she wondered if students would be able to relate

to that time in history and understand the phraseology of the time. When I probed further

and asked what she thought would be the differences in boys' and girls' reading interests,

she believed that the boys would prefer the sports books and the nonfiction, girls would like the realistic fiction and historical fiction, and some of both would like fantasy and mysteries.

When I asked Mrs. Labelle this same question, she lamented that she had no clear idea what the students in her language arts class liked to read. She was learning what the students in her homeroom liked to read when she had given them some independent reading time before the study began. Boys gravitated to the nonfiction books and the magazines. Girls liked the realistic fiction and poetry. Both liked picture books, and both were reading the popular series *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, which is a graphic novel. I asked Mrs. Labelle if she knew whether her students were interested in reading other graphica. She said that although she had never told students explicitly that they were not allowed to bring manga or comic books to school, she had never seen them reading any other graphica so she was unsure what other types they liked to read.

By the end of the first set of interviews, I had learned that although both teachers had some idea of their boys' reading interests, neither had integrated any of these genres or text formats into their language arts instruction. As part of the intervention of the study, the choice of which type of books to use for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds during weeks 2, 4, and 6 were going to be the genres or text formats that were of the greatest interest to the reluctant boy readers in the two classrooms. After the first week of baseline data collection, the 14 boys were identified and their favorite genres or text formats were selected. The most popular response on the Reading Interest Inventory was graphic novels, followed by several other types of graphica, so graphica

was the text format chosen for week 2 of the intervention. Informational books and sports were chosen for week 4. Scary/horror/mystery books were selected for week 6.

In the second set of interviews, I asked the teachers to tell me what they were learning about their students' reading interests, especially the boys, and what the teachers' thoughts were about the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds from the two weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds using nontraditional texts-- graphica (week 2) and information and sports (week 4). Mrs. Vacca was surprised to learn that her girls had such a wide range of reading interests. "They have no limit to what they want to read. They are totally open, whatever it is," she told me. The boys, on the other hand, seemed to prefer only certain types of books: graphica, information, and some of the realistic fiction. Neither girls nor boys liked reading historical fiction. She also learned that boys liked reading the same book and talking about it, which she believed was happening outside of class; whereas, the girls were fine with reading books on their own.

As part of Mrs. Vacca's language arts curriculum had included literature circles, I asked her if the study had impacted her thinking about anything related to literature circles. Her response indicated that she already was considering how she might integrate the boys' reading interests into her language arts instruction.

> I'm thinking that probably it'll broaden the genres. It'll have more genres than I ever used before because I can see that there's quality literature in other places that I didn't anticipate. So I see that. I also see, probably, talking to the kids about what books they might recommend that they have been reading for lit circles, rather than me just going to see what we have. If money is available, ask them, "Okay, what do you think would be a good lit circle book for other kids?"

When I asked Mrs. Labelle what she had learned about her students' reading interests, she had a great deal to share. Her students loved the graphica, so much so that she had waiting lists for certain book titles that students were waiting to have their chance to check out the book and read. She had wondered whether the students' enthusiasm for graphica would lessen after new books were brought in, but it had not. The other type of text that was popular with her class was the informational books.

Several things also surprised Mrs. Labelle. She believed she had a wide selection of nonfiction in her own library but students had not shown an interest in it in the past the way they were showing interest during week 4 of the study. She wondered if having the additional sports titles made the difference or what it was that made these books more fascinating to her students. She was surprised by her students' lack of interest in reading realistic fiction. She had thought this genre was of high interest to students, but she said the books in that week's read-aloud library were "practically gathering dust the entire time. A few kids have picked it up, but most of them really weren't that into it." She noted that a few students were beginning to show interest in this genre, one of those being her most reluctant boy reader, Marcus, so she was happy to see that he finally was displaying an interest in some type of book. She also had not expected the girls to want to read some of the books that they had shown an interest in. She had thought that the girls would stick mostly to reading realistic fiction and historical fiction. Instead, many of the girls showed as much interest in reading graphica and the informational books as the boys.

Finally, Mrs. Labelle was surprised that her students were even less interested in

historical fiction than realistic fiction. She noticed that even the students who had

checked out historical fiction books tended to return them within days, not having read

them. The kids kept saying, "Agh, they're not really that interesting to me," or "That

wasn't what I expected." Instead, they continued going back to the books in the graphica

read-aloud library or the informational and sports selections. Both teachers expressed

some level of disappointed by their students' lack of interest in historical fiction because

it was one of their personal favorites.

By the midstudy interviews, both teachers had noticed changes in their reluctant

boy readers. Mrs. Labelle spoke enthusiastically as she told me about the positive

changes she was seeing in the boys who had not shown an interest in reading before the

study.

> Obviously there are certain genres that certainly affect them more. And they
> have, with the exception of maybe one, they have really engaged in a way that I
> don't see even the rest of the day in some of the kids. They have really engaged.
> They're constantly asking, "Can I check out a new book? Can I get a new book?
> Can I, you know, I finished this one. Can I get a new one? When can I get a new
> one? Am I on the reserve list for d-d-d-d?" I mean, they're more affected by the
> graphica and the informational texts.

For all but one boy, Marcus, Mrs. Labelle had a story to tell about what she had learned

about the reluctant boy readers' reading interests and how engaged they now were as

readers.

The same was true in Mrs. Vacca's class. She referred to her boys as being "much

more involved in their reading." She, too, had stories to share about the boys. For

example, she shared that "Nathan has, in fact, persevered through a whole book," and

"Mathias is just glued to the books. ...He would rather do that than a whole bunch of

other things that are, in general, things that he enjoys doing."

In the final interviews, both teachers reiterated much of what they had shared in the midstudy interviews. By the end of the study, Mrs. Labelle said that except for one or two boys, she could not identify who the reluctant boy readers were in her classroom because they were no longer reluctant to read. Her only concerns were Marcus, who continued to show a lack of interest in reading, and Alex, who liked to check out books but who Mrs. Labelle was unsure whether he was finishing them. Mrs. Vacca told me that all the boys who she had concerns about were now choosing to read whenever they had free time available, and she was thrilled to see this evolution in them as readers.

In one of the final interviews, Mrs. Labelle discussed a change in her views on using only the state-adopted reading materials to teach reading. When I asked her how, if at all, the study had changed her as a reading teacher, she talked about her realization that using only state-adopted reading materials does not foster in students a desire to read for pleasure.

> It kinda reminded me of something I probably kind of knew when I first started, but because again of that culture about testing and the pressure, that I've kind of steered away from which was, you know, just teaching from the book isn't gonna work. The kids tune off faster, even if you do all the classroom stuff about getting them moving and keeping it   going fast and paced and more interactive. The books that we have now don't represent the kind of genres our kids kinda wanna see. There's no graphic novels or graphica at all in our textbooks. There's some informational texts, but it's dense by fifth grade. And it's not that interesting in a lot of cases. There's some, but not a ton. And so that makes life harder for those kids that don't love reading to begin with. The kids [that] love reading are gonna devour those books, and they're gonna be fine. But the kids that I worry about are the ones [that] either like, or are good readers, but don't like to read. Or the ones[that] are struggling in both areas. They can't read, and they have trouble finding books they like. So it reminded me of how important it is for that time. For them to get to read something that's not a textbook. And that had to be a built-in part of the day. It couldn't just be a filler. There needs to be a

time when I engage with them about books that are out in the world. And they need to see me as a reader, and they need to see how a reader engages in a text and not just a textbook text.

Again, Mrs. Labelle shared her plans to continue using the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds as a way of engaging all of her students but especially her reluctant boy readers in reading. Mrs. Vacca also discussed her plans to cut back on the amount of stories the class read from the state-adopted textbook and to instead use that time for book talks, interactive read-alouds, and time for students to read independently in school.

In addition to interviews, I also collected two other sources of data to learn what the teachers thought about using these alternate texts compared with the texts they traditionally would have used. One source of data was the Teacher Book Talk and Interactive Read-Aloud Log that teachers completed weekly. On this log, the teacher recorded their level of preparedness, the level of student interest, the ease of their fluency and expression, and any comments about what worked well and what could be improved upon. These weekly logs were a valuable source of data for how the teachers were responding to the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds each week.

Table 29 contains the teachers' responses for the key components of the log: level of student interest and teachers' comments about what worked well and what could be improved. The teachers described students' level of interest in the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds during the weeks with traditional texts mostly as good, okay, or fair. The teachers used the words excellent, high, very good, and really excited to describe students' level of interest during the book talks and interactive read-alouds for

Table 29

Teacher Book Talk and Interactive Read-Aloud Log

Date	Type of Activity	Student Interest	Comments (what worked well & what could be improved)
2/16	Week 1: Realistic Fiction Book Talks	Mrs. V: Peaked with *Hoot*- Lots of reaction	Mrs. V: Don't know how I sounded reading the book talk- tried to stay on script.
		Mrs. L: Good	Mrs. L: Seems long to me (lots of listening)
2/17	Week 1: Realistic Fiction Read-Aloud *Shiloh*	Mrs. V: Class enjoyed the read-aloud; wanted me to continue reading the story	Mrs. V: Students checked out *Shiloh*. Need to prep for turn and talk for them to elaborate during discussion
		Mrs. L: Good (laughed at odd places)	Mrs. L: breaking of sections good
2/18	Week 1: Realistic Fiction Read-Aloud *Hoot*	Mrs. V: Didn't seem as engage. One asked if I was starting in the middle of the book	Mrs. V: As turn and talks progressed, students became more engaged
		Mrs. L: Good	Mrs. L: Good section to read--very interesting (to me, at least)
2/22	Week 2: Graphica Book Talks	Mrs. V: Excellent--really interested in books	Mrs. V: A bit hard to get them focused on the book talk once they saw the books
		Mrs. L: Excellent (very excited about genre)	Mrs. L:
2/23	Week 2: Graphica Read-Aloud *Amulet: The Stonekeeper*	Mrs. V: Excellent--wanted to predict even before they were asked	Mrs. V: Even with my unfluent reading, students were totally into the book. Next time, practice with the book more. Put in post-its with topics and stop signs
		Mrs. L: The best yet!	Mrs. L: Needed to practice with script and document camera
2/24	Week 2: Graphica Read-Aloud *Superman for All Seasons*	Mrs. V: Good--not as excited, had trouble understanding that this was before Superman fully knew his abilities	Mrs. V: Reinforce the idea that this was the beginning of the time his parents saw his capabilities
		Mrs. L: Antsy--weather bad, little focus all period	Mrs. L: Just a squirrelly day in general
3/1	Week 3: Historical Fiction Book Talks	Mrs. V: Fair--not as enthusiastic as last week	Mrs. V: Wish I could come up with smoother check-in check-out procedure
		Mrs. L: Okay--some better than others	Mrs. L:

Table 29 continued

Date	Type of Activity	Student Interest	Comments (what worked well & what could be improved)
3/2	Week 3: Historical Fiction Read-Aloud *Number the Stars*	Mrs. V: Good--turn and talks were interesting--students are becoming more engaged	Mrs. V: 2 students checked out the book--students involved so that I became totally engrossed in my book, *Understanding Comics*
		Mrs. L: So-so	Mrs. L:
3/3	Week 3: Historical Fiction Read-Aloud *Sweet Clara*	Mrs. V: Good--especially the conversations about the pictures	Mrs. V: More interest in checking out historical fiction this session
		Mrs. L: Okay	Mrs. L:
3/8	Week 4: Information & Sports Book Talks	Mrs. V: Good--really excited as books were put on display	Mrs. V: As we did, I would let them look (from their seats) before beginning the book talk
		Mrs. L: Really excited--hard to settle down	Mrs. L:
3/9	Week 4: Information & Sports Read-Aloud *Year in Sports 2010*	Mrs. V: Good	Mrs. V: Emily, others didn't want to stop. Pair sharing is picking up in intensity and enthusiasm
		Mrs. L: Really excited--hard to settle down	Mrs. L:
3/10	Week 4: Information Read-Aloud *Guinness World Records 2010*	Mrs. V: Very good--almost 3/4 of class has/knows of someone with Guitar Hero!	Mrs. V: Students very engaged in read-aloud, though 2-page text features a bit hard to see on the Elmo
		Mrs. L: Really excited--hard to settle down	Mrs. L:
3/15	Week 5: Fantasy Book Talks	Mrs. V: Impressed by numbers--excited about fantasy in general	Mrs. V: Many knew Kate DiCamillo and Cornelia Funke. High interest in this genre
		Mrs. L: Good	Mrs. L:
3/16	Week 5: Fantasy Read-Aloud *Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*	Mrs. V: Some (Katherine, Ronald, Wilson) somewhat off-task, but generally good	Mrs. V: After thinking about the disadvantages of living forever, Mathias checked out Tuck Everlasting from read-aloud library. Discuss vocabulary "china" ahead
		Mrs. L: Good--better than historical fiction, more controlled than informational	Mrs. L:
3/17	Week 5: Fantasy Read-Aloud *Tuck Everlasting*	Mrs. V: Fair	Mrs. V: Harder for them to discuss characters from smaller passages. I had to do a lot of prodding and giving examples
		Mrs. L: Very good!	Mrs. L:

Table 29 continued

Date	Type of Activity	Student Interest	Comments (what worked well & what could be improved)
3/22	Week 6: Scary/ Horror/Mystery Book Talks	Mrs. V: Very high--especially about New Moon and 39 Clues	Mrs. V: Don't know if it worked well to check in and out books before new ones arrived. it was expedient and I want kids to stick with a book they like before turning it in
		Mrs. L: High	Mrs. L:
3/23	Week 6: Scary/ Horror/Mystery Read-Aloud *Bites*	Mrs. V: Good--enjoyed the humor--wanted me to read more	Mrs. V: A bit of trouble understanding "motivation"--students wanted to check it out right away. Suggestion- # the stops and the place in the script
		Mrs. L: High	Mrs. L: Bites very popular
3/24	Week 6: Scary/ Horror/Mystery Read-Aloud *New Moon*	Mrs. V: Very high with boys and girls. Donny noticed the different cover. Emily O explained it.	Mrs. V: Finally remembered to use your strategy (from the beginning read-alouds) and note on post-its what the turn and talk topic is
		Mrs. L: High	Mrs. L:

the weeks using alternate texts. As seen in Table 29, there was a higher level of student interest during the weeks that nontraditional texts were used for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds compared with the weeks that traditional genres of texts were presented.

The other source of data was the Favorite Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds where the teachers ranked in order from most to least favorite the book talks and interactive read-alouds they conducted. The same ranked order survey that was completed by the students was given to the teachers. Table 30 contains the results of the teachers' preferences ranked in order from most preferred (1) to least preferred (6).

Both teachers' selected two of the nontraditional types of texts--graphica and scary/horror/mystery--as their favorites. Both teachers ranked realistic fiction and historical fiction as two of their least favorite. One major difference between the two

Table 30

Favorite Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds

Teacher	Week 1 Realistic Fiction	Week 2 Graphica	Week 3 Historical Fiction	Week 4 Information & Sports	Week 5 Fantasy	Week 6 Scary/Horror/ Mystery
Mrs. Vacca	4	1	5	6	3	2
Mrs. Labelle	5	1	6	3	4	2

teachers was their interest in the informational and sports texts. Mrs. Labelle ranked this week third, following graphica and scary/horror/mystery. She explained to me that the reason was because of her students' high level of interest in this genre. Mrs. Vacca did not perceive her students to have liked this genre as much and, therefore, did not rank it high on her list of book talks and read-alouds. One commonality in these findings is that both teachers selected their favorite book talks and interactive read-alouds based on the students' level of interest.

Integrating Graphica into the Language Arts Curriculum

Of all the types of texts available for students to read, fewer have been met with more resistance by teachers than graphica. The two fifth-grade teachers in this study held some of the negative beliefs about graphica. Mrs. Vacca believed that the content of graphic novels was too mature for fifth graders and banned graphic novels. Mrs. Labelle believed the same about manga and believed that it was inappropriate for fifth graders to be reading it. She also frowned upon comic books. In our first interview, she reaffirmed much of what teachers in general believe about students reading comics in school.

I think I just, you know, enough being around teachers [that] were older than me,

or whatever, who thought comics aren't reading in the sense that they're not rigorous reading at least. And so that's fine if they do it at home, but they should try to pick different choices at school.

Even though they had negative beliefs about graphica, overall both teachers were open and anxious to find out what their students' reactions would be when they learned they were allowed to read graphic novels, comic books, comic strips, manga, and single panel comics in school. Each teacher anticipated that their students would be excited by the variety and volume of new books and that the graphica especially would grab their attention. When I asked Mrs. Labelle how she thought her students would react the next day when I brought in the books, she told me which books she believed would be the most popular with her students.

> I can guarantee that all of the books that are kind of not normal, not classic genres in a classroom. You know, anything with a graphic novel is going to be goooone. The sports books are going to be goooooone. The magazines will be goooooone. The historical fiction will be sitting there til the end of the day.... Anything with lots of pictures is going to be probably grabbed. ...Even though this group is not low readers, this group is, on average, at the most, probably a year maybe behind grade level, reading at the bottom of fourth, the most, at the lowest. And they will probably grab whatever has the highest picture to text ratio and anything that they think that they wouldn't normally be allowed to read. So I'm sure there are going to be certain books that are going to be goooone, and other books will be sitting here and never have been picked up the entire 6 weeks.

Even though Mrs. Vacca overall had a positive attitude toward graphica being introduced into her classroom, she shared some of her concerns about whether students would make "good choices" when they were given complete choice and graphica were among the options for what they could read during independent reading in school.

> I'm curious to see, well I wanna say that's a judgement call... if they're gonna make good choices. And I guess I have to just trust that they will see over time. [Interviewer: And when you say good choices, is this related to the reading at a level that's challenging enough for them?] Yeah, not only challenging enough,

but that they'll actually read it for 15 to 20 minutes. That they won't just look at it, laugh, and then start sharing with other kids at that moment during silent reading. Or, I don't know, I guess there's a tiny bit of concern that they'll all go for *Dennis the Menace* and leave all of the other ones aside. And I know that's pretty irrational, but at the same time there's that, are they gonna choose books that will enhance their ability, that's kind of the bottom line.

Upon more discussion, I learned from Mrs. Vacca that she, like many teachers, read comics as a child and had fond memories of her comic-book reading experiences; however, she, too, had believed comic books were only to be read at home.

When I was a kid I'm sure I read *Archie*. In fact, I know I read *Archie* comics and loved it. [Interviewer: But not in school?] But not in school, no. At home, during the summer, for fun. And so, not in school. And so some of this is just tradition, my thinking of what's appropriate for school reading. And some of it is because I sense for some kids they don't like to push themselves. And so, to be able to read for a sustained period of time, whether it's fiction or nonfiction, but just that I want them to actually need to follow a story. I think that's kind of the important skill so they can kind of keep things in their minds and keep reading for a length of time.

When I met with the teachers after week 4 of the intervention, they shared with me the different point of view they now held about graphica. Both had learned that their preconceived ideas about the content of all graphic novels and manga being too mature for upper elementary-school students was incorrect. They had witnessed their students reading graphica for extended periods of time, not flipping through pages without reading or reading only a few pages here or there and then returning the books. They were excited about their students' level of excitement toward reading as a result of being able to read graphica in school. Mrs. Labelle discussed how graphica was an entry point for many students into wanting to read more and how she was learning what graphica had to offer as well.

The graphica was probably the door opening for a lot of the kids. It was the first time I saw them interested in books. Even the ones who didn't end up liking graphica, which was very few, they still... that was when they started to enter reading as a fun activity that they were engaged in. And it was an opening for me because it was a totally new genre to me. So I wasn't really clear on what it looked like and what was out there, and what was available for kids this age. And it's really just opened up my eyes entirely to that.

Mrs. Vacca and Mrs. Labelle also had learned that there were positive attributes to graphica that could enhance their language arts instruction and already were making plans to integrate the use of graphic novels, especially, into their curriculum. Mrs. Labelle told me how she values using graphic novels in the classroom.

Oh my gosh, I did not understand what a graphic novel was before this. I don't think I realized how many things are covered in a graphic novel. I mean, how much... like *Amulet* is not a book I would have thought of as a graphic novel. If somebody had told me what that book was about, and they hadn't mentioned that it was a graphic novel, I would not have thought it was a graphic novel. I think, you know, I didn't even think of a *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* necessarily as a graphic novel. I guess I was thinking more like, you know, the book that has all Superman in it, or something like that.

Contrary to her previous beliefs that graphica was easy reading that should be done at home, Mrs. Labelle now believed that reading graphica not only would challenge her students to think more but that it was her responsibility to teach her students how to read graphica.

And even just me trying to read it, you know, during the read-alouds, I realized how much more engaged you have to be sometimes than in a regular textbook. You know, just a regular realistic fiction or whatever, there's so much more detail in the pictures than I expected. I remember even catching myself as I was reading the interactive read-aloud going, "Next year, when I have an Elmo," saying I do, "I am so using graphica as one of my read-alouds, if not all the time in my read-alouds." I don't think I realized how maybe they were only flipping around because they didn't know what else to do? ... But, as an adult reader, I didn't think about the fact that you have to explain to a kid how to read a comic book, that they don't see which order the bubbles go in. ...This study has really opened my

eyes to what is included in [graphica] because I didn't think about what was included in it before.

Mrs. Vacca shared a similar belief that graphica not only got students excited about reading but also could be used for language arts instruction. By the second interview, Mrs. Vacca already was acting on her beliefs and purchased some graphica titles to use in her language arts program. After doing the interactive read-aloud on Amulet: The Stonekeeper and seeing the positive reaction from the students, Mrs. Vacca bought several copies of *Amulet Book 2: The Stonekeeper's Curse* to use as one of her literature circle selections. She also bought four copies of *Owly*, a wordless graphic novel, to work with a small group of English learners on vocabulary development.

Mrs. Vacca acknowledged that her previous concerns about students not making "good decisions" when reading graphica had lessened; however, she still worried about the impact of students reading single panel comics.

> It seems from Christie's example that she just literally went through the whole book. And so even though [the pages] were connected by character, but they weren't connected by plot, necessarily, she found that to be fascinating to go for 500 pages. And I guess at this point… I probably still have unreasonable but concern about the single panel ones only because, if that's all they're reading, that might impact their ability to find a plot. But if that's an occasional, that's fine. But what I'm finding is that a lot of them are reading the whole books. Not all of them, but a lot of them are reading the whole books or half the book. Well, great. And you know that works fine. Just, I guess, I want them to be reading. That's kind of the bottom line. I just want them to be reading.

Mrs. Vacca's and Mrs. Labelle's attitudes toward graphica remained positive throughout the remainder of the study. In the final set of interviews, each discussed their future plans to expand the graphica sections of their classroom libraries and integrate graphica into their language arts instruction. Mrs. Vacca told me that there was no limit

to the type of text she would use to teach reading but that graphica is one of the types that she definitely will use.

> Well, obviously I'm using *Bone*, so that's because I just think it's hysterically funny. So I'm looking forward to that cause I'll enjoy reading it as well. So I now look at the entire library as being options to teach reading strategies.

At a different point in our conversation, Mrs. Vacca explained more about her plans for using *Bone 1: Out of Boneville*, the first in a series of nine graphic novels written by Jeff Smith, which was one of the graphic novels that was popular with the boys in her classroom. In the past, Mrs. Vacca began the year by reading from Houghton-Mifflin, but she planned to use *Out of Boneville* next year instead.

> This is the first year, instead of doing the back-to-school thing from the Houghton- Mifflin, I'm gonna do, hopefully we'll get 'em, the class set of *Bone*. And so we're gonna do the interactive read-alouds all the way through *Bone,* to learn number one how to read graphic novels, for those who haven't. They're wonderful! I mean, as we have talked, inference is such an important part of those, so I'm looking forward to it. I've actually started writing out my notes for each page of what we're gonna do, and so we'll read it as a class, and we'll have those interactive. And I hope, I don't wanna make it just that, I want to get to continue that then with every book that we read as a class.

Mrs. Labelle also believed that she could use about anything to teach the reading standards. She still was unsure about how she would use manga because she felt that it was hard for her and she would not do a good job teaching with it at this time; yet she told me that if she had a class that really enjoyed it, she would be willing to try.

Like Mrs. Vacca, Mrs. Labelle already was planning how she would use graphica in her language arts instruction the following year. She planned to introduce one genre a month starting with graphica. She was excited that her principal had purchased document cameras for all the teachers so she now could conduct her graphica interactive read-

alouds using the document camera and could teach students how to make inferences from the pictures. For both Mrs. Vacca and Mrs. Labelle, their attitudes toward graphica had changed. Their transformation can be summarized in Mrs. Labelle's comment, "I think [the study] opened my eyes to the power of graphica and how much it can be used to engage students in ways that other genres don't."

<div align="center">Additional Findings</div>

One set of additional findings were learned from quantitative data collected regarding students' preferences for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. From the qualitative interview data collected from the reluctant boy readers, three additional findings emerged: one personal factor, one behavioral factor, and one environmental factor. Additional findings also emerged from the interview data collected from the teachers. Each of the additional findings are discussed further in the sections that follow.

<div align="center">*Additional Findings from Quantitative Data*</div>

One additional finding emerged from quantitative data I collected at the end of the study. After the intervention, I wanted to learn which weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were the boys' and girls' favorites, so students completed a ranked item survey with a rating scale of 1 to 6, ranking each week of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds in order from most favored to least favored. The results of the ranked book talks are found in Table 31, Table 32, and Table 33. Friedman's test was used to analyze these data. Friedman's test for agreement in ranking was statistically significant, thus indicating that there is agreement in the ratings of the teacher book talks

and interactive read-alouds for the 6 weeks.

The results for all 52 students are in Table 31. Overall, mostly the alternate texts ranked in students' top three choices of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. Ninety-six percent of the students ranked graphica as one of their top three choices for favorite book talks and interactive read-alouds, 79% ranked scary/horror/mystery as one of their top three choices, and 46% of the students ranked information and sports as one of their top three choices. Fantasy was ranked as one of the top three choices only by 42% of students, realistic fiction by 23% of students, and historical fiction by 13% of students. Table 31 shows a high level of agreement among students among most genres, except for fantasy where students' responses are split.

Table 31
All Students' Favorite Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds

Type of Book	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Rank
Realistic fiction	1	7	4	20	12	8	4
Graphica	29	15	6	1	0	1	1
Historical fiction	1	4	2	8	13	24	6
Information & Sports	3	7	14	9	11	8	3
Fantasy	1	10	11	10	14	6	5
Scary/Horror/ Mystery	17	9	15	4	2	5	2

Table 32 is a summary of the results for the fifth-grade boys' favorite teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. All the boys ranked graphica as one of their top three choices of book talks and read-alouds, followed by 37% who ranked scary/horror/ mystery and 27% who ranked information and sports as one of their top three favorites.

Table 32
Boys' Favorite Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds

Type of Book	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Rank
Realistic fiction	1	3	3	9	7	3	4
Graphica	16	8	2	0	0	0	1
Historical fiction	1	2	1	1	5	16	6
Information & Sports	3	5	6	7	4	1	3
Fantasy	0	3	5	6	8	4	5
Scary/Horror/ Mystery	5	5	9	3	2	2	2

Table 33 is a summary of the results of the reluctant boy readers' favorite teacher book talks and read-alouds. The most favored set of book talks and read-alouds for the reluctant boy readers was graphica; 64% of the boys ranked graphica first. Unlike the total group of boys, a higher percentage of reluctant boy readers ranked information and sports as one of their top three compared with the total group of boys. A similar number of boys ranked information and sports and scary/horror/mystery as one of their top three favorite book talks and interactive read-alouds.

Additional Findings on the Reluctant Boy Readers from Qualitative Data

Three additional findings emerged from the qualitative data collected from the reluctant boy readers, one from each set of factors: personal, behavioral, and environmental. The personal factor that emerged was a perceived level of higher reading ability. The behavioral factor that emerged was a higher level of reading engagement. The environmental factor that emerged was access to high-interest reading materials.

Reading ability or progress in reading emerged as an additional finding for the

Table 33

Reluctant Boy Readers' Favorite Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds

Type of Book	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	Rank
Realistic fiction	1	0	1	8	3	1	4
Graphica	9	4	1	0	0	0	1
Historical fiction	0	1	1	0	2	10	6
Information & Sports	1	4	5	1	2	1	3
Fantasy	0	2	3	2	7	0	5
Scary/Horror/ Mystery	3	3	3	3	0	2	2

reluctant boy readers. At some point in each of the final interviews with the boys, each

mentioned that he perceived himself as having a higher ability level related to some

aspect of reading than he had had before. As was seen in Table 19 on page 228, six boys

mentioned higher reading ability as a reason for their improved attitude toward reading.

As was seen in Table 23, higher reading ability was mentioned 16 times in the

discussions of why the reluctant boy readers' reading self-efficacy had improved. Every

boy mentioned making an improvement in some aspect of his reading ability during the

poststudy interviews. The boys' perceived improvement of their reading ability was

further substantiated by the quantitative results from the boys' responses on the Reader

Self-Perception Scale. As was seen in Table 22 on page 233, there was a statistically

significant difference in the mean for Progress on the poststudy survey compared with the

prestudy survey mean.

One additional finding about the behavior of the reluctant boy readers emerged

from the teacher interviews. Both teachers witnessed a high level of reading engagement

during independent reading in all their students; however, both teachers discussed how

much more engaged the reluctant boy readers were while reading independently than the

boys had been at other points during past language arts class sessions. One reason why

Mrs. Vacca was concerned about her six reluctant boy readers was because she

considered all of them to be less engaged during independent reading or during language

arts class than her other male students. Mrs. Labelle's students did not read

independently in class before the study, but she, too, mentioned a lack of engagement

during language arts class for many of the boys she considered to be reluctant boy

readers.

In the second teacher interview, both teachers discussed how engaged their

students were during independent reading. Mrs. Vacca talked about that overall she

believed there was a much higher level of reading engagement since the study began.

> Most of the kids before we started the study, probably 80% would read, and some of the other ones would sort of, you know, not read, whatever that looked like. Now, they are all… I mean I'll look up, cause I get involved with my reading, I look up and they are totally engrossed. I mean there's not a looking at each other, nothing. They are totally in there.

Then Mrs. Vacca discussed the improvement she had seen in the reading engagement

level of 4 of her 6 reluctant boy readers.

> Nathan, and Donny, and Kevin, to a fairly high degree, were not particularly involved readers before. They would be the ones that would be sort of not actively reading. And that's not true anymore. Nathan has, in fact, persevered through a whole book, in the study. That was pretty exciting. Mathias is just glued to the books.

Mrs. Labelle had witnessed a similar transformation in her students. She

discussed the improvement in the reading engagement level of her students from before

the study and now after the fourth week of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds.

> When we would read, and granted the only experience I had before this was most of the time we were reading textbooks, they would be very unfocused. It seemed like they really didn't like reading very much. ...With the exception of maybe one, they have really engaged in a way that I don't see even the rest of the day in some of the kids. They have really engaged. They're constantly asking, "Can I check out a new book? Can I get a new book? Can I, you know, I finished this one. Can I get a new one? When can I get a new one? Am I on the reserve list for d-d-d-d?" I mean, they are totally into it.

In the final interviews, both teachers told me that most, if not all, of their reluctant boy readers continued to have a high level of reading engagement. Mrs. Vacca had noticed by the end of the year that any moment the boys had free they chose to take out their books for independent reading.

> They did take out their books more often than, like I say, when they were finished early instead of turning around and talking or whatever they weren't supposed to be doing, they would grab the book. And, as I said, Mathias specifically was sitting in front of me, cause that was the best place for him, and I had to almost pry the books out of his hands he really... so clearly that enthusiasm for reading. They would talk about books, and they recommend books to each other, which was really fun. You know, "I read this. Why don't you try it? I think you'd like it," to their friends, and stuff like that, which they hadn't done before.

Mrs. Labelle reflected in her final interview on how engaged her students were and what a positive experience the study had been for her students overall.

> Watching the kids and some of the kids in the study who, I don't know if they'd say necessarily to a teacher that they hated reading, but you knew that they really didn't love it, just devouring books. I know most of the words were hard for them, but they kept going, and they were interested, and they were sharing books with each other.

One additional finding that emerged about the environment was the need for students to have access to high-interest reading materials. On the first day of each week, as part of the intervention, a new set of 30 books were introduced into the read-aloud

library collection. The 30 new titles were of the same genre or text format as the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds presented that week. When I interviewed the reluctant boy readers, several boys mentioned liking reading because they liked the interesting books available for them to read. As was seen in Table 19, when the reluctant boy readers were asked why their responses on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey had changed, the reason most often given for the change was because of the "new books" they were reading. All but one of the reluctant boy readers mentioned the books from the read-aloud library collection when discussing the positive change

in their reading attitude and/or their reading ability.

Additional Findings on the Teachers from Qualitative Data

Several new themes emerged during the qualitative analysis of the teacher interview data on teachers' reading beliefs and practices. Three personal factors related to being a teacher of reading emerged: attitude toward teaching reading, self-efficacy as a reading teacher, and ability as a reading teacher; one behavioral factor emerged: planning for future changes related to teaching reading; and three environmental factors emerged: benefits in the environment that positively influence teachers' decisions related to teaching reading, barriers in the environment that impact teachers' decisions related to teaching reading, and conditions in the environment that bridge teachers and students allowing them to connect to one another through shared reading experiences.

As the weeks passed and I visited each school, I began to notice a change in the teachers' attitudes toward teaching reading. The change was confirmed during the second interviews when both teachers discussed the joy they felt while teaching reading. I asked

each teacher the same question at the start of the second interview: "How do you think

it's going?"

> I love it. The kids cannot wait for you to come in. "Is she coming in today?" and
> if you are, "Yay!" and if you're not, "Aww." (Laughs) So they're loving it. I'm
> much more excited about reading right now, or their reading right now, because
> it's opened up a lot of new areas that I would've not gone into before.
> (Mrs. Vacca)

> Honestly, it is my favorite part of the entire day. Not just even literacy, it's
> probably my favorite part of the entire day. It's certainly my favorite part of
> literacy. ...It's great. It's awesome. I never would have thought that it would
> have worked this well. I mean I was pretty sure it was gonna work. I didn't
> realize it was gonna work to the level that it has, so it's awesome! (Mrs. Labelle)

> In the final interview, Mrs. Vacca shared how the study had changed her attitude

positively toward teaching reading.

> I'm so excited about reading again, which is really fun. I mean, I've always
> enjoyed reading, personally. I've always enjoyed teaching reading. But there's
> an extra little spark that happens, and I think it's feeding off the kids. You know,
> when you see how excited they get, and how four or five of them read the 1,300
> page *Bone* compilation without really... it wasn't a big thing for them. I mean
> they wanted to read it, and they enjoyed it, but it wasn't like an insurmountable
> goal. They got it. And so seeing what happened in here has got me all fired up
> again to teach reading next year.

Two other themes emerged during the teacher interviews: teachers' self-efficacy

as a reading teacher and teachers' ability as a reading teacher. In our discussions about

the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, both teachers shared new knowledge

they were acquiring about other ways to teach reading. Along with their new

understanding came some amount of questioning of their past teaching practices.

Beginning with the second set of interviews and through the final interview 2 months

later, the teachers processed their plans to change their practice after using the teacher

book talks and interactive read-alouds from the study.

The reflections on their self-efficacy and ability as reading teachers first became evident when I asked them to talk about how they thought the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were going.

> The book talks I've been doing now are, because they're prepared by you, are much better prepared than I usually do. I do a more informal book talk, when I would explain the new books to the kids. So I think when I do it next year, I'm going to have to do some kind of major research. ...Yeah, I'd like to do [book talks] more, and probably in a better way than I've been doing it. And I love the way that's going into the read-alouds. But you're bringing in the comprehension strategy to the read-alouds, which I have never done before. (Mrs. Vacca)

> I think book talks are a lot more powerful than I ever thought they were. I used to do... I taught book talks that weren't book talks. I don't know what I was doing, but they weren't book talks. They weren't quick enough. They weren't... I think I gave too much away, or I gave too little away. Like I didn't write it to make them interested. I kinda was like, "Oh, well this is kind of cool," or I would tell them, like, practically all about the book, and then it was, like, well no wonder they're not interested. They kinda heard everything already. The book talks were amazing. (Mrs. Labelle)

The teachers sharing similar comments with me throughout the study as they expanded their repertoire of teaching strategies and saw the positive benefits that the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were having on their students' reading attitudes and behaviors. Both teachers believed that the book talks and read-alouds they had conducted in the past could be improved upon or could be expanded to include elements that were part of the book talks and interactive read-alouds used in the study and planned to use these reading instructional strategies the following year. This leads to the behavioral factor that emerged from the teachers: future plans for a change in how they teach reading.

In the last set of interviews, I asked the teachers about their beliefs and practices related to each of the components of the intervention: teacher book talks, interactive read-

alouds, time in school for independent reading, and an unrestricted amount of student choice of books for independent reading. Both teachers discussed their plans for how they were going to make changes to their current practice in each of these areas. Mrs. Vacca was planning how she would introduce her class to her new library, which book talks and interactive read-alouds she would conduct first, and which reading selections from the state-adopted reading textbook she would omit so she could do literature circles more often and give her students more time in class to read. She already had planned to read *Bone: Out of Boneville* with her class as their first shared reading, and she was planning to buy more graphica to add to her classroom library. Mrs. Vacca wanted to continue with the book talks and read-alouds the way they were conducted in the study and told me about her summer plans and how she would prepare.

> In the past, the read-alouds that I did I'd read the whole book. And I'd stop intermittently and actually ask some questions that sort of tied in with what we were doing. I would like to continue doing these. I really like being able to focus on a short, instead of taking on a whole book, take on a portion, to get the kids' appetite wetted, and then to be able to focus in specifically about… So, I think my job over the summer will probably be to sit and work those out, cause I know during the year I may not have the time, or energy, to do that. But I would like to continue doing it the way it is now because it does, instead of reading the whole thing to the kids, which is good, it allows them to get kind of an idea before they pick the book up. And it's always interesting. They want to read the same book, always, even when I did the whole book.

Mrs. Labelle was making similar plans for how she would use her time in the summer to write her own book talks and plan out her interactive read-alouds. She also shared her plans to conduct the graphic book talks and interactive read-alouds in the beginning of the year because she believed those book talks and interactive read-alouds would pique her students' interest the most and get them excited about reading. Many of

her plans also included how she would integrate graphica into her teaching of reading.

> I've already had thoughts in my head, not done anything about it yet, but I've thought in my head next year I still wanna do my one-a-month genre thing. And I'm starting with graphica. And we're gonna start with basically the read-alouds that we did from the study because they were so powerful. And then from there I'm not sure which, and what'll be the next month. But the graphica has gotta start off, because it is just so... I think it'll engage so many more kids than I thought it would, than this year I started off with realistic fiction. And it was okay, but I think the graphica's just gonna get them, and they're gonna be like, "Ooh, I can read these books in class. Okay, I like these." So I think that that's definitely going to be added to my repertoire. Now we actually have document cameras, so I'm going to be able to do those as a read-aloud like we did in the study with the document camera, which I think makes a huge difference...

In addition to the instructional changes in their teaching of reading, both teachers planned to give their students time in school to read independently and to purchase more books for their classroom libraries from the genres and text formats presented during the alternate weeks of the study: graphica, information and sports, and scary/horror/mystery. This future plan in changing their classroom library environment leads to the final area of change: behavioral factors related to reading.

Three sets of factors emerged from the interviews where teachers discussed aspects of the environment, some of which benefited them as reading teachers and others that prevented them from carrying out plans for improving their teaching of reading. I grouped these findings into three themes: benefits, barriers, and bridges. Benefits are positive aspects of the environment that support the teaching of reading. These included the new read-aloud library collections they received in the study, the document cameras that would allow them to teach students how to read graphica and other texts with pictures, and an extensive literature circle library.

Barriers were obstacles in the environment that were perceived by teachers to

interfere with their teaching of reading. These included mandates to follow the district

reading pacing guide, pressures to prepare students for standardized reading tests, lack of

time, few books of high interest to boys and a lack of funding to buy more of these books,

and colleagues who have differing beliefs and practices about teaching reading. In our

first interview, Mrs. Labelle voiced her thoughts about how the current conditions under

which she teaches limit her flexibility as a reading teacher.

> Since we started doing a dedicated 2-hour block of literacy in which... In my school, we switch, so we have lots of different kids than we have in our regular classroom. No, I haven't ever done silent reading or any independent reading in my literacy class. I've done it as a homeroom teacher, and each year it's been a little bit less as the restrictions have increased on our other parts of our time. It seems like Houghton Mifflin takes up the whole two hours, and I have to... It's hard enough to fit in the writing part of it so that I haven't even gotten to independent reading. I know some of the other teachers do it in their homerooms. So I kind of felt like, well, maybe it's getting hit, maybe it's not. And it just kind of seemed like we just didn't have the time to possibly even think about it much less actually do it on any regular scheduled amount of time.

Mrs. Vacca also shared her concerns over finding the time to fit in all the parts of

the study that she perceived were valuable instructional methods. By the final interview,

she had reached a point where she was prepared to make a change in her teaching even

though she faced some barriers as a reading teacher. Her determination to overcome

environmental obstacles was evident when she shared how she plans to handle the lack of

time and give her students the opportunity to read independently within the school day.

> I'm thinking more and more. While I think being consistent with the adoption is probably a good thing, at the same time, the quality of the stories, just by virtue of the fact that they have to be short, is not the same as what we're reading in our library. So what I would probably say is, you know, maybe cut back on some of that adoption reading and use some of the time, at least, to give them independent choice. And being able to do that reading independently, I think, honestly will benefit them as much. It is hard, I mean, and especially knowing we're not going to really have that two hours next year is kind of like, oh, my guess is that the

only thing we can do is add it onto some other place in the day, so that we can get some kind of quality of instruction. So some things are gonna go away. I mean, you know, science may be done mostly at home, as homework, because we use the interactive text and that might work. I would rather give that up, I think, than what we've done this year.

The last environmental factor is bridges. Bridges is the term I gave to capture the teachers' comments about the connectedness they felt with their students as a result of the study. Mrs. Vacca and Mrs. Labelle taught reading under a few substantial differences. Mrs. Vacca's language arts class consisted primarily of the students she taught throughout the rest of the day, except for one student who left her room to go to a reading intervention class and two other students who joined her class during the language arts block. Mrs. Labelle, however, taught reading to students who were from her homeroom class and two other fifth-grade teachers' classes, and all of Mrs. Labelle's students were assigned to her class because they were reading about one year below grade level, as measured by multiple types of standardized reading tests. Although there existed these differences, both teachers shared in the final interviews the connections they felt to their students after sharing positive reading experiences from the study.

> For some of those kids it was their first positive experience I was having with them as students. That they weren't... where we weren't having to fight each other. So I really appreciated getting that chance to get to know some of those kids in a positive light. And getting to see them actually interested and engaged in learning, which is something that had been... for some of them pretty much missing the whole rest of the year.

Mrs. Vacca felt more connected to her students as well, especially to her boys. When I asked her what she believed would be an important message to communicate with other teachers that might make a difference in their decision of whether to try putting into practice any of the components of the intervention, Mrs. Vacca discussed her realization

that her role as a reader and a reading teacher matter to the students.

> I think I didn't realize that the students really watch what I do--not just what I tell them is valuable, but what they see me read. I think it validates them as readers to see I enjoy the same books they do. It allows me to talk (with experience, not just authority) to them about things that really matter to them, and to really share the experience of reading, not just as teacher-student, but as readers. It really changes our relationship. They feel valued as readers, and I am able to, sort of, share their experience.

Summary of the Results

In summary, there were more similarities than differences in the reading interests, reading attitudes, and reading self-efficacy of the fifth-grade boys and fifth-grade girls in this study. Boys and girls liked realistic fiction and historical fiction the same, and both liked scary/horror/mystery. More boys than girls liked graphica and information and sports, whereas more girls than boys preferred reading fantasy. There was no statistically significant difference in the reading attitudes or reading self-efficacy of the boys and girls before the study began. Overall, more girls read for longer amounts of time than boys.

After the 6-week intervention, there was a statistically significant difference in the boys' pretest and posttest means for Recreational subscale and for Total on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. There was a statistically significant difference in the girls' pretest and posttest means for Recreational subscale on the ERAS. There was a statistically significant difference on the Progress subscale on the Reader Self-Perception Scale for both the boys and the girls. For amount of reading, more boys than girls checked out books from the read-aloud library collection; however, the amount of books boys and girls finished reading could not be compared.

For the reluctant boy readers, there was a statistically significant difference

between the pre- and postsurvey scores on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey for Recreational, Academic, and Total. These data were supported in the qualitative data where 13 of the 14 boys reported liking reading after the study had ended. The only statistically significant differences in reading self-efficacy as measured by the Reader Self-Perception Scale were for the subscale Progress and Total. The qualitative data, however, suggest that all boys experienced some positive change in their self-perceptions as readers. The most commonly reported reasons for their change as readers were an increased amount of reading, higher reading ability, more positive attitude toward reading, and enjoyment of a wider variety of books. Every reluctant boy reader reported reading more by the end of the study compared with their amount of reading before the study began. The two reasons boys gave for a change in their amount of reading were having a more positive attitude toward reading and a higher level of reading self-efficacy.

There were no reluctant boy readers who did not prefer some form of graphica, so no comparison could be made between graphica and nongraphica readers.

Both teachers believe that teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds are effective instructional methods for teaching the reading standards and plan to implement them in their future practice. Neither teacher provided students with time for independent reading within their language arts period before the study, but both stated that they plan to provide students with a chunk of time to read independently in school next year, either within the language arts block or at some other point in their day. Both teachers believe that students should have a choice of which books they read for independent reading and plan in the future not to restrict the types of books their students read in school. Both

teachers plan to include boys' reading interests in future book talks, interactive read-alouds, and other areas of their language arts instruction. Before the study, one teacher banned graphic novels and comics from her classroom, and the other did not encourage students to read graphica, whereas, after the study, both teachers advocate that students read graphica and plan to integrate graphica into their language arts instruction.

One additional quantitative finding emerged for the students. Data from students' ranking of the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds indicated that graphica and scary/horror/mystery were students' favorites. Few boys or girls enjoyed reading historical fiction.

Several additional findings for the reluctant boy readers and the teachers emerged from the qualitative data. For the reluctant boy readers, one additional finding emerged related to each set of factors: personal, behavioral, and environmental. The personal factor that emerged was a perceived level of higher reading ability. All 14 of the reluctant boy readers perceived themselves as having a higher level of reading ability after the study. The behavioral factor was a higher level of reading engagement for the reluctant boy readers. The teachers reported that all students, but especially many of the reluctant boy readers, were engaged more while reading than they had been before the study began. The environmental factor that emerged was access to high-interest books. All but one of the 14 reluctant boy readers stated that the new books in the read-aloud library were one of the reasons why they liked reading.

Three additional findings emerged from the teacher interviews, which related to each of the three sets of factors: personal, behavioral, and environmental. The personal

factors included a more positive attitude about teaching reading and teachers' self-reflection on their self-efficacy and ability as reading teachers. The behavioral factor was the future planning teachers were making for how they would teach reading differently the following year. The environmental factors were the benefits and barriers in the environment that influenced their decisions as reading teachers and the bridges they had built to connect more with their students.

Chapter V contains a summary of the study, a summary of the findings for each research question, limitations of the study, a discussion of the findings, implications for educational practice, recommendations for future research, closing remarks, and the afterword.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY AND RESULTS, LIMITATIONS, DISCUSSION
OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Summary of the Study

In this study of fifth-grade reluctant boy readers and their teachers, I examined the

interaction among two personal factors related to reading (reading attitude and reading

self-efficacy), two behavioral factors related to reading (boys' reading interests and their

amount of reading), and four environmental factors related to reading (teacher book talks,

interactive read-alouds, independent reading in school, and unrestricted amount of

student choice of books), as viewed through the theoretical lens of social cognitive

theory. According to Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, people act according to

their personal beliefs, yet their actions do not operate in isolation. The environment plays

a key role in a person's behavior. The language arts classroom is an important

environment for students' reading development. Research suggests and my experience

has been that overall girls have more positive learning experiences in language arts class

than boys and perform better on standardized reading achievement tests. In this study, I

wanted to learn whether changes in the language arts environment would lead to positive

changes in boys' reading behaviors and personal factors related to reading, so I designed

a 6-week intervention that included four components: teacher book talks, interactive read-

alouds, time in school for independent reading, and an unrestricted amount of student

choice of books for independent reading.

The study began with 2 weeks of baseline data collection that included survey

data on students' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, reading interests, and amount of reading. Students were introduced to the routines of independent reading that included 15 to 20 minutes of uninterrupted time to read books of their choice from one of the library resources, 3 to 5 minutes of partner talk about the books students were reading, and time to record on their in-school reading log the date, title, number of minutes read in class, and number of pages read. The library resources from which students had to choose were the classroom library, school library, public library, home library, or read-aloud library collections. The read-aloud library collections were the new sets of books I provided weekly for each classroom. The First Read-Aloud Library collection consisted of 40 texts from a wide range of genres and text formats. Each subsequent read-aloud library collection included 30 new titles that matched the genre or text format of the teacher book talks and read-alouds conducted during that week of the intervention.

The results of the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey and Reader Self-Perception Scale and recommendations from teachers were used to identify the reluctant boy readers in each classroom. I interviewed the 14 reluctant boy readers before and after the intervention to learn of any changes in their reading attitude, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading as a result of the intervention. I also interviewed the two teachers during the first week of baseline data collection, after week 4 of the intervention, and twice after the study to learn their beliefs and practices about teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, allowing time in school for their students to read independently, giving students unrestricted choice of books for independent reading, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into their language arts curriculum.

For 6 consecutive weeks following the baseline data collection, each teacher conducted one set of book talks on three book titles and two interactive read-alouds each week. On the first day of each week, I observed the teacher book talks, which were followed by15 to 20 minutes of independent reading, partner talk, and reading log completion. During this time, I recorded my observations of the teachers' and students' behaviors. On the second day of each week, I observed the first interactive read-aloud, which was followed by15 to 20 minutes of independent reading, partner talk, and reading log completion. Again, I recorded my observations of teachers' and students' behaviors. I was not present on the third day of the intervention when the teachers conducted the second interactive read-aloud; however, both teachers recorded their reflections for these interactive read-alouds in a weekly log. Both teachers chose to provide their students with one additional independent reading period each week to compensate for any loss of time during independent reading on the other days.

The remainder of chapter V contains a summary of the results, limitations of the study, a discussion of the findings viewed through the theoretical lens of social cognitive theory as it applies to the personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors related to reading for boys and teachers, implications for educational practice, recommendations for future research, closing remarks, and the afterword.

Summary of the Results

In this mixed-methods study, I aimed to learn to what extent teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, time in school for independent reading, and unrestricted student choice of books changed boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of

reading. I also explored teachers' beliefs and practices about conducting teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, providing time in school for independent reading, allowing students unrestricted choice of books for independent reading, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum. Six research questions guided the quantitative and qualitative data collection for this study.

The first research question involved a comparison of fifth-grade boys' reading interests with fifth-grade girls' reading interests. To learn what were the differences in fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading interests, students completed a Reading Interest Inventory. Students circled their reading preferences for 23 different genres or text formats. Their choice of responses were: *yes*, *sometimes*, *no*, and *never tried it*. The Fisher's exact test was performed to test for statistical significance among students' responses. Science fiction and sports were the only two categories of texts where boys and girls showed a statistically significant difference in their reading preferences. More boys than girls preferred reading science fiction and sports.

To learn more about students' reading interests, they also were given the list of titles in the First Read-Aloud Library and were asked to circle the titles they were interested in reading. There were no set number of titles they were asked to circle. More girls than boys selected titles from the traditional texts: realistic fiction, historical fiction, and fantasy. More boys than girls selected graphica titles. Scary/horror titles were of interest to both boys and girls. The reluctant boy readers selected mostly texts that were nontraditional: graphica, information and sports, and scary/horror/mystery.

The second research question involved a comparison of fifth-grade boys' reading

attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading with fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. To measure boys' and girls' reading attitudes before the intervention, students completed the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990). Students responded to 10 survey items on recreational reading and 10 items on academic reading. The choice of responses were *very happy*, *slightly happy*, *slightly upset*, *very upset*. Results from an independent-samples *t* test indicated there was no statistically significant difference in the means for boys' and girls' reading attitudes.

To measure boys' and girls' reading self-efficacy before the intervention, students completed the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS; Henk & Melnick, 1995). Students responded to 33 survey items grouped into six categories: General Perception, Progress, Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, Psychological State, and Total. The five levels of response choices were *strongly agree*, *agree*, *undecided*, *disagree, and strongly disagree*. Results from an independent-samples *t* test indicated there was no statistically significant difference in the means for boys' and girls' reading self-efficacy.

To measure boys' and girls' amount of reading before the intervention, students wrote their response to the following Reading Interest Inventory item: *On average, how much time do you spend reading each day?* Students' responses were reported according to the following categories: *less than 30 minutes*, *exactly 30 minutes*, *30 to 45 minutes*, *45 to 60 minutes*, *exactly 1 hour*, *1 to 2 hours*, *more than 2 hours*. Overall, girls spent more time reading than boys. Twice the number of girls as boys read for more than one hour per day. The same number of boys as girls read for 45 minutes or less each day.

The third research question measured the extent to which teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school changed fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. To measure the change in reading attitudes before and after the 6-week intervention, paired-samples *t* tests for each group were conducted to compare the means on the subscales and total for the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. There was a statistically significant difference for the Recreational subscale and Total for boys and a statistically significant difference for the Recreational subscale for girls on the ERAS.

To measure the change in reading self-efficacy before and after the 6-week intervention, paired-samples *t* tests for each group were conducted to assess change on each of the subscales and total for the Reader Self-Perception Scale. There was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest means on the Progress subscale and Total for the boys. There also was a statistically significant difference in the pretest and posttest means on the Progress subscale on the RSPS for girls.

Weekly reading logs were to be used to measure the change in boys' and girls' amount of reading during the 6-week intervention; however, the self-reported reading log data from students contained many errors and could not be analyzed. Instead, a review of the library circulation cards was conducted. Each of the 220 books introduced into the classroom library throughout the 6 weeks of the study were reviewed to find out how many and which types of books were checked out by boys and by girls. More boys than girls checked out books from the read-aloud library; however, reliable data on the number

of books read in entirety were not available. These data also do not include other books students read outside of the read-aloud library collection.

The fourth research question contained a measurement of the extent to which teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and students' unrestricted choice of books during independent reading in school changed fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collection to answer this question.

To measure the change in the boys' reading attitudes, paired-samples *t* tests for the reluctant boy readers were conducted to assess the change on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey given before and after the 6-week intervention. There was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest reading attitude scores on Recreational, Academic, and Total of the ERAS. Interviews with each of the 14 reluctant boy readers were conducted before and after the study. Interview data were analyzed using a qualitative software analysis program, HyperResearch. Boys' responses about their reading attitude when given before the study were coded as Reading Attitude Prestudy, and boy's responses given at the end of the study were coded as Reading Attitude Poststudy. Pre- and poststudy responses for all 14 boys were analyzed individually. All but one boy had a positive change in reading attitude.

To measure the change in reading self-efficacy, paired-samples *t* tests for the reluctant boy readers were conducted to assess the change on the Reader Self-Perception Scale given before and after the 6-week intervention. One subscale, Progress, and Total had statistically significant differences between the pretest and posttest means.

Interviews with each of the 14 reluctant boy readers were conducted before and after the study to learn what were the changes in the reluctant boys' reading self-efficacy. Interview responses about their reading self-efficacy when given before the study were coded as Reading Self-Efficacy Prestudy, and boy's responses given at the end of the study were coded as Reading Self-Efficacy Poststudy. Pre- and poststudy responses for all 14 boys were analyzed individually. Every boy discussed at least once a positive change in their self-efficacy as readers. The most frequent response given for why their self-perceptions as readers had improved was because of a perceived improvement in their reading ability. Two other reasons given were someone else's positive perception of them as readers and reading more books or reading more often.

Weekly reading logs were to be used to measure the change in the reluctant boy readers' amount of reading during the 6-week intervention; however, the self-reported reading log data from all students contained many errors and could not be analyzed. Instead, a review of the library circulation cards was conducted. Results of this analysis indicated that the reluctant boy readers checked out 61% of the total number of books checked out by all boys. No reliable data could be gathered on the number of books the reluctant boys read in entirety.

The fifth research question measured the difference in the change in reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading for fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer graphica and fifth-grade reluctant boy readers who prefer other texts. This question could not be answered because all the reluctant boy readers indicated on their Reading Interest Inventory that they enjoyed reading some form of graphica.

The sixth research question explored two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, time provided in school for independent reading, an unrestricted amount of student choice of books, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum. To learn what were the two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about each of the components of the intervention, I interviewed each teacher during week 1 of baseline data collection, after week 4 of the intervention after the teachers had conducted the second set of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds using alternate texts, 6 weeks after the intervention had ended, and 3 weeks later after the teachers had read through all of the transcripts from my interviews with the reluctant boy readers in their classes. Both teachers stated that the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds are effective instructional methods for teaching the reading standards and plan to use them to teach reading in the future. Neither teacher had provided their students with time for independent reading within their language arts period school before the study. Both, however, intend to give their students an allotted time within the school day for independent reading. Both teachers changed their belief about restricting students' choice of books for independent reading. Both teachers plan to include boys' reading interests as part of their language arts instruction, including graphic novels and comics.

One additional finding learned from quantitative data collected was students' preferences for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. At the end of the study, the students ranked from highest to lowest their favorite teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. Friedman's test was used to analyze these data and results

indicated there was agreement in the ratings for the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds for the 6 weeks. Graphica and scary/horror/mystery were ranked the highest by all students. Historical fiction and realistic fiction were ranked the lowest by all students. For all boys, graphica, scary/horror/mystery, and information and sports were ranked highest. All 14 of the reluctant boy readers ranked graphica as one of their top three favorite text formats. Information and sports and scary/horror/mystery received the other highest rankings.

Three additional findings for the reluctant boy readers emerged from the interview data: one personal factor, one behavioral factor, and one environmental factor. The personal factor that emerged was a perceived level of higher reading ability. During the final interviews, I asked each of the reluctant boy readers the questions: *Do you think your attitude toward reading has changed at all in the last 2 months? If so, how has it changed?* Thirteen of the 14 boys responded with a more positive attitude toward reading. To learn about any change in their reading self-efficacy, I asked: *Have you changed as a reader over the last 2 months? If so, how have you changed?* All 14 boys believed they had changed in some way as readers. The reason given most often to one or both sets of questions about their changes in reading attitude and reading self-efficacy was that the boys perceived themselves as having a higher level of reading ability. This finding was supported by the quantitative results from the reluctant boy readers' responses on the Progress items on the Reader Self-Perception Scale.

The additional finding related to the reluctant boy readers' behavior surfaced during the teacher interviews. After the study, both teachers reported that all students, but

especially many of the reluctant boy readers, were highly engaged during independent

reading. This was a change in reading behavior for most of the reluctant boy readers.

The environmental factor that emerged from the final interviews with the reluctant

boy readers was having access to high-interest books. When I discussed with the boys

their change in reading attitudes, all but one of the boys commented about the books in

the read-aloud library collection being a reason why their attitude toward reading had

improved and why they were reading more. They believed the new books that I brought

in were more interesting than the books that had been in their language arts classroom

libraries.

Three additional findings emerged from the teacher interviews, which related to

each of the three sets of factors: personal, behavioral, and environmental. The personal

factors were a more positive attitude about teaching reading and self-reflection on their

self-efficacy and ability as reading teachers. In the midstudy and poststudy interviews,

both teachers told me how much they enjoyed teaching reading because of the

intervention and the changes they were seeing in their students. Both teachers discussed

the new instructional methods they had learned and were thinking critically about how

their past practices could be improved.

The behavioral factor that emerged was the teachers' planning for how they are

going to teach reading in the future. Both teachers plan to buy more graphica and other

books of high interest to add to their classroom libraries. Both teachers plan to write their

own teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. Both intend to schedule a structured

time within the school day for independent reading. Both teachers plan not to restrict the

types of texts their students are allowed to read for independent reading in school. Both teachers plan to find ways to integrate boys' reading interests, including graphica, into their language arts instruction.

Three types of environmental factors emerged from the teacher interviews: benefits in the environment that support changes to teaching reading, barriers in the environment that interfere with changes they would like to make for how they teach reading, and bridges that were built in their environment that make the changes for how they will teach reading necessary. The benefits are the read-aloud library books that now are part of their classroom libraries, document cameras that enable them to conduct interactive read-alouds with graphica and other books with pictures, and, for one teacher, an extensive literature circle library collection. The barriers are the district reading pacing guide, pressures related to high-stakes testing, lack of time, few books of high interest for reluctant boy readers and limited funds available to buy these books, and differing beliefs and practices from colleagues on how to teach reading. The bridges are the connections both teachers had made with their students through the shared reading experiences in the study.

Limitations

Although every effort was made to analyze correctly the data collected in my study, several limitations existed. First, although I had never taught with the two teachers in the study, they knew me from my work as a literacy coach; therefore, the teachers might have responded more positively to interview questions asking their beliefs and practices about the interventions in the study. To counteract this possibility, I emphasized

in the beginning of each interview that I respected their beliefs and practices and hoped

that even if they were different from my own, I hoped they would to share their beliefs

without reservation.

Second, when interviewing each boy from the small group of target students, it

was possible that one or more boys became self-conscious while answering questions

about their reading preferences, reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of

reading, especially the students who had negative attitudes toward reading and very poor

self-perception as readers. To help prevent the boys from becoming self-conscious, I

prefaced the boy interviews by stressing how important it was for them to be honest

about their responses and that a negative reaction to reading would not result in any

negative consequence. Furthermore, the first round of interviews with the boys took

place only one week after meeting the boys, and some of the boys seemed shy and

reserved when answering their questions. Because they did not know me well, some of

their prestudy responses may not have been completely accurate or fully explained.

Third, the amount of time available to interview the boys was limited. All

interviews were conducted within the school day and at times I had to work around the

teachers' schedules and requests to interview boys only at a certain time of the day.

Although I made an effort to ask followup questions when the boys' responses were not

clear, some interview questions were not followed up even when the boys' responses

were unclear.

Fourth, I acknowledge that I have a bias for using teacher book talks and

interactive read-alouds, independent reading, and students' choice of self-selected reading

materials as instructional practices for teaching reading; therefore, this bias could have influenced my data collection. During the study, I did my best to put aside my personal beliefs and looked for data that confirmed and negated my intended findings.

Fifth, my study was conducted with two fifth-grade teachers from the same school district. Circumstances that are unique to this school district may have impacted their responses about instructional practices related to teaching reading and may prevent my findings from being generalized to fifth-grade teachers in other school districts.

Sixth, the intervention component of the study took place in only two fifth-grade classrooms and, therefore, may not be generalizable to all other fifth-grade classrooms.

Seventh, measuring students' amount of reading, in-school and out-of-school, was dependent on students' accurately self-reporting the number of minutes they spent reading each day and the number of pages they read per week. Because the students in one of the classes were not accustomed to keeping a reading log and many were not in the classroom all day with the teacher who participated in the study, the students had many problems recording the number of minutes they had read. Although the other class of students had kept a reading log outside of school, several problems occurred with their reading log sheets as well, which prevented all reading log data from being analyzed.

Finally, the sample size of the reluctant boy readers was diverse but small ($n =$ 14); therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to boys who do not share the same characteristics.

Discussion of the Findings

Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory provided the framework for this mixed-

methods study on fifth-grade reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-

efficacy, and amount of reading and teachers' beliefs and practices about teaching

reading. A discussion of the findings for the six research questions are embedded within

the three sets of factors in Bandura's framework of triadic reciprocity--personal factors,

behavioral factors, and environmental factors--as they apply to boys and reading and

teachers' beliefs and practices about teaching reading; however, given the triadic

relationship among the personal, behavioral, and environmental factors related to reading

examined in this study, findings for some research questions overlap and, therefore, are

discussed in multiple sections. Figure 8 illustrates the interrelationship among the

personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors related to boys and

reading after the intervention using Bandura's model of reciprocal interactions.

Personal Factors

Improved reading attitude & reading self-efficacy

↕

Perceived higher level of reading ability

Behavioral Factors

Wider range of reading interests
Strong preference for graphica
Increased amount of reading
Minimal change in boys' out-of-school literacy activities
Higher level of reading engagement

Environmental Factors

Change to ELA curriculum
Interesting teacher book talks
Engaging interactive read-alouds
More time for independent reading
Unrestricted choice of books
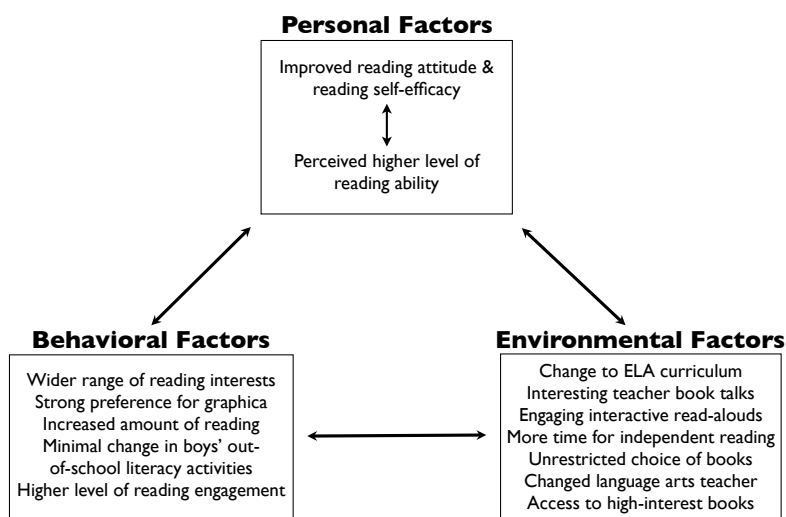Changed language arts teacher
Access to high-interest books

Figure 8. Reciprocal Interactions in Social Cognitive Theory Applied to Boys and
Reading After the Intervention

The findings for research question #1 on the differences between fifth-grade boys'

and fifth-grade girls' reading interests before the study are discussed mostly in the section

on behavioral factors related to reading. The results of this study suggest, however, that a connection exists between providing students with access to books that match their reading interests, amount of reading, and students' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy; therefore, students' reading interests also are discussed in environmental and personal factors related to reading. The additional finding on students' wider range of reading interests after the study is discussed in behavioral factors related to reading.

The findings for research question #2 on the differences between fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy before the study are discussed in the section on the results of the personal factors related to reading. The findings on the differences between fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' amount of reading are discussed in behavioral factors related to reading.

The findings for research question #3 on the change in fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' reading attitude and reading self-efficacy after teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading, and unrestricted choice of books were introduced into the language arts classroom are discussed primarily in personal factors related to reading. The findings for research question #3 on the change in fifth-grade boys' and fifth-grade girls' amount of reading after teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading, and an unrestricted amount of student choice of books were introduced into the language arts classroom are discussed primarily in behavioral factors related to reading. Given the connection between the results on students' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and changes in the environment, these findings also will be discussed in the section on environmental factors related to reading.

The findings for research question #4 on the change in the reluctant boy readers' reading attitude and reading self-efficacy after teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading, and an unrestricted amount of student choice of books were introduced into the language arts classroom are discussed primarily in personal factors related to reading. The findings for research question #4 on the change in the reluctant boy readers' reading attitude and reading self-efficacy after teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, independent reading, and an unrestricted amount of student choice of books were introduced into the language arts classroom are discussed primarily in behavioral factors related to reading. Given the connection between the results on the reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and changes in the environment, these findings also are discussed in the section on environmental factors related to reading.

Three additional findings emerged from the qualitative data for the reluctant boy readers: one personal factor, one behavioral factor, and one environmental factor. The additional finding on the reluctant boy readers' perceived higher level of reading ability is discussed in personal factors related to reading. The additional finding on the reluctant boy readers' higher level of reading engagement is discussed in behavioral factors related to reading. The additional finding on the reluctant boy readers' access to high-interest books is discussed in environmental factors related to reading.

Research question #5 on the difference in the change in the reading attitude, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading of reluctant boy readers who prefer reading graphica and reluctant boy readers who prefer reading other types of texts could not be

answered because all 14 reluctant boy readers indicated on the Reading Interest Inventory that they liked reading some form of graphica.

The findings for research question #6 on teachers' beliefs and practices about teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, providing students with time during language arts class to read independently, allowing students unrestricted choice of books to read during independent reading, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum are discussed primarily in the environmental factors related to boys and reading. Given the connection between teachers' beliefs and practices and students' personal and behavioral factors related to reading, findings for the teachers also are presented in the sections on personal factors and behavioral factors related to reading. Additional findings related to teachers' reading beliefs and practices suggest that a triadic relationship also exists among personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors related to being a teacher of reading. These additional findings on the interrelationship among the personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors related to teachers' reading beliefs and practices are examined using Bandura's model of reciprocal interactions and discussed in the section on teachers' reading beliefs and practices.

Discussion of Findings on Personal Factors Related to Boys and Reading

A literacy achievement gap exists between boys and girls at all levels beginning as early as fourth grade where overall girls outperform boys on standardized reading achievement tests by one and a half years (Digest of Educational Statistics, 2004; National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Research suggests and many reading

teachers believe that constructs from the affective domain of reading influence students'

reading achievement (Cole, 2002; Gottfried, 1985; Thomas & Oldfather, 1997). Two

affective reading constructs were investigated and measured in this study: reading attitude

and reading self-efficacy, which are personal factors. These constructs were the two

personal factors measured in this study. Reading attitude was measured using the

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990) before and after a

6-week intervention of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and 15 to 20 minutes

of independent reading in school with no restrictions placed on students' choice of books.

Reading self-efficacy was measured before and after the intervention using the Reader

Self-Perception Scale (RSPS; Henk & Melnick, 1995).

Research suggests that overall girls have more positive attitudes toward reading

(McKenna et al., 1995; Merisuo-Storm, 2006; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004) and higher

reading self-efficacy than boys (Logan & Johnston, 2009). Research also suggests that

students' reading attitudes decrease as students progress from elementary-school to

middle-school to high-school (Sainsbury & Schagen); however, qualitative studies

conducted in the late 1990s and early 2000s suggest that students' reading attitudes are

not as negative as some researchers believed. Worthy and McKool (1996) studied 11

sixth graders with negative attitudes toward reading but average or above reading ability.

Eight students were boys and three were girls. Even though these students were capable

readers, most of them rarely chose to read. The students and their language arts' teachers

were interviewed to learn more about the students' negative reading attitudes. The

researchers learned that students' attitudes toward reading were not as negative as

students' attitude surveys had indicated or as was perceived by their teachers. All 11

students had strong personal reading preferences and enjoyed reading outside of school.

In the current study, some of the reluctant boy readers before the study discussed positive

reading experiences outside of school, and all but one discussed many positive

experiences in school after being given access to books that interested them.

Results from the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey and Reader Self-Perception

Scale in this study indicated that the reading attitude and reading self-efficacy of the fifth-

grade boys and fifth-grade girls were not statistically significantly different before the

study began, which could be due to the small sample size. Also, the results of the ERAS

and the RSPS indicated and teachers confirmed that there were some girls who also had

negative reading attitudes and low self-perceptions as readers. Both teachers believed,

however, that more of their boys had negative reading attitudes and lower reading self-

efficacy than the number of girls. Similar to what was learned about the teachers'

perceptions of their students in Worthy and McKool's study (1996), the two fifth-grade

teachers' perceptions of their students' reading attitudes may not be accurate all the time.

After the 6-week intervention of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and

15 to 20 minutes of independent reading in school with no restrictions placed on

students' choice of books, poststudy survey results for the ERAS indicated positive

change in the reading attitudes for the fifth-grade boys and fifth-grade girls in this study.

There was a statistically significant difference in the pretest and posttest means for

Recreation and Total for the fifth-grade boys on the ERAS. There was a statistically

significant difference in the pretest and posttest means for Recreation for fifth-grade girls

on the ERAS. These results suggest that the boys and girls in this study liked reading for pleasure more after the study than before the study began. Several researchers have recommended teacher book talks and read-alouds as instructional approaches that might engage students more and encourage more students to want to read (Fisher et al, 2004; Ivey, 1999a; Worthy, 1996). Even though many teachers are aware of these effective practices, few teachers utilize these methods as part of their regular instructional practice (Worthy, 2000). As with the teachers in this study, the lack of implementation of these methods may be due partly to pressures related to following district-mandated pacing guides that either do not allow time for or that teachers perceive they are unable to use because these practices are not promoted in these curricular documents.

The change in students' reading attitudes and behaviors was evident throughout the study as I witnessed during my visits a high level of enthusiasm for reading from students. Students often told me about the new books they were reading, how many pages they had read since the previous day or week, and what books they planned to read next. Several students asked me where I bought the books that I had brought in for the study and then reported back to me later telling me they had gone to visit bookstores and comic specialty stores with their families.

A statistically significant difference also was found in the pretest and posttest means for the Progress subscale on the Reader Self-Perception Scale for boys and girls. More students preceived themselves as readers, experienced more positive feelings inside while reading, and perceived themselves as having a higher level of reading ability than before the study. Reading achievement was not measured in this study; therefore, no data

were collected on students' reading progress. There was some evidence to suggest, however, that students' actual reading performance had improved. All of Mrs. Labelle's students were identified as strategic-level readers: readers who score within one year of the grade-level standard as measured on standardized reading achievement tests. Fifth-graders at Delrado take the Houghton Mifflin Theme Skills Test every 6 weeks to assess students' progress in mastering the reading skills taught in the Houghton Mifflin curriculum. During the final week of the intervention, Mrs. Labelle announced to the class that she had good news for them. Most of the students had scored proficient on their most recent Houghton Mifflin test, and many had performed higher than the students in the two Benchmark, or on-grade-level, reading classes. When Mrs. Labelle announced to her class that there now were three Benchmark reading classes instead of two at Delrado because most of them now were reading on grade level, the students clapped and yelled out in joy.

Likewise, in one of the final interviews, I learned from Mrs. Vacca that the students in her class who had low reading test scores on the computerized district-wide reading assessment taken in the winter improved their reading test scores in the spring. Some research suggests a positive correlation between reading attitude, reading self-efficacy, and reading achievement (Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004), yet more research is needed to understand the complexities of these relationships. On the one hand, students who read well may have more positive attitudes toward reading because of their higher reading ability. On the other hand, students who have a positive reading attitude may read more and, therefore, become better readers. In this study, the students in Mrs.

Labelle's class all were below-grade-level readers. By the end of the study, many of them were reading on grade level. To what extent students' improved reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, perceived higher level of reading ability, and higher level of reading engagement influenced students' reading achievement scores is unknown. More research on the relationship among these areas is needed.

In this study, 14 boys with low reading attitude scores on the ERAS and low reading self-efficacy scores on the RSPS were selected to be studied in-depth. The teachers confirmed that many of these boys had negative reading attitudes or low reading self-efficacy. Many had low reading test scores. Others were reluctant to engage fully during language arts class or independent reading. Their teachers hoped that through this study I would learn what the reasons were for their lack of reading engagement. I interviewed the 14 reluctant boy readers before the 6-week intervention began. During these interviews, I learned that the boys' attitudes toward reading were mixed. Some boys did not like reading; however, many told me they liked to read when they were able to read books that interested them. This result is similar to the findings in Worthy's (1999) research with 11 sixth-graders with low reading attitude scores on the ERAS. In her discussions with the boy who had the lowest reading attitude score, the researcher learned that the boy did enjoy reading but had limited access at home and school to the types of books that interest him most. Some of his favorites were scary stories, comics, drawing books, and books on sports. Many of the boys in the current study had positive reading attitudes and perceived themselves to be good readers when they were reading books they had more experience reading, such as comic books and sports.

After the study, the reluctant boy readers' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy changed. There was a statistically significant difference in the boys' pretest and poststudy ERAS means on Recreation, Academic, and Total. There was a statistically significant difference in the boys' pretest and poststudy RSPS means on Progress and Total. In the poststudy interviews, I asked each boy if he believed his attitude toward reading and self-perceptions as readers had changed. Every boy except for one believed his attitude toward reading had changed to be more positive, and all of them discussed at least one positive change in himself as a reader. When the boys compared their prestudy with their poststudy responses on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey, they discussed why their attitudes toward reading were more positive. Four of their reasons were due to a change in their language arts classroom environment. They were provided with new books that many believed were more interesting, there were no restrictions on the choice of books they were allowed to read, they were given time within the school day to read, and they had a variety of books from which to choose to read. These results support the findings from a previous study on reading motivation. Worthy (2000) surveyed 419 sixth-grade students and asked for them to give three responses to the following question: "What could your language arts teacher do to make students more motivated to read?" The responses given most often by students for how their teachers could change their classroom environments where students would read more were choice in books (52 students), more time to read (39 students), no requirements (34 students), and read aloud and introduce books (32 students). The students also suggested having "interesting, good, great, better, cool books" for students to read (51 students). All but

one of the students' suggestions in Worthy's study (no requirements) were part of the design of the current study. Even the one requirement--filling out the reading log--was not enforced.

When I asked the reluctant boy readers why they believed they saw themselves differently as readers, the response given most often was because they perceived themselves as having a higher level of reading ability. The boys believed they had improved their oral fluency, reading comprehension, pronunciation of harder words, and vocabulary. I was concerned when I learned that after the study not all of the changes in the boys' responses on the ERAS and RSPS were positive; however, upon closer examination I learned that their reasons did not reflect a negative attitude toward reading or lower self-perception as a reader. When I asked the boys to explain why they gave a more negative responses on the poststudy ERAS and RSPS, I learned that some boys had misinterpreted the question or had considered their immediate personal life situations when answering instead of generalizing to how they would respond most of the time. Some researchers (Ivey, 1999a; Worthy & McKool, 1996) suggested and results from this study support the belief that qualitative data should be collected concurrently with survey data so a more accurate picture of the complexities related to constructs of reading motivation may be learned.

Overall, the results of this study suggest that changes in the language arts environment can lead to positive changes in boy' and girls' reading behaviors. All 14 reluctant boy readers told me they read more often, read more books, or read for longer amounts of time than they had before the study began. The change in the boys' reading

behaviors led to their positive change in their reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy.

As seen in Figure 8 on page 315, the results of this study suggest that there is an

interrelationship among the personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental

factors related to reading. Changes made to the language arts classroom environment

(new books that are more interesting to students, unrestricted choice of books, and time to

read independently) led to changes in boys' reading behavior (an increased amount of

reading and a higher level of reading engagement) and changes in personal factors related

to reading (improved reading attitude, higher reading self-efficacy, and a perceived higher

level of reading ability).

Discussion of Findings on Behavioral Factors Related to Boys and Reading

Several behavioral factors related to reading were important in this study. Past

research suggests that many students have strong reading preferences and enjoy reading

when given free choice and access to the types of texts that are of interest to them (Ivey,

1999b; Worthy, 1996b). To learn what were the differences in fifth-grade girls' and fifth-

grade boys' reading interests before the 6-week intervention, students completed the

Reading Interest Inventory and identified their degree of interest in 23 types of genres

and text formats. There were more similarities than differences in boys' and girls'

reading preferences; however, more boys enjoyed reading science fiction and sports than

girls. Various types of graphica, scary/horror books, and informational books were of

high interest to boys and girls in this study, which were different from the teachers'

preferences for realistic fiction, historical fiction, and fantasy. Worthy et al. (1999)

investigated sixth graders' reading interests and found similar results. The most popular

type of book were scary (66%), comics and cartoons (65%), and magazines (38%).

In this study, 14 boys with poor reading attitudes and low reading self-efficacy were studied in-depth. The Reading Interest Inventory results for these 14 reluctant boy readers were used to determine which genres and text formats were used during the alternate weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. Given the level of high interest from the reluctant boy readers, graphica (week 2), information and sports (week 4), and scary/horror/mystery (week 6) were the three categories selected. The traditional texts used for the other weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were based on the teachers' reading preferences: realistic fiction (week 1), historical fiction (week 3), and fantasy (week 5). In the poststudy survey, all students ranked their favorite weeks of teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. Graphica was ranked by 96% of the students as one of their top three favorites, followed by scary/horror/mystery (79%), information and sports (46%), and fantasy (42%). One boy ranked realistic fiction as his top choice, one boy ranked historical fiction as his top choice, and one girl ranked fantasy as her top choice. More students were interested in reading books that traditionally are not found in language arts classroom libraries. Similar to the findings in past research (Love & Hamston, 2003; Nippold et al., 2005; Ujiie & Krashen, 1996), in this study, students' reading preferences did not match the types of texts teachers preferred their students read.

The students' strong preference for reading graphica was evident especially in the reading interest data collected from the 14 reluctant boy readers. Every boy responded *yes* to liking graphic novels before the study. During the study, the boys' interest in

reading graphica expanded as a result of the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds on graphica, time given in school to read, and access to these types of books. Before the study, their teachers did not allow or did not encourage the students to read graphica and some of the other types of books that the reluctant boy readers were interested in reading most; however, after the intervention, both teachers became advocates for graphica and other reading materials. Given the changes in students' amount of reading and improved reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy, the teachers not only allowed their students to read graphica in school but also regarded graphica as a valuable text format and planned to integrate graphic novels and comics in their language arts instruction.

A second behavioral factor--amount of reading--has been correlated with reading achievement. Allington (2001) analyzed the results of studies on amount of reading and learned that high-achieving students in elementary school read three times as much per week in school as low-achieving students. Amount of reading was to be measured using data collected from students' in-school and out-of-school reading logs; however, these data were unreliable and could not be used. Instead, I reviewed the students' responses to their amount of reading per day as reported on the Reading Interest Inventory in the first week of the study. Thirteen boys and 13 girls indicated they read 45 minutes or less per day. Half as many boys as girls read for more than 1 hour per day. To learn how much reading boys and girls had done during the study, I analyzed the library circulation cards that were kept for each book included in the read-aloud library collection. A total of 962 books from the read-aloud library collection were checked out by students: 500 for boys

and 462 for girls. The total number of books completed by the students could not be reported due to inconsistencies in the teachers' record-keeping as books were returned; therefore, the data reported from the library circulation cards can be used only as a guide for how many books students might have read rather than providing the total amount of books actually read.

Several sources of qualitative data provided additional information about students' amount of reading. In the teacher interviews, Mrs. Vacca and Mrs. Labelle discussed how much more their students were reading and how much faster students were finishing reading books. They both told me that even though they could not prove that students had finished reading the books, they both saw their students reading in school and many of their students approached the teachers to discuss with them the books they were reading. My weekly classroom observations further supported what the teachers reported. During the study, several boys and girls told me they were finishing books within a few days, and each week when I returned on Monday for the next round of teacher book talks, I recorded the books that students were reading. Many students had finished the book they were reading the week before and had checked out a new one.

The interview discussions with the reluctant boy readers provided valuable information about how much students were reading. Before the intervention began, half of the reluctant boy readers read 30 minutes or less per day. During the poststudy interviews, all the boys told me they were reading more than before the study began. On one of the days I observed, I overheard Mike, one of the reluctant boy readers, tell another reluctant boy reader, "I finished reading *Amulet* (graphic novel) last night, and I

read all of *Chicken Hare* (graphic novel) too." When I observed Mike read independently during the second week of baseline collection, he was out of his seat three times to select different picture books from his classroom library to read; he did not finish reading one of them during those 20 minutes. Mike's amount of reading changed during the time of the study. In the final interview, Mike told me that he nows take his time and reads more than what he used to read; however, his response on the Reader Self-Perception Scale indicated only a minor change in his reading self-efficacy. On the prestudy survey, he responded *strongly disagree* to survey item 22: *I read more than most students.* On the poststudy survey, his response changed to *disagree*.

The differences between Mike's behavior, interview responses, and responses to the survey items on the RSPS and the ERAS were not atypical. A few of the boys' gave responses to survey questions that were inconsistent with their responses during the interviews. Some of the inconsistencies in the boys' responses were due to the their misinterpretation of the general intent of the survey questions. For example, Mathias gave more negative response on the poststudy RSPS to survey items 16 and 22: *Reading makes me feel happy inside* and *Reading makes me feel good.* When I asked him why his answers had changed from *undecided* to *disagree*, it was because the word he would prefer to use to describe how he feels inside when reading is *relaxed*, not *good* or *happy*. Furthermore, the inconsistencies between their responses may indicate a lack of ability for 11-year-old boys to generalize the survey and interview questions beyond their immediate life circumstances or personal beliefs about the right way to answer the question. For example, when Jonathan responded to the RSPS item asking whether he

was a good reader, his presurvey to postsurvey responses changed from *agree* to *undecided*. When I asked him about this in our interview, he told me, "I don't want to brag or anything cause I don't really know." After talking more about this with him, I learned that he did believe he was a good reader when he reads books that he likes to read. The use of survey data alone did not provide a complete picture of the boys' reading attitudes or reading self-efficacy. Even though multiple sources of data often provided conflicting messages, the combination of quantitative and qualitative data provided a clearer picture of the reluctant boy readers' personal and behavioral factors.

Other researchers have collected both quantitative and qualitative data to understand the complexities related to boys' literacy lives. Smith and Wilhelm (2002) studied 52 middle-school and high-school students and collected interview data on the boys' out-of-school literacy lives. Results of this study suggested that many boys lead active literacy lives outside of school, even though many of these boys do not consider themselves to be readers. In the prestudy and poststudy interviews with the reluctant boy readers I asked if they liked reading at home. I learned that a few boys had reading interests that they pursued after school. For example, two of the boys read comic books outside of school. In the poststudy interviews, I asked the boys again about their at-home reading. A few of the boys mentioned reading to parents or other family members, and some mentioned reading the books from the read-aloud library collection at home. Even though the boys all reported reading more and students out-of-school reading logs suggest that the boys were reading at home, few of the boys discussed in any detail a change in their out-of-school literacy behaviors. Given that boys' out-of-school literacy

activities were not being measured in this study, I did not ask followup questions about this topic, which may have contributed to lack of information the boys told me about the types of literacy activities they engaged in outside of their school day.

An additional reading behavior that surfaced for all students but was noticeable especiallyfor the reluctant boy readers was a higher level of reading engagement during independent reading. Both teachers mentioned in the midstudy and poststudy interviews that students were more engaged during independent reading and in language arts class overall than they had been before the study. The teachers attributed this change in students' reading behavior to the interesting book talks, engaging interactive read-alouds, time given in school for their students to read independently, unrestricted amount of students choice of books, and access to books of

high interest. The teachers' observations were substantiated further in some of the interviews I conducted with the reluctant boy readers. After the study, some of the boys talked about enjoying reading so much that they sometimes forget what is going on around them. For example, when I asked Swenson what he thought about having independent reading time in school, he responded:

> I'm kinda happy with that because you can spend a little time having a little fun reading funny books, enjoying them. And you don't know what time has passed, like sometimes when it's time to stop, Mrs. Vacca can't stop the reading and when we she says stop, we're like, 'Awww...'

Changes in the language arts environment had led to changes in boys' reading engagement and amount of reading, which in turn had led to changes in their reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy, as well as their self-perceptions of having a higher level of reading ability. Additional evidence of the triadic relationship among the

personal, behavioral, and environmental factors related to related to reading are discussed in the last section on the language arts classroom.

Discussion of Findings on Environmental Factors Related to Boys and Reading

In this study, changes were made to several aspects of the language arts classroom environment. As discussed in previous sections, the changes made to the environment changed students' personal beliefs about reading and some of their reading behaviors. In this study, I also wanted to learn what were two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices related to these changes. I interviewed the teachers before, during, and twice after the 6-week intervention where the teachers conducted teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, gave their students time to read independently during their language arts class, allowed an unrestricted amount of student choice of books for independent reading, and integrating boys' reading interests, including graphica, into the language arts curriculum.

In the first interviews, I learned that the primary English language arts curriculum used in both fifth-grade classrooms was the state-adopted textbook materials published by Houghton Mifflin. Both teachers followed the district reading pacing guide that outlined which reading selections should be taught throughout the school year. In the prestudy interviews, I asked the teachers if they had conducted book talks or read-alouds with their students in the past. Researchers (Albright & Ariail, 2005; Ariail & Albright, 2006; Jacobs et al., 2000) have suggested that teacher book talks and read-alouds are effective instructional methods for teaching language arts. Neither teacher had conducted book talks to promote students' reading of books in other genres or text formats. Both teachers had read aloud to their students in the past, but their read-alouds were whole

books, entire reading selections from the reading textbook, or entire passaged from a collection of short stories. Fisher, Lapp, Flood, and Frey (2004) studied the read-aloud procedures of 25 expert teachers to learn what were the characteristics of an effective read-aloud.   Of the seven characteristics identified, six were applicable to the current study. When I trained the teachers on how to conduct an effective read-aloud, I stressed the importance of previewing and practicing the read-aloud in advance, reading fluently, and reading with animation and expression. When I wrote the interactive read-alouds, I selected texts that were engaging to students, included a clear teaching point that was shared aloud with students at the beginning of each read-aloud, and marked places in the text for teachers to stop periodically to allow students to talk about what had been read. Neither teacher had done short, interactive read-alouds that had a teaching point and asked student to practice a reading skill or reading strategy during the read-loud, but both were excited to try this instructional method.

In the midstudy interviews, both teachers reported that they believed the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds in the study were valuable instructional strategies and wanted to implement them as part of their language arts curriculum in the future. Mrs. Vacca liked teaching a reading comprehension strategy as part of the read-alouds. Mrs. Labelle wanted to continue doing teacher book talks; however, she planned to reduce the number of books she talked about at one time. In the second phase of Fisher et al.'s (2004) study, the researchers observed 120 teachers in grades 3 through 8 to learn how commonly widespread the seven characteristics of effective read-alouds were in teachers' instructional practice. Most teachers read with animation and expression and

engaged students in some type of book discussion, but fewer teachers previewed and practiced reading the text in advance and only half had thoughtfully considered what their purpose was for reading aloud the selection. During the current study, the teachers kept a weekly log on their reactions to conducting the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds. They recorded their students' level of interest, the ease of their fluency and expression while conducting the book talk or read-aloud, and any comments about what worked well and what could be improved upon. Both teachers commented that they had learned that in order for their read-alouds to go smoothly, they needed to be prepared. Both teachers discussed students' high level of interest, especially during the weeks when alternate types of texts were presented. In the poststudy interviews, both teachers discussed plans to write their own teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds over the summer.

In the prestudy interview, I asked each teacher if they provided any time in school for their students to read independently. Mrs. Vacca said she tried to give her students silent reading time in school twice a week for half an hour, but it never took place within her 2-hour language arts block. Mrs. Labelle also did not give her students time to read during language arts, and rarely did she give her homeroom students time to read during other parts of the day. Both teachers told me that they believed independent reading was important but there was not enough time in the school day to teach all the required curriculum and give students an opportunity for free reading. Although amount of time spent reading has been correlated with growth in reading (Allington, 2001; Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988), many teachers are reluctant to give up instructional time to

allow students to read in school. In Worthy's (2000) study, the teachers agreed in theory that giving students time to read was important, but they felt pressured to cover the curriculum so they rarely acted upon their beliefs. By the midstudy interviews, both teachers spoke to me about the importance of finding time within the school day for their students to read. They were witnessing firsthand how much their students loved independent reading time and believed that it was essential for nurturing a lifelong love of reading in their students. In the final interviews, the teachers were making plans for how they would make time for independent reading in their schedules.

In this study, students were given unrestricted choice of books to read during independent reading. Several studies have revealed the importance of giving students choice (Worthy, 1996b; Worthy et al., 1999), yet students often read only the books their teachers select or make available in their classroom libraries. In the prestudy interviews, I learned that Mrs. Vacca had guidelines for the types of books her students were and were not allowed to read. Above all, she insisted that students read books at their independent reading level. Apart from this, Mrs. Vacca believed she gave students a good amount of choice; however, upon further discussion I learned of other restrictions she placed on students' choice of books. Students were not able to read books by R. L. Stine because she believes his books are formulaic. Students were not allowed to read *Captain Underpants* books because Mrs. Vacca believed these books were written at the third-grade level. Mrs. Labelle told me she gave her students choice but then admitted that she steered students toward reading the types of books that she believed were more worthy reading material: books with more text than pictures and "honest-to-goodness books" that

challenged her students. Both teachers believed graphic novels were not appropriate

reading material for school.

I wondered what the teachers knew about their students' reading interests, so in

our first interview I showed the teachers the 40 different reading selections in the First

Read-Aloud Library and asked them which types of books their students liked to read.

Mrs. Vacca believed her students would enjoy reading all of them. Mrs. Labelle was not

aware of what her language arts students liked to read because they had never been given

time for pleasure reading during the language arts block of instructional time. She knew

that boys in her homeroom chose nonfiction books, picture books, and magazines when

they had free time to read, and the girls chose realistic fiction, picture books, and poetry.

Research suggests that even when teachers are aware of their students' reading interests,

many view students' reading preferences as inappropriate and do not allow students to

read these materials in school (Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1999). Research also

suggests that students often do not have access in school to the types of books that

interest them the most (Worthy, 2000; Worthy & McKool, 1996). Because each of the

two classroom libraries contained a different number of books in each genre and no

graphica, I provided 30 new books for each of the 6 weeks of the intervention. I had

anticipated that when students were given permission and were encouraged to bring in

any types of books from home or the library that students would bring in books that they

were interested in reading, but this happened only on occasion. Students read mostly the

books that I had provided for them through the duration of the study.

In the midstudy interviews, Mrs. Vacca and Mrs. Labelle discussed the change in

their beliefs and practices about students' choice of books. Mrs. Vacca realized that by

not promoting a wide range of reading materials--mostly the types of books that she did

not enjoy reading--she had been limiting her students' book choices. Mrs. Labelle told

me she would not restrict her students from reading any type of book now. She believed

that opening up the range of acceptable book choices to include graphic novels, comics,

and other books that were of interest to students is what motivated many of her reluctant

boy readers to want to read more. I found that both teachers had learned a great deal

about their students' reading interests, and this newly acquired knowledge had changed

the teachers' beliefs about the types of books they should include in their own classroom

libraries. Mrs. Vacca had learned that her girls enjoyed a wide range of types of books,

whereas, her boys enjoyed mostly graphica, information, and some realistic fiction. She

was surprised to learn that neither boys nor girls enjoyed reading historical fiction, which

she found disappointing because historical fiction was one of her favorites genres. Mrs.

Labelle had learned that the alternate genres and text formats presented in the teacher

book talks and interactive read-alouds were liked more by both boys and girls than the

traditional types of books. Both teachers had noticed changes in their reluctant boy

readers. These boys were engaging in reading more than they had before the intervention

began. At the end of the study, the teachers again spoke with excitement about all of their

students but especially their boys' high level of reading engagement, increased amount of

reading, and overall positive attitude toward reading and their plans to integrate more

types of books of high interest to students into their language arts instruction.

Providing students with access to high-interest books was an unexpected but

important finding in this study. My decision to provide each classroom with a set of 30 new books connected to each week's book talks and interactive read-alouds was to insure that a minimum number of books in each genre and text format was available in both classrooms for students to check out. In the boys' poststudy interviews where the boys discussed the reasons for their change in reading attitude, the reason most often given for the positive change was the "new books" I had brought in for them to read. Mrs. Vacca and Mrs. Labelle both talked at length about the difference it made in students' reading behaviors when they had access to high-interest books. Both teachers planned to buy more books from their own funds but also were hoping that their principals would provide funding for them to buy more books of high interest for their classroom libraries and the school library.

Not only did the students enjoy having access to the new books, but both teachers commented on the number of books that they would like to read, many of which were from the alternate texts in the read-aloud library collection. The greatest change was in their attitudes toward and interest in reading graphica. In the first interviews, I learned that both teachers disapproved of graphica on some level. Mrs. Vacca did not allow students to read graphic novels or comics in school. Mrs. Labelle did not approve of students reading manga because she believed it was inappropriate reading material for fifth graders. She also did not encourage students to read graphic novels or comics because other colleagues did not believe these were acceptable for in-school reading. These teachers were not alone in their beliefs about comic-book reading. Many researchers recommend that teachers support their students' interest in reading comics

(Carey, 2004; Norton, 2003; Ujiie & Krashen, 1999) and allow students to read comics

and graphic novels in school (Carter, 2008; Newkirk, 2002), but most teachers continue

to resist this text format and do not support students reading graphica in school (Worthy,

Moorman, & Turner, 1999). In the midstudy interviews, I learned that the teachers'

attitudes toward graphica had changed for two reasons. First, their students loved reading

all forms of graphica and were reading more because they had access to these types of

books. Second, after teaching the interactive read-alouds with the graphic novels, both

teachers believed that reading graphic novels and comics required students to read and

think about text more critically than the teachers had realized. Teachers had viewed

reading graphic novels and comics as easy reading, but after reading some of these texts

themselves they had changed their thinking. By the end of the study, both teachers not

only viewed all forms of graphica as acceptable classroom reading but also had become

advocates of students reading these text formats. Mrs. Vacca was using examples of

graphica in her language arts instruction. When she gave her students a Houghton

Mifflin assignment where they were to create a picture connected to a story, she told the

students to think about how graphic novels tell stories in pictures along with words. Mrs.

Vacca had bought several copies of the sequel to *Amulet*, one of students' favorite graphic

novels and interactive read-alouds from the intervention, to use as one of her literature

circle choices for the end of the year. She also had purchased multiple copies of *Owly*, a

wordless graphic novel, to read with English learners to help them build vocabulary.

Mrs. Labelle also had come to appreciate the power of graphica as an instructional

tool. She believed she could teach students how to predict and make inferences from the

pictures in graphic novels, and she viewed reading graphica as a much more challenging task than she had before doing the interactive read-alouds from graphic novels. Knowing that many of her students were reading graphica and that it was not as easy to read as she had believed in the past, she wanted to teach her students how to be successful reading this text format. Mrs. Labelle had been sharing with her colleagues how much more engaged her students were in reading, especially her reluctant boy readers and hoped to persuade them to integrate graphica into their language arts instruction as well. At the end of the school year, Mrs. Labelle was thrilled to learn that her principal was allotting $1,000 for her to spend on graphica for the school library because these books he had seen how excited the students were about reading because they had access to these types of books.

Every change made to an environmental factor in the study led to a change in teachers' beliefs and practices. After conducting teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, the teachers believe these are valuable instructional practices and plan to conduct them in the future. After providing 15 to 20 minutes 4 days per week for their students to read independently, the teachers believe that students need to be given time within their school day to read for pleasure and plan to find time in their schedules for students to read in school. After students were given an unrestricted amount of choice to select books for independent reading, the teachers believe that choice is essential to students positive attitudes toward reading and high level of reading engagement and plan not to restrict students' choice in the future. After graphica, information and sports, and scary/ horror/mystery books were included in the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds,

the teachers believe that integrating boys' reading interests in their language arts

instruction validates boys' reading interests and hooks more students into reading and

plan to continue conducting teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds using these

types of texts in the future. After conducting the graphica book talks and interactive read-

alouds, the teachers developed a strong preference for integrating graphica into their

curriculum and plan to use it in a variety of ways to teach language arts in the future. The

changes in teachers' reading beliefs and practices and their connection to being a teacher

of reading will be discussed further as viewed through the lens of Bandura's social

cognitive theory (see Figure 9 in the following section).

Discussion of Findings on Teachers' Reading Beliefs and Practices

In this study, two fifth-grade teachers' attitudes toward teaching reading, self-

efficacy as reading teachers, and ability as reading teachers changed as a result of

changes made in their language arts classroom environment. A 6-week intervention of

teacher books and interactive read-alouds, time provided for students to read

independently in school, and unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading

was introduced into two fifth-grade language arts classroom environments. As a result,

students' reading behaviors changed, including the behavior of most of the reluctant boy

readers. The students read more often and for longer amounts of time, and students were

engaged more while reading. The change in students' reading behaviors led to changes in

students' personal factors. Students' attitudes toward reading improved, and students

perceived themselves to be better readers. As seen in Figure 9, the changes in the

students' behavioral and personal factors related to reading influenced the teachers'

Personal Factors

Improved attitude toward
teaching reading

Reflecting on self-efficacy and
ability as a reading teacher

Behavioral Factors

Changes to the classroom library
Changes in teacher book talks &
interactive read-alouds
Changes in independent reading
Changes in student book choice
Changes in integrating boys' reading
interests into the ELA curriculum

Environmental Factors

Benefits in the environment that
support change
Barriers in the environment that
interfere with change
Bridges in the environment that
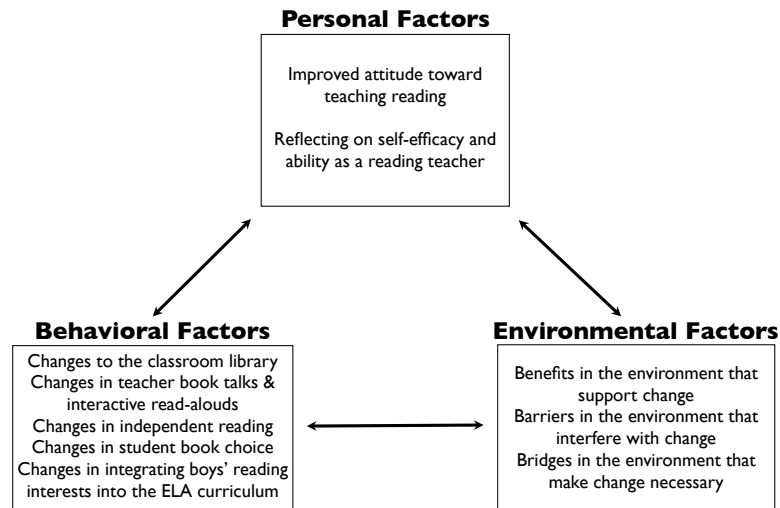make change necessary

Figure 9. Reciprocal Interactions in Social Cognitive Theory Applied to Teachers'
        Reading Beliefs and Practices After the Intervention

personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors related to being a teacher

of reading. The teachers enjoyed teaching reading more. After learning new approaches

to conducting book talks and interactive read-alouds, the teachers perceived themselves

as having new knowledge and ability as reading teachers. They reflected on their past

practices and perceived these practices to be inferior to those they had learned in the

study. These changes in the teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy as reading teachers, and

ability to teach reading influenced teachers' behaviors as reading teachers.

By the end of the study, teachers already had made some instructional changes

and were planning to make additional changes in their reading instruction. Mrs. Vacca

had reorganized her entire classroom library to match the genres and text formats in the

study. She had bought a literature circle set of the graphic novel *Amulet: The*

Stonekeeper's Curse that she used at the end of the current school year and had purchased

a class set of the graphic novel *Bone: Out of Boneville* to use as her first shared reading

with the following year's class. She planned to add more graphica and more scary/

horror/mystery but no realistic fiction and historical fiction because she had many of these books and had learned that not as many students enjoyed reading these types of books as they did the other types. Mrs. Labelle had bought additional graphica books and planned to buy more for her classroom library over the summer. Both teachers planned to write their own teacher book talks and plan their own interactive read-alouds over the summer. Both teachers were planning to make time in their schedules for students to read independently in school. Mrs. Vacca decided to eliminate one of the Houghton Mifflin reading selections she had required her students to read in the past to allow more time in the schedule for her students to read. Mrs. Labelle did not have a concrete plan for how she would fit in independent reading within the school day but hoped that she could convince all of her team members to agree to independent reading time so that all fifth graders would have time in school to read. Mrs. Labelle planned to give all of her students unrestricted choice in what they read. Mrs. Vacca planned to give her students unrestricted choice of books but planned to encourage her higher-level readers to read books that challenged them at least some of the time. Mrs. Vacca already had begun to integrate graphica into the curriculum and was planning to find additional ways to integrate boys' reading interests in the future. Mrs. Labelle planned to teach students how to predict and infer using graphic novels and comics.

Changes made to the language arts classroom environment for the intervention intended to change personal factors and behavioral factors related to boys and reading resulted in changes to teachers' personal factors and behavioral factors related to being teachers of reading. In turn, these changes resulted in a new vision of their language arts

classroom environment, one that included benefits that supported the changes in their environment, barriers that interfered with the changes in their environment, and bridges that already had been made in their environment that they believed made change necessary in their language arts environment. Both teachers were excited about the new books in their classrooms and viewed these books of high interest to students as a benefit to their language arts classrooms. Their vision for next year included classroom libraries with even more books to engage their students in reading. During the study, Mrs. Labelle learned that she would be getting a document camera of her own and viewed this as a benefit to teaching reading. She believed that having a document camera was necessary for teaching students how to read graphic novels, comics, informational books, and other texts with graphics. Mrs. Vacca had a document camera before the study but concurred that this technology was necessary for the same reasons. At Mrs. Vacca's school, she had an extensive literature circle collection which she viewed as another benefit to teaching reading.

Although the teachers mostly viewed their language arts classrooms considering the benefits that would support their changes, each discussed barriers that interfered with the changes they wanted to make. Both teachers discussed the district pacing guide that required them to use the Houghton Mifflin materials and the amount of time it took to get through all the selections and additional components of the state-adopted curriculum. Lack of time within the language arts block to allow students time to read remained the major barrier they would have to overcome. Mrs. Vacca planned to forego reading one story in each Houghton Mifflin theme hoping this would allow more time for

independent reading. Mrs. Labelle did not have a plan and was still thinking about how she would overcome this barrier the following year. Mrs. Labelle often discussed and Mrs. Vacca occasionally mentioned the pressures related to high-stakes testing--district-level reading test and the statewide reading test. These pressures influenced teachers' curricular choices and had become barriers in teachers' decision-making process. Both teachers mentioned the lack of books in the school library that were of high interest to reluctant boy readers--a barrier in the school environment that influences the change that the teachers were hoping to make. Mrs. Labelle also discussed the challenges she faced working with colleagues who had not experienced a shift in their philosophies about integrating students' reading interests into the curriculum. She was making some progress with colleagues as she shared with them the changes she had seen in her reluctant boy readers, but she was unsure of their level of commitment to making any substantive changes the following year.

The last environmental factor to consider when viewing changes teachers were making in their language arts environment is the bridges they had already built that had connected them to their students. Before the study, Mrs. Labelle talked about the disconnect she felt with her language arts students. Her students came to her from multiple classrooms, she saw them only 2 hours of the day, and she had little time to help them bond as a group so often she had believed that her language arts classroom was not the happy, supportive environment she wanted it to be. At the end of the study, Mrs. Labelle discussed how different she felt inside about her relationship with her language arts students. She felt connected to her students in a way that she had not felt before the

study, and she believed it was due to the reading experiences she and her students had shared during the study. The teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, and time together to sit and just read books that they enjoyed had influenced the lens through which she viewed her students and, she believed, the way they felt inside about coming to her class each day. Mrs. Vacca had perceived a similar level of connectedness to her students, especially her boys. She believes that the types of reading materials teachers promote and the types of books teachers choose to read send a message to their boys whether their reading choices are acceptable. She believes that boys want this validation from their teachers. After she began reading the books that her boys liked to read, she believes it changed their relationship.

The teachers were not the only ones to recognize changes that had occurred from the study. In the final interviews with the reluctant boy readers, I asked them if they had noticed a change in their teachers. Most of them said yes, their teachers had changed. Mrs. Labelle's boys told me she likes doing the book talks and she is happy they are reading more books. They had seen a change in the types of books Mrs. Labelle recommends and believed it was because she had seen how interested they had become in reading the new books from the study. Every reluctant boy reader from Mrs. Vacca's room had noticed a change in their teacher. Some discussed how much Mrs. Vacca enjoyed doing the read-alouds. Five of the six boys told me that Mrs. Vacca liked different types of books than before the study began. When I asked Donny why he thought Mrs. Vacca had changed her mind about the types of books she recommends, he said, "She really learned that not all books aren't half bad, that you could... Any book is a

good book, and you could probably learn from it." Most of the boys also mentioned Mrs.

Vacca's new interest in reading graphic novels. When I asked Mathias why he thought

Mrs. Vacca had changed her mind about letting students read graphic novels, he told me,

"Because she realizes how cool they can be cause she finally gave them a chance."

The connections that teachers had made to their students were reciprocated. Most

of the reluctant boy readers in the study felt a connection to their teacher as well. Their

reading interests had been validated, their increased amount of reading had been

acknowledged and celebrated, and their improved reading attitudes and reading self-

efficacy had influenced their teachers' behaviors. Both teachers believed that the changes

they planned to make were necessary if they wanted to build relationships with future

students they way they had built with the students in the study. They hoped that sharing

the results of the study would change the practices of other teachers. Mrs. Vacca

summarized it well when she told me in the final interview:

> I don't think I can encapsulate the enormous change I have seen in my students.
> If I could, maybe more people would try what we did. To see the enjoyment and
> excitement some of my lower readers now feel when they read. Just that should
> convince anyone to try this type of reading. My words simply cannot do it
> justice.

Implications for Educational Practice

The results of this study have practical implications for teachers of English

language arts and professors in higher education who prepare future teachers. Teacher

book talks are an effective instructional method for introducing students to new books,

exposing students to a wide variety of texts, and having a shared-literacy experience with

students that parallels real-world reading activity. Classroom teachers should use book

talks to encourage their students to read more and to read a wider range of books.

Teachers in higher education should find opportunities to model for their teacher-

credential candidates how to conduct teacher book talks from a variety of genres and text

types. They also should provide their students with examples of teacher book talks and

require them to plan and conduct a book talk as one of their assignments.

Interactive read-alouds are a second type of instructional method that was found

to be effective in this study. Reading aloud to students provides a model for oral fluency.

Classroom teachers should conduct short, interactive read-alouds from a variety of genres

and text types so students have an opportunity to experience a range of reading materials

rather than always reading whole books. While doing so, teachers should focus on an

instructional point and stop periodically for students to talk with a partner to practice the

reading skill or reading strategy they are teaching. This not only is an effective

instructional approach, but it is highly engaging for students. Teachers in higher

education should model for their teacher-credential candidates how to conduct interactive

read-alouds from a variety of genres and texts and include various instructional points.

By doing so, their students will witness firsthand the power of these instructional

methods. Furthermore, if students are provided with examples of interactive read-alouds

and then are required to plan and conduct an interactive read-aloud as one of their

assignments, they will be more confident using these instructional methods in the field.

Every teacher knows the frustration of running out of time and wishes they had

more time to teach. Classroom teachers must do whatever they can to give students time

to read in school. Students need time to practice the reading skills and strategies they are

taught and should do so alongside the reading expert who is there to guide and support them: their teacher. If teachers value giving students time to read, they will do their best to make time for it in their schedules. Teachers in higher education should consider occasionally giving their teacher-credential candidates time for independent reading of books of their choice during class so they can experience the joy that a few minutes of reading can bring to their day. Likewise, professors should take a few minutes to read as well to remind themselves of the pleasures that reading brings.

Classroom teachers should limit the degree to which they restrict their students' reading choices. Limiting students' choice of texts and allowing them to read only what a teacher decides is valuable reading material is a form of censorship. If English teachers broadened their definition of literacy to include all types of texts, it not only would validate students' reading interests but also would prepare them better to be literate in the 21st century.

Classroom teachers should find ways to provide their students with access to a wide range of reading materials. Finding available funds to buy books will be a problem always. Teachers can ask for books for presents; ask students, parents, and community members to donate books; ask the Parent Teacher Association for money or book donations; order books from book clubs where teachers earn bonus points and can get books free; shop at comic specialty stores and book stores that give teachers a discount, write grants to buy books for their classroom; make friends with the school librarian and request that more books of high interest to students be purchased, ask their principals if there is money to buy books; start a book swap at school where students buy and share

books with each other. Teachers should do whatever it takes to provide their students

with access to books in their classrooms along with encouraging them to check out books

from the school and public library. Teachers in higher education should provide their

teacher-credential candidates with a list of suggestions for how they can build their own

classroom libraries.

Classroom teachers should integrate students' reading interests into their

curriculum. Short excerpts or a sentence or two from students' books can be used to teach

interesting sentence structure, punctuation, figurative language, and other language arts

standards. To whatever extent possible, teachers should integrate the types of books that

their students are interested in reading. By doing so, students are likely to be more

engaged during lessons, and teachers are likely to learn more about the genres and text

formats they read less often.

Classroom teachers should allow their students to read graphica. Reading graphic

novels, comic books, comic strips, manga, and single panel comics not only will bring

students joy while reading but also will teach them how to read pictures, make inferences,

learn how text and pictures work together to convey a message, and more. Teachers who

have never tried reading a graphic novel should give one a chance. They may be

surprised how much they enjoy it. Teachers of higher education should expose their

students to a wide range of genres and text formats, including graphica, by bringing in

examples of many texts, such as graphic novels from a variety of genres. Reading

professors should read aloud excerpts from graphic novels and comics to their students.

Doing so may help rid some of the bias that even new teachers have toward comics and

may convey a positive message about the value of using graphica in the classroom.

Recommendations for Future Research

Social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) was the theoretical foundation for this study. According to Bandura's framework of triadic reciprocality, it is the interaction between one's personal beliefs, behaviors, and the environment that motivates a person's actions. In this study, fifth-grade boys' personal beliefs and behaviors related to reading and teachers' reading beliefs and practices were studied after several changes were made to two fifth-grade language arts classroom environments. A close examination of the dynamic interrelationship between the three sets of factors in this study led to valuable insights into each individual set of factors. Future research is needed on the reciprocal interactions between other personal and behavioral factors related to reading and personal and behavioral factors related to classroom environments in other disciplines. An investigation of these factors related to science classrooms, history classroom, mathematics classrooms, and other subject areas would provide a basis for comparing whether interactions within the language arts environments are similar or different from other types of classrooms.

This study focused on fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. Research suggests that boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading decline as boys advance from middle to high school. In this study, boys' personal factors and behavioral factors changed positively as a result of the intervention. More research is needed on boys' personal and behavioral factors when effective instructional practices are changed within elementary language arts classrooms

as well as classrooms at the middle-school and high-school levels.

This study focused primarily on boys with negative reading attitudes and low reading self-efficacy. Although research suggests that more girls than boys like to read, some girls have negative reading attitudes and low self-perceptions as readers. More research is needed to learn what differences exist between boys' and girls' personal and behavioral factors related to reading. A repeat of this study with a focus on girls may provide additional insights into these differences.

In this study, a 6-week intervention on teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, time in school for independent reading, and students' unrestricted choice of books was introduced into the language arts environment. Due to the restricted amount of time for the study, students were exposed to a new type of genre or text format each week for 6 consecutive weeks. The continuous addition of books each week may have resulted in a higher level of interest because it was maintained for a short time. Future research using the same intervention spanning a longer time is needed to learn whether boys' positive reading attitudes, high reading self-efficacy, increased amount of reading, and high level of reading engagement would be sustained.

Research suggests that there is a correlation between affective reading constructs and reading achievement. Given the literacy achievement gap between girls and boys, further investigation is needed on affective constructs such as reading attitude and reading self-efficacy. An additional finding in this study was boys' perceived higher level of reading ability. A repeat of this study that measures the effect of the intervention on boys' reading achievement to find out whether reading achievement actually improved is

a much-needed next step.

Teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds were the two instructional methods used to integrate boys' reading interests into the language arts curriculum. Research on other effective instructional methods may have had the same positive effects. Future research using other language arts instructional practices is needed to learn additional ways to improve boys' reading attitudes and reading self-efficacy and to increase boys' amount of reading and level of reading engagement.

Integrating graphica into the teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds and allowing students to read graphica in school resulted in profound changes in teachers' beliefs and practices regarding the use of graphica in the language arts classrooms. Many teachers are reluctant to allow students to read graphica in school and do not include graphic in their language arts instruction. Although the research in these areas is growing, more research on valuable methods for integrating graphica into language arts instruction is needed.

Two fifth-grade teachers and their students participated in this study; therefore, the findings from this study cannot be generalized to other grade levels and educational settings that are different from those in the study. A repeat of this study in a variety of classrooms in different educational settings would provide further evidence that the components of the intervention used in this study are effective instructional approaches for improving boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, amount of reading, and reading engagement.

The two fifth-grade teachers' reading beliefs and practices changed drastically as

a result of the intervention used in this study. Longitudinal research is needed to learn whether the changes in teachers' reading beliefs and practices are sustained over time. A repeat of this study also is needed to learn whether the changes that occurred for these two teachers are unique or whether other teachers would experience similar changes in their reading beliefs and practices using the same intervention.

Closing Remarks

I conducted this mixed-methods study partly in response to the call from researchers to implement several needed changes in language arts classrooms. I designed a 6-week intervention that was implemented in two fifth-grade classrooms where teachers conducted teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, provided their students with time in school to read independently, allowed students to choose books that interested them, and integrated boys' reading interests, including graphica, into their language arts curriculum. As a result, boys' and girls' attitudes toward reading, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading changed.

The results of the study contribute to the small but growing body of qualitative research on boys' and girls' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. The majority of past research conducted in these areas was survey research, and results suggested that girls hold more positive attitudes toward reading, have higher reading self-efficacy, and read more. Qualitative data collected in the last 10 years suggest, however, that personal and behavioral factors related to boys' and girls' reading are more similar than different. I learned that the boys in this study like to read as much as the girls, and even the reluctant boy readers have positive reading attitudes and high

reading self-efficacy, when they are given time to read in school, free choice of books, and access to reading materials that interest them.

At a time when the teachers in my district believe they have less voice and choice related their classroom instruction, this study explored two fifth-grade teachers' beliefs and practices about several research-based instructional practices in reading. Some of the components that I introduced to them through the intervention were new, yet both of them embraced these methods and made changes to their practice because of their positive experiences in the study.

In conclusion, this study resulted in many changes. The fifth-grade boys and girls changed. They liked reading more, and they believed they were better readers. They spent more time in school reading, and they were more engaged while reading. The two fifth-grade teachers changed. They liked teaching reading more, they believed they were better reading teachers, and they learned new strategies for how to teach reading. The teachers also planned to make changes to their language arts environments. They planned to conduct teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds, provide their students with time in school to read independently, allow students to choose their own books without restrictions, integrate boys' reading interests into their language arts curriculum, and integrate, promote, and even read various types of graphica themselves. Last, I have changed. As a novice researcher, I set out to conduct a study that was expansive in scope and at times felt beyond my capability, but I persevered because it was the study I had dreamed of conducting--one with potential to change the reading attitudes and behaviors of students and the reading beliefs and practices of teachers. I believe it did both.

Afterword

As a middle-school English teacher, I had great satisfaction each year when I was able to help turn around a reluctant reader by helping that student find books that he or she was interested in reading, yet every year there were a few students I was unable to reach. Upon reflection, I realized that those students usually were boys.

I will never forget my last year as a sixth-grade teacher and the troubles I had with Harvey (pseudonym). Harvey's reading scores suggested he should be reading books at the third-grade level, yet Harvey would come to school with thick novels to read during independent reading. The research said that Harvey should not be reading books outside of his lexile range, beyond his zone of proximal development, and my avid support for this philosophy made me determined to make sure Harvey read only those books that were within his zone. And so the battles began. I explained to Harvey why he could read only books within a certain lexile range and offered him a variety of approved titles to choose from. I even found books I thought would be of high interest to him. Still, we battled. Day after day, Harvey would fight my attempts to find books that I believed were appropriate for him to read. His behaviors ranged from staring into space and refusing to read to more aggressive behaviors, such as shoving his book across his desk and on to the floor.

And then there were the books we read as a whole class. I had selected for our first shared reading experience Lynn Joseph's book, *The Color of My Words*, the beautiful story of a young girl growing up in the Dominican Republican who longs to be a writer but is forbidden to do so. I had selected this text because of the tenderness of the story,

the rich language, and its connection with teaching writing through the writer's workshop model. Harvey hated *The Color of My Words*. Each day as I read aloud, he sat at the carpet with his head buried in his fists. When I asked the students to stop and jot their thoughts, he often dug his pen into his reader's notebook and scribbled large circles until he wore a hole through the pages. Some days I was patient with Harvey; other days I sent him out of the room because his defiance angered me. I took personally his lack of interest in the books I selected.

At times Harvey and I connected. I once bought a few of the Simpsons' graphic novels with Harvey in mind, and when he read them during independent reading he was completely engaged. There also were the times when I relinquished control over what he read during independent reading and allowed him to read the science fiction books he brought in, even though they were at the high-school readability level. *At least he is being quiet and cooperative today,* I would think to myself.

When I became a middle-school literacy coach, I witnessed defiant behaviors in many classrooms, and I observed teachers struggling with students of both genders but more so with boys to get them to read the books they had assigned. Teachers were frustrated at their male students' lack of appreciation for the wonderful stories they had selected to teach the content standards, and they battled with their boys to get them to engage fully during independent reading.

When I entered the doctoral program and began reviewing the literature on boys and reading, I learned that I was not alone in my thinking; others were concerned about why many boys were not achieving at the same level as girls and were aware of the

culture in many language arts classrooms that alienated some boys from reading. I began

reading the literature on boys and reading, and then I asked myself this question: Why is

it that we, English language arts teachers, hold on so dearly to certain types of texts and

literacy practices when, on average, half of the population we teach is underperforming?

I wanted to learn more about boys like Harvey, boys whose test scores suggested that

they were not capable of reading many of the books that matched their reading interests.

I wondered if others, like Harvey, *did* like to read but were not being given opportunities

to read the books that interested them. I began to wonder whether I had contributed to

the literacy achievement gap in my classroom when I promoted books that many girls

enjoy reading more than boys. I questioned whether some boys' negative reading

attitudes, low reading self-efficacy, and lack of time spent reading was because I had not

taken the time to find out what types of books these boys were interested in reading and

had not provided boys with access to books that were of interest to them. I had been

providing my students with time in school to read independently, and I believed I was

giving them choice; however, I realized that I had been giving them the choice to read the

books *I* liked to read or those *I* believed were quality reading materials, not what *they*

were interested in reading.

When I thought about past conversations with other English teachers, I knew I

was not the only teacher who had been limiting my students' book choices. Many of us

value the Newbery award-winning books, many of which are realistic and historical

fiction, and these are the books we read to our classes and recommend that our students

read. My personal preference for reading these books had not changed; what was

beginning to change was my recognition that my reading preferences should not be elevated above the reading preferences of others who enjoy reading genres I rarely read--science fiction, horror, information, sports, fantasy, and humor--and text formats I had no experience reading: graphic novels, comic books, manga, sports information, video-gaming books, and others. I had come to realize that many of the books that I did not prefer to read or had no experience reading were books that many men (including my husband) preferred reading and decided I needed to expand my definition of good literature to include a range of reading materials that interest more students, especially boys. I also needed to provide my students with access to these reading materials by including them in my own classroom library. I knew I would be making these changes in my own classroom, but I wanted to design a study that would allow me to investigate what would happen for students and teachers if these changes were made in other classrooms as well.

Conducting a study that not only gave students time to read and unrestricted choice of books but also promoted a wide range of genres and text formats through teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds and gave students access to these reading materials in their classrooms was rewarding on so many levels. I witnessed students transform from being reluctant readers to voracious readers just because they were given time to read, free choice of books, and access to books they enjoyed. Each successive week when I arrived on Monday with a new set of books for the read-aloud library collection, students became more excited. They could not wait to see what books I had brought for them to read.

I recall as if it was yesterday the day I arrived at Delrado and morning recess had not ended. A boy spotted me coming down the hallway with a box of books in hand and called out, "Mrs. Wozniak is here with more books!" He and a whole crowd of students from Mrs. Labelle's class came charging at me wanting to see the new books. It was the final week of the intervention, so I was holding the scary/horror/mystery collection. They literally were jumping up and down in excitement when they saw them--grabbing books and making comments such as, "Cool!" and "I love this book!" Some were asking already if they could be the first to read a particular title. Mrs. Labelle came down the hall and saw what was happening. "You would have thought I was bringing them candy," I whispered to her. We smiled at each other knowing how magical that moment was for both of us. What we had hoped would be a result of the study was happening right before our eyes: students were excited again about reading!

Many positive results have happened since my study ended. When I told my principal how much more the fifth graders in my study were reading and that I believed it was because the students had been given access to high-interest books, she allotted me $11,000 to buy books for our elementary school, $6,000 of which were for high-interest books for fourth and fifth graders. I spent $7,000 on graphica and the rest on the other genres that had appealed to so many of the students in my study.

Next, my school site held a 4-week summer school program for students who were reading below grade level. Knowing that many of the students enrolled in the program were not strong readers and many did not like reading, we selected a theme that we believed would be of high interest and purchased books that matched the theme:

Superheroes! Again, my principal allowed me to spend $4,000 on books of high-interest

so the summer-school students would have books available to read. I spent $1,800 on

graphic novels, comic strips, and single-panel comics. There were four summer-school

classes, and the students in the upper two classes read independently every day for at

least 20 to 30 minutes. Students also were encouraged to read at home each night. I

conducted book talks and brought in a new set of books each week. The results were the

same as in my study: students were excited about the new books and could not wait to

read them. The teacher who taught a combined group of incoming fourth and fifth

graders kept track of the number of books her students read each week: 31 books (week

1), 64 books (week 2), 71 books (week 3), and 74 books (week 4). This group of 21 low-

performing readers had read 240 books in a 4-week summer school session. Why? They

were given time to read in school, a choice of books, and access to books that were

interesting to them.

 While I was conducting my study, I started expanding my own classroom library.

I saw the difference it was making for the students in the study and wanted to provide my

students with access to the same types of books. There was not a single boy or girl in my

class who did not find something he or she liked to read most days. Even my most

reluctant reader (a boy) found at least a few books to read and this year came back to tell

me that he now loves to read and chooses to read all the time. My current students read

in school every day and have had access to a wide variety of books beginning the first

day of school. They record what they have read in their readers' notebooks, and 66 days

into the school year have read a total of 630 books! I have shared the results of my study

with my two fourth-grade colleagues, and they, too, provide time, choice, and access to

high-interest books to their students. Collectively, our fourth graders have read 1,387

books so far this year.

I wanted to learn to what extent the two teachers from my study were putting into

practice the changes they had hoped to make, so I contacted them and asked how their

year is going. I specifically asked them to tell me whether they have conducted any

teacher book talks or interactive read-alouds, if they are giving their students time in

school to read independently, how much choice their students have when choosing books,

and if they have integrated boys' reading interests, including graphica, into their language

arts classroom. Mrs. Vacca has conducted teacher books talks on historical fiction,

graphica, and scary/horror/mystery. She wrote the historical fiction book talk and used

the teacher book talks from the study for the other two. She followed each set of book

talks with two interactive read-alouds. Mrs. Labelle switched grade levels and is now

teaching third grade. She told me she has been unable to use the teacher book talks and

interactive read-alouds from the study and has not found the time to write her own yet;

however, she hopes to do so in the future.

Both teachers give their students time to read in school. Mrs. Labelle's third

graders have a dedicated time for independent reading twice a week for 30 minutes

without interruptions. Her students also read whenever they finish their classwork. Mrs.

Vacca's fifth graders read for 30 minutes every day outside of the English language arts

block so that her two students who are in a reading intervention class can have

independent reading time as well. Neither teacher restricts their students' choice of books

for independent reading. When I read the response Mrs. Labelle sent me, I could see that

she believes strongly in students' choice of books.

> Students have absolute choice in what they read – no restrictions from me at all.
> When I first introduced this, they went nuts, especially when I "talked-up" the
> graphica and sports/gaming sections. I actually had to institute a "library open/
> library closed" sign because students would rush through their assignments to get
> to choose a new book (which got more than a little annoying). When we go to the
> school library, I don't hold them to any restrictions either – I don't worry about
> "dot" books (ones with AR quizzes), or *Captain Underpants* or drawing books.
> They have done an amazing job of picking books that actually require reading –
> not just easy picture books or drawing books. If they do, I just tell them to keep
> one and choose another one closer to their level (which was one of the mini-
> lessons I taught).

Mrs. Vacca was equally passionate about students' unrestricted choice and has advocated

for choice even with her students' parents.

> Students have complete choice of books. In fact, I had to really talk to several of
> the parents at conference time to have them allow their students to pick out their
> own books. One dad in particular wanted to allow his son a choice within a group
> that dad picked out. I really had to stress how much his son (by his own
> admission) is now enjoying reading (he did not like reading at all before fifth
> grade) and that we want to cultivate that love of reading, rather than squelch it.
> Many of the students are surprised by the freedom of choice and by the types of
> books I now have in my library.

When I asked the teachers if they had integrated students' reading interests into

the curriculum, Mrs. Labelle told me that she and her third-grade team were using a set

curriculum, but she believed it included many stories that were interesting to boys. Mrs.

Vacca told me that she used students' independent reading books for examples of writing

strategies, grammar, and syntax. The first book she and her students read together was

Bone: Out of Boneville. She said her students were surprised to be reading a graphic

novel in class. "I hope it gave them the understanding that reading this year would be

different than in previous years. They loved the book and were always anxious to get back to it."

Both teachers had purchased additional graphic novels and comic books for their classrooms, as well as other books that were of high interest to their reluctant boy readers. Mrs. Labelle said she now has over 90 graphica-style books in her library, including some comic books. "I have added to this section several times, and those books are always the ones checked out." Mrs. Vacca said that when placing book orders she selects mostly scary/horror/mystery books and nonfiction books that are appealing to boys, but has not bought much realistic fiction because she had plenty of books in that genre.

I could hear the pride in their voices as they conveyed stories that told of the changes they had made to their practice and its effect on their students' reading lives.

> Clearly, my experience in the study has profoundly affected both my philosophy and my practice. My students are keeping a reader's notebook, and, as of today, collectively have read 652 books!

Mrs. Labelle proudly reported the number of books her third graders had read since the school year began: 368 books! Mrs. Labelle's positive experiences have inspired her to volunteer to lead one of the sessions at her school's parent education nights. She told me she would be leading a workshop titled: How can I help my child to love reading? Gaphica and choice were going to be the two main topics of discussion. Several of her students' parents had shared at conferences the change they had seen in their children already this school year. Students were reading all on their own without their parents having to fight them to do so.

Mrs. Labelle closed her reflection with this story:

I had the best teacher moment last week. We have just started switching for English Language Development, and I have the English-only group – students that are not at grade-level or are not independent workers. A student from another room said something about not liking to read, and three of my students went wild saying over and over "What do you mean, you don't like to read? It's like watching TV! It's so much fun." What a great testimony to adding the joy of reading back into our curriculum.

No doubt every doctoral student sets out to make an important contribution to the field in which they passionately work. It is the job of our professors to keep us grounded and remind us that our doctoral study builds on years of past research and that our goal should be to make a small contribution to previous findings. My study on the effect of teacher book talks, interactive read-alouds, time in school for independent reading, and unrestricted student choice of books for independent reading on boys' reading attitude, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and teachers' reading beliefs and practices is one small contribution to the field of reading research, but for the two teachers in my study, the 52 students they taught last year, the students they teach now and in the future, my colleagues and their students, my students, and for me, my study made a profound difference. I am proud of the work that has been accomplished. The positive changes we are making truly do bring the joy of reading back into our classrooms. I hope that this study will continue to affect positively the lives of the teachers and students with whom I work. More importantly, I hope all students, but especially boys who have not come to know yet the joy of reading, will have at least one teacher who validates *their* reading interests and provides them with access to these books in their language arts classrooms. Thank you, Harvey, for helping me become one of these teachers.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

Consent Forms

Date

Dear (district office person's name),

This week, you will be receiving my formal request for consent to conduct my doctoral study in two fifth-grade classrooms in (district's name).

I will be submitting all of the required district paperwork for gaining consent to conduct a doctoral research study and hope to gain district approval as soon as possible. I also will be including the formal application to be submitted to the Internal Review Board, which includes a detailed description of the purposes and procedures of the study and all of the required consent forms.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Cheryl L. Wozniak
Doctoral Candidate
School of Education
University of San Francisco

Date

Dear (district office person's name),

I am currently a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco. As part of my degree requirements, I will be conducting an experimental study on the effect of teacher book talks and read-alouds on fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and teachers' beliefs about students' choice of books for independent reading.

To fulfill the study, I am looking for two fifth-grade teachers who would be willing to participate with their students in an experimental study where teachers give short book talks and read-alouds three days per week alternating between traditional literature (realistic fiction, historical fiction, and award-winning books) during weeks 1, 3, and 5 and non-traditional literature of high interest to reluctant boy readers (sports books, humorous fiction, and graphica), during weeks 2, 4, and 6, followed by a 15-minute independent reading period. The study also includes teacher interviews, interviews with a sub-sample of three to five reluctant boy readers from each classroom, and classroom observations conducted by the researcher two days per week.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. The participants' identities will be kept anonymous, and results will remain confidential and in a secure location. Your signature on the enclosed consent letter indicates that you acknowledge and authorize research to be conducted on school grounds in your district with the consent of the principals, fifth-grade teachers, and their students. Please sign the attached consent form and return it in the district mail as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Wozniak
Doctoral Candidate
School of Education
University of San Francisco

Consent for Research

My signature below indicates that I acknowledge and authorize Cheryl Wozniak to conduct classroom research in two fifth-grade classrooms in our district. I am aware that the design of the study includes teacher interviews, interviews with a sub-sample of three to five reluctant boy readers from each classroom, a six-week treatment three days per week, the collection of survey data from all students who gain consent from their parents to participate, and classroom observations by the researcher two days per week for the duration of the study.

_____

Name   Title/Position

_____

Signature   Date

Date

Dear (principal's name),

This week, you will be receiving my formal request as a doctoral candidate for consent to conduct research on your school grounds with one of your fifth-grade teachers. I have followed the district's policy for obtaining formal consent and both the directors of educational services and the superintendent's cabinet have given written consent for me to conduct my study. I hope you will give your consent as well.

Thank you, in advance, for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Wozniak
Doctoral Candidate
School of Education
University of San Francisco

Date

Dear _____,

I am currently a doctoral candidate in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco. As part of my degree requirements, I will be conducting an experimental study on the effect of teacher book talks and read-alouds on fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and teachers' beliefs about students' choice of books for independent reading.

To fulfill the study, I am looking for two fifth-grade teachers who would be willing to participate with their students in an experimental study where teachers give short book talks and read-alouds three days per week alternating between traditional literature (realistic fiction, historical fiction, and award-winning books) during weeks 1, 3, and 5 and non-traditional literature, which tend to be more appealing to many boys (sports books, humorous fiction, and graphica), during weeks 2, 4, and 6, followed by a 15-minute independent reading period. The study also includes teacher interviews, interviews with a sub-sample of three to five reluctant boy readers from each classroom, and classroom observations two days per week.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. The participants' identities will be kept anonymous, and results will remain confidential and in a secure location. The district office staff person in charge of giving consent for research has approved my request to conduct research in your district. Your signature on the enclosed consent letter indicates that you acknowledge and authorize research to be conducted on your school grounds with the consent of your fifth-grade teachers, students, and parents. Please sign the attached consent form and return it in the district mail as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Wozniak
Doctoral Candidate
School of Education
University of San Francisco

Consent for Research

My signature below indicates that I acknowledge and authorize Cheryl Wozniak to conduct classroom research in a fifth-grade classroom at my school site. I am aware that the design of the study includes teacher interviews, interviews with a sub-sample of three to five reluctant boy readers from each classroom, a six-week treatment three days per week, the collection of survey data from all students who gain consent from their parents to participate, and classroom observations by the researcher two days per week for the duration of the study.

_____

Name   Title/Position

_____

Signature   Date

TEACHER CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Purpose and Background
Cheryl Wozniak, a doctoral candidate at the University of San Francisco, is doing a study on the effect of teacher book talks and teacher read-alouds on fifth-grade boys' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading and teachers' beliefs about students' choice of books for independent reading. You were recommended by the Director Elementary Education in your district as a teacher who might be interested in participating in this study.

Procedures
The procedures for the study will take place during your language arts period. By agreeing to participate in this study, you are asked to fulfill the following research components:

1. Participating in one-on-one interviews with the researcher that last approximately 45 minutes each at three points in the study: before the study begins, at the end of week 4, and at the end of the study. The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Once the recordings have been transcribed, they will be destroyed. You will receive a copy of the transcripts for your verification of the interviews.
2. Completing a teacher-checklist of familiar book titles before and after the study
3. Administering three surveys before the first week of the study: a Reading Interest Inventory, the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (20-item survey), the Reader Self-Perception Scale (33-item survey)
4. Administering two surveys at the end of the study: the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey and the Reader Self-Perception Scale
5. Reading one set of scripted book talks on the first day of each week for six weeks--approximate length of instructional time is 10 minutes
6. Reading aloud scripted excerpts from two books and discussion starters for student partner talk on two subsequent days each week for six weeks-- approximate length of instructional time per day is 10 minutes
7. Providing students with 15 minutes of independent reading and 5 minutes to complete a log following each book talk and read-aloud
8. Selecting three to five boys who will represent a sub-sample of students with negative reading attitudes and low reading self-efficacy and agreeing to release these boys for one-one-one interviews at two points in the study: during the first week and the last week of the study

Risks and/or Discomforts

It is unlikely that the interview questions will make you feel uncomfortable, but you may decline to answer an interview item if you choose. Participation in this research will mean a loss of your confidentiality, but every attempt will be made to keep your individual responses confidential. Your identity will not be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study.

Benefits

There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study; however, you may gain a deeper understanding of how teacher book talks and read-alouds affect students' book choices and independent reading behaviors. You also may learn how recommending and reading aloud books of high interest to reluctant boy readers might affect their reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading.

Costs

There will be no cost to you for participating in this study.

Payment/Reimbursement

No monetary reimbursement will be given to your for participating in the study; however, all reading materials purchased for the book talks, read-alouds, and independent reading will be yours to keep. A token gift of one favorite book will be given to each of the sub-sample of boys from your classroom who completes the study.

Questions

If you have questions or comments about the study, first contact the researcher, Cheryl Wozniak by calling _____. If for some reason you do not wish to do so, you may contact the IRBPHS, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research studies. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 or by writing to the IRBPHS, School of Education Building, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

Consent

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you agree to participate, please keep one copy of this document for your records and sign and return one copy to the researcher.

Thank you,
Cheryl Wozniak
Doctoral Student, University of San Francisco

TEACHER CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM

_____ I agree to participate in this study.

_____ I do not agree to participate in this study.

_____
Name   Title/Position

_____
Teacher's Signature   Date

STUDENT AND PARENTAL CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Purpose and Background
Cheryl Wozniak, a doctoral candidate at the University of San Francisco, is conducting a study on the effect of teacher book talks and read-alouds on students' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. Your child is being asked to participate because he or she is a student in one of the classrooms where the study is taking place.

Procedures
The procedures for the study will take place as part of the regular language arts instructional period. If you agree to allow your child to be in this study, you are giving consent for the following pieces of data to be included in the researcher's data collection:

1. Your child's results on the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey
2. Your child's results on the Reader Self-Perception Scale
3. Your child's results on the Reading Interest Inventory
4. Your child's amount of reading as recorded on a weekly reading log

Risks and/or Discomforts
It is unlikely that any item on any of the surveys will make your child feel uncomfortable, but your child may decline to answer a survey item if he or she chooses. Participation in this research may mean a loss of your child's confidentiality, but every attempt will be made to keep your child's individual results confidential. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study.

Benefits
There is no direct benefit to you or your child for participating in this study; however, your child may benefit from the teacher gaining a better understanding of how teacher book talks and read-alouds may influence students' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading.

Costs
There will be no cost to you or your child for participating in this study.

Payment/Reimbursement
Neither you or your child will be paid to participate in this study.

Questions
If you have questions or comments about this study, first contact the classroom teacher or the researcher, Cheryl Wozniak by calling _____. If for some reason you do not wish to do so, you may contact the IRBPHS, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research studies. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 or by

writing to the IRBPHS, School of Education Building, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

Consent
Participation in this research is voluntary. Although your child will be expected to participate in the classroom activities described above, allowing your child's survey and reading log results to be included in the researcher's data collection is voluntary.

If you agree to allow your child to participate, please keep one copy for your records and sign one copy and return it with your child as soon as possible.

Thank you,
Cheryl Wozniak
Doctoral Student, University of San Francisco

STUDENT CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

CONSENT FORM

_____ I agree to participate in this study.

_____ I do not agree to participate in this study.

_____
Student's Signature   Date

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

CONSENT FORM

_____ I agree to allow my child to participate in this study.

_____ I do not agree to allow my child to participate in this study.

_____
Parent's Signature   Dat

STUDENT AND PARENTAL CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Purpose and Background
Cheryl Wozniak, a doctoral candidate at the University of San Francisco, is conducting a study on the effect of teacher book talks and read-alouds on students' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. Your child is being asked to participate because he or she is a student in one of the classrooms where the study is taking place.

Procedures
A small group of students will be interviewed one-on-one in the first and last weeks of the research study. The interview procedures are as follows:

1. Your child will be interviewed by the researcher in a quiet place on school grounds at two different points in the study. The first interview will be conducted in the first week of the study. The final interview will be conducted during the final week of the study, 7 weeks later.
2. Each interview will last approximately 30 minutes.
3. Your child's responses will be audio-recorded and transcribed after the interviews are completed. The audio recordings will be destroyed after the transcription is complete.
4. Every attempt will be made to conduct the interviews at a time that least impacts your child's learning.

Risks and/or Discomforts
It is unlikely that any interview question will make your child feel uncomfortable, but your child may decline to answer a question if he or she chooses. Participation in this research may mean a loss of your child's confidentiality, but every attempt will be made to keep your child's individual results confidential. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study.

Benefits
There is no direct benefit to you or your child for participating in this study; however, your child may benefit from the teacher gaining a better understanding of how teacher book talks and read-alouds may influence students' reading attitudes, reading self-efficacy, and amount of reading. In addition, your child will be able to select one book from the books purchased for the study as a token of gratitude for participating.

Costs
There will be no cost to you or your child for participating in this study.

Payment/Reimbursement
Neither you or your child will be paid to participate in this study.

Questions
If you have questions or comments about this study, first contact the classroom teacher or the researcher, Cheryl Wozniak by calling _____. If for some reason you do not wish to do so, you may contact the IRBPHS, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research studies. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 or by writing to the IRBPHS, School of Education Building, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1080.

Consent
Participation in this research is voluntary. Allowing your child's interview data to be included in the researcher's data collection is voluntary.

If you agree to allow your child to participate, please keep one copy for your records and sign one copy and return it with your child as soon as possible.

Thank you,
Cheryl Wozniak
Doctoral Student, University of San Francisco

STUDENT CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

_____ I agree to be interviewed for this study.

_____ I do not agree to be interviewed for this study.

Student's Signature   Date

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

_____ I agree to allow my child to be interviewed for this study.

_____ I do not agree to allow my child to be interviewed for this study.

Parent's Signature   Date

Appendix B

Reading Interest Inventory

Reading Interest Inventory

PART 1

Directions: Circle yes or no, or write a brief answer to the following questions.

1. When you were little, did you enjoy having someone read aloud to you?   YES   NO

2. Do you enjoy having your teacher read aloud to you?   YES   NO

3. Do you like to read?   YES   NO   Explain why or why not.

4. What are your favorite things to read? Name all the types of reading you can think of.

5. On average, how much time do you spend reading each day?

6. About how many books do you own? _____ Name some titles.

7. What are some books or reading materials you would like to own?

8. Do you visit the school library?   YES   NO

9. If you visit the school library, write the reasons why you like to spend time there.

10. Do you check out reading materials from your classroom library?

   YES   NO

   Explain why you do or do not check out reading materials.

11.Do you have a hobby?   YES   NO

12.Do you read anything related to your hobby?   YES   NO
   If yes, what do you read?

13. Who are your some of your favorite authors? What books of theirs did you like
    reading?

PART 2
Directions: Below is a list of kinds of reading material that some students like to read. For each genre, circle the answer that best fits you as a reader. If you answer yes, name any titles you recommend that other students read in the space below.

DO YOU LIKE READING...

realistic fiction	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
magazines	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
comic books	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
humor	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
informational books	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
video gaming books	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
graphic novels	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is

poetry	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
science fiction	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
mysteries	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
action/adventure	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
historical fiction	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
biographies	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
sports	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
online materials	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
newspaper	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is

fantasy	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
award-winning books	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
picture books	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is

List any other types of reading materials on the lines below.

_____	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
_____	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is
_____	Yes	No	Never tried it	Not sure what it is

Appendix C

Read-Aloud Libraries

Text Set for Teacher and Student Interviews
(First Read-Aloud Library)

1. *Because of Winn Dixie*- Kate DiCamillo (realistic fiction)

2. *Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key*- Jack Gantos (realistic fiction)

3. *Dear America*- Civil War diaries (historical fiction)

4. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* (historical fiction)

5. *Nancy Drew: The Secret of the Old Clock* (mystery)

6. *Hardy Boys: The Tower Treasure* (mystery)

7. *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark- Alvin Schwartz* (scary/horror)

8. *Goosebumps: Piano Lessons Can Be Murder*- R. L. Stein (scary/horror)

9. *National Geographic Kids* (magazine)

10. *Fantasy Baseball 2010 Draft Guide* (magazine)

11. *Out from Boneville*- Jeff Smith (graphic novel)

12. *Marvel Adventures- The Avengers: Heroes Assembled*- (graphic novel)

13. *Kyuma!*- Shunshin Maeda (shonen manga)

14. *Ultra Maniac*- Wataru Yoshimzumi (shojo manga)

15. *Eye Witness: Vietnam War* (informational)

16. *Inventions*- (informational)

17. *Guiness World Records 2010: Gamer's Edition* (video-gaming book)

18. *The Adventures of Captain Underpants*- Dav Pilkey (humor)

19. T*he Really Stupid Joke Book* (joke book/humor)

20. *Where the Sidewalk Ends*- Shel Silverstein (humorous poetry)

21. *Animorphs*- (science fiction)

22. *Star Wars the Clone Wars: Grievous Attacks* (science fiction)

23. *Archie Marries Betty: "The Wedding"* (full-length comic book)

24. *Marvel Adventures Super Heroes*- (full-length comic book)

25. *Stormbreaker*- Anthony Horowitz (action/adventure)

26. *Island- Book One: Shipwrec*k- Gordon Korman (action/adventure)

27. *Princess Diana*- Joanne Mattern (biography)

28. *Jeff Corwin: A Wild Life*- Joanne Mattern (biography)

29. *Everything Kids' Soccer Book* (sports)

30. *Two-Minute Drill*- Mike Lupica (sports)

31. *Superman: The Dailies 1940-1941* (comic strips)

32. *Dennis the Menace*- (single panel comics)

33. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*- C. S. Lewis (fantasy)

34. *Warriors- Into the Wild*- Erin Hunter (fantasy)

35. *Bridge to Terabithia*- Katherine Paterson (award-winning book)

36. *Maniac Magee*- Jerry Spinelli (award-winning book)

37. *Moonpowder*- John Rocco (picture book)

38. *Long Shot*- Chris Paul (picture book)

39. San Francisco Chronicle Sunday paper

40. Local weekday newspaper

Week 1: Realistic Fiction

41. *A Long Way from Chicago*- Richard Peck

42. *Belle Pratter's Boy*- Ruth White

43. *Do the Funky Pickle*- Jerry Spinelli

44. *Double Fudg*e- Judy Blume

45. Esperanza Rising- Pamela Munoz Ryan

46. *Flipped*- Wendelin Van Draanen

47. *Ginger Pye*- Eleanor Estes

48. *Guy Tim*e- Sarah Weeks

49. *Harriet the Spy*- Louise Fitzbugh

50. *Hatchet*- Gary Paulsen

51. *Hoot*- Carl Hiaasen

52. *I Hadn't Meant to Tell You This*- Jacqueline Woodson

53. *Locomotion*- Jacqueline Woodson

54. *Lyddie*- Katherine Patterson

55. *Picklemania*- Jerry Spinelli

56. *Rascal*- Sterling North

57. *Shiloh*- Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

58. *Sounder*- William Armstrong

59. *Stargirl*- Jerry Spinelli

60. *Strider*- Beverly Cleary

61. *The Great Gilly Hopkins*- Katherine Patterson

62. *The Report Card*- Andrew Clements

63. *The River*- Gary Paulsen

64. *The Secret School*- Avi

65. *The View from Saturday*- E. L. Konigsburg

66. *There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom*- Louis Sachaar

67. *Walk Two Moons*- Sharon Creech

68. *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*- Kimberly Willis Holt

69. *Who Ran My Underwear Up the Flagpole*?- Jerry Spinelli
70. *Wringer*- Jerry Spinelli

Week 2: Graphica

71. *A House Divided*- Marshall Poe

72. *Amelia Rules: Superheroes*- Jimmy Gownley

73. *Amulet Book One: The Stonekeeper*- Kazu Kibuishi

74. *Batman the Dailies: 1943-1946*

75. *Bone 2: The Great Cow Race*- Jeff Smith

76. *Bone 3: Eyes of the Storm*- Jeff Smith

77. *Calvin and Hobbes: Something Under the Bed is Drooling*- Bill Watterson

78. *Calvin and Hobbes: The Revenge of the Baby-Sat* - Bill Watterson

79. *Captain Underpants & the Wrath of the Wicked Wedgie Woman*- Dav Pilkey

80. *Captain Underpants & the Preposterous Plight of the Purple Potty People*- Dav Pilkey

81. *Casper the Friendly Ghost*

82. *Chickenhare: The House of Klaus*- Chris Grine

83. *Copper*- Kazu Kibuishi

84. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid #1*- Jeff Kinney

85. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid #2: Rodrick Rules*- Jeff Kinney

86. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid #3: The Last Storm*- Jeff Kinney

87. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid #4: Dog Days*- Jeff Kinney

88. *Leave It to Pet: The Misadventures of a Recycled Super Robot Vol 1*- Kenji Sonishi

89. *Leave It to Pet: The Misadventures of a Recycled Super Robot Vol 2*- Kenji Sonishi

90. *Little Rock Nine*- Marshall Poe

91. *Looney Tunes #182*

92. *Male Order Ninja*- Joshua Elder

93. *Queen Bee*- Chynna Clugston

94. *Satchel Paige: Striking Out Jim Crow*- James Sturm & Rich Tommaso

95. *Spider Girl: Season of the Serpent*- Don DeFalco & Ron Frenz

96. *Sons of Liberty*- Marshall Poe

97. *Spiderman #58*

98. *Superman for All Seasons*- Jeff Loeb & Tim Sale

99. *The Wizard's Tale*- Kurt Busiek

100. *Veronica (Archie Comics #198)*

Week 3: Historical Fiction

101. *A Boy at War*- Harry Mazer

102. *A Boy No More*- Harry Mazer

103. *Al Capone Does My Shirts*- Gennifer Choldenko

104. *Amelia's War*- Ann Rinaldi

105. *American Girl: Meet Rebecca*- Jacqueline Dembar Greene

106. *Animals Christopher Columbus Saw*- Sandra Markle

107. *Bud, Not Buddy*- Christopher Paul Curtis

108. *Children of the Fire*- Harriett Gillem Robinet

109. *Dear America: The Journal of Augustus Pelletier, The Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804*- Kathryn Lasky

110. *Echohawk*- Lynda Durrant

111. *Freedom's Fire*- J. P. Trent

112. *My Friend the Enemy*- J. B. Cheaney

113. *Number the Stars*- Lois Lowry

114. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*- Mildred D. Taylor

115. *Soldier's Heart*- Gary Paulsen

116. *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*- Deborah Hopkinson and James Ransome

117. *The Art of Keeping Cool*- Janet Taylor Lisle

118. *The Coffin Quilt*- Ann Rinaldi

119. *The Door in the Wall*- Margauerite De Angeli

120. *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg*- Rodman Philbrick

121. *The Patchwork Path: A Quilt Map to Freedom*- Bettye Stroud and Erin Susanne
Bennett

122. *The Sign of the Beaver*- Elizabeth George Speare

123. *The Slave Dancer*- Paula Fox

124. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*- Christopher Paul Curtis

125. *The Whipping Boy*- Sid Fleischman

126. *Truth is a Bright Star: A Hopi Adventure*- Joan Price

127. *Under the Quilt of Night*- Deborah Hopkinson and James Ransome

128. *Uprising- Margaret Peterson Haddix*

129. *WeedFlower*- Cynthia Kadohata

130. *When the Sergeant Came Marching Home*- Don Lemna

Week 4: Information and Sports

131. *100 Most Dangerous Things On The Planet*- Anna Claybourne

132. *100 Most Disgusting Things On The Planet*- Anna Claybourne

133. *100 Things Dodgers Fans Should Know and Do Before They Die*- Jon Wiesman

134. *2010 Almanac for Kids*- Scholastic

135. *America at War: Civil War*- John Perritano

136. *America at War: Vietnam War*- John Perritano

137. *Book of World Records 2010*- Jennifer Corr Morse

138. *Cool Stuff and How it Works*- Chris Woodford, Ben Morgan, Luke Collins, and
Kevin Jones

139. *DK Experience: Flight*- Richard Platt

140. *Earthquakes & Volcanoes*- Anne Rooney

141. *Fighting Machines*- Bill Gunston, John Guy, Ian MacKenzie

142. *Football Hero*- Tim Green

143. Football Stars- Virginia Buckman

144. Game Breakers- James Gigliotti

145. Guinness World Records 2010: Gamer's Edition

146. Guinness World Records: Extreme Animals!- Kris Hirschmann & Ryan Herndon

147. Hot Jobs In Video Games- Joe Funk

148. National Geographic Kids Almanac 2010

149. Shh! We're Writing the Constitution- Jean Fritz

150. Soccer Stars- Therese Shea

151. Super Bowl Fireworks- James Buckley, Jr.

152. The Big Book of World War II- Melissa Wagner and Dan Bryant

153. Ultimate Guide to Football- James Buckley, Jr.

154. Video Game Master- Terry Munson

155. Video Game Secrets- Terry Munson

156. What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?- Jean Fritz

157. Will You Sign Here, John Hancock?- Jean Fritz

158. World Picture Atlas- Holly Wallace

159. Year in Sports 2010- Scholastic

160. Zany Miscillany: A Mixed-Up Encyclopedia of Fun Facts- Tom Jackson

Week 5: Fantasy

161. Charlotte's Web- E. B. White

162. Ella Enchanted- Gail Carson Levine

163. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone- J. K. Rowling

164. Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets- J. K. Rowling

165. Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban- J. K. Rowling

166. Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire- J. K. Rowling

167. Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix- J. K. Rowling

168. Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince- J. K. Rowling

169. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows- J. K. Rowling*

170. *Igraine the Brave- Cornelia Funke*

171. *Inkdeath- Cornelia Funke*

172. *Inkheart- Cornelia Funke*

173. *Inkspell- Cornelia Funke*

174. *Matilda- Roald Dahl*

175. *No Place for Magic- E. D. Baker*

176. *Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Lightning Thief- Rick Riordan*

177. *Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Sea of Monsters- Rick Riordan*

178. *Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Titan's Curse- Rick Riordan*

179. *Stuart Little- E. B. White*

180. *The Dragon Princess- E. D. Baker*

181. *The Girl Who Could Fly-* Victoria Forester

182. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe- C. S. Lewis*

183. *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane- Kate DiCamillo*

184. *The Salamander Spell- E. D. Baker*

185. *The Spiderwick Chronicles: The Completely Fantastical Edition-* Tony DiTerlizzi &
     Holly Black

186. *The Tale of Despereaux- Kate DiCamillo*

187. *The Tiger Rising- Kate DiCamillo*

188. *The Trumpet of the Swans- E. B. White*

189. *Things Not Seen- Andrew Clements*

190. *Tuck Everlasting- Natalie Babbitt*

Week 6: Scary/Horror/Mystery

191. *America's Most Haunted: True Scary Places-* Allan Zullo

192. *America's Most Haunted: True Scary Creatures-* Allan Zullo

193. *Beware! R. L. Stine Picks His Favorite Scary Stories-* R. L. Stine

194. *Bites: Scary Stories to Sink Your Teeth Into-* compiled by Lois Metzger

195. *Bones: Terrifying Tales to Haunt Your Dreams*- compiled by Lois Metzger

196. *Deep and Dark and Dangerous*- Mary Downing Hahn

197. *Encyclopedia Brown Cracks the Case*- Donald J. Sobol

198. *Goosebumps: How I Got My Shrunken Head*- R. L. Stine

199. *Goosebumps: Say Cheese and Die!*- R. L. Stine

200. *Goosebumps: The Curse of the Mummy's Tomb*- R. L. Stine

201. *More Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*- retold by Alvin Schwartz

202. *New Moon*- Stephenie Meyer

203. *Pretty Freakin' Scary: You Smell Dead*- Chris P. Flesh

204. *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*- American Folklore retold by Alvin Schwartz

205. *Scary Stories: 3 More Tales to Chill Your Bones*- retold by Alvin Schwartz

206. *Skeleton Creek*- Patrick Carman

207. *The 39 Clues: Book One, The Maze of Bones*- Rick Riordan

208. *The 39 Clues: Book Two, One False Note*- Gordon Korman

209. *The 39 Clues: Book Three, The Sword Thief*- Peter Lerangis

210. *The 39 Clues: Book Four, Beyond the Grave*- Jude Watson

211. *The 39 Clues: Book Five, The Black Circle*- Patrick Carman

212. *The 39 Clues: Book Six, In Too Deep*- Jude Watson

213. *The Knavehearts Curse: A Vampire Island Story*- Adele Griffin

214. *The Monsters of Morley Manor*- Bruce Coville

215. *The Old Willis Place*- Mary Downing Hahn

216. *The Robe of Skulls*- Vivian French

217. *Twilight*- Stephenie Meyer

218. *Two Minute Mysteries*- Donald J. Sobol

219. *Vampire Island*- Adele Griffin

220. *Wait Till Helen Comes*- Mary Downing Hahn

Appendix D

Weekly Reading Log

Reading Log

Date	Title	Author	# of min	# of pgs	Library source

Read-aloud library (RL), Classroom library (CL), School library (SL), Public library (PL), Home library (HL), Friend's library (FL), Other library (OL)

Appendix E

Sample Teacher Book Talk and Interactive Read-Aloud

Cinderella Book Talks
(Traditional Texts)

Book 1: *Cinderella*

One of the most popular fairy tales ever written is the story of Cinderella, a young maiden who became the slave of her two wicked stepsisters. Every day her stepsisters commanded of Cinderella that she sweep and scrub the floors and wait on them hand and foot. Cinderella was so kind and generous that she did as she was told and never complained.

One day, the stepsisters are invited to attend a fancy ball that the King is throwing for his son, the Prince. Of course the two stepsisters plan to attend, but they laugh at the thought of Cinderella going to the ball.

On the night of the ball, Cinderella's godmother comes to visit Cinderella and grants Cinderella her wish of going to the ball.

No matter how many times I have heard or read the Cinderella story, I still enjoy it. What is interesting in this book is that there is no glass slipper! You might wonder: how can this be a Cinderella story without the glass slipper?

You'll have to read this version of *Cinderella* written and illustrated by Paul Galdone to find out whether or not Cinderella hooks up with the Prince and how Paul Galdone took the traditional version of Cinderella and made it his own.

What you might not know about the story of Cinderella is that Cinderella's character is not unique to American culture. There are many versions of the Cinderella fairy tale told in cultures all over the world.

Book 2: *The Korean Cinderella*

The next book I'm going to talk with you about is called *The Korean Cinderella*. It was written by Shirley Climo and illustrated by Ruth Heller.

Th story begins... in the land of Korea, where magical creatures were as common as cabbages, there lived a child named Pear Blossom. Pear Blossom was as lovely as the pear tree planted in celebration of her birth. One winter morning, when the branches on the pear tree were still bare sticks, Pear Blossom's mother died.

There are similarities to the Cinderella story we know, but because the setting of the story is in a different country, the details of the story are different. For example, in *The Korean Cinderella*, instead of a fairy godmother coming to help the young go to a

royal ball, various animals help Pear Blossom finish her chores, and she is able to go to the village festival.

One of the things I love about this book are the illustrations. They are so bright and ornamental. When I opened the book and saw the pictures, it made me think that in Korea these bright colors are a part of their culture. I noticed that in the back of the book the illustrator wrote a note explaining that the illustrations of this book were inspired by patterns painted on the eaves of Korean temples and that these patterns are a symbol of good luck and protection.

Today during independent reading you might like to read this version of Cinderella and learn more about what the author and illustrator have to say about their work.

Book 3: *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*

The last book I'd like to share with you today is called *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*. This is an African tale that was written and illustrated by John Steptoe in 1987.

Mufaro is the father of two lovely daughters. Manyara is cruel and self-centered, while Nyasha is sweet and kind. The king sends a notice to Mufaro that his daughters should come to see him so that he can choose one of them to be his wife.

One of the daughters, Manyara, sneaks out of the village early so that she might be the first to appear before the king. Along the way Manyara meets a young child who is begging for help, but Manyara ignores the child and keeps on going.

Nyasha, on the other hand, waits and goes with the wedding party as planned, and when she meets the young child along the way she gives him food.

At first, it might not be evident that *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* is a Cinderella story, but if you read this book you'll start to see many similar characteristics between Nyasha, Pear Blossom, and Cinderella.

So what makes a story a Cinderella story? Generally speaking, the main character of all the Cinderella story is usually a girl who is treated badly by someone in her family. Cinderella's character is always a kind and good person, and her goodness is rewarded by someone who has magical powers. And in the end, she is loved for all of her good qualities.

As I said when I started, I never get tired of hearing the story of Cinderella. If this describes, you are welcome to read any of these Cinderella books today during independent reading. Next week you'll have a chance to read more Cinderella books

from other cultures. I hope those of you who select one will enjoy the reading and feel free to talk with someone else who is reading a Cinderella story and compare how your stories are alike and what details are different. Happy reading!

(846 words)

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters
Interactive Read-Aloud (Traditional Text)

I'm going to read aloud to you the beginning of *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* and give you a chance to talk to a partner about how this book is like the Cinderella story you know and how it's different. You'll have about one minute to talk to each other, and you'll know it's time to stop talking to your partner when you hear me repeat the last line that I just read. Before we begin, will you make sure you know who your partner will be and then decide who is partner A and who is partner B.

Read pages 1-3. Stop and say to the students:

Partner A, you'll share first. Turn and talk to your partner about what in the story so far reminds you of the traditional Cinderella story. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read pages 4-5. Stop and say to the students:

This time Partner B will talk first. Turn and talk with your partner about the new character that just entered the story--the small garden snake. Who does the character of the garden snake remind you of from the American culture's Cinderella story? Turn and talk.   (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read pages 6-7. Stop and say to the students:

Partner A, start the conversation and discuss why it is that you think Manyara suddenly spoke so sweetly to her father and offered to be the one who would be separated from her family? Turn and talk.   (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read the next page and stop and say to the students:

To find out what happens next and how the rest of the story is like the other Cinderella stories you know about, you can read *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* during independent reading.

Appendix F

Teacher Book Talks and Interactive Read-Alouds

Realistic Fiction Book Talks
(Traditional Texts)

Book 1: *Shiloh*

Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor is the story of 11-year old Marty Preston and his struggle between doing what is right in his heart and what is right by the law.

The story takes place in the hills of West Virginia in a small town near Friendly, but it turns out that not everyone in the town is a friendly neighbor. One afternoon while Marty is out on his own, he spots a beagle dog who is also out wandering. Marty suspects that the dog has run away because it has been abused by its owner. When Marty's parents find out that Marty is harboring the dog, they insist he take it back. Marty has always listened to his parents and done what he's been told, but Marty believes he is the only one that can rescue the dog from his cruel owner, Judd Travers. The problem is that Judd is the Preston's neighbor, and in the town where Marty is growing up, neighbors look out for each other, not steal from one another.

This realistic fiction book won the Newbery Medal in 1992, which means it was voted by the members of the American Library Association to be the best children's book written the previous year. The first Newbery Medal was awarded in 1922 and was the first children's book award created. Today there are many other children's book awards, but the Newbery Medal winners and the Newbery Honor winners, which are the runners up, remains one of the most distinguished honors a children's author could receive.

To find out whether or not Marty returns the dog as he's been told and to decide for yourself whether this book is deserving of such a prestigious award, you can check out *Shiloh* from the read-aloud library.

Book 2: *Hoot*

The next book I'm going to talk with you about is *Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen, and it was one of 5 books given the Newbery Honor in 2003. In 2006, Hoot was made into a full-length movie. This has become a trend where popular children's books have been into major motion pictures.

Hoot is a realistic fiction book but you might also call it a mystery. Here's why. On the one hand, this book is the typical story of the new kid who comes to town and gets picked on by the school bully. Roy Eberhardt, just moved to a new town--the tenth town that he can remember living in--and on his way riding the school bus to Trace Middle School--the sixth school he has attended over the years--gets his face shoved against the window by Dana Matherson.

But on the other hand, this books is also the story of a police officer, Office David Delinko, whose job it is to keep a watch on a vacant lot that continues to be vandalized at night. The empty lot is where the next Mother Paula's All-American Pancake House is going to be built, but because of the nightly pranks that are being pulled, the construction job is far behind schedule.

For quite a while the reader wonders how these stories are connected, and, yet, deep down you know they have to be in some way. Page after page you read to figure out how the two story lines fit together, which is one mystery, and you try to figure out who is vandalizing the vacant lot, a second mystery. But what makes this book realistic fiction is the every day events that Roy faces, which are much like the realities many new kids and kids who are quiet and keep to themselves encounter every day at school.

Today during independent reading you might decide to pick up Hoot and give it a try to see if you can solve the mystery, but remember that if you have already seen the movie and know how it ends, don't give it away!

Book 3: *Locomotion*

The last book I'd like to share with you today is called *Locomotion* by Jacqueline Woodson.

Ever since his parents died, eleven year-old Lonnie Motion has had to adjust to many changes in his life: living with his new foster mother, going to a new school, and dealing with being separated from his little sister Lili, who lives with her new mother.

When Lonnie first went to live with Miss Edna, his new foster mother, he was more like himself, but Miss Edna doesn't like the noise and energy Lonnie brings to their small apartment, and is constantly telling him, "Hush, Lonnie." So day by day, Lonnie gets quieter and quieter.

At school, Lonnie keeps to himself, too. The only comfort he finds is when his teacher, Ms. Marcus, helps Lonnie realize that one way he can deal with his feelings of the past is to write about them. And so he does. In fact, what I love most about this book is that Lonnie's story is told entirely through free-verse poetry. If you're looking for a great story that is a quick read, I recommend you give Locotion a try.

Today, during independent reading, you are welcome to try out one of three books I recommended, any of the other new realistic fiction titles that Mrs. Wozniak added to the read-aloud library, any of the 40 books from the original read-aloud library, or any other book of your choice.

Happy reading!   (885 words)

Realistic Fiction Book Talks

Book 1: *Shiloh*

• Introduce the title, author, and a summary sentence about the book

• Introduce the main character, setting, and hint at the problem

• Introduce the genre and the Newbery Medal and Honor books

• Closing- recommend reading *Shiloh* or any other book of choice

Book 2: *Hoot*

• Introduce the title and author

• Reference the movie production of Hoot

• Introduce the genre and explain why it's also like a mystery

• Introduce the setting and the opening scene, which includes a hint at the problem

• Introduce the setting and hint at the problem of the second story--Officer Delinko and Curly--and mention that they must be connected

• Closing- recommend reading *Hoot* or any other book of choice

Book 3: *Locomotion*

• Introduce the title and author

• Introduce the main character, setting, and hint at the problem

• Introduce the genre and explain that it's written in free-verse poetry

• Closing- recommend reading *Locomotion* or any other book of choice

Today, during independent reading, you are welcome to try out one of three books I recommended, any of the other new realistic fiction titles that Mrs. Wozniak added to the read-aloud library, any of the 40 books from the original read-aloud library, or any other book of your choice.

Happy reading!

Shiloh
Interactive Read-Aloud

I'm going to read aloud to you the first few pages of *Shiloh* and give you a chance to talk to a partner about your predictions and your inferences. Remember that good predictions are made when the reader makes a guess about what will happen next in the story based on what is happening in the text. Readers make good inferences when they use their personal experience or prior knowledge combined with clues from the story to understand the message behind what the author has written. You'll have a few opportunities today and during future read-alouds to practice making predictions and inferences, so listen carefully.

You'll have about one minute to talk to each other, and you'll know it's time to stop talking to your partner when you hear me repeat the last line that I just read. Before we begin, will you make sure you know who your partner will be and then decide who is partner A and who is partner B? Each time I stop reading, I'll let you know whose turn it is to start. After that partner is finished sharing, switch and allow the other partner to share. Any questions?

Read pages 11-12 and stop after the line: "Which is when I leave the table" and say:

Partner A, you'll share first. Turn and tell your partner what you infer from Marty's behavior about the way he feels about eating animals. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read pages 12-13. Stop after the line "River to one side, trees to the other-- sometimes a house or two" and say to the students:

This time Partner B will talk first. From the way Marty describes his surroundings, what do you infer about Marty's feelings toward where he lives and what his life is like? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read pages 13-14. After the line, "It's okay, boy," I say, coming a little closer, but still he backs off," stop and say to the students:

Partner A, make a prediction about what will happen next. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read the next paragraph, then stop and say to the students:

From Marty's behavior, I infer that Marty really is a caring boy and he has a strong sensitivity for animals. I also predict that Marty will find a way to reach the dog and get

the dog to come home with him. To find out whether my inference and prediction are right, you can check out *Shiloh* from our read-aloud library.

Happy reading!

Hoot
Interactive Read-Aloud

Today I'm going to read aloud to you the first few pages of *Hoot,* and, just as I did with *Shiloh,* I am going to give you a chance to talk to a partner about your predictions and your inferences. Remember that good predictions are made when the reader makes a guess about what will happen next in the story based on what is happening in the text. Good inferences happen when readers use their personal experience or prior knowledge combined with clues from the story to understand the message behind what the author has written.

You'll have the same partners as you had with *Shiloh* and you should already know who is partner A and who is partner B. (Allow more time if someone was absent.) Remember that your signal to stop talking will be that I'll reread the last line.

Read pages 1-2 and stop after the line: "Roy was sure that the barefoot boy...but that didn't happen... because" and say:

Partner B, you'll share first today. What do you predict happens next with the barefoot boy and with Roy? Share as many details as you can about your prediction. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read pages 2-3. Stop after the line "For a moment he wondered if he'd really seen it himself" and say to the students:

This time Partner A will talk first. From the scene on the bus, what can you infer about Dana Matherson's character? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read pages 3-5. After the line, "That's where it'll cost some serious bucks" stop and say to the students:

Partner B, from what I've read so far from the scene at the vacant lot, what can you infer about Curly and Officer Delinko's characters? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read the next line: Officer Delinko took off his cap and scratched his head, "Let me think on this," he said. Then say to the students:

In just 6 pages, the author introduces the reader to two different sets of characters who are encountering two completely different types of problems. I predict that even though it may seem strange that these two sets of characters are connected in some way. To find out how they are related, you will have to read *Hoot* by Carl Hiassen.

Happy reading!

Graphica Book Talks
(Alternate Texts)

This week, the booktalks and the new read-aloud books are graphica books. Graphica are books that combine words and pictures to tell a story. Graphic novels, comic books, cartoons, single panel comics, and comic strips are all examples of graphica. The three books I'll be talking with you about today are all graphic novels.

Book 1: *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*

The series of books called *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney is one of the most popular series of books being read by kids today. But did you know that before *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* was published in book form in April, 2007 that it was originally an online comic strip published on Funbrain.com. From 2004-2007 Jeff Kinney published a series of online comics before turning them into the first book. Ten months later in 2008 *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules* was published. The next two books were published in 2009: *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Last Straw* and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days*. The final book of the series, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: My Last Year*, is scheduled to come out this year!

For those of you who have not yet read one of these graphic novels, they are the story of Greg Heffley, his best friend, Rowley, and their many adventures in middle school. In book one, for example, an old piece of cheese was left lying on the blacktop of the playground for months and no one will go near it until one day Darren Walsh touches it and chases everyone around giving them the Cheese Touch, sort of like giving everyone cooties.

Book two is the story of Greg and his older brother, Rodrick, and what happens with the school talent show. The Last Straw is about Greg, his father, and Greg's adventures with the soccer team. Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days is about Greg's summer vacation. And book five is the story of Greg's final year in middle school.

Remember when I talked about *Hoot* and the trend for Hollywood to make movies about best-selling books? Yep, you guessed it! The movie, Diary of a Wimpy Kid, comes to theaters March 19. And the book, Wimpy Kid Movie Diary, which is a book about the making of the movie, comes out March 16. If you haven't read the books yet, I highly recommend you give one of them a try before you head off to the movie theaters to see it on the big screen.

Book 2: *Amulet*

The next book I'm going to talk with you about is the graphic novel *Amulet: The Stonekeeper* by Kazu Kibuishi. This is a fantasy story told in words and pictures. After a

family tragedy, Emily and Navin move with their mother to the home of her deceased great-grandfather, but the strange house proves to be dangerous. Before long, a sinister creature lures the kids´ mom through a door in the basement. Em and Navin, desperate not to lose her, follow her into an underground world inhabited by demons, robots, and talking animals. Eventually, they enlist the help of a small mechanical rabbit named Miskit. Together with Miskit, they face the most terrifying monster of all, and Em and Navin risk their own lives to the to save the one they love.

This graphic novel is very different from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. It has *some* humorous moments, but overall it is filled with drama and suspense. It all has fewer words. Instead of reading about the characters' emotions, often the reader must read the facial expressions of the characters which tell a great deal about the story line. In fact, the illustrations are one of the things I love most about this book. (Open the book to the page marked). Just look at the way the author captures Em and Navin's emotions. When I look at their faces, I see fear, bewilderment, surprise, curiosity, and so much more.

Today during independent reading you might decide to read Amulet: Book One: The Stonekeeper to find out whether Em and Navin survive their encounter with the monster and to see what it's like to read the pictures in a graphic novel fantasy story.

Book 3: *Superman for All Seasons*

The last book I'd like to share with you today is called *Superman for All Seasons* by Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale. Well, if ever there was a fictional character that didn't need an introduction, it would be Superman! Superman, the comic book hero, first appeared in Action Comics #1 in June, 1938. Superman was the first comic book character with superpowers ever to be created.

Superman for all Seasons is the story of Clark Kent as he first comes to realize he has super powers. The book is divided into four sections, one for each season: Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter. The first story, Spring, is narrated from the point of view of Clark's pa, who tells the story of how one night, years ago, a terrible whistling noise came out of the sky and when he and his wife, Martha, drove to the field to see where the noise was coming from, they discovered a rocket ship. And inside was a baby boy. Ma and Pa Kent took the baby home, named him Clark, and raised him as their own. But when Clark was in high school, he started to realize he was not like other boys. He had powers that others did not have--including the power to fly.

Each of the following chapters is narrated from a different character's point of view. Summer is narrated by Lois Lane. Fall is narrated by Lex Luthor. And Winter is narrated by Lana Lang, Clark's childhood sweetheart.

If you've ever wondered how the Superman stories originated or have wanted to read a superhero story but never have, try out this book or any of the other Superhero books in the graphica collection during independent reading. You can also continue to read any of the realistic fiction books that Mrs. Wozniak added to the read-aloud library, any of the 40 books
from the original read-aloud library, or any other book of your choice.

Happy reading! (1,051 words)

Graphica Book Talks

Book 1: *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*

• Introduce the title, author, and a summary sentence about the book

• Introduce the main character, setting, and hint at the problem

• Introduce the genre and the Newbery Medal and Honor books

• Closing- recommend reading *Shiloh* or any other book of choice

Book 2: *Amulet*

• Introduce the title and author

• Reference the movie production of Hoot

• Introduce the genre and explain why it's also like a mystery

• Introduce the setting and the opening scene, which includes a hint at the problem

• Introduce the setting and hint at the problem of the second story--Officer Delinko and Curly--and mention that they must be connected

• Closing- recommend reading *Hoot* or any other book of choice

Book 3: *Superman for All Seasons*

• Introduce the title and author

• Introduce the main character, setting, and hint at the problem

• Introduce the genre and explain that it's written in free-verse poetry

• Closing- recommend reading *Locomotion* or any other book of choice

Today, during independent reading, you are welcome to try out one of three books I recommended, any of the other new realistic fiction titles that Mrs. Wozniak added to the read-aloud library, any of the 40 books from the original read-aloud library, or any other book of your choice.

Happy reading!

Amulet
Interactive Read-Aloud

I'm going to read aloud to you the beginning of *Amulet* and you'll have another chance to talk to a partner about your predictions. Remember to make your predictions based on what is happening in the text.

One thing that is important to know about reading graphic novels is that you read not just the words but also each panel of pictures. You'll see what I mean when I read aloud *Amulet*. Watch how even when there are no words on the page, my mind is thinking about what each panel means, and I am sharing with you the messages that are being represented in the pictures. When you make your predictions, be sure to do so based on both the words and the pictures.

I'll be using the document camera for the read-alouds this week so that you can read the pictures along with me, so be sure to follow along and pay close attention to each page. Remember that your signal to stop talking is when you hear me reread the last few panels of words and pictures.

Page 1: It was a cold winter night.

Page 2: "We're supposed to pick up Navin at eight o'clock. We're late," Karen says to her husband, David.
    It's 7:45 when David says to his wife, "We have plenty of time--at least half an hour." But she doesn't agree.
    "Fifteen minutes is not a half hour," Karen tells him.
    "I think Dad just lives in an alternate universe," Emily calls out from the back seat. "Time moves slower there," says Emily, as they drive along the winding road passing a large semi truck.

Page 3: "That certainly would explain a few things," Emily's mom replies.
    David tries to reassure his wife by saying, "I'm sure Navin won't mind playing video games for a few minutes longer, honey."
    "Hey Dad, I get to play a game when we get there, right?"
    "Mm, hmm," Dad replies.
    "Sit back down, Emily," says Emily's mom.
    "Okay, cool," Emily says excitedly to her dad.
    "David, it's already late. By the time we get back home, it'll be eleven," says Emily's mom sternly.
    "You're right. You're right," says Emily's dad. "Hear that, Emily? We'll have to postpone our game till next time," says Dad, as he glances back over his shoulder.

"Aww," says Emily disappointedly. Meanwhile David does not seem to notice that a car is coming toward him with its lights shining brightly.

"David," Karen says to him in a concerned voice.

STOP READING HERE.

Partner A, you'll share first. Turn and tell your partner what you predict will happen next. (After about 1 min, reread the last few lines: "Hear that, Emily? We'll have to postpone our game till next time." "Aww." "David--")

Page 4: "I see it. The guy's not paying attention to his high beams. I can't believe this," David says and honks the horn at the oncoming driver.

"David! Lookout!" Karen cries out.

"Hold on!" he yells, as he turns the wheel sharply to avoid running into a stalled car ahead of him on the road. The car spins on the pavement, crashes through the side railing...

Page 5: flips over several times and begins sliding down a steep hill...

Page 6: until it finally crashes into a tree. The car is upside down at the edge of a cliff and the only thing preventing it from falling off is the tree.

STOP READING HERE.

This time Partner B will share first. What do you predict is going to happen next? Turn and talk.   (After about 1 min, repeat: The car is upside down at the edge of a cliff and the only thing preventing it from falling off is the tree.)

Page 7: "Karen, are you okay?"

"My nose is hurt. Emily. What about Emily?!"

"Emily!"

"I"m fine, Dad."

"Okay, I want you to climb out of there and come out the front. That's it. Just keep moving. Get away from the car, Emily. Karen, now you."

"C'mon, Mom."

Meanwhile, David is struggling to move.

"Dad! Give me your hand!" Emily shouts to her dad.

STOP READING HERE.

Partner A, make a prediction about what will happen next. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, say: "Dad! Give me your hand!" Emily shouts to her dad.)

Page 8: "Emily, I can't. My legs are stuck under the dashboard." Meanwhile, the trunk of the tree creaks.

"Dad, just give your hand. Please," Emily cries out in despair.

"Emily--you'll need help." Emily turns around and yells, "Mom! Dad's stuck!!"

"David?! You have to get out of there RIGHT NOW!"

"Karen, my legs are stuck. We need someone to pry me out of here.... get help."

"David, we don't have time!!" Karen cries out to him. "The car's tipping!! Just give me your hand!!!"

Page 9: David struggles to free himself, "I can't move!!! I can't do it, Karen."

"You're gonna have to try!!" Karen cries out to him through tears. Meanwhile, Emily looks on in fright as she sees their car slipping away. She runs toward the car, grabs on to the back end with all her strength, and "No!" she screams...

STOP READING HERE.

Partner B, make a prediction. (After about 1 min, repeat: "No!" she screams...)

Page 10: "Karen, let go."

"David!!!"

"You need to look after Emily. Let go."

Emily is desperately trying to stop the car from giving way, but it breaks free from her hands and she falls to the snowy ground. "Mom! Dad! Get out!!!"

Karen clings to David's hand, but she begins losing her grip.

Page 11: Karen and Emily scream in agony as they watch the car with David in it plummet to the ground.

Emily stares in shock and disbelief while Karen clings to her daughter as she realizes that her husband is gone forever.

Page 12 ....

To find out how Karen and her two children, Emily and Novin, go on with their lives without their father, you can check out *Amulet* from our read-aloud library.

Happy reading!

Superman for All Seasons
Interactive Read-Aloud

Today I'm going to read aloud the beginning pages of *Superman for All Seasons,* and, just as I did with *Amulet,* I am going to read aloud both the words and the pictures. I'll stop and give you the chance to make predictions and inferences. Remember that good inferences are made when the reader combines his or her background knowledge or personal experience with clues from the text. Be sure to follow along closely so your predictions and inferences reflect the words and the pictures. I will signal you to stop talking by rereading the last few panels.

Page 7: Chapter 1: Spring

Page 8: Superman!

Page 9: *Say:* Remember that I told you in the book talk that chapter 1 is narrated by Clark's father, Pa Kent.

Read aloud all of the narrator's lines in the three panels.

Pages 10-11 (show the 2-page spread): Pa continues by saying: My son. Clark Kent.

Say: It is a beautiful spring evening and the sun is setting when Clark comes outside to look for his father. "Pa," he calls, wondering where he would find his pa.

Page 12-13 (show the 2-page spread): Pa begins telling the story of how his son, Clark, came to live with Ma and Pa Kent.

Read aloud the narrator's lines in panels 1 and 3, then stop to say: "Ma says it's getting to be time for supper," Clark says to his Pa.

Continue reading aloud the narrator's lines on the next 2 panels.

Clark looks on as his pa struggles to dislodge a large boulder, then says, "Can I help?"

Page 14: "You're gonna need something for levering, son," Pa says to Clark. Pa scratches his head in disbelief when he sees Clark pick up the giant boulder with one hand.

Narrator: "The boy's got a lot of Martha in him and let's leave it at that."

STOP READING HERE.

Partner A, what do you infer about Clark by Pa comparing him to Martha? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, repeat: "The boy's got a lot of Martha in him and let's leave it at that.")

Page 14 continued: Pa stares off into the distance wondering about what he just saw. "Pa?" Clark asks again, wanting to know what Pa wanted done with the boulder, but Pa doesn't respond. Instead, he just turns and heads back to the house for dinner. "Your mother wants us for supper. Best not keep her waiting."

STOP READING HERE.

Partner B, what do you infer Pa Kent is thinking about as he stares off into the distance? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, repeat: "Your mother wants us for supper. Best not keep her waiting.")

Page 15: *Read aloud the narrator's lines first, then* say: "Clark, what are you up to?" asks Lana.

"Who me?" says Clark, acting as if he's up to nothing, while he slips his dog a scrap of food from the table.

"Everything go all right today with the plowing, Jonathan?" Ma Kent says to Pa.

"Fine-looking ham, Martha," Pa replies, not wanting Martha to know anything about Clark's heroic deed with the boulder.

Meanwhile, Aunt Ruth looks over at Lana and says, "Lana! Sit up straight," while Lana is gazing up at Clark.

Page 16: After dinner, Clark and Lana go for a walk together. Aunt Ruth calls for Lana to hurry up and get in the car so they can get going home.

"Kids...!" Aunt Ruth says as she watches her daughter walk along with Clark.

"I'll be just a second, Aunt Ruth!" Then she turns back to Clark and says, "Clark. What's wrong? You were so quiet at dinner."

"Hmmmm...? Oh, um, nothing's wrong, Lana. I just felt like being quiet, that's all."
Lana looks up at Clark and wonders whether he is telling her the truth. "You'd tell me if there was something really wrong, right?"

"Who else would I tell?" Clark responds, not really answering Lana's question.

STOP READING HERE.

Partner A, what do you infer about Clark and why he is being so quiet? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, repeat: "You'd tell me if there was something really wrong, right?" "Who else would I tell?")

Page 17: Meanwhile, back at the Kent's home, Ma and Pa are resting on the swing on the front porch while Pa is enjoying a piece of Ma's homemade pie.
"Good pie, Martha."

Read aloud the narrator's lines in panel 1, then go on to panel 2 and finish the narrator's words.

"You want to talk about what went what went on between you and Clark this afternoon?" Martha says to Pa.
"He's changing. The boy. He's... different now."

Page 18: "What do you mean, Jonathan?" asks Martha.
"We both knew that one day, we'd have to face this, Martha. I just didn't think it would be so soon."
"Clark has had time to think about our talk. I don't regret for one moment telling him about the rocket and what he can do that other boys can't. He's taking it all in stride. Maybe too well..."
"I don't see it like that. Clark has always been able to work things out for himself."
There's just so much we don't know, Martha. Every day he becomes stronger. With powers and abilities that don't seem to have any limitations. What are we dealing with here?"
"Jonathan Kent. You don't have enough faith in Clark or in us! We brought him up right!"
"Maybe we did, Martha, maybe..."

STOP READING HERE.

Partner B, from the pictures and from their conversation, what do you infer about the type of relationship that Ma and Pa Kent have with one another? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, repeat: "Jonathan Kent. You don't have enough faith in Clark or in us! We brought him up right!" "Maybe we did, Martha, maybe...")

Page 19: Then Martha says to Pa, "Jonathan, you don't think Clark can hear us?
"The boy's asleep. Anyways, his bedroom is clear on the other side of the house... How could he possibly hear us?" Pa responds, unaware that Clark is lying in his bed, wide awake, hearing every word of their conversation.

To find out what Clark does when he realizes he has super powers, including the power to fly , check out *Superman for All Seasons*.

Happy reading!

Historical Fiction Book Talks
(Traditional Texts)

How many of you are interested in history? Many authors write stories about what life was like for people living at different points in history. The stories are not true; the authors create the characters and the problem, much like realistic fiction. The difference is that historical fiction writers must research the time in history in which their make-believe characters lived in order for the stories to be believable. All three of this week's book talks and the books in this week's read-aloud library are historical fiction. Listen closely to see if you'd like to give one of these three historical fiction books a try.

Book 1: *The Watsons Go to Birmingham--1963*

The Watsons Go to Birmingham by Christopher Paul Curtis is the story of 10-year-old Kenny Watson and his family--known affectionately as the ***Weird*** Watsons. Kenny lives in Flint, Michigan with his parents, little sister Joetta, and big brother, Byron, who is always getting into some type of trouble. You can tell the time in history that the story takes place is in 1963, but do you know what was different about life back then compared with life as you know it today? Well, in some parts of the country, like where their Grandma Sands lives, the "deep south," being black meant you didn't have the same rights as those who were white. So when Kenny and his entire family travel to Birmingham, Alabama in 1963, Kenny learns some valuable lessons.

This historical fiction book was a Newbery Honor book in 1996. Remember that means that this book was one of the runners up to winning the best children's book that year. This book won a second award: the Coretta Scott King award. The idea for the Coretta Scott King Award was first developed in the late 1960s, and the first award was given in 1970. The purpose of the Coretta Scott King award is to honor African American authors and illustrators of children's literature for their distinguished work.

To find out why *The Watsons Go to Birmingham--1963* deserved to win two prestigious awards, you can check out this historical fiction book from the read-aloud library.

Book 2: *Number the Stars*

The next book I'm going to talk with you about is *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. *Number the Stars* won the Newbery Medal in 1990.

Number the Stars is a historical fiction book that is set in Copenhagen, Denkark. When the book opens, it is 1943 and for 10-year-old Annemarie Johansens, life in Copenhagen is changing quickly--but not for the better. Before the war, Annemarie and

her best friend, Ellen, led a carefree life, but now the Nazi soldiers march through their town daily and are on a mission to force all of the Jewish people in Copenhagen to relocate and live somewhere else. The problem is that Ellen is Jewish, so Annemarie and her family take Ellen in as part of their family to try to save her life.

Most of us would be willing to say that we'd risk our lives for our best friend, but, in *Number the Stars*, Annemarie is really called to the task. To find out whether Annemarie and her family successfully save Ellen's life and to learn more about what life was like for those who lived through this tumultuous time in American history, you can select the book *Number the Stars* from the historical fiction read-aloud library.

Book 3: *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*

The last book I'd like to share with you today is the picture book called *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Deborah Hopkinson, illustrated by James Ransome. This book is one of many picture books written that relay stories of how brave men, women, and children who were slaves managed to escape and gain their freedom.

In this picture book, 11-year-old Clara is taken from the plantation, where she and her mother worked, to a new plantation where she worked for a different master. Clara is overcome with grief but vows that one day she will find a way to be with her momma again.

At the new plantation, Aunt Rachel, a slave woman who takes care of Clara as if she is her own daughter, teaches Clara how to sew. Clara gets a job working inside the Master's house and overhears many conversations about how some slaves escape through the help of those who are running an Underground Railroad to free slaves.

To learn more about the time of history when people like the character of Clara were willing to risk their lives to be free, you can check out *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* from the historical fiction read-aloud library. Or if that picture book is unavailable, you could read *Under the Quilt of the Night*, also written by Deborah Hopkinson and illustrated by James E. Ransome, or *The Patchwork Path: A Quilt Map to Freedom* by Bettye Stroud and illustrated by Erin Susanne Bennett.

So today, during independent reading, you have lots of reading choices. If you are in the middle of a book, I hope you will continue reading it until you are finished. When you finish, you are welcome to try out any of three books I recommended, any of the other new historical fiction titles that Mrs. Wozniak added to the read-aloud library, any of the books from the graphica or realistic fiction libraries, books from the original read-aloud library, or any other book of your choice.

Happy reading!   (903 words)

Historical Fiction Book Talks

- Introduce this week's read-aloud library and give explain the definition of historical fiction

Book 1: *Watsons Go To Birmingham--1963*

- Introduce the title, author, main character, setting, and hint at the problem

- Newbery Honor book and Coretta Scott King Award in 1996

Book 2: *Number the Stars*

- Introduce the title, author, Newbery Medal winner in 1990

- Introduce the main character, setting, and hint at the problem

- Closing--recommendation to try the book

Book 3: *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*

- Introduce the title and author

- Introduce this popular topic with picture book authors and illustrators

- Introduce the main character, setting, and hint at the problem

- Tell how Clara meets Aunt Rachel who teaches Clara how to sew

- Mention the titles of the other 2 picture books on the same topic

So today, during independent reading, you have lots of reading choices. If you are in the middle of a book, I hope you will continue reading it until you are finished. When you finish, you are welcome to try out any of three books I recommended, any of the other new historical fiction titles that Mrs. Wozniak added to the read-aloud library, any of the books from the graphica or realistic fiction libraries, books from the original read-aloud library, or any other book of your choice.

Happy reading!

Number the Stars
Interactive Read-Aloud

For the past two weeks, we have been making predictions and inferences during read-aloud time. This week and next we're going to move on to a new reading skill, but keep in mind that you should still be predicting and inferring whenever I read aloud and when you read on your own. Today, the skill I want to teach you is how readers use the features of a text to make meaning before, during, and after reading. In other words, good readers don't just jump in and start reading without noticing some other important aspects of the book. While they are reading, they often stop and go back to notice things about the way the book is set up that they may not have noticed or understood before reading. Even after reading, readers can make deeper connections to certain features of a book that they missed from the start. After I teach you how to notice the features of historical fiction books, I hope you'll practice noticing those features if you read a historical fiction book from the read-aloud library.

Today I'll be sharing the text features in *Number the Stars*, and at various points I will stop and ask you to turn and talk to your partner. Pay close attention so you will be ready to share your thinking.

Show the students the cover of the book and say:
One important text feature of a historical fiction book is its cover. The covers of most historical fiction books give you clues about the characters, setting, and plot of the story. Sometimes you can infer from the cover who the main character will be, what time in history the story is set, and perhaps even a hint at the problem in the story.

Take a look at the cover of the book *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. Study the expression on the young girl's face, notice the necklace that overlaps the picture. Think to yourself: Who is the main character of this book? What time in history does this story take place? And what might this story be about? Now, you know some of these answers from yesterday's book talks. If I hadn't done the book talk, you might have learned some of this from another text feature: the back cover. The back cover gives you a brief introduction to the book.   Do you see how these two text features--the front and back cover--get the reader thinking about the story?

Partner A, you'll share first. Turn and tell your partner one idea you have about how the cover of this historical fiction book reveals some of the main ideas of the story. (After about 1 min, say: This historical fiction book, *Number the Stars*, was written by Lois Lowry.)

Show the students the cover of the book again and say:
When I look at the cover, I notice that the main character, which is 10-year-old Annemarie Johansen, looks very sad. This makes me think that Annemarie is in trouble

or is going to go through something very difficult. I notice that the necklace has the Star of David on it, which I know is a symbol of Jewish identity. I'm wondering if Annemarie is Jewish, but then I remember from reading the back cover that her last name is Johansen which sounds more like a German name than a Jewish name. I know that there was a dark time in our world's history when the Nazis in Germany tortured and killed 6 million Jewish people, which is referred to as the Holocaust. Adolf Hitler and his followers tried to eliminate the Jewish race.

Partner B, this time you'll share first. Turn and tell your partner what you already know about this time in history. (After about 1 min, say: This historical fiction book, *Number the Stars* takes place during one of the darkest times in our world's history when the Nazis tried to eliminate the Jewish race.)

Open the book to the inside cover and say:
Another feature of this book and all books is the copyright page. There are a few features on this page that get me thinking about the author and the story. First, I notice that the book was published in 1989, which is over 20 years ago. I know that Lois Lowry is still writing books, so this makes me think that *Number the Stars* was one of her earlier books. I am surprised that she won such a prestigious award so early in her career. I also notice that her dedication is on this page, and it says: "For my friend Annelise Platt. Tucind tak."

Say to the students:
Listen to those lines again: "For my friend Annelise Platt. Tucind Tak." What do you predict Tucind tak means? **Partner A, share your prediction first.** Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, say: For my friend Annelise Platt. Tucind tak.)

Say to students:
Tucind tak is Danish, and it means a thousand thanks. I didn't know that just by reading it, but I did an online search and found the meaning. Good readers take the time to notice the details that the author includes outside of just the story. Text features such as the dedication page often can reveal something personal about the author. You might be wondering what role Annalise Platt played in Lois Lowry's life like I was. Lois Lowry explains that to us in the Afterword of the book.

Show the students that you are turning to page 133 of the book and say:
Listen as I read aloud the first few paragraphs of the Afterword. (Read aloud the first four paragraphs of the Afterword.)

Partner B, share first: What do you think is the purpose of this text feature--the afterword? In other words, why do some authors include an afterword instead of ending the book where the story ended? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line of the last full paragraph on page 133: So I created little Annemarie and her family...)

Show the students the Contents page and say:

The last feature I'd like to point out to you is the Contents page. Not every historical fiction book lists the titles of the chapters, but if I take the time to read the Contents page in Number the Stars, I learn several things. Chapter 1 begins on page and is called: Why Are You Running? and ends with the Afterword which begins on page 133. As I read through the titles of the chapter, I can make predictions about what might be happening in the story. I notice that many of the chapter titles are questions and that a few end in exclamation points, which adds suspense.

So, if you like stories that are suspenseful and want to learn more about what life was like for people who survived the Holocaust, I recommend you read *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry. Or if you'd like to learn more about another time in history, study the book covers and check out one of the other books in our historical fiction read-aloud library.

Happy reading!

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt
Interactive Read-Aloud

Show the students the front cover of the book and begin by saying:
Today I'm going to talk to you about the text features of picture books as I read aloud the first few pages of *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Deborah Hopkinson with paintings by James Ransome. Just like we did with *Number the Stars*, first we will take a minute to study the front cover.

Partner B, you'll share first today. Talk about what setting this is in history and make a prediction of what you think the story is about. (After about 1 min repeat the title, author, and illustrator: Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkinson with paintings by James Ransome.)

Turn to the back cover and say:
The back cover is also an important text feature. When you read the synopsis on the back cover, it gives you an idea of whether your predictions from the front cover were correct.

Read aloud the synopsis on the back cover: Clara, a slave and seamstress...

Next, point to the reviews on the back cover and say:
Another text feature of books are the reviews that were written by book reviewers who work for various newspapers and magazines. Typically only a few words from the entire review will be included, but it is a way of showing that the book received positive reviews from notable reviewers in the book industry.

Read aloud the reviews on the back cover: "Straightforward and inspiring..."

Now turn back to the beginning and as you open the book say:
Let's take a look at the copyright and dedication to see if we learn anything important. The book was published in 1993. The dedication says: "For my father and in memory of my mother--D. H." The D. H. stands for the Deborah Hopkinson. Whenever a picture book is published, both the author and illustrator have the opportunity to include their own dedication. J.R.--James Ransome--wrote: "For Emma Ransom, the first slave of Pattie and General Matt W. Ransom, and all the other Ransom slaves on Verona Plantation."

Partner A, now it's your turn to share first. What interesting information did you learn from the dedication page? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min repeat the second dedication: For Emma Ransom...)

Keep the page open to the dedications and say:

I learned that Deborah Hopkinson dedicated this book to her parents. Her father is alive but her mother had passed away already. I also learned that James Ransome is descendent of the first slave, Emma Ransom, who was given the last name of her slave owner. I read online that the letter "e" was added to the Ransome family name some time after slavery ended, which is why the illustrator's name is spelled differently than Emma Ransom's name. How many of you noticed any of these things?

(Just look for a show of hands) then say:
Do you see how you can learn new things about the author and illustrator from only a few words on the dedication page?

Now we move on to the pictures, which are by far the most prominent feature of a picture book, which means they are the feature that sets them apart from other types of books. Understanding the role of the illustrations is important to reading a picture book. The illustrations are meant to do more than give a pretty picture of what the words say. The illustrations tell a story of their own. Just like when we read the graphic novels last week, we need to slow down and take the time to read the pictures and learn what it is about the characters and plot that is not included in the words. To read a picture book well, you will need to infer from the pictures both the author and illustrator's message.

Listen now as I read aloud the beginning of *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*, and be ready to share with your partner what you learn from reading the pictures that isn't written in words.

Turn to the first page of the book and lay the book on the document camera so the students can see the first painting.

Read aloud the first page, then say:
Partner B, tell your partner one thing that you read from the pictures--something you understand about life in the time of slavery--that you got only from reading the pictures. When you're finished, partner A share something you learned. Turn and talk.

Turn to the next page, and instead of reading aloud any words, say to the students:
I'm going to stop reading and just show you the next few illustrations. See if you can figure out the events of the story without the words.

Show the students the next 3 pages of illustrations (Clara and Aunt Rachel, Aunt Rachel at the fire, Clara looking on nervously while the Missus examines Clara sewing skills). Leave the images up long enough for students to fill in the story line.

After the third page, say to the students:
Partner A, what is happening in the story? Turn and talk.

As you can see, there is much more to the story when you read the pictures. I can see from the look in Aunt Rachel's eyes that Clara is like a daughter to her and that she would do about anything to keep Clara safe.

To find out if Clara stays safe and if she ever finds her way back to her momma, read the words and the pictures in *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt.* You might also check out *Under the Quilt of Night*, also written by Deborah Hopkinson and illustrated by James Ransome.

Happy reading!

Information and Sports Book Talks
(Alternate Texts)

Last week our book talks were all from the genre historical fiction--books that are based on true events but are still fiction. This week, you get to hear about the real thing--books of information. The books I will talk about and read aloud, and all the books in the read-aloud library, are filled with information, including sports books, video-gaming books, books about war, animal books, and books with lots of facts like the World Records books. Today I have three informational books to introduce to you.

Book 1: *Book of World Records 2010*

I'll start with one of the most popular types of informational books for kids--the world records books. The *Book of World Records 2010* published by Scholastic is packed with information about who has set various world records.

The book is divided into 6 major categories: pop culture, sports, science, nature, money, and human-made. Wondering what human-made means? I'll get to that in a minute.

Each of the 6 categories is further divided into subsections. For example, under pop culture, you can read about records that were set in television, movies, music, magazines, theater, and art. In sports, you can read about records set in 16 different sports. For example, the NBA team with the most championship titles is the Boston Celtics with 17 championship wins. Their first win was in 1957, followed by 7 consecutive years of winning the title--the longest winning streak in all of U.S. sports history.

The science section provides the records related to the categories of video games, the Internet, computers, vehicles, and technology. Can you guess what is the world's best-selling video game? It's the Nintendo Wii Sports, which sold more than 41.6 million copies around the world.

Now about the human-made category. These are the world records related to three areas: construction (like buildings and amusement parks), travel (like the world's most visited city: Orlando, the home of Disney World, in Florida), and transportation (with records like the country with the most number of vehicles--who do you think? Yes, the United States, with more than 244 million cars registered--and 33.2 million of those are in California).

To find out more of the world records, check out the *Book of World Records 2010* from this week's read-aloud library.

Book 2: *Year in Sports 2010*

If you are an avid sports fan, the *Year in Sports 2010* is the book for you. In this one book, you can read the highlights of the most exciting moments in 14 different sports--four major sports leagues: Major League Baseball, the National Football League, the National Basketball Association, and the National Hockey League--and many other sports like soccer, tennis, Nascar racing, and even wild and weird sports!

Since this is a nonfiction book that gives information about sports, you don't have to read it from cover to cover like you do when you read a fictional story book that has a beginning, middle, and end. Instead, you can pick and choose what parts you'd like to read and skip the rest. The book is designed to help you pick the sports topics that are most interesting to you.

Let me show you. Let's say that I'm really interested in learning more about soccer. Well, in the table of contents, the different areas of sports are represented by a different color. The Major League Baseball is in blue, the NFL is in orange, college football is in green... Here's the NBA in yellow. It was easy to find because I just looked at the different colors until I found the sport I wanted to read about. The number before the word tells me which page to go to: page 82 NBA.

When I get to the introduction page I see NBA in large yellow print and every page that has a yellow banner at the top gives me more exciting information about the National Basketball Association! I can read the final standings for 2008-2009. There's information about the Play-off and women's basketball. I can read the stats on the winning teams. And I know that I'm at the end of the information on basketball when I get to a new color--like this: the blue pages that are all about the National Hockey League.

So if you enjoy sports and you missed the news about what has been happening in the past year, you can catch up on all the highlights by reading some or all of a *Year in Sports 2010.*

Book 3: *Guinness World of Records 2010 Gamer's Edition*

The last type of informational book I am going to talk to you about today is a book about video games. I know that many of you play video games and some of you read about how to beat the levels of the games you play. If you are a video-gaming fan, this would probably be a good book for you to check out. If you don't believe me, listen to what the book reviewer for the Gamers Daily News had to say, "You really need to get this book. It's a great looking edition, chock full of interesting facts and information...it is a must-have for gamers."

The *Guinness World Records 2010 Gamer's Edition* is definitely full of information. You'll learn about the best games of the year, the best gaming systems, and record-breaking games in these categories: shooting games, sports and racing games, action-adventure games, fighting games, party games, puzzle games, role-playing games, strategy and simulation games, and instant gaming.

Other features of the book include a look at future gaming, a highlight of Shigeru Miyamoto, the mastermind behind two of the best-selling video games of all time: Super Mario Brothers and Wii Sports.

So if you're looking for a book of information about your favorite sports, video games, extreme animals, events in history, inventions, or general, there are many to choose from in this week's read-aloud library.

Happy reading!

(988 words)

Year in Sports 2010
Interactive Read-Aloud

Today I'm going to read aloud excerpts from the *Year in Sports 2010.* As you might recall, during last week's read-alouds, we studied the text features of historical fiction. During this week we are going to look at the text features used in informational writing. One type of informational writing that many of you like to read is sports.

Let's start by looking at the front cover. Just like with fiction books, we can learn about what information will be inside the book by looking at the front cover. Take a look. Who are the people you know, and what information do you know about them?

Stop here and say to the students:
Partner A, you'll share first. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, say: This informational text is called *Year in Sports 2010*, and it was published by Scholastic.)

During yesterday's book talk, I mentioned a very important text feature of informational books--the table of contents. Because readers often don't read an informational book from cover to cover, they use the table of contents to guide their page selection.

As I look at the table of contents, I notice that the book begins with an introduction. This is a typical text feature of informational books. The authors of informational books include an introduction so the reader will know the scope of what the writing includes--in other words, the reader gets the big picture of what the book is all about.

Let's look at the introduction to *Year in Sports 2010.* It begins with a 2-page spread and the title introduction is written in all caps--meaning all the letters are capitalized. It includes 3 photographs, each from a different sport: the L.A. Lakers winning the NBA championship, the Pittsburg Steelers winning the Superbowl, and the Williams sisters winning at Wimbledon for the 8th time. You may wonder whether I knew all of this just from looking at the pictures? Of course not! I mean, I could have figured some things out by reading the names on their uniforms, but how would I have known that Venus and Serena Williams have won the Wimbledon title 8 times unless I was an avid tennis fan? The reason I knew was because of another important text feature.

Stop here and say to the students:
Turn and talk with your partner about the text feature that helps readers understand what is happening in the pictures, and discuss why they are so important. **Partner B share first.** (After about 1 min, say: The LA Lakers captured their 15th NBA championship. The Pittsburg Steelers became the first team to win six Super Bowls. The Williams sisters have eight Wimbledon titles.)

I just read to you the captions, which are the words that the writers include so the reader is aware of what information the picture is conveying. Although many people who follow sports closely *do* know this already, others may be picking up the book and learning about it for the first time.

Now let's say I am interested in knowing more about the Lakers NBA championship win, I go back to the table of contents, and I see that the section on the NBA begins on page 82. When I go to page 82, I see the title page to this section: NBA in huge bold yellow print (because the pages in this section will have the yellow bar along the top). I see another 2-page spread for the title pages, and then I notice that at the bottom there is a short blurb about the picture. It's more writing than a caption. Instead, it gives a short summary of the significance of the photo. Listen as I read aloud the paragraph. When I'm finished, partner A you're going to start the discussion by talking about why you think the writers chose this particular photograph to introduce the *whole section* on the NBA.

Read aloud the paragraph: NOTHING BUT NET! Lakers guard Derek Fisher launches a three-point shot over Orlando's Jameer Nelson in the final seconds of the fourth quarter of Game 4 of the NBA finals in June 2009. Fisher's heave found the bottom of the net, tying the game and forcing overtime. The Lakers later won the game in that OT. Three nights later, they clinched their 15th league title.

Stop here and say to the students:

Partner A, start the conversation and tell the reasons why you think this particular photo was used to introduce the NBA section. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last 2 lines.)

Because there is a lot of information in each 2-page spread, this book, like many other information books, includes main headings and subheadings to help the reader know what the pages are mostly about. For example (turn to and show the students pages 94-95), you can see that the main topic of this 2-page spread is what is happening around the WNBA, or the Women's National Basketball Association. If you look closer, you will notice that there are three subheadings on these 2 pages, and the subheading titles are: Three's Company, Good as Gold, and Shot of the Year. Each of the subsections gives information that connects back to the main topic--what is happening around the WNBA. You can read all three subsections or just the ones that seem interesting to you. And notice that each of the subsections has one photograph that helps you visualize the information you are reading.

Stop here and say to the students:
Now I'd like each of you to share one new thing you learned or one important thing about the text features of information books that you were reminded of. Partner B,

you share first. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, say again: Notice that each of the subsections has one photograph that helps you visualize the information you are reading.)
End here and say to the students:
   Today during independent reading, you may decide to read *Year in Sports 2010* or some other information book. If you do, be sure to use the text features we just talked about--the front and back cover, the table of contents, the introduction, photographs and captions, main headings and subheadings--to help guide your reading selections.

Happy reading!

(1,005 words)

Guinness World Records 2010: Gamer's Edition
Interactive Read-Aloud

Today I'm going to read aloud excerpts from a popular type of information book that young people read: a video-gaming book!   As you know, this week we are focusing on the text features used in informational writing. Video-gaming books are filled with information, so it is important for you to know how to use the text features to guide your reading of these types of books. This book was part of our original read-aloud library so you have seen the cover and probably have predicted already what this book is about. Also, many of you have lots of experience with reading video-gaming books, unlike me who has never read a book on video games and had no idea what this book was about until I opened it. I was surprised when I found so many similarities between the text features in this book compared with other books of information I have read.

Stop here and say to the students:
Before I show you what I found, what do *you* predict is similar about the way this book is organized--in other words, the text features--and the text features in *Year in Sports 2010*? **Turn and talk.** (After about 1 min, say: There are several similarities between the text features of this book and *Year in Sports 2010*.)

Let's take a look and see what are the similarities. First, there is the table of contents. And, look, it's color-coded just like *Year in Sports*. The chapters are divided into topics and each topic is a different color. The chapter on video-gaming hardware is in mint green (point to the chapter titles and to the 2-page spread pictured as well), the chapter on shooting games is in blue, sports and racing games is in lime green, and all the special feature sections are in bright yellow, like the section on future gaming.

I also noticed that not only is there an introduction to the entire book--Welcome to Gamer's 2010--but there is also an introduction to most of the other chapters (point to the Shooting Games chapter, the Action-Adventure Games chapter, Fighting Games, Party Games, Role-Playing Games, Puzzle Games, Role-Playing Games, Strategy and Simulation Games, Instant Gaming). This helps readers to get the big picture of what each chapter is all about before reading the specific details about that topic.

Stop here and say to the students:
After seeing all the chapter titles, talk with your partner about which chapter you would be most interested in reading first if you selected this book to read. **Turn and talk.** (After about 1 min, say: Shooting Games, Sports and Racing Games, Action-Adventure Games, Fighting Games, Party Games, Puzzle Games, Role-Playing Games...).

I'm curious about the Party Games chapter. I know that many families own the Nintendo Wii and they play video games with groups of people, so I'm wondering if that's the type of video game that I'd learn about if I read the Party Games chapter.

Ask the students: To what page should I turn to find out about Party Games? (either allow students to call out the page number or call on someone to answer: page 118 and point to show the page number next to the title, then turn to page 118).

Show students that the title page to this chapter is a 2-page spread with 4 different pictures. **Read aloud the blurb on page 119:** The best-selling video game of all time is Wii Sports, which sold 45.7 million copies between its launch in 2006 and May 2009. Pictured is the game's sequel, Wii Sports Resort, launched July 2009.

Say to the students: My prediction that this chapter would be about popular family games like the Wii was right! I'm guessing that each of the four pictures is from one of the different games you can play in Wii Sports Resort.

Another thing I notice is that the chapter has its own table of contents. This chapter has an introduction, a chapter on mini games, lifestyle games, rhythm games: karaoke, rhythm games: instrument, and rhythm games: dance mat. First I'm going to look at the introduction and from there I'll decide which one of the subsections I'd like to learn more about.

Stop here and say to the students:
Take a look at the 2-page spread that makes up the introduction and read the bold heading: Thanks to some spectacular innovations in multiplayer gaming, it has been one big party for videogame fans in search of the ultimate shared experience.

Ask the students: What are some of the text features that you notice on the introduction pages? **Turn and talk.** (After about 1 min, reread the bold heading: Thanks to some spectacular innovations in multiplayer gaming, it has been one big party for videogame fans in search of the ultimate shared experience.)

Stop here and say to the students:
Did anyone notice the sidebars on each of the pages? The sidebar on page 120 tells what was the best-selling rhythm game series: Guitar Hero which was launched in 2005 and sold over 32 millions units between then and July 2009. How many of you own or have a family member or friend who owns Guitar Hero?

There is another sidebar on the page 121, which talks about a videogaming expert: Chris Schilling, who has been gaming since he was five years old.

Below the blurb on the expert is a Trivia section. Running along the bottom of the two-page spread is a timeline of the events related this chapter's topic, so if you're interested in the history of party games and what has happened over the years prior to them becoming so popular, you can read over the timeline. There are two pictures and their captions. And, of course, there are the paragraphs that introduce the topic.

Every chapter begins this way using these same text features. Each chapter has an introduction with side bars that tell you what the top-selling game is, who is an expert videogamer, some trivia about the topic, a timeline, pictures and captions, and the text.

I decided to go to the section: Rhythm Games: Instrument. When I did, I found that the most critically acclaimed rhythm game series (meaning the most popular) is ... Does anyone think they know? (Call on a few students) Rock Band! And what I also found is that on every page there is a table that lists the Top Ten Games You Should Play in This Genre. So you can find out what are the most popular games in every video game genre, if you don't already know.

End here and say to the students:
So, today during independent reading, you may decide to read *Guinness World Records 2010: Gamer's Edition* or some other information book. If you do, be sure to look for the text features we just talked about--the table of contents, the introduction, photographs and captions, sidebars, and timelines--to help you learn more about the topic.

Happy reading!

(1,091 words)

Fantasy Book Talks
(Traditional Texts)

Ever since the release of the first Harry Potter book in 1997, the genre of literature called fantasy has become extremely popular, not just with young people but with adults, as well. Fantasy stories include magic and other forms of the supernatural that make up a significant part of their plot, setting, and theme. As of June 2008, the Harry Potter books have been translated into 67 languages and have sold more than 400 million copies worldwide. J. K. Rowling's fantastical Harry Potter series paved the way for many more fantasy authors to publish books in a series, but some authors, like two that are featured in this week's book talks, write a single fantasy book that has become popular as well.

Book 1: *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*

The first book I'm going to share is a book written by an author whose work is familiar to you. Her name is Kate DiCamillo. Does anyone remember which book she wrote? She is the author of *Because of Winn Dixie*, and she also wrote the fantasy book called *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane,* the fantasy story of a 10-year-old girl named Abilene Tulane who owns a china rabbit doll named Edward.

Every morning Abilene dresses Edward Tulane in a silk suit, custom-made shoes of the finest leather, and a top hat designed with the ears cut out so it sits comfortably on his head. Tucked inside Edward's pants pocket is a gold watch, that Abigail winds for him every morning, so he can tell when it is 3:00 and Abigail will be home to school to visit him again.

You might wonder what it is that makes this book so magical. Well, as you can imagine from the title, the life of Edward Tulane does not remain as predictable as it seems. When Edward is separated from his beloved family, Edward faces some incredible adventures that teach him some big lessons about life and love.

To find out what these miraculous adventures are, you can read *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo.

Book 2: *Tuck Everlasting*

The next book I'm going to talk with you about is *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt. This book was published in 1975, and since then it has been made into a movie twice--first in 1981 and again in 2002.

Have you ever thought to yourself: I wish I could live forever? *Tuck Everlasting* is a fantasy story about a young girl, Winnie Foster, and her encounters with the Tuck family--Pa and Mae Tuck, and their two teen-age sons, Miles and Jesse. When Winnie

discovers that the Tuck family drank from a spring of water on her family's property and are now immortal, meaning they will never die, she is fascinated and wonders whether she, too, would want to live forever. Eventually she must make the decision whether to drink from the spring or enjoy only the amount of life most people are given to live.

Tuck Everlasting has sold over 2 million copies and is considered by some to be a classic of modern children's literature, meaning that it has remained popular long after it was first published, that it contains themes that are universal, and that the work continues to influence readers of all ages.

Today during independent reading you might decide to pick up *Tuck Everlasting* to find out what makes this book a classic, but, once again, if you have already seen the movie and know how it ends, don't give the story away!

Book 3: *Inkheart*

The last book I'd like to share with you today is called *Inheart* by Cornelia Funke. Inkheart, first published in Germany 2003, is the first book of the Inkworld trilogy. The other two books in the trilogy are *Inkspell*, released in 2005, and *Inkdeath*, released in 2007. The author, Cornelia Funke, is the third most popular children's author in Germany. Can anyone guess which authors are more popular? J. K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books, and R. L. Stine, author of the Goosebump series. And *Inkheart* also was made into a movie that was released in January of last year, 2009.

Inkheart, the first book of the series, is the fantasy story of 12-year-old Meggie Folchart who discovers that her father, a bookbinder named Mo, has the amazing ability to bring to life the characters out of books when he reads them aloud. Sounds like it could be fun, right? But not when Mo accidentally reads his wife, Teresa, into the book, Inkeart, and then can't get her out. And at the same time, he brings out of the book three not-so-wonderful characters: Dustfinger, Basta, and the most evil character of all, Capricorn.

If you'd like to find out whether Meggie and Mo are reunited with their mother and the evil Capricorn brings their way, check out *Inkheart* by Cornelia Funke. And when you're finished with *Inkheart*, you can go on to read the two other books in the Inkworld trilogy.

So today, during independent reading, you are welcome to try out one of three books I recommended, any of the other new fantasy titles that Mrs. Wozniak added to the read-aloud library, any of the 160 books from the previous read-aloud libraries, or any other book of your choice.

Happy reading!   (886 words)

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
Interactive Read-Aloud

For the past two weeks, we have been studying the text features of fiction and informational texts during read-aloud time. This week and next we're going to move on to a new reading skill, but keep in mind that you should notice still the text features of the books you are reading. Since this week's read-alouds are of fictional books, you should remember to look at the front and back covers, the dedication page and copyright information, the table of contents, and any other important structural parts of the book.

Today, the skill I want to teach you is how readers consider the traits, motivations, and appearances of the main characters to help them understand the plot and theme of a book. In other words, what is it that is special about the character that makes the story unique. Also, what is it about the way the character looks, acts, or is on the inside that makes it clear to the reader what is the big message you should get from reading the book. For example, if you read *Amulet*, you might have learned from the actions and motivations of Emily and Navin that family members need to pull together and be there for one another, especially during times of tragedy, if they are going to survive the hard times.

Today I'll be reading aloud the beginning pages of *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, and at some point of the reading, I will stop to ask you to talk with your partner about a character's appearance, actions, or motivations. Any questions? Okay, then get a good listening position and be ready to talk with your partner.

Read aloud pages 3-4 and stop after the line: "He preferred, as a rule, not to think unpleasant thoughts" and say:

Turn and tell your partner what are some of the character traits of Edward Tulane. (After about 1 min, reread the last two lines.)

Read aloud pages 4-5. Stop after the line "She kissed the tips of his ears, and then she left and Edward spent the day staring out at Egypt Street, listening to the tick of his watch and waiting" and say to the students:

Now turn and talk to your partner about the character traits of Abilene. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read aloud pages 6-the top of page 8. After the line, "It was Pellegrina who had give him as a gift to Abilene on her seventh birthday" say to the students:

We just met three more characters: Abilene's mom, dad, and grandma, Pellegrina. Take turns talking about the traits of these three characters. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read aloud the rest of the chapter, then stop and say to the students:

From Abilene's actions--the way she is so gentle with Edward, the way she dresses him in the finest clothes, and the way she keeps him by her side--I think that Edward is like a best friend to Abilene. Meanwhile, by the way Edward is described, I think that even though it says that he can't talk, that if he could he would not do and say nice things to Abilene like she does to him. He seems to be sort of arrogant, like all he thinks about is himself.

This makes me think that this fantasy story might be about friendship and what it means to really care about a friend. To find out whether my inference and predictions are right, you can check out *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* from our read-aloud library.

Happy reading!

Tuck Everlasting
Interactive Read-Aloud

Today I'm going to read aloud to you the first few pages of *Tuck Everlasting,* and, just as I did with *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane,* I am going to give you a chance to talk to a partner about the characters' appearances, traits, and motivations, and how those help the reader understand the plot and theme of the story. Remember that the writer creates characters that are believable to the story, even when the characters are fantasy characters like a china rabbit doll. The characters' actions and motivations must be consistent throughout the story so that they all contribute toward the reader drawing conclusions about the plot and theme of the story. Listen now as I read aloud part of the first chapter of *Tuck Everlasting* and pay attention to the actions and appearances of the characters so you can draw your own conclusions about the plot.

Read from the beginning of page 3, the Prologue, and stop after the line: "She was going there, as she did once every ten years, to meet her two sons, Miles and Jesse" and say:

Talk about the actions of Mae Tuck and make a prediction about the story based on what you learned about her actions. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Call on a couple of students to share what they think about Mae's actions and how they give you clues about the plot. Add a few ideas of your own to offer support if students are stuck or to enrich the conversation.

Read only the next paragraph. Stop after the line "...lost her patience and decided to think about running away" and say to the students:

Talk about the actions of Winnie Foster and make a prediction about the story based on what you learned about her actions. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Call on a couple of students to share what they think about Winnie's actions and how they give you clues about the plot. Add a few ideas of your own to offer support if students are stuck or to enrich the conversation.

Read only the next paragraph. Stop after the line "...he was looking for someone but didn't say who" and say to the students:

Talk about the actions of the stranger and make a prediction about the story based on what you learned about his actions. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.

Call on a couple of students to share what they think about the stranger's actions and how they give you clues about the plot. Add a few ideas of your own to offer support if students are stuck or to enrich the conversation.

Read aloud the final paragraph, then say to the students:

In just 2 pages of the Prologue, the author introduces the reader to three different characters involved in three different situations. I can tell that these three characters and events are connected in some way.

Maybe you know already, if you saw the movie, but, if not, I suggest you read *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbitt to find out how the appearances, actions, and motivations of these characters work together to make the plot of this story that has become a classic fantasy story for children.

Happy reading!

Scary/Horror/Mystery Book Talks
(Alternate Texts)

A genre of literature that is very popular with young people is horror or scary books. Closely related to that are mystery books. For years, elementary-aged students have been reading the *Goosebump* series, *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*, and other books that are written to give the reader a scare or thrill. The 30 new books in this week's read-aloud library are horror, scary, or mystery books.

Book 1: *Bites: Scary Stories to Sink Your Teeth Into*

The first book I'm going to share was written not by just one author but by 7 authors. Just like the popular book that many of you know, *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*, this book has many scary stories in it, each one written by a different author. Yet they all have one thing in common. Can anyone guess what that is? If you haven't figured it out, take a look at the title. Now you guessed it...they're all about bites.

The forward of the book--that's the commentary that another guest author writes to introduce the book--written by Lois Metzger begins with this line: "When it comes to vampires and werewolves, what you don't know can bite you." She goes on to introduce each of the 7 stories by passing on one rule for each story.

Rule #1: It's not enough to watch your back. Watch your neck, too.
Rule #2: There isn't always honor among vampires.
Rule #3: Do not become the "guests of honor" at a vampire dinner.
Rule #4: Stay out of direct sunlight. At the very least, use sunblock.
Rule #5: Never remove the silver bullets from a dead werewolf's body.
Rule #6: Don't steal--especially rare artifacts.
Rule #7: You can't teach a ghost dog new tricks.

To find out what these rules mean, who or what gets bitten, and whether or not *you* think these stories are scary at all, you can read *Bites: Scary Stories to Sink Your Teeth Into.*

Book 2: *New Moon*

The next book is *New Moon* by Stephanie Meyer. This book is the second book in the popular *Twilight* series and crosses over many genres. The author described her books as a combination of suspense, romance, horror, and comedy. *Twilight* is a series of four vampire stories about the life Isabella Swan, a teenage girl, who moves to a new town and falls in love with a 104-year-old vampire named Edward Cullen.

The series made its debut with book 1, *Twilight*, in 2005, and, as of November 2009 had sold over 85 million copies worldwide and had been translated into at least 38

different languages. The four *Twilight* books set a record for the biggest selling novel in 2008 on the USA Today Bestselling Books list and were on the New York Times Bestsellers List for children's series books for over 235 weeks. That is over four and a half years!

With each new book's release, the series became even more popular. To give you some idea of just how many people were reading the series, when the fourth and final book of the series, *Breaking Dawn*, was released on August 2, 2008, at midnight release parties in over 4,000 bookstores, 1.3 million copies were sold in the first 24 hours!

The *Twilight* books have won multiple awards. For example, the series won the 2009 Kids' Choice Award for Favorite Book. And, of course, as most of you probably know, the first two books have been made into major motion pictures. In fact, *New Moon* just came out on DVD this past Saturday.

If you have seen the first movie or read the first book, *Twilight*, you might be ready to check out *New Moon*. If you haven't seen the first movie or read the first book, you may decide to check out *Twilight*. If so, you will find out what makes this series so popular.

Book 3: *The 39 Clues: The Maze of Bones*

The last book I'd like to share with you today is also part of a series. Book 1 is called *The 39 Clues: The Maze of Bones* and was written by Rick Riordan. It is the first of seven books that have been published, and every book was written by a different author. There are three more scheduled to be released in 2010. Book 8 will be out in April and the final book will be released in August.

The series of ten books is the story of Amy Cahill and her brother, Dan, and the mysterious adventures they go on when their grandmother suddenly dies and leaves a message in her will about 39 clues that are scattered all over the world.

Listen to how chapter one begins:

"Five minutes before she died, Grace Cahill changed her will.

Her lawyer brought out the alternate version, which had been her most guarded secret for seven years. Whether or not she would actually be crazy enough to use it, William McIntyre had never been certain.

"Madam," he asked, "are you sure?"

"Yes, William." Her every breath was painful. "I'm sure."

The book begins with suspense and never seems to end. Listen to the first two lines of Chapter 2:

"Dan Cahill thought he had the most annoying big sister on the planet. And that was *before* she had set fire to two million dollars.

And now the first two lines in Chapter 3:

"Amy Cahill thought she had the most annoying little brother on the planet. And that was *before* he almost got her killed.

Not only is this series of books filled with mystery and adventure, the book also includes online gaming and card collecting. Readers of these books can participate in an interactive online experience where they win prizes, but only if the readers are between 6 and 14.

Each book in the series unlocks one clue, and by entering the codes of the 6 cards in their online 39 Clues account, readers are entered automatically into a drawing to win Book Prizes, including the final prize of $100,000! You can participate in the online gaming, or you can just have fun reading the books.

So today, during independent reading, you are welcome to try out one of three books I recommended, any of the other new titles that Mrs. Wozniak added to the read-aloud library, any of the 190 books from the previous read-aloud libraries, or any other book of your choice.

Happy reading!

(1,050 words)

Bites
Interactive Read-Aloud

Last week during the fantasy read-alouds, we talked about how the traits, motivations, and appearances of the main characters help readers understand the plot and theme of a book. Good readers know that the way a character looks and acts on the outside, and the way the character thinks and feels on the inside, affects the plot of the story.

Today I'll be reading aloud the beginning pages of one of the scary stories in the book *Bites*. The first time I stop today, I am going to model for you how I use the details the authors give me to paint a picture of the character to come up with my own understanding of that character's appearance, actions, and motivations. Then, when I stop reading at other points, your job will be to talk with your partner about what *you* think about the character's appearance, actions, and motivations.

Read aloud the first half of page 1 and stop after the line: "Hand me the shovel" and say:

I noticed that these two boys have very different character traits. Rudy seems to be outgoing and adventurous, but maybe not so much in a good way. I think this because it he is climbing over the fence and breaking into a cemetery and is taking a shovel with him. This makes me think he is about to do something he shouldn't do.
Mark, however, seems to be more of the cautious type that thinks about his actions and doesn't want to get into trouble. I also think he is easily influenced by other people because he must have allowed Rudy to talk him into going to the cemetery late at night.
I also think Rudy is bossy and tells Mark what to do, because in the opening line Rudy tells Mark not to be stupid and when Mark gets nervous about being at the cemetery Rudy laughs about it and ignores Mark's suggestion that they go home.
I predict that Mark is Rudy's good friend or maybe a relative--like a brother or cousin--and that Rudy is the one that makes most of the decisions and Mark just agrees to do with whatever Rudy suggests.
Did you notice how much thinking I did about these two characters after reading just half a page. Good readers stop and think about what they are learning about the characters in a book based on the characters' words, actions, and inner thoughts and feelings.
As I continue reading, pay attention to all of these things so you can talk about the characters' traits as well.

Read aloud the rest of page 1 and the first full paragraph on page 2. Stop after the lines: "It won't really be stealing," Rudy had said, "because you can't steal from the dead, right? It's a legal fact" and say to the students:

Now turn and talk to your partner about the character traits of Rudy and Mark. Do you agree with my descriptions of the two boys? If so, tell why by giving details from the book. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read aloud the rest of page 2 and stop at the end of the paragraph at the top of page 3. After the line, "At least that's what Mark had thought until he was there, at the cemetery fence" and say to the students:

We just learned some new information about Mark because the narrator revealed to us some of Mark's thoughts and feelings. Turn and talk about Mark's motivations for doing something wrong that he now realizes could get him into trouble. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Read aloud the rest of page 3 and stop at the end of the paragraph at the top of page 4, then stop and say to the students:

From this scene, what are some additional ways you would describe each of these two characters? Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread the last line.)

Before reading on, look up at the students (so they know you're not reading this from the book) and say: "I've got to give Rudy credit. He's an intelligent boy, even though he is already on the path to be a criminal. Meanwhile, Mark seems insecure with himself and just wants to be accepted by people--so much so that he is willing to go to extreme measures to get the money to buy the new tennis shoes."

Finish the read-aloud by reading the rest of page 4 and on to the middle of page 5. Stop when you get to the break in the page (after the line: "Now hold that flashlight steady" and say:

To find out whether Mark and Rudy find the riches they are searching for and whether they make it out of the cemetery alive, check out *Bites* from our read-aloud library.

Happy reading!

New Moon
Interactive Read-Aloud

Today I'm going to read aloud to you the preface of *New Moon*. The preface is the same as a prologue. They both refer to the introductory part of the book, but they're not part of the actual plot, which begins in chapter one. Then I'll read the first few pages of *New Moon* and, just as I did with *Bites,* I am going to give you a chance to talk to a partner about the characters' appearances, traits, and motivations, and how those help the reader understand the plot and theme of the story. Remember that the writer creates characters that are believable to the story, even when the characters are vampires. The characters' actions and motivations must be consistent throughout the story so that they all contribute toward the reader drawing conclusions about the plot and theme of the story. Listen now as I read aloud part of the first chapter of *New Moon* and pay attention to the actions and appearances of the characters so you can draw your own conclusions about the plot.

Read the entire Preface and when you are finished reading say:

If you haven't read the first book, *Twilight,* or seen the movie, let me introduce to you the character that is talking in this scene. It is the main character of the book, Bella, and she is a seventeen-year-old girl who is quiet and rather shy. In the first book, she moved to a new town and has become pretty popular at her high school. The kids there are intrigued by her because she has just moved from a place that is different from where they live, and even though she perceives herself to be plain looking and not very special, the boys find her attractive.

Listen now as I begin reading chapter one, and see what conclusions you can draw about Bella from her actions, thoughts, and feelings.

Read pages 3-4, and when you get to the bottom of page 4, before reading aloud the text that is italicized, stop and say to the students:

And then, Bella imagines herself trying to explain aloud the situation to her grandmother by saying something like: "Well, Gran, you might have noticed that my boyfriend glitters. It's just something he does in the sun. Don't worry about it..."

Then say: The reason I know that Bella is only thinking this in her mind is that those words are written in italics.

Turn and talk to your partner about what you can say about Bella's character from the interaction she had with her grandmother during the dream. Is Bella a good or bad person, caring or uncaring... how would you describe her and why? Turn and talk. (After about 1 minute, reread the italicized lines."

Read half of page 5 and stop after the line "...put his arm around my shoulder and turned to face my grandmother" and say to the students:

Now discuss Edward's character--his actions and appearance. Turn and talk. (After about 1 min, reread all of the last line.

Read aloud the rest of page 5 and the first half of page 6 up to the break in the text and then say to the students:

From just a couple of pages that talk about Bella's dream, I think that Bella is worried about growing old. I have a feeling that she fears that she will lose Edward because she is going to get old and wrinkly one day, and, meanwhile, he will stay seventeen and be young looking forward. Hmm... sounds a little bit like Winnie and Jesse in *Tuck Everlasting*.

Maybe you know already, from seeing the movies, what happens in *Twilight* and in *New Moon,* but, if not, I suggest you read Stephanie Meyer's books to find out what happens in books 1 and 2 of the *Twilight* saga.

Happy reading!

Appendix G

Ranking of Favorite Book Talks and Read-Alouds

Favorite Book Talks and Read-Alouds

Rank in order from most to least favorite the teacher book talks and read-alouds by writing the numbers 1 to 6 on the lines below. Write the number 1 in the blank for the week of teacher book talks and read-alouds that you enjoyed the most and continue ranking them in order from 1 to 6.

_____   **Week 1: Realistic fiction**

- *Shiloh*
- *Hoot*
- *Locomotion*

_____   **Week 2: Graphic novels and comics**

- *Amulet*
- *Superman for All Seasons*
- *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*

_____   **Week 3: Historical fiction**

- *Number the Stars*
- *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*
- *The Watsons Go to Birmingham--1963*

_____   **Week 4: Information and sports**

- *Year in Sports 2010*
- *Guinness World Records 2010: Gamer's Edition*
- *Book of World Records 2010*

_____   **Week 5: Fantasy**

- *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*
- *Tuck Everlasting*
- *Inkheart*

_____   **Week 6: Scary/Horror/Mystery**

- *Bites: Scary Stories to Sink Your Teeth Into*
- *New Moon*
- *The 39 Clues series*

Appendix H

Teacher Interview Questions

Teacher Interview Questions (Interview 1)

1. What types of texts do you use to teach the state reading standards?

   - FQ: Are these required or do you have a choice in the types of texts you use?
   - Do you ever pull in other reading material? Explain what types.
   - Do you ever do teacher book talks? Read-alouds?

2. What types of texts do students read in school?

   - FQ: Are these required or do students have a choice in what they read?
   - What are your beliefs about students having a choice in what they read in school?
   - Are your students limited in the types of texts they can read in school?

3. Describe the format of a typical reading block of instruction. In other words, what would I see if I observed the reading portion of your English language arts class?

   - Are students given time for independent reading within their reading block?
   - If so, how often, and what does this chunk of time look like?

4. I brought a set of texts from a variety of genres. I'd like you to tell me which type of text—keep in mind it doesn't necessarily have to be this exact title—but which of these text formats have you used in the past to teach the reading standards?

   - FQ: Why did you choose to use these types of texts?

5. Are there any text formats that you don't see yourself ever using to teach the reading standards?

   - FQ: Why would you never choose these types of texts?
   - If a specific discussion about comics does not evolve naturally, then ask the teacher: What about comics? How do you feel about using this genre to teach reading?

6. Which of these texts do your students like to read?

   - FQ: How do you know?
   - Why do you think these texts are so appealing to your students?
   - Are any of these texts more appealing to the girls or more appealing to the boys you teach?
   - How do you think the students would feel about being able to read all of these in school?
   - End with a discussion about unrestricted choice during independent reading during the study.

Teacher Interview Questions (Interview 2) - Mrs. Vacca

Thank you... it's been a wonderful 6 weeks for me. I'm totally enjoying this and loving spending time in your classroom. You and your students are wonderful!

1. How do you think it's been going?

2. What do you think about using teacher book talks? What do you like about them? If you were to use them beyond the study, what changes would you make?

3. What do you think about using teacher read-alouds? What do you like about them? If you were to use them beyond the study, what changes would you make?

4. Independent reading- In what ways, if any, have your thoughts about independent reading changed?

5. Follow-up question: In the first interview you said that you don't have silent reading during the language arts block because there isn't enough time. (Thank you again...) Have your thoughts changed or do you believe that when the study is over you'll go back to having independent reading only with your homeroom class the once or twice a week that you have time?

6. Student choice- You said in the first interview that you give some sort of strict guideline. Have any of your thoughts about the guidelines for what students can and cannot read changed?

7. You mentioned that you thought students were going to think they "died and went to heaven." You thought they'd love the Captain Underpants and the comic books... What do you think about the books students are choosing to read? Any surprises in what students are reading and not reading?

8. Follow-up questions about graphica-
   a. You mentioned that you have restricted students from reading graphic novels mostly because of the content. You also said that you didn't consider them to be chapter books, and "I wanted to make sure the kids got the enjoyment of reading a real book, a real book with chapters and plot." Have your thoughts about graphic novels changed, and, if so, what are your thoughts now about students reading graphica?
   b. "I want kids to be able to read for a period of time, and I'm thinking with the Dennis the Menace book they may pick up the book and read just one page and then go back and do another page or whatever." Have your thoughts or concerns changed about making sure students are reading for longer periods of time and

wondering whether they would do that if they were reading single panel comics, graphic novels, comic books, and manga?

9. Lit circles- You talked about how you teach reading by doing literature circles. Have your thoughts about anything related to literature circles changed?

10. What are you learning about your students and their reading interests through this study?

11. Have you learned anything or noticed anything about the boys that was different from before the study?

12. Were there any surprises related to gender and students' reading interests?

13. What about any of the boys whose reading attitude and reader self-perception scores were lower? Nathan, Mathias, Jonathan, Swenson, Kevin, and Donny?

14. Have you learned anything new as a teacher?

15. What texts would you consider using to teach reading?

16. Is there anything else you want to share about the study? Anything that surprised you? Anything that you wish was going better?

Teacher Interview Questions (Interview 2) - Mrs. Labelle

Thank you... it's been a wonderful 6 weeks for me. I'm totally enjoying this and loving spending time in your classroom. You and your students are wonderful!

1. How do you think it's been going?

2. What do you think about using teacher book talks? What do you like about them? If you were to use them beyond the study, what changes would you make?

3. What do you think about using teacher read-alouds? What do you like about them? If you were to use them beyond the study, what changes would you make?

4. Independent reading- In what ways, if any, have your thoughts about independent reading changed?

5. Follow-up question: In the first interview you said that you don't have silent reading during the language arts block because there isn't enough time. (Thank you again...) "It just kind of seemed like we didn't have the time to possibly even think about it much less actually do it on any regularly scheduled amount of time." And in your homeroom you said, "Even in homeroom, we're probably down to one or two, you know, it feels like one or two minutes, but, probably, a very short amount of time. The kids that get done early get a lot more silent reading time than the kids that don't." Have your thoughts changed or do you believe that when the study is over you'll go back to having independent reading only with your homeroom class when they have time changed?

6. Amount of reading: Are students reading more than they were reading in the past? How do you think the reading logs are working?

7. Partner talk- How do you think the turn and talk during read-alouds and the partner talk is going?

8. Student choice- You said in the first interview that you hadn't realized it but that you have put some restrictions on what they read. You've put limits on magazines and you haven't allowed graphic novels and manga because they seemed inappropriate. You also mentioned thinking they weren't really reading the Captain Underpants and only looking at the pictures. Have any of your thoughts about limiting students' reading choices changed?

9. You mentioned that you thought the students were going to love the graphic novels, love the sports book, love the magazines, and love the informational books like the

World Records books. What do you think about the books students are choosing to read? Any surprises in what students are reading and not reading?

10. Follow-up questions about graphica-
   a. You mentioned that you have restricted students from reading graphic novels mostly because of the content. Have your thoughts about graphic novels changed, and, if so, what are your thoughts now about students reading graphica?

11. What are you learning about your students and their reading interests through this study?

12. Have you learned anything or noticed anything about the boys that was different from before the study?

13. Were there any surprises related to gender and students' reading interests?

14. What about any of the boys whose reading attitude and reader self-perception scores were lower? Eric, Charlie, Julius, Mike, Willis, Isaac, Marcus, or Alex?

15. Have you learned anything new from the study that will help you as a reading teacher?

16. What texts would you consider using to teach reading?

17. In the first interview you said...

I know it's not part of your study, but I was thinking how awesome would it be if their, if this group's test scores went up and how I could use that to demonstrate how silent reading is, in fact, an important part of the reading block, because I know that it doesn't happen. Even if we just did it in our homerooms I'd be thrilled. Because it's something that's been pushed to the side, and to the side, and to the side, until it's practically fallen off the table. Um, and if it's happening, it's usually the break that teachers get that it's like, "I need to do, I need to finish report cards. Sit and silent read." I would love to prove that it doesn't have to be just that. Um, and that, especially having lots of different kinds of books would be awesome. Especially if we could all have a library like this to everybody. But I think that's it, I think, I mean, right now it's so test-school, so test-score driven, I would love to prove that yeah, this does, in fact, affect how well they do, and that, you know, 90 minutes a week can make a huge difference on how they do.

18. Is there anything else you want to share about the study? Anything that surprised you? Anything that you wish was going better?

Teacher Interview Questions (Interview 3) - Mrs. Vacca

1. The last time we talked formally was after week 4, which was after you had completed your second round of book talks and read-alouds that were of high interest to students--information and sports book talks, and you had a lot of positive things to say about how things were going. How have things been since then, and especially since the intervention of book talks and read-alouds formally ended?

   • FQ: Have you continued any pieces of the intervention? Book talks (formal or informal), read-alouds, independent reading, partner talk about what students are reading?

2. What did you enjoy most about the study?

3. You indicated that your favorite weeks of the study were graphica (1st), scary/horror/mystery (2nd), and fantasy (3rd). Can you explain why?

4. The other weeks you rated realistic fiction (4th), historical fiction (5th), and information and sports (6th). Can you explain your thinking for these weeks?

5. Was there anything about the study that you didn't like, or that you found more challenging than you had expected?

6. What is your current belief about teachers giving book talks? How do you think you might put this belief into practice next school year?

7. What is your current belief about teachers doing interactive read-alouds? How might you put this belief into practice next school year?

8. What is your current belief about students being given time to read independently in school? How might you put this belief into practice next school year?

9. What is your current belief about students having choice of what they read during independent reading? How might you put this belief into practice next school year?

10. If you recall from our first interview, I laid out 40 texts in front of you, and I asked you which type of texts have you used in the past to teach the reading standards and why (mostly realistic and historical fiction). Which type of texts will you use now?

11. Are there any types of texts that you still don't see yourself using to teach the reading standards?

12. How, if at all, have you changed as a reading teacher as a result of the study?

13. How, if at all, have your students changed as readers as a result of the study?

14. What message, if any, do you have for teachers who don't implement any of these instructional methods?

15. What would you say to teachers who aren't sure whether they should give up instructional time to allow students to read in school?

16. What would you would want me to write in a book for teachers that might convince them to try any of the components of my study?

Thank you for taking this time to answer my questions. I look forward to talking with you more in-depth about the boys' interview responses.

Interview Questions (Interview 3) - Mrs. Labelle

1. The last time we talked formally was after week 4, which was after you had completed your second round of book talks and read-alouds that were of high interest to students--information and sports book talks, and you had a lot of positive things to say about how things were going. How have things been since then, and especially since the intervention of book talks and read-alouds formally ended?

    • FQ: Have you continued any pieces of the intervention? Book talks (formal or informal), read-alouds, independent reading, partner talk about what students are reading?

2. What did you enjoy most about the study?

3. You indicated that your favorite weeks of the study were graphica (1st), scary/horror/mystery (2nd), and information and sports (3rd). Can you explain why?

4. The other weeks you rated fantasy (4th), realistic fiction (5th), and historical fiction (6th). Can you explain your thinking for these weeks?

5. Was there anything about the study that you didn't like, or that you found more challenging than you had expected?

6. What is your current belief about teachers giving book talks? How do you think you might put this belief into practice next school year?

7. What is your current belief about teachers doing interactive read-alouds? How might you put this belief into practice next school year?

8. What is your current belief about students being given time to read independently in school? How might you put this belief into practice next school year?

9. What is your current belief about students having choice of what they read during independent reading? How might you put this belief into practice next school year?

10. If you recall from our first interview, I laid out 40 texts in front of you, and I asked you which type of texts have you used in the past to teach the reading standards and why (realistic fiction, historical fiction, and some fantasy). Which type of texts will you use now?

11. Are there any types of texts that you still don't see yourself using to teach the reading standards?

12. How, if at all, have you changed as a reading teacher as a result of the study?

13. How, if at all, have your students changed as readers as a result of the study?

14. What message, if any, do you have for teachers who don't implement any of these instructional methods?

15. What would you say to teachers who aren't sure whether they should give up instructional time to allow students to read in school?

16. What would you would want me to write in a book for teachers that might convince them to try any of the components of my study?

Thank you for taking this time to answer my questions. I look forward to talking with you more in-depth about the boys' interview responses.

Teacher Interview Questions (Interview 4)

For each of the first four questions, answer first the changes you observed in *all your students*, next, with *all the boys,* and third, specifically, with the *boys in the study*.

1. What changes have you seen in your students' reading attitudes? Feel free to look back at the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey to recall the types of reading attitude questions the students answered.

2. What changes have you seen in your students' self-perceptions as readers? Feel free to look back at the Reader Self-Perception Scale to recall the types of questions the students answered about their self-efficacy as readers.

3. What changes have you seen in your students' amount of reading? Think back to what you saw on their reading logs but also what you witnessed happening in class.

4. What changes have you seen in your students' other reading behaviors? (e.g. how engaged they are with reading, how much they talk about reading, how interested they are in reading)

5. Which boys in the study changed their attitudes and self-perceptions about reading the most? Discuss any situations that exemplified these changes.

6. What surprised you about the boys' responses shared with you throughout the study? For example, were there responses made from boys that you didn't expect?

7. What commonalities, if any, did you find among the boys' responses? What does this make you think, wonder, or want to act upon as a result?

8. Did you read any of the boys' responses to questions and find that they didn't align with what you witnessed firsthand from their reading behaviors in the classroom? Any ideas why there were these discrepancies?

9. What are the most important ideas you learned from reading the boys' responses?

10. How, if at all, might your reading instruction change as a result of what you learned from what the boys shared throughout the interview process?

11. After completing my study where we focused in-depth on boys' reading attitudes, how they see themselves as readers, and how much they read, what thoughts do you have about the topic of boys and reading? Are these ideas different from before the study began?

12. Any other closing comments about the boys in the study or any other aspect of the study?

Appendix I

Reluctant Boy Reader Interview Questions

Prestudy Reluctant Boy Reader Interview Questions

Researcher: I'm going to ask you some questions about your in-school reading and your at-home reading.

In-School Reading

    1. When you are in school, do you like reading?
- Tell me some of the reasons why or why not.
- FQ: Do you like reading in all of your classes or just certain classes? Explain.
- FQ: Do you have a different feeling being able to read for enjoyment than you do when you read in your English language arts class?
- FQ: How do you feel about yourself as a reader when you're doing your in-school reading?

    2. What types of things do you read in school?
- FQ: How well do you like what you read in school?
- FQ: Can you give me some specific titles or examples of things you have read in school lately?
- FQ: Is there anything you would like to read in school but for some reason you don't? Explain.

At-Home Reading

    3. When you are at home, do you like reading?
- Tell me some of the reasons why or why not.

    4. What types of things do you read at home?
- FQ: Do you read this because it is assigned or is it your choice?
- FQ: Can you give me some specific titles or examples of things you have read at home lately?
- FQ: How many of these do you get to read in school?
- FQ: How do you feel about yourself as a reader when you're doing your at-home reading?

Text Sets

    5. I brought a set of texts from a variety of genres. (Check student's understanding of the word genre.) Take a minute to look over all the different types of reading (pause for student to look through the titles). Now I'd like you to tell me which types of texts you have read in the past. I'm not asking whether you have read this exact book title, but I'm wondering which of these

types of books—for example science fiction books, popular magazines, other comic books, and so on--that you have read in the past. (Provide examples by saying something such as: Sports Illustrated is a magazine. Even if you haven't read this magazine, are there other magazine titles that you do like to read?)

- Which of these did a teacher assign for you to read?
- What do you think when you are assigned to read these types of texts?
- Which of these did you choose to read?
- What do you think when you are assigned to read these types of texts?

6. If no discussion about comics has evolved naturally, then say to the student: Five of the titles are comics.
   - What do you think about reading comics?
   - What do you think about students reading comics in school?
   - What do your teachers think about students reading comics in school?

ERAS and RSPS Results

7. I'd like to talk with you a little bit about some of your responses to the surveys. Would that be okay? Have a sample of the ERAS and RSPS for references during the discussion. Discuss briefly with the student any of his particular responses or his overall attitude toward reading using s prompts such as:

   - I noticed you marked _____ for question # _____. Can you tell me more about that?
   - I noticed that for all the questions that ask about _____ you responded _____. Can you tell me more about that?
   - I noticed that overall you responded _____ (positively, negatively, or indifferently—check for understanding of these words) to _____ (recreational questions, academic questions, or overall—check understanding of these words). Can you tell me why that is?

8. Is there anything else that you think might be important for me to know about you as a reader?

Thank you very much for your help with my study!

Poststudy Reluctant Boy Reader Interview Questions

In-School Reading and At-Home Reading

1. When you are in school, do you like reading? Why or why not?

2. What types of things do you read in school?

3. Do you like reading at home? Why or why not?

4. What types of things do you read at home?

5. What do you think about students being able to read comics and graphic novels in school?

6. Show the student the ERAS and explain that the survey measured reading attitude. Has your attitude toward reading changed at all over the last two months?
    a. Show examples from the ERAS.
    b. Ask student to explain any changes in his responses.

7. Show the student the RSPS and explain that the survey measured how students see themselves as readers. Do you see yourself differently now as a reader compared with the kind of reader you were two months ago?
    a. Show examples from the RSPS.
    b. Ask student to explain any changes in his responses.

8. What have you enjoyed most about reading class over the last two months?

9. Were there certain weeks of the study that were your favorite?

- Week 1: <u>Realistic fiction</u> book talks and read-alouds

- Week 2: <u>Graphica </u>book talks and read-alouds

- Week 3: <u>Historical fiction</u> book talks and read-alouds

- Week 4: <u>Information and sports</u> book talks and read-alouds

- Week 5: <u>Fantasy</u> book talks and read-alouds

- Week 6: <u>Scary/Horror/Mystery</u> book talks and read-alouds

10. Was there anything about the study that you didn't like?

11. What do you think about teachers giving book talks and doing read-alouds?

12. What do you think about students being given time to read independently in school?

13. What do you think about students being given the choice of what they are allowed to reading during independent reading?

14. How, if at all, have you changed as a reader over the last two months?

15. How, if at all, has Mrs. _____ over the last two months?

16. What message do you have for Mrs. _____ or any other teachers if they're not sure sure whether they should give up instructional time to allow students to read in school?

17. Is there anything else that you would want me to write in a book for teachers to convince teachers who are unsure that they should try any of the things that we've been doing in my study?

Thank you very much for participating in my study! I ordered the book you picked out so it should be here in a few weeks. It is my way of saying thank you for allowing me to interview you a few times. I wish you all the best and lots of happy reading!

Appendix J

Codes for Boy Transcripts

BOY TRANSCRIPTS
Coding Terms, Descriptions, and Examples

Code	Description	Example
Personal Factors (1)		
1a: Reading attitude prestudy interview	• Responses given to the prestudy Elementary Reading Attitude Survey • Responses in the prestudy interview where boys discuss liking or not liking reading	I: When it's time for your language arts block of time, do you like reading? S: Yeah, I only like reading interesting books, not like if it's boring, I don't like reading.
1b: Reading attitude poststudy interview	• Responses given to the poststudy Elementary Reading Attitude Survey • Responses in the poststudy interview where boys discuss liking or not liking reading or some reading-related activity--focus is on the reading, not the reader	S: In the beginning, on a rainy Saturday, I wouldn't want to read, like before. And now, on a rainy Saturday, I would want to read because this... cause it's like raining, and I wouldn't go outside, and I would just sit down and read.
1c: Reading self-efficacy prestudy interview	• Responses given to the prestudy Reader Self-Perception Scale • Responses in the prestudy interview where boys discuss how they feel inside while reading or their perceptions of themselves as readers--focus is on the reader, not a reading-related activity	So when you're reading in school, how do you feel about yourself as a reader? Do you have any good feelings or bad feelings when you're reading, I'm thinking mostly in Mrs. Vacca's and when it's language arts time. How do you feel about the reading you do then and yourself? S: I don't really like it. I: Can you talk about... Can you think about any reasons why you don't like it? S: No.
1d: Reading self-efficacy poststudy interview	• Responses given to the poststudy Reader Self-Perception Scale • Responses in the poststudy interview where boys discuss how they feel inside about reading or their perceptions of themselves as readers	I: When you think back about yourself two months ago, have you noticed anything different about yourself as a reader? S: Yeah, I like to read more kinds of books now. And two months ago, I didn't really like reading.

Code	Description	Example
1e: Reading ability prestudy interview (new finding)	• Responses given in the prestudy interview where boys discuss their or another student's level of reading knowledge, skill, or ability	What if your teacher asked you to answer some questions about Diary of a Wimpy Kid? S: I would do it. I: Yeah? That would be better? S: Yeah. I: Why? S: Because I know a lot about the book.
1f: Reading ability poststudy interview (new finding)	• Responses given in the poststudy interview where boys discuss a level of reading skill or ability	S: "When I read I don't have to try as hard as I used to." Agree. Strongly agree. Oh, because we've been reading... reading free time, and we get... And I think it helps us read, get better at it, better and better and better because we can read chapter books, all sorts of cool books.
Behavioral Factors (2)		
2aa: Reading interests prestudy interview	• Boys discuss genres, titles, or attributes of books they like reading • Boys discuss books in the study that were their favorites	I: Alright. And what kinds of things do you like to read now in school? S: Books that have action and sports. I: Can you think of the names of any books you've read that you really like? S: Mmm... let me think... The World Record, Scooby Doo, and what it's like football history.
2ab: Reading interests poststudy interview		
2b: Graphica	• Responses that mention the titles of graphic novels or comics • Responses that discuss students reading graphica	so it sounds like you like the graphic novels and comics. That's one of the things you like reading. Now that you able to read these in school because I brought them in, what do you think about kids getting the chance to read those other kinds of books in school? S: That it's very good because Mrs. Labelle doesn't have these books, and it's a chance to read something new.
2c: Amount of reading prestudy interview	• Responses given in the prestudy interview where boys discuss how much or how often they read	I: What do you think would happen if kids were allowed to read comic books in school? S: We'd read more of them. I: You'd read more? S: Yeah.

Code	Description	Example
2d: Amount of reading poststudy interview	• Responses given in the poststudy interview where boys discuss how much or how often they read	I: Do you think you've changed at all as a reader over the last two months? S: Yes. I: And how? How would you describe the change? S: I read more.
2e: Out-of-school literacy activities	• Boys discuss a specific literacy-related activity occurring at home or outside of the school setting--not just a response about liking or not liking to read at home • Boys mention someone at home who is involved in their reading lives	I: Alright, so where do you come up with the books that you read at home? Does someone give them to you, or do you get them from the library? S: Mostly some people give them to me, and sometimes I buy them from Borders or Barnes and Noble.
2f: Other reading behavior prestudy interview	• Other reading behaviors discussed in the prestudy interview that don't fit in the other behavior categories	Do you ever bring any of your books from home to school? S: No. I: No? Why not? S: I like, cause I read the one at school. I: Okay. Would you like to bring any books that you like from home to school? S: Mmhmm. I: Yeah? Did you know that you can do that now? S: Yeah.
2g: Reading behavior after the study	• Other reading behaviors discussed in the poststudy interview that don't fit in the other behavior categories	
Environmental Factors (3)		
3a: Language arts curriculum	• References made to anything related to traditional reading activities such as answering questions and completing workbook pages	What if you had to do reading pages about Diary of a Wimpy Kid? S: No. I: No? You just don't want to do those workbook pages? Okay.
3b: Teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds	• Boys discuss anything related to the teacher book talks and read-alouds--should only be found in the post-study interviews	S: Yes, because if you read aloud the first pages of the books, it makes you interested, and you want to read it more than, like, one is Amulet. When she book talk it. When I saw it in the book talk I like it, and it was interesting.
3c: Time in school for independent reading	• Boys discuss an amount of time students are given to read • Any mention of wanting more time to read in school	I: So, what's alright about it, or how could it be better if it's just alright? How could it be good? S: I don't know… Oh, more reading time.

Code	Description	Example
3d: Amount of student book choice	• Boys discuss anything related to having a wide or limited range of books to read • Any reference to wanting to or not being able to read books of their choice in school or at home	S: I've enjoyed how we get to read whatever we want. I: And does Mrs. Vacca ever recommend certain books to you, or does she just say whatever you want to read? S: She says get books at your lexile level.
3e: Teacher change	• Any change in teacher behavior	S: Yeah, she's kinda calm when she reads, and when she reads a book, she didn't know time has passed. One time she almost forgot to stop us from reading. It was kinda fun.
3f: Teacher's attitude toward graphica	• Boys discuss a change in their teacher's attitude toward or behavior relating to graphica	I: And have you noticed any change in Mrs. Vacca during the study? S: Yeah, like, she likes different kinds of books, like the graphic novels. She thought they were not that good until she started reading some of them, and she is interested in them.
3g: Teacher's book preferences	• Perceptions about what teacher prefer students read or what they do or do not like to read themselves • Boys discuss genres of books, book length, or difficulty of book teachers believe is best for a student to read • Boys mention a teacher's name and the books that teacher includes in the classroom library	I: Okay. Is Mr. Bolger's library different from Mrs. Labelle's library? S: Yes. It's very bigger. S: Well, I'm used to her saying a lot of good things about Andrew Clements books and Because of Winn Dixie. She really likes that book.
3h: Access to high-interest reading materials (read-aloud library)	• Boys discuss enjoying reading certain books • Boys mention preferring certain books because they are more interesting than others • Any mention of the books in the read-aloud library	Well, I've liked the books that we have now because they're more interesting, so I like reading those books and it kind of changed me cause I've wanted to read more. Number 1, "...on a rainy Saturday," I didn't really like to read books. But now I do, because I can read like different kinds of books from the read-aloud.

Code	Description	Example
Narrative Codes (4)		
4a: Boys and reading	• All responses given to the question on boys and reading	I: Is there anything that you think it would be good for me to know about boys and what boys think about reading? S: They like really scary, action, some game book.
4b: Message to teachers about reading	• All responses given to the question about their message to teachers	What message do you have for Mrs. Vacca, or for any other teachers who are unsure whether or not they should give up some of their teaching time and just let kids read books in school? S: Yeah, I think that other teachers should do that. They should let the kids read in class and read aloud to them, and let them discuss with their partner about the book.
Miscellaneous (5)		
5a: Misconception about the question	• Any response that revealed a student's lack of understanding of the question asked during the interview or a question on one of the surveys	So you just said something really important that helps me understand. You said, "I don't feel so good when there's killing in the story." So this question really is about how you feel as a reader. The question isn't asking about how you feel about what's happening in the story. Okay?
5b: Other	• Other pertinent information that does not fit in another coded category	So of all the things that you had to do with the study, you know you listened to the book talks and read-alouds and then you would read books of your choice and partner talk, and all that. Was there anything about the study that you didn't like? S: Kind of like the partner, like, A and B, like that. But, I liked everything except that.

Appendix K

Codes for Teacher Transcripts

TEACHER TRANSCRIPTS
Coding Terms, Descriptions, and Examples

Code	Description	Example
Personal Factors (1)		
1a: Students' reading attitude	• Teacher discusses students' reading attitudes • Teacher states whether a student likes or dislikes reading or any aspect of reading	Watching the kids and some of the kids in the study who, I don't know if they'd say necessarily to a teacher that they hated reading, but you knew that they really didn't love it, just devouring books. And some of them were... I know most of the words were hard for them, but they kept going, and they were interested, and they were sharing books with each other and they really… For some of those kids it was their first positive experience I was having with them as students.
No differentiation made for prestudy or poststudy remarks about students' reading attitudes		
1c: Students' reader self-perception	• Teacher discusses students' reader self-perception • Teacher states how a student feels about himself or herself while reading • Teacher states how a student feels about himself or herself as a reader	I'm anxious to see how the actual interviews come out because I would think that some of them are going to change their idea of whether they are good readers and whether they like reading based on the opportunities they've gotten in here.
No differentiation for prestudy or poststudy remarks about students' reading self-efficacy		
1e: Students' reading ability	• Teacher discusses students' reading ability level • Teacher states whether a student is able or not to perform some reading skill or activity • Teachers' perception of students' reading ability or ability to perform some cognitive reading task	I know it's not part of your study, but I was thinking how awesome would it be if this group's test scores went up and how I could use that to demonstrate how silent reading is, in fact, an important part of the reading block, because I know that it doesn't happen. Even if we just did it in our homerooms, I'd be thrilled, because it's something that's gotten pushed to the side, until it's practically fallen off the table. And if it's happening, it's usually the break that teachers get, you know, "I need to finish report cards. Sit and silent read." I would love to prove that it doesn't have to be just that. Having lots of different kinds of books would be awesome, especially if we could all have a library like this available to everybody. But I think that's it. I think right now it's so test-score driven, I would love to prove that, yeah, this does affect how well they do, and that 90 minutes a week can make a huge difference on how they do.
No differentiation made for prestudy or poststudy remarks about students' reading ability		

Code	Description	Example
Behavioral Factors (2)		
2a: Students' reading interests	• Teachers discuss genres, titles, or attributes of books their like reading • Teachers discuss books in the study that were their students' favorites	Very rarely do they actually have a structured silent reading period. And then they like to read, you know, my nonfiction gets grabbed a lot. A lot of the picture books get grabbed a lot, even the ones that are way too easy for them. They tend to stay away from historical fiction or biography.
2b: Students' interest in graphica	• Teacher responses that mention the titles of graphic novels or comics • Teacher responses that discuss students interest in reading graphica	They're going to love being able to read comics. They're gonna love that, I would think. They're going to love Captain Underpants because they haven't had a chance to do that.
2c: Students' amount of reading	• Teacher responses that indicate how much or how often students read	Partly because when they check in their books, they tell me how far they're reading. And, for the most part, they are reading much more than they did before. Emily, who is suddenly a little book vacuum and is picking good quality books. I mean things like *Out of the Dust*. Things like *Number the Stars*. Things like *Tuck Everlasting*.
No differentiation made for prestudy or poststudy remarks about students' amount of reading		
2e: Students' out-of-school literacy activities	• Teachers discuss a specific literacy-related activity that their students engage in at home or outside of the school setting	
2f: Students' reading engagement level	• Teachers discuss their students' level of engagement while reading	Even the ones who didn't end up liking graphica, which was very few, that was when they started to enter reading as a fun activity they were engaged in.
2g: Other student reading behavior	• Reading behaviors that don't fit in the other reading behavior categories	But in past years I've had to restrict things like I had a year several years ago there, the kids loved wrestling magazines. And it got so out of hand I had to restrict them because they were at... they just kind of went crazy, like they wouldn't, they weren't reading. So it didn't seem to me like they were reading so much as just flipping through looking at the pictures, and that kind of... in my traditional teacher sense, went "Ahhh!!! that's not reading!"

Code	Description	Example
Environmental Factors (3)		
3a: Language arts curriculum	• References made to anything related to traditional reading activities such as answering questions and completing workbook pages	I do follow the Houghton Mifflin. I do the read-alouds. We do a fairly extensive... more than what Houghton Mifflin talks about for the vocabulary so that they have access to it. Then I have been using comprehension questions from the book lately. The thinking for that is the way those comprehension questions are phrased is the way they would be phrased in tests. And my asking them in my words, I may get a different result, as far as what they're thinking is, than using something that's more official. So we do that, but we also go through the story. And then, when I do the read-aloud from Houghton Mifflin, we go over the particular strategy that they're stressing at the time.
3b: Teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds	• Teachers discuss anything related to the intervention of giving teacher book talks and interactive read-alouds • Teachers discuss giving book talks and read-alouds other than the type given in the study	I've used read-alouds probably not... My book talks have been informal, at best, usually more: "I bought this cool new book. I think you might like it guys. It's sitting up here," and then, you know, they like it for, you know, three days, and then if it's not a book that they're particularly interested in anyways, they'll just kind of disappear from it. But nothing formal for book talks.
3c: Time in school for independent reading	• Teachers discuss an amount of time their students are given to read • Any mention of wanting more to give more time to read in school	Whenever possible, when we have time in the day, depending on how things have gone, I go ahead and let them have half an hour of silent reading. And the rules are: You read and you don't get up, unless, well, an emergency, and you can choose what you want to read. I don't monitor them, I don't walk around and see what they do. I'm reading while they're reading, and I think it's important because they don't get a chance to do a lot of choice reading in school.
3d: Amount of student book choice	• Teachers discuss anything related to giving their students a wide or limited range of books to read • Any reference to their students wanting to but not being able to read books of their choice in school or at home	I really give them some sort of strict guidelines. Like I said, most importantly that it's at their reading level, whether it's at-home reading or the in-class reading. And as far as at-home reading, otherwise I'm pretty free because I figure their parents are there, and if they see something is not appropriate they will, hopefully, step in. Here, other than it needs to be a book, and often my reluctant readers I'll say that book could be about sports or it could be about science or it could be about whatever. It doesn't have to be a fiction book. I let them have pretty good choice, other than it has to be at their reading level.

Code	Description	Example
3e: Teacher change		*NOTE: None of the teacher transcripts were coding using this theme because the theme overlapped so many others that it no longer was useful. Instead of coding for teacher change, a separate section called The Reading Teacher was created.* *Themes related to changes made in the teacher included themes with the environmental section such as teacher's attitude toward graphica and teachers' book preferences.* *New categories not found previously in the boys' transcripts themes were organized further into three areas: personal factors, behavioral factors, and environmental factors.*
3f: Teacher's attitude toward graphica	• Any responses that indicate a teacher's attitude toward or behavior relating to graphica	The other thing is just comics. And I think I just, you know, enough being around teachers that were older than me, or whatever, who was like comics aren't reading in the sense that they're not rigorous reading at least. And so that's fine if they do it at home, but they should to try to pick different choices at school.
3g: Teacher's book preferences	• Teachers discuss their preferences for what students read or what they do or do not like to read themselves • Teachers discuss book titles, genres of books, book length, or the difficulty level of books they believe are best for a student to read	Houghton Mifflin, especially some of the stories in 5th grade, do not do a particularly good job at that and so I use In the Land of the Lawn Weenies to teach some of those. They're short stories that are kind of scary fantasy stories, and they have a great cliffhanger. And so we do a lot of predicting and inferring of what's going to happen next. What do you think would have happened if the story had continued, and they kind of like, they hook into it because it's interesting and fun. They're not going to find that in their Houghton Mifflin story.
3h: Students' access to high-interest reading materials	• Teachers discuss students enjoying reading certain books because they are more interesting than others	I'm curious to see, for the kids who don't enjoy reading, if having the variety will help bring them in. That they'll say, "Okay, I don't like reading a novel, but I love reading a magazine." And so they'll see that as part of their reading. Part of the excitement does seem to be getting new books. I mean thye're just thrilled that they're getting new books. "Is she bringing new books today? Oh, good, oh, good!" And so I'm thinking, how am I gonna do this next year? Am I just going to have blank library shelves and just start bringing them out? Am I going to take out a loan on my house to buy books? I don't know exactly how we're going to do this.

Code	Description	Example
Language Arts Teacher: Personal Factors (4)		
4a: Teacher's attitude	• Teacher discusses her attitude toward teaching reading	I: How do you think it's been going? T: Honestly, it is my favorite part of the entire day. It's probably my favorite chance to get to know the kids in a way I don't get to see them, like, when we're doing stuff out of the textbook.
4b: Teacher's self-perception	• Teacher discusses how she feels about herself as a teacher of reading • Teacher discusses her competence level in the teaching reading	It's still hard for me to follow a script because I'm just not a script person, but I find that if I practice it at the over head in the morning, I do better. So that would be the only thing, but, yeah, I'd like to do it more, and probably in a better way than I've been doing it.
4c: Teacher's ability	• Teacher discusses her ability toward teaching reading • Teacher discusses her knowledge about the teaching of reading	I: Is there anything that comes to mind about what it is that you're learning as a reading teacher? T: This is where my notes all are. I realized that the more I understand a genre, the deeper I can go when I'm talking about it. I mean, that should be obvious, but it kind of like… If I'm familiar with a genre, it's easier for me to introduce it, to tie it into other things, than on genre. So I need to do some reading during the summer, to get into things that I hadn't been into before.
Language Arts Teacher: Behavioral Factors (4)		
4d: Future planning	• Teacher discusses her plans for how she will teach reading	I would like to continue doing these [teacher book talks]. I really like being able to focus on a short, instead of taking on a whole book, take on a portion, to get the kids' appetite wetted, and then to be able to focus in specifically on a strategy. I think my job over the summer will probably be to sit and work those out, cause I know during the year I may not have the time, or energy, to do that.

Code	Description	Example
4e: Other teacher reading behavior	• Teachers discuss practices in the teaching of reading not related specifically to teaching core curriculum • Teacher discusses other reading behaviors not described above	I realized that when I was going through my library just to get it kind of weeded out. I have no graphic novels. (cleaning out classroom library) I've always made the rule that you can't do a lit circle with a book that you've already read, and I'm not sure I could continue to do that. The concern is that they won't read; they'll just remember what they remember. The other side is that if they read it a second time they're going to get more. (changing a practice for literature circles)
Language Arts Teacher: Environmental Factors (4)		
4f: Benefits	• Teacher discusses benefits in the environment that support their teaching of reading	We have a fairly extensive lit circle library here, which we're really lucky to have, and what I generally do is that I look at books I've read, books that kids have liked or have told me they liked if they were reading individually, so that I have a pretty good idea these are not just interesting to me but they're good. I try to get ones that I consider appropriate, like, there are some that we bought that had a great deal of Southern dialect in it and it was for kids who were at a lower lexile, but because of the dialect it just threw them off completely. Or if I read it myself and just say, mm, no, not a great book, I won't choose that one. So I try to choose what I think is a good book based on the strength of the story elements, based on the level that is relatable to the kids
4g: Barriers	• Teacher discusses barriers in the environment that restrict their ability to teach reading the way she would like	I: Have your thoughts about independent reading changed, or do you believe that, when the study is over, you'll go back to having independent reading only with your homeroom class? T: I would really like to see it in the literacy block. The only thing was just, again, the time problem. I mean, right now, to fit the study in and I'm giving them four days a week--the three book talks and then the read-alouds--and an extra day to make up for any time where we get cut short, because the book talk was long or the read-alouds go long, as well as the fact that they just really love it.

Code	Description	Example
4h: Bridges	• Teacher discusses situations that help bridge the gap between teacher and student and allow the teacher to be a more effective reading teacher • Teacher discusses situations that help bridge the gap between students and allow the teacher to be a more effective reading teacher	There needs to be a time when I engage with them about books that are out in the world. And they need to see how a reader engages in a text, and not just a textbook text. It was amazing to watch multiple kids going through and finishing *New Moon*. Finish the comic book collections that were huge. That was powerful. And I think between that and the fact that it spreads. A couple of kids get into a book, and all of a sudden your waiting list is huge. It builds community. We don't have a lot of time for community building like we used to, and I think if you can build community and teach them how powerful reading is on top of it, how could you go wrong?
Narrative Codes (5)		
5a: Boys and reading	• All responses given to question that related to boys and reading	I: Do you have any sense of any differences in what your boys like to read versus what the girls like to read? T: Almost more what they think they should read. In other words, boys don't think girls should read sports books and girls don't think boys should read about, maybe Princess Diana. But other than that I, partly from watching Ralph Fletcher talk about boys are really different and they need certain kinds of things, so what I tell them is that I don't want them to bring really explicit, violent kinds of things. But, in general, the boys would probably prefer the sports books, the nonfiction books. Girls are more into the fiction, either realistic or historical fiction. Some of both like the kind of mystery stuff. Some like the fantasy, both of them. We don't have these available.
5b: Message to teachers about reading	• All responses given to the question about their message to teachers • Responses given by teachers in the study about conversations with their colleagues	I: Alright, so then what message, if any, would you have for teachers who, you know, all of these things that have become now part of your experience, and have been of mine, what would you say to them if you wanted to maybe encourage them to try any of these instructional methods? T: I think I would suggest just try it. Just try it for even a few weeks, and do some of the things. Maybe come in and take a look at what this looks like, if they're interested. I mean obviously if they're just, "No, we won't do it," okay. But if they are even slightly interested say, come in and watch, and see what happens with these kids, cause I think, in general, teachers really do want kids to like reading. And so the concern, I would imagine, would be that they would just be reading fluff and they wouldn't be getting what they need. And if I probably had to choose, I'm more happy that the lower kids got better reading than the high kids going up and up. I mean, between the two, we worry more about the ones that are low. And so I would bring that up.