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Implementing a Research-Based Reading Intervention Focused Upon Increasing Reading Comprehension Amongst Third-Grade Students

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Implementing a Research-Based Reading Intervention Focused Upon Increasing Reading
Comprehension Amongst Third-Grade Students

by
Kamaria McNair

An Applied Dissertation Submitted to the
Abraham S. Fischler College of Education
and School of Criminal Justice in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Education

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This applied dissertation was submitted by Kamaria McNair under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

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Kamaria McNair
Name

July 26, 2019
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  Teaching to the third-grade participants of this study

Abstract

Implementing a Research-Based Reading Intervention Focused Upon Increasing Reading Comprehension Amongst Third-Grade Students. Kamaria McNair, 2019: Applied Dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice. Keywords: Reciprocal Teaching, metacognition, comprehension, background knowledge

The purpose of the qualitative study was to determine if and how the strategy instruction model Reciprocal Teaching helped low-level readers comprehend what they read. The study also was conducted to measure if and how the Reciprocal Teaching strategies motivated the participants to read and if and how they used the strategies after their exposure to them. Lastly, the study measured the instructional strategies that were currently being used to help third-grade participants. The subjects involved in this study were 10 third-grade students who displayed a need for comprehension development. The sample size was determined by the reading benchmark test that takes place in the beginning of the year.

All participants were taught the four strategies of Reciprocal Teaching (Predicting, Questioning, Clarifying, and Summarizing) by a reading specialist. The reading specialist explicitly taught the participants the Reciprocal Teaching strategies by modeling the strategies and utilizing think alouds. After modeling, the participants worked together as a group to practice using the strategies. The researcher observed and served as a facilitator with the reading specialist. During and after the study, the researcher observed how the participants used the strategies and their reading behaviors as they relate to comprehension development. Observation forms, interviews, and surveys were utilized as a means to track the progress and development of comprehension with the participants.

During the study, the researcher was able to use that which was observed by the participant to make theoretical connections to reading literature. The findings were described and discussed in terms of how Reciprocal Teaching can be used by teachers to help develop comprehension as well as motivate readers to read and become lifelong learners. Finally, the researcher used the finding to explore and determine future research and recommendations that can possibly take place to further research and findings on the topic of Reciprocal Teaching and how it can be used to foster comprehension.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background and Significance of the Problem

At the researcher's elementary school, a basic cause of reading problems was that some third-grade students did not have basic reading skills and were not able to comprehend grade-level texts. The ability to read fluently and derive meaning from text is a critical concept students need to learn by the end of third grade (Workman, 2014). After third grade, research indicates remediation of poor reading for students is increasingly challenging, if not quite difficult (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Guthrie, Shafer, & Huang, 2001; Rigney, 2010; Stanovich, 1986; Workman, 2014). Students unable to comprehend print by third grade struggle to gain new levels of reading, making independent learning impossible. Evidence of the problem stated above is shown through standardized testing mandated by the host state's Department of Education as displayed within the classroom by weekly and local school-wide benchmark reading tests, such as Unit reading test and weekly comprehension test. Student data from test scores show students achieving below grade level compared to students in other states.

This research took place within a local, public elementary school, part of a large Southeast Atlantic urban center. The school employs 22 teachers, two principals, one counselor, one school nurse, and one secretary. Prior to 2010 there were 1,200 students enrolled. With such a large enrollment, each principal took the responsibility of handling student discipline, teacher observations, teacher concerns, and parent concerns. The construction of new houses and small businesses led to the enrollment of 1,200 students which in turn resulted in the development of a new K-8 school. After the construction of the new school, students were rezoned to a new school. The new school was not included

in the study, the researchers' school which currently enrolls and instructs 630 students was included.

The researcher, as a primary researcher in the implementation, is a Highly Qualified (HQT) third-grade classroom teacher with 12 years of experience within the local setting. A Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) federal reform legislation as one who holds a master's degree and has completed a minimum of 3 contiguous years of teaching in a specific area of focus. In the role stated above, the researcher is charged with providing effective reading strategies and interventions to students unable to grasp the concepts taught.

Research Problem

The problem to be addressed by the current study is that 43% of third-grade students at the researcher's school are not reading on grade level. This percentage exceeds the percentage of students not reading on grade level nationally. According to the National Assessment of Educational Policy (NAEP) (2017), 33% of newly fourth grade students are reading below grade level. The NAEP is the nation's report card that is given every two years to assess the reading ability of beginning of the year (BOY) fourth- and eighth-grade students.

The ability to read fluently and derive meaning from text is a critical concept of print students need to learn by the end of third grade (Workman, 2014). After third grade, research indicates remediation of poor reading for students is increasingly challenging, if not impossible (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Guthrie et al., 2001; Rigney, 2010; Stanovich, 1986). Students unable to comprehend print by third grade struggle to gain new levels of reading making independent learning unfeasible. Evidence of the problem

stated above is shown through standardized testing mandated by the host state's

Department of Education as displayed within the classroom by weekly and local school-

wide benchmark reading tests such as Unit reading test and weekly comprehension test.

Additionally, student data from Georgia Milestone Assessment System (GMAS) test

scores at the researcher's school show 43% of students achieving below grade level

compared to students in other neighboring states.

Audience

Third graders who have not mastered the concept of print by the third grade are

the individuals affected by the inability to understand what they are reading. General

education classroom teachers and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

teachers, as well as reading specialists, and parents are included as the target audience for

this study. The audience members identified above have daily contact with students who

have been identified as struggling readers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe how Reciprocal Teaching

aids in the comprehension development of struggling third-grade readers. The researcher

also wanted to determine if Reciprocal Teaching increases the ability of struggling third-

grade students to comprehend grade-level text. Reciprocal Teaching aids students in

developing knowledge modules in long-term memory. Students have the ability to access

their modules when needed. Additionally, students learn cognitive strategies (predicting,

questioning, clarifying, and summarizing) that can be used whenever students are reading

independently. Studies (Brown & Palincsar, 1985; Kelly, Moore, & Tuck, 2001;

Rosenshine & Meister, 1994; Sporer, Brunstein, & Kieschke, 2009; Stricklin, 2011) show

that students who master the four strategies used in Reciprocal Teaching have better comprehension skills. Moreover, teachers implementing Reciprocal Teaching have an opportunity to observe reading behaviors and comprehension strategies (Cobb & Kallus, 2011).

Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal Teaching occurs when the teacher and students are involved in a dialogue about what the students are reading. Reciprocal Teaching is a methodology that uses four important strategies that provide struggling readers with techniques to use to better understand the text. To implement Reciprocal Teaching, the teacher models the four reading strategies used in Reciprocal Teaching: questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting. The teacher performs a think aloud using the four strategies to model how the strategies are used when reading a text. A think aloud is characterized as the teacher verbally expressing what he/she is thinking as he/she is completing a task. The purpose of a think-aloud is to model to students the process of thinking as they are reading in an attempt to model how readers construct meaning from reading (Wilhelm, 2012). Next, the teacher gradually releases the use and control of the four strategies by only helping students when necessary. The teacher helps students in the development of questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting only when needed. Once students are able to use the four strategies independently, the teacher becomes the facilitator and assesses the use of the four strategies with students (Pilonieta & Medina, 2009).

This study provides researchers and teachers with research that supports reading strategies that will help struggling readers comprehend grade-level text. This study provided the reader with specific reasons as to why Reciprocal Teaching is more

beneficial than current reading programs such as scripted reading programs and reading interventions that are Title I funded reading programs.

Definition of Terms

Dialogue—Dialogue is defined as the exchange of concepts and ideas between two or more people who are discussing a specific topic.

Metacognition—Metacognition is the awareness of one's own though process; also known as thinking about thinking.

Reciprocal Teaching—Reciprocal teaching is an instructional methodology that allows students to become the teacher in small reading groups. The teacher models four reading strategies (predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing) that can be used to comprehend the text.

Schema/Background knowledge—Schema is defined as prior knowledge about a specific topic that can be used to understand new concepts and topics.

Think Aloud—A think aloud is defined as describing one's thinking or thoughts out loud.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The following is a literature review pursuant to an applied dissertation focused upon scientifically researched reading interventions. The beginning of the literature review addresses the theoretical framework in which the research is grounded. Various interventions in other settings will be explored noting strengths and weaknesses. The literature that defines the purpose of the study will be investigated. Lastly, influential and non-influential factors likely to affect the research were examined.

Learning to read is a critical skill children must learn to grasp in order to function properly in society (Keer, Hilde, & Vanderlinde, 2001). Successful reading requires more of children than fluency, phonics, and word recognition. The main goal for reading is comprehension. Without knowledge of comprehension, reading becomes meaningless and pointless. Reading for information and pleasure is simply not a goal and reading comprehension becomes impossible. School systems are charged with the responsibility of developing young readers into lifelong readers who are able to not only read fluently, but to also understand what they read. To ensure this is taking place, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) Act of 2001 made sure to incorporate within its curriculum the five components of reading. The five components of reading are as follows: phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The five components were to be incorporated within a research-based reading curriculum to ensure readers were getting the essential reading concepts needed in order to comprehend the text properly (National Reading Panel [NRP], 2000). Though students receive reading instruction with the five components of reading, students are still having difficulty with

reading comprehension. Within the last seven years, students have been introduced to "Common Core" state standards which use a plethora of expository texts to address critical content in social studies and science. Embedded within common core expository text are Tier 3 vocabulary words, which struggling readers have difficulty understanding. The inability to understand Tier 3 vocabulary words results in readers' inability to comprehend the text. Additionally, Common Core state standards use a variety of text structures. Furthermore, struggling readers have difficulty comprehending the text because of text complexity. (Stanovich, 1986; Cunningham & Stanovich, 2001; Rigney, 2010) states the Matthew Effect has always had a poor effect on struggling readers. The Matthew Effect is characterized as the rich continue to get rich, while the poor continue to or remain poor. With reading the Matthew Effect is characterized in that the readers who have difficulties reading continue to have difficulties reading throughout their lives and the readers who read well continue to read well throughout their lives.

Research (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Guthrie et al., 2001; Rigney, 2010; Stanovich, 1986) has shown that students who have not mastered the concept of grade-level equivalency reading comprehension by the end of third grade have difficulty gaining independent meaning from text. Research (Cunningham & Stanovich, 2001) shows deficient reading decoding skills, lack of practice, and difficulty with materials result in unrewarding reading experiences which lead to students' decreased involvement in reading related activities. Insufficient exposure and practice delays automaticity and speed at word recognition. Delayed identification of words requires cognitive resources which should be used for comprehension. Therefore, reading for meaning is hindered and unrewarding reading experiences result in a lack of cognitive involvement (Cunningham

& Stanovich, 2001).

Thirty-eight percent of fourth graders at the researcher's school have been identified as reading below grade level. A small percentage of below fourth-grade level students have been identified as having a learning disability (LD). A learning disability in this context is described as a reader who struggles to process and comprehend print. Students identified as (LD) receive special instruction in separate resource rooms. There is no uniform educational policy for teaching the remaining students identified as low readers (Aaron, Joshi, Gooden, & Bentum, 2008). The educational policy in place leaves low readers at a disadvantage which results in low readers never having the opportunity to read and comprehend text on grade level. The LD based policy has shown its methods are unreliable and instructional methods ineffective. This has led researchers, teachers, and reading specialist to find better identification and treatment for reading programs (Aaron et al., 2008).

Reading Interventions

Reading interventions that are already in place have shown positive gains in struggling readers. However, the interventions have some shortfalls in relation to teaching struggling readers to comprehend text. The researcher has cited three reading interventions that are in place that have failed to thoroughly teach students to comprehend text. Though the interventions have some positive growth in teaching struggling readers to read, the interventions and programs have yet to equip struggling readers with effective reading strategies that can be used to help them read and comprehend text independently. The researcher outlines the interventions' positive gains as well as reasons as to why the interventions have not been thoroughly effective in

teaching struggling readers to comprehend text.

The first reading intervention is READ 180. READ 180 is a reading intervention program created for struggling readers who are reading 2 or more years below grade level (Diebold, 2011). In an effort to meet the needs of struggling readers, READ 180 utilizes instructional software, high interest literature, and direct reading instruction (Diebold, 2011). The intervention is 90 minutes. Students receive 20 minutes of direct reading instruction, 20 minutes in using instructional software, and 20 minutes in small group instruction (Diebold, 2011). The last 10 minutes are used for the closing of the lesson.

READ 180 afterschool program (Hartry, Fitzgerald, & Porter, 2008) cautions teachers about burnout. While implementing the program, researchers found teachers to be fatigued in afterschool hours due to teaching all day and then instructing in an afterschool setting. Students also were at high risk for burnout, being the students were in school all day and the students were now in an afterschool reading program. Studies show teachers are at greater risk of suffering from burnout when teachers teach in the regular-day and the afterschool programs. Additionally, students appeared more restless than they were during the regular school day (Hartry et al., 2008).

The next intervention used involves Title I funding and support. Title I support involves a reading specialist providing 90 minutes per day, weekly of small-group instruction. Most schools have supported struggling readers with Title I funding and support by providing the student with small group direct reading instruction in a classroom with fewer students (Bentum & Aaron, 2003). The reading specialist provides direct reading instruction based on reading standards the struggling readers are having a difficult time grasping. This intervention takes place daily for 90 minutes. However,

research (Bentum & Aaron, 2003) has concluded that elementary school students enrolled in Title I programs were more likely to remain struggling students in grade 9 and receive poorer grades in mathematics and reading. Another approach used extensively in schools is referral and placement in special education programs. A 6-year longitudinal study of a special education program provided to students in grades 1–7 identified with learning disabilities failed to find any significant improvement in either reading comprehension or word recognition skills (Bentum & Aaron, 2003).

The third intervention identified is Scripted Reading programs. Title I funded programs support and implement scripted reading programs. Scripted reading programs are programs that became prominent in the reading classroom in the late 1980s. Scripted reading programs were geared toward ensuring that all students received quality reading instruction that had a specific focus on phonics and phonemic awareness. The NRP (2000) identified phonics and phonemic awareness as a critical factor in developing reading comprehension in the early grades. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) mandated that schools use scientific research-based reading programs. One such reading approach is known as scripted reading programs. Scripted reading programs claim to ensure that proper and effective reading instruction is taking place in the classroom. Scripted reading programs (Dresser, 2012) take the place of the teacher designing instruction by telling the teacher what to say, how to teach, and the pace of the lesson. Research (Dresser, 2012) has shown that scripted reading programs take up to 2–3 hours per day, which leaves little time for teaching other subjects such as science and social studies. Scripted reading programs lead teachers to rush their lessons and leave very little time to revisit complex concepts. Scripted reading programs (Demko & Hedrick, 2010)

are known to teach to the state standardized test as opposed to teaching concepts to master. Students learn to master test-taking as opposed to mastering reading concepts. Students ultimately are shortchanged in that they are unable to take in new information and successfully transfer the knowledge to new areas. According to Demko and Hedrick (2010), teachers are not allowed to stray from the script of the curriculum. Minority students may have a difficult time connecting to the text because the script may make reference to a culture that is unknown to them. Scripted reading programs fail to provide differentiated instruction to students of different backgrounds as well as students who learn differently (Demko & Hedrick, 2010). Teachers feel as though scripted reading programs fail to consider the teacher's professional judgment in regards to how to teach reading to students (Dresser, 2012).

Scripted reading programs, READ 180, and Title I funded reading programs have been implemented in elementary classrooms for many years and have shown some gains in teaching struggling readers to read. However, the programs have yet to be proven to be thoroughly effective in teaching struggling readers to read and comprehend text. The comprehension reading model the researcher has chosen maximizes the accountability of teaching students to read and comprehend text by using various reading strategies that warrant success upon struggling readers (Brown & Palincsar, 1985).

Strategy Instruction

In an effort to bring an end to this phenomenon, the researcher would like to present the reader with strategy instruction, more specifically Reciprocal Teaching and its implication on struggling readers. Reciprocal Teaching maximizes the accountability of teaching students to read and comprehend text by using various reading strategies that

warrant success upon struggling readers (Brown & Palincsar, 1985; Sporer et al., 2009; Stricklin, 2011; Takala, 2006). Students need a systematic reading program that equips students with the ability to critically reason and figure out what they are reading (Eilers & Pinkley, 2006). A systematic reading program such as Reciprocal Teaching allows students to learn strategies and have meaningful dialogue about the text to understand its meaning. Reciprocal Teaching (Brown & Palincsar, 1985; Sporer et al., 2009; Stricklin, 2011; Takala, 2006) is a strategy instruction model that encourages readers to use reading strategies to monitor their comprehension before, during, and after reading to ensure complete comprehension is taking place. This model allows learning and understanding to continue well after the text has been read and analyzed (Brown & Palincsar, 1985; Rosenshine & Meister, 1994). Reciprocal Teaching (Brown & Palincsar, 1985) is a specific strategy instruction model that is tailored to the needs of struggling readers. Within this model, readers are presented with four reading strategies that help them to understand the text. The readers are also within a social environment which encourages readers to have meaningful dialogue about their reading and understanding of their reading with the teacher and other readers.

Reading: Problem Solving

Researchers (Eilers & Pinkley, 2006; Newell & Simon, 1972) identify reading as a problem-solving process. As readers begin to read, readers need strategies that will help them get through the difficult stages when they are reading a text. Research shows that struggling readers are unable to understand the text because they do not have the strategies needed to help clarify what they are reading and the strategies used to help them define the meaning of unknown words. Studies (Palincsar & Brown, 1984) have

shown that Reciprocal Teaching teaches struggling readers problem-solving strategies that relate to frequently encountered problems during reading. For example, Reciprocal Teaching uses the strategy "clarify" to help readers clearly understand the meaning behind the text. When readers stop to clarify what they are reading, readers are able to share their perspective and give their clarification of what is being read (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Readers stop to clarify unknown words or ideas during reading. Furthermore, when readers are able to use the strategy clarify independently, readers can be sure that they are taking the time necessary to gain meaning from the text as opposed to just reading the words on the page.

Reciprocal Teaching uses three other strategies for problem solving such as predicting, questioning, and summarizing to increase comprehension. Reciprocal Teaching allows readers to predict before reading and then check predictions during reading. Readers ask "teacher questions" during and after reading to check for understanding. Lastly, readers summarize either a page or the entire text selection after reading. Teachers show readers how to apply the strategies, but do not use the strategies directly. An example would be to allow readers to create questions about the text. During Reciprocal Teaching, teachers have the responsibility of doing three things:

1. Teachers must activate prior knowledge of ideas and words before reading.

2. Teachers must monitor and guide readers during the use of Reciprocal Teaching.

3. The teacher must encourage reader reflection and allow readers to share a reading strategy which helps them as they read.

The last strategy is critical to the overall success of Reciprocal Teaching. Meta-

cognitive thinking is an important tool which gives students insight into the specific learning styles and allows the students to reflect on which tools help readers gain the most understanding (Stricklin, 2011). Reciprocal Teaching is a model that researchers (Brown & Palincsar, 1985; Rosenshine & Meister, 1994; Stricklin, 2011) favor because the comprehension model gives students a set of strategies that encourage comprehension of the text. Students also indulge in rich dialogue with their peers about what they have read as well as their strategy and process used to gain meaning from the text. Scripted reading programs are geared toward preparing for reading assessments as opposed to providing reading strategies which will aid in the process of comprehending text.

Theoretical Perspective

Various theorists have developed theories that support the comprehension model of Reciprocal Teaching. Lev Vygotsky, John Dewey, and Louise Rosenblatt have created teaching and learning theories that contribute to the way in which readers learn to read and derive meaning from text. The following literature explains the implications Reciprocal Teaching has on struggling readers in their attempt to attain strategies to help below level readers comprehend what is being read.

Lev Vygotsky (1978) was an evolutionary theorist who felt that student learning happened on two levels for students. First, students are allowed to learn the concept by the modeling of a teacher. The next step involves the student becoming more comfortable with completing the task. This stage is also known as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). During this phase, the student is gradually able to perform the strategy or task independently. Vygotsky believed in the role of community to enhance and encourage construction of knowledge. The strategy instruction model Reciprocal Teaching is based

on the theory of Lev Vygotsky (1978) in that students play a role in helping their peers

construct knowledge by their interaction and the dialogue that takes place.

According to Vygotsky (1978), critical learning by the child occurs through social

interaction with a skillful tutor. The tutor may model behaviors and/or provide verbal

instructions for the child. Vygotsky refers to this as cooperative or collaborative dialogue.

The child seeks to understand the actions or instructions provided by the tutor (often the

parent or teacher), then internalizes the information, using it to guide or regulate their

own performance. During Reciprocal Teaching, the reader first observes the reading

teacher explicitly modeling research-based reading strategies. The reader then has the

opportunity to showcase the same strategies that were just observed from the reading

teacher. The reading teacher is able to provide guidance to the students when needed.

Over a period of time, the student becomes comfortable enough to perform the strategies

independently without the help of the reading teacher. This occurs because cooperative

and collaborative dialogue is taking place. This leads to the next educational theorist who

understood the correlation between constructing and building knowledge through social

interaction—John Dewey.

John Dewey's theory was based on learning from doing. Some have adopted the

phrase of experimentalism or instrumentalism to characterize the theory of John Dewey.

Dewey's philosophy of learning was deeply rooted in students taking a role in their own

learning by participating in activities that were of interest to the students. Dewey (1897)

stated, "I believe that the only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's

powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself" (p. 77).

Through Reciprocal Teaching, readers are placed within a setting in which they have to

understand and problem solve in order to comprehend the text. Reciprocal Teaching places critical strategies with the readers in an effort to allow students to problem solve their way through the text. In order for students to understand the text, readers must be able to experiment with the use of reading strategies so that they know which strategies are appropriate for their use when reading text.

In conjunction with Lev Vygotsky and John Dewey, Rosenblatt's (1988) transaction theory is a key factor in strategy instruction. Rosenblatt (1988) states that when readers read, they have a transaction with the text based on their prior knowledge and background knowledge about the topic about which they are reading. Rosenblatt most importantly discusses the stance readers take when reading. The importance of stance being taken by the reader determines the experience the reader has during the reading. Studies (Rosenblatt, 1988) suggest that an aesthetic stance allows the reader to connect with their emotional side, which results in a deeper understanding of the text. When students are able to make emotional connections based on their prior knowledge, text is brought to life based on what students have knowledge about. As readers begin to discuss/dialogue about what they are reading, students share their experience with the text and their perspective of the text with the other readers. Thus, readers are able to view different perspectives, understand the text, and add relevant information from the discussion to their own background knowledge. In closing, Reciprocal Teaching is a comprehensible reading model that fosters the comprehension development in struggling readers.

Components of Reciprocal Teaching

The researcher would like to begin with an outline of components students

attained and were exposed to from their use of Reciprocal Teaching. The components were important in that struggling readers needed to be exposed to them in order to achieve text comprehension. The components are dialogue: background knowledge, motivation, metacognition, and explicit instruction. The components have been proven by researchers to yield successful results in reading comprehension amongst struggling readers. The components discussed are metacognition, dialogue, background knowledge, explicit instruction, and student motivation.

Metacognition. Metacognition is characterized as thinking about thinking. Additionally, metacognition is the act of monitoring one's own cognitive process; "Metacognition refers to the knowledge, awareness and control of one's own learning" (Baird, 1990, p. 184). Metacognitive development can therefore be described as a development in one's metacognitive abilities, i.e., the move to greater knowledge, awareness, and control of one's learning (Baird, 1990, p. 184). According to Pintrich, Wolters, and Baxter (2000), there are three different levels of metacognition. The first level of metacognition is metacognitive knowledge. This level consists of cognitive learning strategies which the reader uses to regulate the process of knowledge acquisition. Examples of these cognitive reading strategies include using prior knowledge or memory cues to invoke information. The second level is known as metacognitive monitoring. This level consists of metacognitive control strategies. This level allows readers to plan and monitor their learning by analyzing and evaluating their learning activities. The third level is known as the resource management and self-management level. These strategies are characterized with the control of the general conditions associated with learning, for example, time management and management of the learning

environment.

A study by Cubukcu (2008) conducted with below average readers suggest that strategy instruction along with metacognitive strategies can give readers the opportunity to understand vocabulary words as well as comprehend information in a text better than they can without the metacognitive strategies. In the study conducted, there were two groups of students, an experiment group that received 45 minutes of reading instruction with metacognitive strategies and a control group of students who did not receive the metacognitive instruction. The experimental group was taught the following metacognitive strategies: using background knowledge, evaluating, inferring meaning, maintaining reading goals, distinguishing between how difficult and easy the text is to read, and guessing what information will be present later in the text. The data showed that students in the experimental group performed well on vocabulary and comprehension posttest. The results indicate that metacognitive instruction can be useful in teaching readers to read and construct meaning from the text. The results also indicate that readers from both groups were able to use metacognitive strategies to gain meaning from text.

Researchers (Dermody, 1988; Lederer, 2000; Stricklin, 2011) suggest that metacognition use in Reciprocal Teaching is a tool that is used to allow students to reflect on their own thinking and learning during reading. Researchers (Gajria, Jitendra, Sood, & Sacks, 2007) have concluded that metacognition is an important factor in self-regulation and motivation in students learning. Mastering the way in which one thinks about reading is a characteristic of an expert learner (Dermody, 1988). Students with metacognitive skills have been known to take ownership of their learning. Metacognition has been known to help students take an active role in their own learning (King & Parent Johnson,

1999). Active learning leads to reading for enjoyment. Lastly, metacognition has its role in leading students to think critically as they read, which makes learning more effective (Stricklin, 2011).

Following Metacognition, are the implications of dialogue within Reciprocal Teaching, dialogue amongst peers has been proven to support new information, add to the background knowledge of students, add to the vocabulary of students, and foster an environment amongst students to feel safe to read and discuss the concepts being read about.

Dialogue. Social interaction is based on the zone of proximal development (ZPD) developed by Vygotsky (1978). Through it, students are able to learn or solve challenging problems, or reach a more complete development of their potential through some guidance from an adult (instructor or expert) or learning activities such as discussion, brainstorming, and group work. Group interaction allows students to participate in four different phases of social interaction (Gavelek & Raphael, 1996). Within the first phase, students in a group learn with the members of their group by sharing new information with one another, participating in meaningful dialogue, and peer tutoring. It is within this phase that students are exposed to new knowledge and negotiate the knowledge that they acquired. Students share different ideas and concepts and bring their perceptions and understanding of the text to the dialogue (McKeown, Beck, & Blake, 2009).

During the second phase, students internalize the knowledge by relating the knowledge to previous experiences, background knowledge, and through experiences people close to them have experienced. During Reciprocal Teaching, students learn the four strategies of Reciprocal Teaching through the teacher's modeling and, later, working

in cooperative groups. During the third phase, the students build their own understanding and reading process on the foundation of what they have learned from the social interaction and thus engage in a process of transformation (McKeown et al., 2009). Finally, they share their understanding and thinking with the group. During this stage, the students' thoughts are shaped through group discussion (Wilen, 1990).

An important factor that plays a role in meaningful dialogue is the transactional reading theory (Rosenblatt, 1988). Transactional reading is characterized as the experience the reader brings to the text which allows the reader to establish and experience the text being read. Rosenblatt (1988) suggests that the words and symbols on a page do not have meaning until the reader, reading the words and symbols, brings them to life based on the readers' experiences and background knowledge that is bought to the text. During reading, readers have a transaction based on the readers' prior knowledge and their personal perspective on the text being read. The theory suggests that the reader's stance or perspective must be respected because each reader brings a different set of experiences to the text which then shapes the meaning each reader has about the text. During Reciprocal Teaching, students are encouraged to have dialogue about the text they are reading; it is at this time that students share their transaction of the text perspective of the text, and in some cases negotiate meaning depending on the text. Transactional reading allows students to bring their memories and feelings to the text. The importance of Reciprocal Teaching is within the rich dialogue in which students can share new ideas, new perspectives, and make connections.

Transactional theory also involves two important factors. These factors must also be considered when readers begin to make a transaction with the text. The readers must

distinguish between one of the two stances of efferent reading and aesthetic reading. By deciding upon a stance, the reader sets a tone that allows the reader to have a meaningful transaction. The stance is used as a guiding force for reading because not only does the stance set a tone, but the stance sets a purpose and answers what the reader would like to get out of the reading. The efferent stance is one in which a reader is reading to take information away from the text. The reader may take this stance if information is needed to learn how to do a task or for information about a specific concept. If a reader takes an aesthetic stance, the reader is reading more so for the experience that the text is bringing forth based on the reader's prior knowledge. While there is dialogue going on within Reciprocal Teaching, through discussions may find that their peers took a different stance which allowed them to come to their respective perspectives. The different perspectives that are brought to the discussion begin to allow readers to see the different point of view of others which results in students observing the thinking process and patterns of thinking of others.

During Reciprocal Teaching, each participant in a group has the opportunity to be a leader and manages group work by discussion through the four main strategies. It is during this phase that social interaction is important because it promotes social learning (Dewitz, Carr, & Patbery, 1987). Social interaction improves the students' ability to resolve comprehension difficulties, improves their higher thinking or metacognition, and increases their motivation (Hurst, Wallace, & Nixon, 2013). Finally, students create new knowledge from what information is internalized. The new knowledge the students create becomes schema for future reading.

Reciprocal Teaching encourages students to take an active role in their learning

through leading a group dialogue. The strategies within Reciprocal Teaching provide a framework for meaningful dialogue to take place. Dialogue has been proven to bring a clearer understanding to the text among students discussing the important concepts in a text. Through dialogue, students are able to reconstruct their ideas and format new ideas from the discussion that occurs in self-guided dialogue. When students use the strategies of Reciprocal Teaching, they have the ability to engage in meaningful dialogue about the text.

The next essential is background knowledge, also known as schema. Background knowledge and dialogue are connected in that during guided dialogue sessions, readers are able to discuss story elements, problem solving strategies, perspectives, and ideas. This dialogue leads to students attaining information that therefore becomes background knowledge. Studies have shown that the more background knowledge readers have, the better readers are able to understand and comprehend new information in a text.

Background knowledge. Research (Anderson, 1994; Anderson & Pearson, 1984) indicates that in order for readers to be able to understand what they read, readers need to have background knowledge relating to concepts about which are being read. In the event that readers come to the text with schema, readers begin to activate the knowledge, which sets the scene and adds more knowledge to what they already know. Without schema, readers have difficulty making connections and understanding the new material being read in the text (Anderson, 1994; Anderson & Pearson, 1984).

Common Core state standards not only have a plethora of Tier 3 vocabulary words, but the common core text struggling readers are required to read are non-fiction text. The non-fiction topics or concepts that are presented in the text may be difficult for

struggling readers to grasp and understand if they have not previously been introduced to the topics or have background knowledge about the concept.

Reciprocal Teaching allows an allotted time for readers to share ideas and have constructive dialogue about the text (Hashey & Connors, 2003). Readers are encouraged to share and use stories from their own experiences to make connections throughout the text with the other readers (Brown & Palincsar, 1985). Allowing readers to share stories and information during reciprocal reading is a sure way to motivate students to read for meaning, being that readers have enough information to connect to new information to create new learning modules (Guthrie, 2002). The more learning modules created by readers, the more understanding and information is retained within struggling readers to use at the present or in the future. Readers are less likely to shut down and give up trying to understand what they read if they have information to link to what they are reading. Readers become eager to share their experiences and cannot wait for others to share their experiences. It is the interactive nature of sharing and listening that motivates readers to want to share even more (Nueman, Kaefur, & Pinkham, 2014).

Student motivation is an important factor in effectively teaching struggling readers to comprehend text. Poor readers often shut down and dislike reading because they do not know how to read and any attempt to read is frustrating. In order to develop successful readers, readers need to become motivated. Reciprocal Teaching has the ability to motivate students using the four strategies embedded within the instructional model.

Student motivation. Reading motivation is an essential practice for struggling readers to understand what they are reading. There are two types of motivation that the

researcher would like to discuss in terms of reading motivation in Reciprocal Teaching—intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation allows students to become motivated to read based on an inner interest in reading. The students have a desire to read and understand what they are reading to satisfy an inner desire to understand. Extrinsic motivation calls for students to read for a reward or a desired outcome. Readers who have extrinsic motivation have the motivation to read because the students know that there is a chance of receiving a reward for reading and understanding. Extrinsic motivation in reading will not warrant a long-term effect in reading achievement but intrinsic motivation will warrant a long-term reading achievement effect (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010).

Studies (Morgan & Fuchs, 2007) demonstrate that reading motivation correlates with reading proficiency and comprehension. Reciprocal Teaching enhances students' motivation for reading by allowing struggling readers to activate background knowledge during pre-reading activities, and in monitoring their reading (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). The strategies used in Reciprocal Teaching allow students to overcome difficulties they come across when reading for understanding. Struggling readers are more inclined to be motivated to read when they are equipped with strategies that help them to understand what they are reading. Struggling readers have a tendency to initiate reading when they know there are strategies that allow them to understand what they read (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Struggling readers have been known to shut down and become frustrated when they come to reading material they are unable to understand (Brown & Palincsar, 1985). Each strategy used in Reciprocal Teaching has the potential to allow students to understand what they are reading if they should come to a difficult to

understand section during reading.

A strategy used in Reciprocal Teaching is predicting. Studies (Brown & Palincsar, 1985; Hashey & Connors, 2003) have proven that predicting is an essential motivating factor in reading comprehension. Predicting before, during, and after reading allows students to become engaged while reading the text. Predicting also allows students to interact with the text, motivating students to continue reading. When students predict, students set a purpose for reading; students become engaged in what they are reading because there is an intrinsic motivation involved for students to determine if their prediction is correct.

In addition to predicting, social interaction is a motivating factor for struggling readers. Social interaction among peers is an effective way of engaging and motivating students to read and enhance comprehension of text (Gambrell, 2001; Guthrie, 2002; Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Readers begin to feel comfortable and at ease around their peers and therefore feel comfortable enough to expand and share ideas in a group setting. Building background knowledge and activating prior knowledge is a key factor in making sure students understand what they are reading (Nueman et al., 2014). During Reciprocal Teaching, students have the opportunity to build background knowledge with their peers in an attempt to add more information to their learning modules which will result in a greater chance of students understanding new details they are reading. As students acquire knowledge through the interaction with their peers, students become more intrinsically motivated to read for understanding because they have information to connect to new information being read.

An essential method that facilitates in the delivery of Reciprocal Teaching is

explicit instruction. Explicit instruction is an important component in teaching struggling

readers to comprehend text (McAllum, 2014). Explicit instruction is categorized as the

ability to model, guide, and gradually release students upon mastery of the instruction.

Explicit instruction is most useful being used with strategy instruction being that students

learn the how, why, and what of the instruction being presented to them. Students are

more likely to use strategy instruction if they are taught using explicit instruction (Kamil

et al., 2008). Studies (Chall, 2002) show that by using explicit instruction, students have a

more in-depth knowledge about what they are being introduced to. Explicit instruction is

used in a variety of settings and for different instructional uses. Outlined below are the

phases for implementing explicit instruction and its implication in teaching struggling

readers to comprehend text. Lastly, the researcher has included studies that have

successfully and unsuccessfully implemented explicit instruction.

Explicit Instruction

Explicit instruction is a form of instruction that is structured and systematic in

maximizing the learning for struggling readers. Explicit instruction is characterized as

being direct and includes instructional design and delivery procedures. Explicit

instruction is used as a guiding tool that guides readers through a series of supports and

scaffolds, whereby students are guided through the learning process with clear statements

about the purpose and reasoning for learning the new skill, clear goals and modeling of

the instructional goal, and supported guided practice with feedback until independent

mastery of the strategy or skill has been achieved by the reader (Dahl & Farnan, 1998;

McLaughlin, 2010a, 2010b; Roehler & Duffy, 1984). The elements of explicit instruction

include presentation, guided practice, corrections and feedback, and independent practice.

Presentation of the concepts include stating the goals, the objectives, and the standards. Readers are able to know where they are going within the lesson before the lesson begins, which gives students an advantage and opportunity to know what is expected of students. Additionally, vocabulary and key phrases are introduced. The information to be presented is presented as well as examples and non-examples. Modeling concepts and routines and procedures also take place in this phase. It is within this phase that reading strategies are introduced, along with key terms and definitions. Readers are exposed to the strategy and its benefit by the modeling factor that comes from the teacher. The teacher may use many different resources of modeling, such as think alouds, which would show readers how to think and reason with use of the strategy. This phase is a very pivotal phase in that students are being introduced to a concept that can and will be of use to them in their lives. The second phase is just as important as the first phase. After presentation, the teacher then allows students to practice and model their interpretation of the strategy to which they were just introduced (Archer & Hughes, 2011; McLaughin & Allen, 2009).

In this phase of instruction, students are required to respond and participate in the practice of using the strategy with the teacher. Readers work with other students in the classroom or within their group to further gain knowledge about the correct way in which the strategy is used. Studies show that dialogue between peers is beneficial in that students are able to understand concepts when they are taught via a peer. The teacher's role is to work with the students with the strategy by giving clues, hints, and help, but only when needed. This phase is characterized by the scaffolding via gradual release model. Students are free to make mistakes and correct themselves as they practice and model the strategy. Students are expected to practice the strategy until they are fluent and

able to perform the strategy independently. In some instances, students may need to be retaught the strategy in this phase to review the importance and significance of the strategy (Archer & Hughes, 2011; McLaughin & Allen, 2009).

The third phase is independent practice, in which students are allowed to continue practicing on their own with the end goal being in mind to display and use the strategy automatically without hesitation. The teacher's role is still that of a facilitator, who gives support only when needed from the readers. The independent practice portion of this instruction depends heavily upon the presentation/direct instruction. As the teacher, it is critical to introduce relevant vocabulary and details that guide the reader to understand the reasoning and importance of the strategies. Additionally, properly modeling the strategies and modeling the benefits of the strategies is crucial, being that students need to be able to see the whole picture and understand the purpose for learning. Once the purpose of learning is set and students are able to relate to the purpose of learning, students will be able to easily grasp the fundamentals of strategy instruction. After students master the strategy, it is important to continue to review and reteach in order for the strategy to be of genuine use for readers (Archer & Hughes, 2011; McLaughlin & Allen, 2009). Studies (Duke & Pearson, 2002; McLaughlin, 2010b) have shown that with the use of explicit instruction and strategy instruction, struggling readers have a better chance of grasping the strategies and using them throughout their school lives, as well as in their personal lives.

Teaching students strategies to effectively gain knowledge from text can be of use to students and teachers when the teacher models, utilizes think alouds, and makes reasoning public. The students benefit from the teacher explicitly modeling the strategies

and how they are used before, during, and after reading. Readers also benefit from the teacher using the gradual release model in that students can assume responsibility of using the strategies independently or within a group setting among their peers. Lastly, students are more likely to use the strategies taught when students observe the positive benefits the strategies bring to comprehending the text. Explicit instruction is crucial in teaching readers to use strategies to comprehend text. Students are more likely to use reading strategies that have been modeled and explicitly taught because readers are able to understand the effects the strategies have upon reading and understanding the text of the reading strategies.

Transactional Reading Theory

The experience the reader brings to the text is an important factor that brings about rich discussion during the dialogue section of Reciprocal Teaching. Transactional reading theory states that each reader brings a different experience to the text and different background information. Additionally, Rosenblatt (1988) states that readers take one of two stances when reading—an efferent stance and an aesthetic stance. An efferent stance is when the reader is reading a text for information or to take information away from the text. The second stance is an aesthetic stance. This stance infers that students are reading for the experience the text is bringing forth by using their experiences and their background knowledge. Rosenblatt (1988) states that the reader who is reading the text allows the words on the page to come to life. Being that each reader brings a different experience or knowledge to the text will warrant students having different perceptions and ideas about the text. As students begin to discuss their perceptions and ideas from the text, students begin to build more background knowledge and make aesthetic

connections. As students make aesthetic connections, their understanding of the text becomes deeper, which allows readers to fully understand the text.

Though there are positive results in implementing Reciprocal Teaching with young readers. Researchers (Galbato, 2000; Hashey & Conners, 2003; Takala, 2006) have stated that implementing the RT strategies can be time consuming. The time that it takes to explicitly teach each strategy to mastery is not conducive to the time allotted for reading instruction and reading curriculum demands. The four strategies take time to implement explicitly so that young readers have the ability to implement the strategies in such a way that benefits their reading comprehension. The time allotted for other subjects such as math, science, and social studies are cut short in the beginning phase of implementing RT (Takala, 2006). Additionally, the time it takes for students to learn the strategies and implement them independently is time consuming and can take away from learning content from reading.

This effect usually takes place in the beginning stages of the implementation of RT in which the teachers are ensuring they are modeling the strategies correctly. Teachers feel as though the time consumed by the implementation of RT is worth it. "We found the old adage 'give a man a fish and he will eat for a day; teach a man to fish and he will eat for a lifetime' is analogous to the reciprocal teaching process: It is more beneficial in the long run" (Hashey & Conners, 2003, p. 225). Though RT is time consuming, students are equipped with strategies that can be used with anything they read at any time (Johnson-Glenburg, 2000; Swanson & De La Paz, 1998). Though the process of implementing and using the strategies are time consuming, teachers feel as though it is worth it.

Conclusion

In closing, the components discussed above are reading components that struggling readers will have an opportunity to learn to use independently. The components have the capacity to aid struggling readers to develop into readers who are reflective, intrinsically motivated, critical thinkers, and readers who become lifelong readers who read not only for information but also for enjoyment.

Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative study is to describe how Reciprocal Teaching aids in the comprehension development of struggling third-grade readers.

1. **(Central research question)** How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?

2. **(Supporting research question)** What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?

3. **(Supporting research question)** How does Reciprocal Teaching affect student's motivation to read?

4. **(Supporting research question)** After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, how do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The following describes the qualitative methodology for the implementation of the reading intervention Reciprocal Teaching to struggling third-grade readers. During the qualitative study, the researcher observed the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching by a veteran third-grade teacher who was trained on using the reading intervention of Reciprocal Teaching during an in-service provided by the county in which she works. During this study, the researcher observed and described how the strategies of Reciprocal Teaching helped with the comprehension development of struggling third-grade readers.

In this chapter, the researcher includes the restatement of the problem, as well as identifies requirements to be identified as a participant, the researcher's role in this study, and the details about the teacher implementing the intervention of Reciprocal Teaching. Additionally, the researcher has included the necessary instruments needed to successfully implement the reading intervention of Reciprocal Teaching. Lastly, the researcher has included the procedures that are sectioned into four different phases to implement the Reciprocal Teaching intervention.

Restatement of the Problem

The problem to be addressed by the current study is that some third-grade students are not reading on grade level. The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe how Reciprocal Teaching aids in the comprehension development of struggling third-grade readers. The ability to read fluently and derive meaning from text is a critical concept of print students need to learn by the end of third grade (Workman, 2014). After third grade, research indicates remediation of poor reading for students is increasingly

challenging, if not impossible (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Guthrie et al., 2001; Stanovich, 1986). Students unable to comprehend print by third grade struggle to gain new levels of reading, making independent learning unfeasible. Evidence of the problem stated above is noted through standardized testing mandated by the host state's Department of Education, as displayed within the classroom by weekly and local school-wide benchmark reading tests such as Unit reading tests and weekly comprehension tests. Additionally, student data from Measurement of Academic Progress (M.A.P.) and Georgia Milestone Assessment System (GMAS) test scores show students achieving below grade level compared to students in other states. Lastly, evidence of the problem was retrieved from third-grade teacher interviews at the researcher's school.

Aim of the Study

The reading intervention Reciprocal Teaching was not in place at the researcher's school. The researcher's aim was to implement a reading intervention that allows struggling third-grade readers to use reading strategies taught through Reciprocal Teaching to aid in their comprehension. The researcher aimed to conduct a qualitative in-depth case study assessing third-grade readers use of reading intervention strategies of Reciprocal Teaching to comprehend text. If the Reciprocal Teaching strategies were successful in helping with the comprehension of struggling readers, the researcher's aim was to propose that Reciprocal Teaching strategies become employed by all third-grade classrooms at the researcher's school during subsequent school years.

Qualitative Research Approach

The strategy of inquiry for this qualitative research was a descriptive case study. Stake (1995) describes case study inquiry in that the researcher explores an in-depth

program, event, activity, group, individual, or more than one individual to provide a deep understanding of the program or event. This strategy of inquiry was used because the researcher wanted to explore and describe, in-depth, the experience third-grade readers had with using the intervention Reciprocal Teaching to help in their comprehension development. In addition, the researcher wanted to assess the effectiveness the Reciprocal Teaching strategies had on the participants comprehension. This in-depth description provided an explicit understanding of how Reciprocal Teaching strategies specifically helped with the comprehension development of struggling third-grade readers. Case studies (Yin, 2009) are bounded by time in that the researcher is able to investigate the phenomenon in its real-life setting. The time frame for this case study was the first term semester of third-grade. The researcher in this study had the opportunity to describe the use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies in its real context, which was a third-grade classroom. Through this qualitative study, the researcher had an authentic view of specifically how the Reciprocal Teaching strategies influenced the comprehension development of struggling third-grade readers. If this research is a success, the researcher would like to propose to the administration team at the researcher's school the use of Reciprocal Teaching during small group reading time.

The researcher's intention with this study was to develop an in-depth understanding of how the Reciprocal Teaching strategy helps in the comprehension development of struggling third-grade readers. Through this study, the researcher developed a plan of action in implementing Reciprocal Teaching within classrooms at the researcher's school for the development of struggling readers.

Participants

The third-grade participants were selected from one third-grade classroom based on purposeful sampling at the researcher's school. The third-grade participants of this study live in an urban setting in the southeastern region of the United States. The third-grade participants ranged from eight to nine years of age. The third-grade participants were chosen based upon the reading data for the beginning of the year (BOY) reading benchmark assessment (see Appendix L). The assessment played a major role in determining the population of the study in that the students were asked to read a third-grade reading level reading passage. After reading the passage, the participants were asked to answer 10 comprehension questions relating to the passage. If the students were able to correctly answer seven or more of the comprehension questions without difficulty, the students more than likely know how to comprehend that which they read. If the students answered 4 or more comprehensions incorrectly it is cause to believe that the students have difficulty comprehending what they read.

The researcher selected 10 third-grade students from one third-grade classroom who exhibited the lowest below grade level scores in reading comprehension. The third-grade participants were sent home with a permission slip to participate in the study (see Appendix M). Once permission slips were signed and returned, the researcher observed the third-grade students in their classroom to gain a perspective on their reading comprehension.

Third-grade Teacher Participants

The third-grade teachers at the researcher's school were also participants of this study. Four third-grade teachers were given one-on-one interviews (see Appendix A)

from the researcher to help answer Research Question 1, "What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level text?"

Teacher A has been teaching for 8 years. She has a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. She has taught fourth grade for 2 years and third grade for 6 years. Teacher B has been teaching for a total of 16 years. She holds an Educational Specialist degree in Early Childhood Development. She has taught second grade for 4 years, and third-grade for 10 years. Teacher C has been teaching for 5 years. She has a Bachelors' degree in Elementary education. She has taught second grade for 2 years and third grade for 3 years. Teacher D has been teaching for 14 years. She has a Master's degree in Educational leadership. She taught fifth grade for 5 years, second grade for 2 years, and third grade for 7 years.

Researcher's Role

During this qualitative study, the researcher observed the Reciprocal Teaching intervention taking place in one third-grade classroom and described the reading behaviors, patterns, and interactions taking place between the teacher implementing the intervention and the third-grade participants. Additionally, the researcher conducted the third-grade teacher interviews.

Teacher Implementing the Intervention

The reading intervention Reciprocal Teaching was not in place at the researcher's school at the time of this study. The reading intervention Reciprocal Teaching was implemented by a third-grade teacher who was trained on using Reciprocal Teaching during a professional development given by the county in which the teacher is employed.

The teacher implementing the intervention attended a reading intervention professional development provided by the county to develop a new and innovative way to teach students how to comprehend what they read. The county in which the teacher is employed provides teachers with professional development training in reading and math subjects. The purpose for the reading and math professional development is to support and maximize the teachers' strategies and methods used during instruction in the classroom. The reading professional development took place in March of 2017. The professional development was conducted at the county's professional development center every Tuesday from 4:00 pm until 5:30 pm for 6 weeks. The teacher implementing the Reciprocal Teaching intervention has successfully completed 15 years of teaching. The teacher implementing the intervention has taught third grade for 10 years and fourth grade for 5 years. The teacher implementing the intervention has a reading specialist degree as well as an ESOL endorsement.

Data Collection Tools

The instruments used for this qualitative study are the beginning of the year (BOY) reading benchmark testing assessments (see Appendix L). The instrument specified was used to determine below grade-level readers or readers who are having difficulty attaining meaning from text. The researcher used a motivation reading survey (see Appendix F) to measure the third-grade participants' attitudes about reading before and after the intervention was implemented. To implement the intervention, the researcher used third-grade level non-fiction and narrative passages from students' science and reading basal. To document specific reading behaviors taking place during the intervention, a teacher-developed observation form (see Appendix J) and post-

interview questions (see Appendix C) for the participants were used. To ensure the

observation form was appropriate and valid, the researcher asked two third-grade teachers

to review the form before it was used. The reading resources used to aid the third-grade

participants' intervention were Reciprocal Teaching posters and bookmarks with the

Reciprocal Teaching strategies (see Appendix I), Reciprocal Teaching transparencies (see

Appendix G), and composition notebooks.

Table

Measurement of Research Questions

Research Questions	How research question will be answered
(Central research question) "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching techniques affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?"	The researcher will use an observation form (see Appendix H) to describe how Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the third-grade participants' comprehension abilities during the study as well as after the study has been completed. The third-grade participants will also complete a comprehension probe (see Appendix K) to monitor their comprehension during the study.
(Supporting research question) "What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?"	The researcher will interview (see Appendix A) four third-grade teachers about the instructional practices taking place in the third-grade classroom. The researcher will also use an observation form (see Appendix H) to describe instructional reading practices taking place in the four third-grade classrooms.
(Supporting research question) "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?"	The researcher will use an observation form (see Appendix H) to document the third-grade participants' motivation during their use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The third-grade participants will also complete a motivation to read pre-and post-assessment (see Appendix D) to measure their motivation for reading during and after the study.
(Supporting research question) "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?"	The researcher will use a Reciprocal Teaching post observation form (see Appendix I) to observe the third-grade participants reading behaviors and patterns after the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching. The third-grade participants will answer post interview questions (see Appendix B) related to their use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies.

Procedure

  The researcher's role during the study was to observe the teacher implementing the Reciprocal Teaching intervention to the third-grade participants. The study occurred in four phases: Phase I: Pre-assessment, Phase II: Implementation of Reciprocal Teaching, Phase III: Assessing the use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies, and Phase IV: Post-assessment.

  Phase I: Teacher interviews and pre-assessment. Research Question 1, "What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level text?" was answered during this phase. The researcher interviewed four third-grade teachers at the researcher's school to gather data about the current instructional strategies that were used to aid in the comprehension development of third-grade students. The researcher also observed four third-grade classrooms during reading instruction to gain an in-depth perspective on the current reading practices taking place.

  The researcher began Phase I by collecting data related to the current reading instructional practices that take place in the third-grade classrooms at the researcher's school. The researcher completed one-on-one interviews (see Appendix A) with four third-grade teachers at the researcher's school. The individual interviews took place after school in the researcher's classroom. The researcher used an interview guide (see Appendix A) to guide the questions being asked during the interview. The researcher used a tape recorder to record the responses as well as write the responses from the third-grade teachers. After recording the responses from the interview, the researcher transcribed the recordings to analyze the data from the interviews. The interviews took

place to gain the perspective of the third-grade teachers and to answer Research Question 1, "What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?"

Pre-classroom observations. After the one-on-one interviews took place, the researcher investigated the current reading practices taking place by observing the setting of the four third-grade classrooms. The researcher observed one third-grade classroom a week during reading instruction. The pre-classroom observations gave the researcher an in-depth and detailed view of the current reading instructional practices and reading behaviors that were taking place in the third-grade classrooms. The researcher used an observation form (see Appendix I) to describe the setting and the current reading practices that were taking place in third-grade classrooms during reading instruction. During the pre-observation, the researcher observed the teacher and student interactions as well as the students' interactions with one another. The researcher documented/ described the reading instruction that was taking place, as well as the academic dialogue that took place between the teacher and third-grade students. The researcher documented/ described the reading posters, reading manipulatives, reading books, and materials available within the classroom. The pre-observation helped in answering Research Question 1, "What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level text?"

Pre-assessment of third-grade participants. Once the data from the one-on-one interviews and the classroom observation were gathered, the teacher implementing the intervention gave permission slips to ten intended third-grade participants for permission to be included in the study (see Appendix M). All ten intended participants returned their

permission slip signed by their parent or guardian. Once the ten third-grade participants returned the permission slips, the teacher implementing the Reciprocal Teaching intervention gave the third-grade participants the motivation to read survey (see Appendix D). This survey served as a baseline for how the third-grade participants felt about their motivation to read before the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching. The teacher implementing the intervention read the survey with the third-grade participants and explained what each statement on the survey meant.

The second phase of this study focused on how the teacher chosen for the implementation phase implemented the four strategies of Reciprocal Teaching. The third-grade participants were introduced to the four strategies of Reciprocal Teaching. During this phase, the teacher implementing the intervention modeled and allowed guided practice to take place with the third-grade participants.

Phase II: Implementation of Reciprocal Teacher strategies to third-grade participants. The teacher implementing the intervention explained the purpose of Reciprocal Teaching and why Reciprocal Teaching is being implemented. Teaching the third-grade participants the purpose of learning a set of strategies gave the third-grade participants the real-world connection to the concept being taught and gave the third-grade participants motivation to participate in the intervention. By the third-grade participants knowing the purpose for learning and completing the assignment, the third-grade participants were more likely to engage and participate in the activity or assignment. The teacher implementing the intervention introduced the third-grade participants to materials they used during the intervention. The teacher implementing the intervention introduced the third-grade participants to the composition note pad and

dictionaries. The teacher implementing the intervention explained that the note pad was to be used to take notes on the four strategies of Reciprocal Teaching, journal reflections of Reciprocal Teaching, and to write down any questions related to using Reciprocal Teaching.

Next, the third-grade participants were introduced to the dictionaries and thesauruses. The teacher implementing the intervention explained the use of a thesaurus and dictionary, as well as modeled examples of how to use a thesaurus and a dictionary. After the introduction to the resources to be used during the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching, the third-grade participants had an opportunity to ask questions related to the Reciprocal Teaching intervention. The teacher implementing the intervention explained that the third-grade participants would meet 5 days a week for a total of 4 weeks, based upon IRB approval.

After approval from IRB and after the permission slips were returned, the teacher implementing the intervention began teaching the third-grade participants the first strategy of Reciprocal Teaching, predicting. The teacher implementing the intervention introduced the first reading strategy prediction as "Percy the predictor."

Implementing the comprehension strategy: Predicting. The teacher implementing the intervention defined what it means to predict and gave examples of predicting to make predicting comprehensible to the third-grade participants. The teacher explained the implications of predicting as it refers to understanding the text being read. The teacher implementing the intervention placed a reading passage from the basal reading series in front of each third-grade participant; the same passage appeared on an overhead transparency for the third-grade participants to see. The teacher implementing

the intervention modeled the strategy of prediction using a think aloud and the heading and subheading on the transparency. The third-grade participants followed along. The teacher implementing the intervention also read a paragraph from the passage and stopped to perform a think aloud to model how to predict what event may happen next in the passage according to what has already happened in the passage. After modeling two strategies of predicting, the teacher implementing the intervention allowed the third-grade participants to work together to practice using the strategy of predicting using the same passage. After the practice, the teacher implementing the intervention closed the lesson by reviewing predicting with the third-grade participants.

After the implementation of predicting, the teacher implementing the intervention implemented the next strategy of Reciprocal Teaching, questioning. The teacher implementing the intervention introduced the next Reciprocal Teaching strategy as "Quincy the Questioner." Questioning is an important strategy of Reciprocal Teaching, in that questioning allowed the third-grade participants to monitor their comprehension before, during, and after reading by asking questions about phrases and ideas that are not clear to them.

Implementing the comprehension strategy: Questioning. After reviewing the first strategy of predicting, the teacher implementing the intervention began the next strategy of questioning. The teacher implementing the intervention began by asking the third-grade participants a question. The teacher implementing the intervention explained that when one does not know something, one may ask a question to find out the answer. One may ask a question to gain a better understanding. The teacher implementing the intervention connected this strategy to reading by explaining that as one reads, one may

read details in a passage that are unclear or confusing. The teacher implementing the

intervention explained that if this happens, one may ask a question to gain an

understanding. Question types were introduced at this time as who, what, when, where,

and how. The teacher implementing the intervention explained that these types of

questions are known as right-there questions and can be located in a specific place in the

text.

The teacher implementing the intervention used the same passage used earlier for

predicting to model the strategy of questioning. The teacher implementing the

intervention began reading the passage and stopped at a predetermined location within

the passage to ask a question. Once the question was asked, the teacher implementing the

intervention modeled how to locate the answer using details from the passage. The

teacher implementing the intervention continued to read aloud and stopped to ask a

question and locate the answer to the question. The third-grade participants observed the

questioning strategy through the duration of the passage. The teacher implementing the

intervention allowed the third-grade participants to practice asking and answering

questions related to the passage in their cooperative groups. The third-grade participants

discussed the answers to the questions in their cooperative groups. The teacher

implementing the intervention closed the lesson by reviewing the strategy of questioning.

The next strategy of Reciprocal Teaching that the teacher implemented is

Clarifying. The teacher implementing the intervention introduced the next Reciprocal

Teaching strategy as "Clara the clarifier." Clarifying was a strategy that allowed third-

grade participants to clarify phrases, words, and word meanings that are unfamiliar in a

passage. By clarifying, third-grade participants gained meaning from unfamiliar words,

sentences, and phrases, which in turn allowed third-grade participants to better comprehend passages because they knew and understood the meaning to all words, sentences, and phrases within the passage.

  Implementing the comprehension strategy: Clarifying. To ensure the third-grade participants were making connections with the strategies, the teacher implementing the intervention reviewed the first two strategies of predicting and questioning with the third-grade participants. The teacher implementing the intervention allowed the third-grade participants to discuss their predictions and generate questions about the predictions using the subtitles and illustrations in their cooperative groups. The teacher implementing the intervention reviewed the third-grade participants' findings and provided feedback on the use of predicting and questioning. After the review of predicting and questioning, the teacher implementing the intervention introduced the next strategy of Reciprocal Teaching as "Clara the clarifier." The teacher implementing the intervention explained that some words, sentences, and phrases are difficult to determine and understand. The teacher implementing the intervention explained that as one comes across a word, sentence, or phrase with which one is unfamiliar with, one will need to use the strategy of clarifying. The teacher implementing the intervention presented the third-grade participants with four strategies that can be used to clarify a word, sentence, or phrase— using a dictionary, using context clues, re-read, and read-on. The teacher implementing the intervention explained and modeled clarifying using explicit instruction using a reading passage from the basal. Once the teacher implementing the intervention modeled the methods of clarifying, the teacher implementing the intervention guided the third-grade participants in using the methods of clarifying and identifying the meaning of

unknown words, sentences, and phrases in the passage. After the guided practice, the third-grade participants continued to clarify unknown words, sentences, and phrases for the remainder of the passage within their cooperative groups. During the practice of clarifying, the teacher implementing the intervention acted as the facilitator. After the practice, the teacher implementing the intervention reviewed clarifying with the third-grade participants.

The last strategy the teacher implementing the intervention implemented is summarizing. The teacher implementing the intervention introduced the next strategy as "Sammy the summarizer." Summarizing is a key strategy in Reciprocal Teaching in that third-grade participants learned how to identify the important details in a passage. Summarizing allowed third-grade participants to stop and think about the important details from the passage.

Implementing the comprehension strategy: Summarizing. The fourth session began with a review of the last three Reciprocal Teaching strategies: predicting, questioning, and clarifying. The third-grade participants worked in their cooperative groups to practice the previous three strategies using a non-fiction passage from the basal reader. After the review of the previous strategies, the teacher implementing the intervention introduced the fourth and final strategy of Reciprocal Teaching, Summarizing. The teacher implementing the intervention explained the meaning of summarizing and the benefits of summarizing during and after reading a passage. The teacher implementing the intervention modeled how to summarize a paragraph after reading using a think aloud. The teacher implementing the intervention also modeled how to summarize an entire passage. Next, the teacher implementing the intervention guided

the third-grade participants through summarizing using a non-fiction passage on chart paper. After the guided practice of summarizing, the third-grade participants worked together to summarize the passage. The teacher implementing the intervention was the facilitator during this phase. After the third-grade participants practiced using summarizing in their cooperative groups, the teacher implementing the intervention closed the lesson by reviewing and modeling summarizing.

Once all of the strategies of Reciprocal Teaching were taught to the third-grade participants, the teacher implementing the intervention explicitly modeled how to use all four of the Reciprocal Teaching strategies together when reading a passage. The third-grade participants had the opportunity to observe all four of the strategies from Reciprocal Teaching being used to understand the passage. Once the explicit modeling of the Reciprocal Teaching strategies took place, the third-grade participants had the opportunity to work within their group to practice using the Reciprocal Teaching strategies.

Review and model of all four Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The next session of the intervention began with the teacher who was implementing the intervention reviewing the four strategies of Reciprocal Teaching using the transparencies (see Appendix E) and the Reciprocal Teaching bookmarks (see Appendix G). The teacher implementing the intervention reviewed each strategy and its importance in understanding the text. The teacher implementing the intervention placed a non-fiction reading passage from the basal on the overhead projector, large enough for all the third-grade participants to view. The teacher implementing the intervention modeled how to understand the information from the text using the four strategies of Reciprocal Teaching.

The teacher implementing the intervention began with using "Peter the predictor" to predict. Peter the Predictor created schema for the reading of the non-fiction text. The teacher implementing the intervention modeled predicting using the title and subtitle of the text. The teacher implementing the intervention modeled using a think aloud. The teacher implementing the intervention read the text aloud twice. On the second read, the teacher stopped at areas in the text to use Clara the Clarifier to clarify the meaning of words, sentences, and phrases that are unknown to the third-grade participants. The teacher implementing the intervention also stopped to clarify ideas that were challenging to understand by the third-grade participants. In addition to clarifying, the teacher implementing the intervention used Quincy the Questioner to stop to ask questions about the text. The teacher implementing the intervention wrote the questions down and continued to read; when the teacher implementing the intervention came upon a possible answer, the teacher implementing the intervention answered the question.

After each paragraph, the teacher implementing the intervention stopped to use Sammy the summarizer to summarize what was read. The teacher implementing the intervention performed a think aloud to model how to summarize. Additionally, the teacher implementing the intervention underlined specific words and phrases in a paragraph to help model how the words help in summarizing the paragraph. The teacher implementing the intervention continued to model these strategies throughout the text. Once the teacher implementing the intervention completed the modeling of how to understand the text, the teacher implementing the intervention modeled how to answer comprehension questions related to the text that was just read. The teacher wanted the third-grade participants to understand the correlation between understanding the text and

answering questions that showed understanding of the text.

After the teacher implementing the intervention modeled how to use all four of the Reciprocal Teaching strategies, the teacher implementing the intervention explained to the third-grade participants that they had the opportunity to use all four of the Reciprocal Teaching strategies that were just taught and modeled to them within their cooperative groups. The teacher implementing the intervention gave the third-grade participants a brief overview of the next phase of the study—assessing the third-grade participants' use of Reciprocal Teaching. It was during Phase III that the third-grade participants were assessed on how the strategies of Reciprocal Teaching (predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing) aid in comprehension.

During Phase III, the teacher implementing the intervention assessed how the Reciprocal Teaching strategies had an impact on the third-grade participants' reading comprehension, and further described how the third-grade participants used the Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The researcher used the observation form (see Appendix H) to describe how the participants used the strategies of Reciprocal Teaching. This phase of the study helped answer the researcher's central research question, "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?" as well as Research Question 3, "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?"

During this phase, the third-grade participants had the opportunity to observe how the other third-grade participants of the study used the Reciprocal Teaching strategies, as well as use the strategies of Reciprocal Teaching. The teacher implementing the intervention and the researcher observed and described the third-grade participants' use

of the Reciprocal Teaching strategies and recorded the observations using the observation form (see Appendix H). The teacher implementing the intervention and the researcher recorded the strategies used and the third-grade participants' motivation when the third-grade participants were involved in a reading comprehension assignment.

Phase III: Assessing the third-grade participants' use of Reciprocal Teaching. The central research question of this study, "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?" was answered during this phase of the study. The researcher used an observation form (see Appendix H) to describe how the third-grade participants used each strategy of Reciprocal Teaching and how the strategies affected the third-grade participants' reading comprehension.

The third research question, "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect student's motivation to read?" was answered during this phase. The researcher used an observation form (see Appendix H) to describe the motivation of the third-grade participants during their use of the Reciprocal Teaching strategies.

Phase III of the study was implemented over the next 6 weeks. Phase III began with the teacher implementing the intervention providing the directions and procedures for reading the passage from the basal. The teacher implementing the intervention reviewed the roles of Reciprocal Teaching (Larry the Leader, Peter the Predictor, Quincy the Questioner, Clara the Clarifier, and Sammy the Summarizer) and purposes of the strategies in Reciprocal Teaching using the Reciprocal Teaching transparency (see Appendix E). After reviewing, the teacher implementing the intervention assigned Reciprocal Teaching roles to five third-grade participants (Larry the Leader, Peter the

Predictor, Quincy the Questioner, Clara the Clarifier, and Sammy the Summarizer). The third-grade participants who were not grouped and assigned roles observed and took notes of the group of five third-grade participants who were modeling Reciprocal Teaching. Group one of third-grade participants used the Reciprocal Teaching script (see Appendix F) to model Reciprocal Teaching. The teacher implementing the intervention facilitated and monitored to provide support to the first group of third-grade participants modeling Reciprocal Teaching. Moreover, the teacher implementing the intervention and the researcher completed an observation form (see Appendix H) to describe and document the third-grade participants' use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies and how the Reciprocal Teaching strategies affected their reading comprehension. Additionally, the researcher and the teacher implementing the intervention used the observation form to describe the reading motivation behaviors the third-grade participants displayed (DiLorenzo, 2010).

Once the first group of third-grade participants had completed the modeling of Reciprocal Teaching, the second group of third-grade participants were assigned Reciprocal Teaching reading roles (Larry the Leader, Peter the Predictor, Quincy the Questioner, Clara the Clarifier, and Sammy the Summarizer). The second group of third-grade participants had the opportunity to model Reciprocal Teaching using the Reciprocal Teaching script (see Appendix F) as a guide. Next, group one of third-grade participants had the opportunity to observe group two of third-grade participants modeling Reciprocal Teaching. Additionally, the teacher implementing the intervention and the researcher completed an observation form (see Appendix H) to describe the third-grade participants' use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies. Additionally, the researcher

and the teacher implementing the intervention used the observation form (see Appendix H) to describe the motivation behaviors the third-grade participants displayed (DiLorenzo, 2010).

After the modeling and reviewing of Reciprocal Teaching, the teacher implementing the intervention allowed the third-grade participants to complete the comprehension probe (see Appendix K). The comprehension probe is a progress monitoring instrument to track the third-grade participants' reading comprehension growth during the Reciprocal Teaching intervention. The comprehension probe helped in answering Research Question 2, "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching techniques affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?" Lastly, the teacher implementing the intervention ended the session by reviewing Reciprocal Teaching and allowing third-grade participants to discuss their use of Reciprocal Teaching in their journal as well as in their cooperative group.

The next phase of the study, Phase IV: Post-Assessment, served as a closing to the Reciprocal Teaching intervention that was implemented. During this phase, the third-grade participants participated in post-assessments to describe their reading comprehension and motivation after the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The teacher implementing the intervention allowed the third-grade participants to complete the post-assessments and review Reciprocal Teaching.

Phase IV: Post-assessment. Phase IV began with the teacher implementing the intervention allowing the third-grade participants to complete the motivation to read survey (see Appendix D). The motivation to read survey was read to the third-grade participants. After the motivation to read survey was completed, the teacher

implementing the intervention let the third-grade participants know that the end of the implementation of the Reciprocal Teaching intervention was here. The teacher implementing the intervention let the third-grade participants know that starting next week, the third-grade participants would meet weekly for 4 weeks to follow up with their progress on using Reciprocal Teaching strategies in their third-grade classrooms. The teacher implementing the intervention opened the discussion for the third-grade participants to share their thoughts and feelings about their use of Reciprocal Teaching.

After the post-assessments were completed, the researcher continued the study by observing the third-grade participants' use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies in their classrooms. The researcher used an observation form (see Appendix I) to describe how the third-grade participants independently used Reciprocal Teaching strategies in the classroom. This helped in answering Research Question 4, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching strategies, how do students independently apply Reciprocal Teaching strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing?"

Post-classroom observation. The fourth research question, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching strategies, how do students independently apply Reciprocal Teaching strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing?" was answered during this phase. The researcher used an observation form (see Appendix I) to observe the third-grade participants' use of Reciprocal Teaching after exposure to Reciprocal Teaching strategies. Next, the researcher interviewed (see Appendix B) the third-grade participants about their use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies after the intervention was completed.

The researcher used the post-classroom observation form (see Appendix I) to

observe how the third-grade participants independently used Reciprocal Teaching strategies in their classroom. The researcher came to visit the third-grade participants' classroom during their reading block. The researcher stayed in the third-grade participants' classroom for the entire reading block to observe for 5 days. The researcher observed and described the third-grade participants' use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies. Most importantly, the researcher described the reading behaviors and Reciprocal Teaching strategies used as the third-grade participants completed independent reading assignments. Lastly, the researcher individually interviewed the third-grade participants using the post-interview questions (see Appendix B) that were related to Reciprocal Teaching strategies that were being used. The post-classroom observation and post-interview questions aided in answering Research Question 4, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, how do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?"

Data Analysis

To begin the data analysis, the researcher provided an explicit description of the scene/setting investigated. The researcher provided in the description rich details about the participants, setting, events, and the actions taking place. The intent of this description was to give the reader a specific authentic view of the setting, and to make the setting real to the reader, giving the reader a deep understanding of the events and actions taking place in the setting. After the description of the setting, the researcher presents the analyzed data.

The researcher used thematic analysis to analyze the data for this study. A thematic analysis has four steps to ensure the data are analyzed properly. The first step in

this process is to manage the raw data that have been collected. In this case, the researcher transcribed all the responses from the interview to text, as well as reviewed the data from the classroom observations, assessments, and field documents. Second, the researcher reviewed the data. The researcher reviewed the data carefully by reading the data several times and writing notes in the margin about the data collected during the study. Through this process, the researcher began to note classifications and categories emerging through the data. As the researcher continued, the researcher began to use the classification and categories received from the data to chunk the data into categories and initial codes. The third step involves the process of patterns emerging amongst the data that were later used to code data that are similar, which then resulted in themes emerging from the data. In the fourth step, the researcher interpreted the data from the themes that arose to answer the research questions.

To answer Research Question 1, "What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level text?" the researcher interviewed the third-grade teachers individually using a guide (see Appendix A) and a tape recorder. Once the researcher recorded the responses from the teachers, the researcher transcribed the data from each interview, from the recorder to paper. The researcher then reviewed the responses by re-reading the responses from each teacher three times, and wrote notes about the responses from each teacher. As the researcher wrote notes, the researcher noticed the classifications and categories that emerged from all of the responses from the teachers. The researcher began to note patterns that arose from the categories. The patterns from the categories then developed into themes and categories that arose from the responses of the third-grade teachers. The

researcher then used the themes that arose to answer Research Question 1, "What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade participants who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level text?"

To answer Research Question 2, "How does instruction using Reciprocal Teaching affect the reading comprehension abilities of third-grade readers?" the researcher gathered the observation forms from the study. The researcher reviewed the data by re-reading the data related to the Reciprocal Teaching strategies the third-grade participants used during Phase III. The researcher wrote notes on how the third-grade participants used each Reciprocal Teaching strategy to aid in comprehension. The researcher created categories that supported the notes taken from the observation forms. The researcher noticed patterns that arose from the categories. The patterns from the categories were used to create themes that were related to how the Reciprocal Teaching strategies affected the third-grade participants' comprehension abilities. The researcher used the themes to answer Research Question 2, "How does instruction using Reciprocal Teaching affect the reading comprehension abilities of third-grade readers?"

To answer Research Question 3, "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?" the researcher reviewed the observation form (see Appendix H) of how the third-grade participants were motivated with the use of Reciprocal Teaching. The researcher reviewed the notes that were taken by the teacher implementing the intervention during each session of assessing the use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The researcher will write notes on which strategies the third-grade participants were motivated to use and what motivating behaviors the third-grade participants displayed while they were using Reciprocal Teaching strategies. The researcher noticed how the

data from the observation form helped to create the categories, next the researcher took note of the patterns that arose from categories. The patterns from the categories helped in developing the themes that emerged from the categories of motivation. The researcher used the themes to answer Research Question 3, "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?"

To answer Research Question 4, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, how do students independently apply reading strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing?" the researcher interviewed the third-grade participants after the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching. Next, the researcher transcribed the third-grade participants' responses from the post-interview questions to paper. The researcher reviewed the responses and wrote notes from the data relating to how each participant used each Reciprocal Teaching strategy to aid in comprehension development. The researcher took notes regarding the categories that arose from all of the third-grade participants' responses relating to the use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies, and wrote them down. The researcher re-read the responses and developed themes from the categories which allowed the researcher to answer Research Question 4. In addition to the post-interview questions, the researcher will review the post-classroom observation forms (see Appendix H). The researcher will re-read the observation forms and take notes on categories that arose from the data relating to the third-grade participants' use of Reciprocal Teaching strategies after exposure to Reciprocal Teaching. The researcher will re-read the categories and take note of the patterns that form from the categories. The patterns will aid in the development of themes that arise from the categories. The themes were then used to answer Research Question 4, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching,

how do students independently apply reading strategies such as predicting, questioning,

clarifying, and summarizing?"

Ethical Considerations

To ensure ethics were considered during the study, all third-grade participants

were given a letter of assent to participate in the study (see Appendix O). The letter of

assent was sent home prior to the study beginning to gain permission to participate in the

study. The consent letter detailed the purpose of the study and the benefits of

participating in the study. The assent form is documentation of the role the participants

provide for the study and the expectations of the participants (see Appendix P). The data

collected from the study will be stored in a locked filed cabinet for up to 3 years after the

completion of the study. The participants' names were not used. Participants were given

an assigned letter maintain anonymity.

Trustworthiness

The researcher achieved trustworthiness by using methodological triangulation.

Methodological triangulation is defined as using more than one method of data collection

to understand a phenomenon. This method was beneficial for confirming the findings,

increasing validity, and enhancing the understanding of the phenomenon. Reliability and

validity were assessed through multiple methods for the collection of data. Qualitative

research maintains its validity and reliability through the multiple methods of data

collection. Multiple collection of data ensures the reliability and validity in that the

results of the study are analyzed through multiple methods. The results are valid and

reliable because they can be justified through multiple data methods. Thus, the potential

for research bias is kept at a minimum, being that the data derive from more than one

source. The audience is more receptive to the analysis and results from a qualitative study with multiple collections of data because more than one source is giving information related to answering the research questions.

This research included data collection from interviews, observation forms, classroom reading assignments, document analysis, and surveys. Furthermore, member checking took place within this study to ensure reliability and validity. Member checking was used to ensure the validity of the responses and data taken from the interview and observation forms. Member checking took place within this study by allowing the third-grade participants and the third-grade teacher participants to read their responses from the interviews. The third-grade participants and the teacher participants had the opportunity to confirm their responses from the interview as well as have the opportunity to restate their responses for clarity. Using member checking during this study gave the audience an authentic data interpretation from the study.

Potential Research Bias

Through extensive in-depth research, the researcher developed an in-depth understanding of the topic being researched and studied. With this in-depth understanding, the researcher developed a favorable position of how Reciprocal Teaching can aid in the development of comprehension among third-grade readers. The researcher understood that during the study, there could be the possibility of contrary evidence that challenges the researcher's position on Reciprocal Teaching and its implications on struggling readers. Yin (2009) states that it is best to remain open to all evidence that arises during the study. To ensure the researcher was open to contrary evidence, the researcher presented all evidence to two colleagues, who offered alternative explanations

and suggestions for the evidence.

Limitations

The proposed study had limitations regarding the amount of time needed to implement the Reciprocal Teaching model. The case study design is bounded by time in that the study is done in the real time and setting of a regular reading class. The reading block at the researcher's school may not be enough time to properly implement the Reciprocal Teaching model which may affect the data as it relates to time efficiency in implementing the RT model. The researcher may not have enough time to properly implement the strategies of RT which could limit the impact the strategies have on the comprehension of the participants.

The next limitation is the sample size of the study. The data from the small sample size limits the generalization that RT could be a comprehension model that can help develop comprehension for all low-level readers. With a small sample size, the data from the results have to be carefully monitored and interpreted in terms of the sample size as opposed to a bigger sample size with the same population sample.

Conclusion

In closing, the researcher has included the necessary details that describe how the study was implemented. In this chapter, the researcher included the aim of the study, data collection methods, participants, procedures to be implemented, ethical considerations, and data analysis.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The qualitative study, "Implementing a Research-Based Reading Intervention Focused upon Increasing Reading Comprehension amongst Third-Grade Students" was implemented among low-achieving third-grade readers to assess if and how the Reciprocal Teaching strategies help low-achieving readers understand what they read. Additionally, the study is being implemented to describe if and how the comprehension model "Reciprocal Teaching" allows students to comprehend what they have read. The following research questions were posed by the researcher to guide the direction of the study.

Restatement of the Research Questions

1. **Central research question)** How does instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?

2. **(Supporting research question)** What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?

3. **(Supporting research question)** How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?

4. **(Supporting research question)** After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, how do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting?

Participant Selection

The participants for the study were selected by the homeroom teacher based on

their beginning of the year (BOY) reading comprehension benchmark score. Every year all students complete the BOY assessment (see Appendix L) to assess their reading comprehension, vocabulary, and their fluency. There are ten comprehension questions and ten vocabulary questions. The students are asked to read a grade-level passage and answer 10 comprehension questions. After the comprehension questions the students then have to complete 10 sentences by selecting the best vocabulary word for the sentence. To assess the fluency the teacher administers DIBELS. The students read a passage for one minute. At the end of one minute, the teacher counts how many words per minute were read. If any words were read incorrectly, the teacher subtracts the number from the number of words read correctly. The difference is the score for oral reading fluency (ORF). Lastly, the students are asked to tell about what they have just read. The teacher assesses the accuracy of the content in the retell as well as counts the words they use to develop a score for the retell.

The data from the assessments is used to determine the reading level on which the students are currently read. The teachers use the data from the assessments to create lessons and activities tailored for the different reading levels. The data is also used to track the progress during the school year. The students will take a middle of the year (MOY) benchmark assessment and an end of the year (EOY) benchmark assessment. The participants were selected using their overall score on the BOY. The students that scored 60% and below were deemed to be the students who needed the most reading support. *(Central research question) How does instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?*

The central research question, "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching

techniques affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?" was answered during Phase III of the study. To answer this question, the participants practiced using the four Reciprocal Teaching strategies they learned during Phase II. The researcher used a checklist to facilitate in observing how the Reciprocal Teaching strategies affected the comprehension abilities of the third-grade participants. The themes that emerged from this phase helped to answer the central research question, "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?"

Active Reading Through Predicting

The first theme to emerge to answer the central research question, "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?" was active reading through predicting. The participants actively used text features and what they read as clues to predict what the text would be about. For example, during session six, Participant A used the pictures in the text to make his prediction about the article by stating the following: "the pictures are of a caterpillar, pupa, and butterfly, I think this is going to be about how butterflies grow. Look at how the arrow in the picture points to a different picture." Participant E used the title to make his prediction. "I agree, the title also says 'Stages of a butterfly life cycle.' This story will be about how things grow into something else." By making these predictions, each participant became more engaged with the text. Predicting allows students to become interested and engaged in what they are reading while they are attempting to understand what they are reading (Duffy, 2003; Duke & Pearson, 2002; Duke, Pearson, Strachan, & Billman, 2011; Fielding, Anderson, & Pearson, 1990).

Actively predicting affected the participants comprehension in that the participants developed many ideas from the Reciprocal Teaching strategy of predicting, which led to meaningful dialogue. Group interaction gives students the opportunity to bring different ideas, knowledge and perceptions of the text to a dialogue (McKeown et al., 2009.) The dialogue then activates background knowledge. For example, after the participants predictions were made about the butterfly, Participant G stated,

> I saw a movie once about a turtle. The turtle was on a beach and it laid eggs. After the eggs broke open, small little turtles came out. Then they went to be with the momma. They was eating food, a whole lot of food. Then they got bigger and bigger.

The predicting allowed more participants to activate background knowledge that is related to ideas that they would be reading about. Participant D stated, "We going to get big too, we not going to stay the same. I saw a picture of my daddy when he was a baby. He look different than he do now. My daddy is thirty-nine and he tall now." Participant E stated, "My dog had puppies and they are big now. They use to be so small then they started eating all the food and playing around with the other dogs, they got big too." The activation of background knowledge gave all the other participants new information and insight that they had not previously had about particular topics thus making the new information easy to comprehend. For example, after reading about how caterpillars eat a lot of food, Participant C stated, "if something is alive it needs food, cus they eat a lot of food to grow, Participant E said his dog's puppies ate a lot of food and got big, I eat food too and I got big." The participants were able to use this new shared information to understand new information about which they were reading. Research (Anderson, 1994;

Anderson & Pearson, 1984) indicates that in order for readers to be able to understand what they read, readers need to have background knowledge relating to concepts about which they are reading. Actively reading with the predicting strategy gave the participants the opportunity to share and discuss ideas and activate background knowledge. The background knowledge activated from the predicting strategy affected the comprehension of the participants in that they were able to easily understand new information they were reading about.

Active Reading Through Questioning and Summarizing

The next theme to emerge to answer the central research question, "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?" was how the participants demonstrated active reading through the use of the questioning and summarizing strategy. Actively reading using these two strategies affected the comprehension of the participants by giving them the opportunity to remain engaged on the important details in a text and the opportunity to seek a deeper understanding of what they were reading. The participants remained focused and engaged by underlining important details in each paragraph as they read. Underlining details in a text while reading allows the reader to identify important details that can be used for comprehension development. The participants also wrote down notes at the bottom of the reading passage. The notes written were related to their thoughts about what they were reading and questions they had about what they read.

Following the underlining of the details, actively using the summarizing strategy affected the participants' comprehension by them repeatedly stating the main idea of a paragraph. For example, the role of Sam the Summarizer had the job of summarizing a

paragraph by stating the main idea. During a session, Sam the summarizer stated the main

idea and wrote the main idea at the end of each paragraph. The underlined details were

used to create the summary. By stating the main idea at the end of each paragraph the

participants were able to repeatedly review and keep in mind the important details that

they already read. By repeatedly reviewing important details, the participants were able to

effectively comprehend the meaning of what they were reading.

This became evident when the participants answered questions about the text.

Quincy/Quin the questioner asked a question at one of the stop points. Quincy the

questioner asked the participants the following: "How does the caterpillar get big?" The

participants would go back to the underlined important details to answer the questions.

Participant B ran his index finger across two underlined details in the second paragraph.

After reading them to himself, he raised his hand and stated, "The caterpillar eats a lot of

food like its own egg shells and leaves." On another occasion, Quincy the questioner

asked, "What is the first stage in the life cycle of a butterfly?" Participant C glanced at

the text, placed his finger on an underlined detail and read silently. He raised his hand

while the other finger was placed on the underlined detail. He stated, "The first stage is a

caterpillar." The summaries gave the participants an easier way of identifying answers to

questions asked.

Actively using the questioning strategy during reading affected the

comprehension of the participants in that questioning gave the participants the

opportunity to fill in information gaps that were needed to fully understand concepts

being read. For example, after reading the paragraph about pupas, Sara the summarizer

gave this summary: "this paragraph is about how caterpillars make a pupa on the leaf to

go in to grow some more." Quincy the questioner stated, "How long does the caterpillar stay in the pupa?" Participant C stated, "I wonder what it does in there?" Participant D asked, "does it get to eat and play, and how does it look inside?" By asking and answering these questions, the participants began to fill in information that was needed in order to understand what they were reading. As the participants continued to read, some of their questions were answered, which allowed the participants to have a deep understanding of what they were reading about. Participant C stated, "caterpillars stay in their pupa for three weeks, while in the pupa, the caterpillar body parts begin to grow." After these questions were answered, Sam the summarizer provided a new summary. "So the caterpillar eats a lot of food and then makes a pupa that it stays in for three weeks. When it is inside, the caterpillar begins to grow organs it will need to be a butterfly." By answering questions, the participants were able provide more details to what the participants already knew.

Metacognitive Awareness

The third theme to emerge to answer the central research question "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?" was their ability to use the clarify strategy to monitor their understanding of what they were reading. Clarifying affected the reading comprehension of the participants because it is a strategy that taught the participants to monitor or become aware when they did not understand what they read. For example, Clarence/Clara had the responsibility of stopping when a sentence was unclear or if there was a sentence that did not make sense. During a session, Clara the clarifier stopped to state that she did not understand what the following sentence meant: *Plants are living things and they need*

food regularly. "This is not clear or make sense to me because I have never seen plants eat food or plants being fed food." Participant B said, "maybe the water from the ground feeds the plants." Clara the clarifier glanced at her bookmark and decided to use the comprehension fix-up strategy, read on to understand. The participants began reading the next few sentences; *Instead of waiting for someone to feed them, plants produce their own food.* Clara the clarifier stopped and said, "So plants don't actually get food the way we do, they make their own food." By continuing to read, the participants had the opportunity to locate information that would clarify previous sentences that they read about whose meaning was unclear. Clarifying helps students monitor their comprehension as they identify problems, misunderstandings, and the meaning of new and unfamiliar words (Allington, 2001).

Clarifying affected the comprehension of the participants in that it gave the participants the opportunity to know the meaning of all words that they read. Knowing the meaning of all the words in a text results in giving readers a better chance with comprehension as they read. The clarifying strategy was used by allowing the participants to use a dictionary, context clues, and look for word parts that they knew to define unknown words during reading. During a session, Clarence the clarifier read this sentence: *Plants use photosynthesis to produce their own food.* After reading the sentence, Clarence the Clarifier stated that photosynthesis was a word for which that he did not know the meaning. He immediately glanced at his bookmark and decided to use the strategy of 'use context clues to define the word.' Clarence the clarifier looked at the word produce and stated, "this means to make something." He looked at the word food and predicted, "this word must mean how to make food." To be sure, he decided to use

another strategy to define the unknown word. The strategy was read ahead for clarity. The participants began reading again. *Photosynthesis occurs when plants use energy from the sunlight, air from the atmosphere, and water from the ground to produce their own food.* Clarence the clarifier stated, "photosynthesis is when sun, air, and water make food for the plant." Clarence the clarifier also used the dictionary to ensure the meaning was correct. By using the clarifying strategy, the participants were able to know the meaning to all the words they read, thus allowing for a better chance at comprehending what they read.

The questioning strategy affected the participants' comprehension in that the participants used questioning to monitor their comprehension during and after reading. Questioning gave the participants the opportunity to check for understanding as well as further their comprehension beyond the text to develop a deeper meaning (Allington, 2001). To check for comprehension, Quincy the questioner asked questions related to what a participant had just read. For example, the participants read the following: *All magnets have north and south poles.* Quincy the questioner asked, "What poles do all magnets have?" The participants immediately went back into the text to locate the answer. The participants used their fingers to locate key words from the question. For example, Participant C located the word *poles* in the text and circled them. Participant A located the word *magnet* and circled it. After circling key words, the participants read the sentences silently and then thought about what they read. Participant D stated, "All magnets have a north and south pole." By asking and answering questions before, during, and after reading the participants were able to monitor their comprehension, deepen their understanding, and periodically recall and review information from the text.

In closing, the Reciprocal Teaching strategies affected the participants'
comprehension in that they were active in their own comprehension process by using the
Reciprocal Teaching strategies. Furthermore, the participants used the Reciprocal
Teaching strategies to understand when they became aware that they did not understand
what they were reading. In the event that they did not understand the participants used the
Reciprocal Teaching strategies clarifying and questioning to help them understand.
Lastly, using the strategies of Reciprocal Teaching gave the participants an opportunity to
interact with the text and each other to facilitate an accurate understanding of what they
read.

*(Supporting research question) "What instructional methods are currently being used
with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?"*

The supporting research question, "What instructional methods are currently
being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-
level texts?" was answered during Phase I of the study. To answer this question, the
researcher interviewed four third-grade teachers about the reading practices taking place
in their classroom. The researcher's purpose for the interview was to understand and have
an idea of two things:

1. Why are the teachers' low-level students reading below grade level?

2. What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students
who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?

The interviews took place after school in the researcher's classroom. Each
interview lasted for approximately 20 minutes. The researcher used a tape recorder to
document responses from the four third-grade teachers. After the taping, the researcher

transcribed the interview so that the data could be analyzed for specific themes that emerged from the interviews. The results for this research question came about through analyzing data and the patterns that emerged as a result.

Reading Interventions

The theme that emerged to answer the supporting research question, "What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?" is the use of reading interventions to help struggling readers comprehend what they are reading. The intervention that was implemented the most for reading comprehension was group story mapping. Group story mapping is an intervention that uses the story-map graphic organizer to allow students to write the parts of a story such as setting, characters, problem, events, and solution. To implement this, the students read a story from the basal. Next, the students complete the story map graphic organizer. After the graphic organizer is complete, the students discuss the story with the teacher. The teacher reviews how they have completed their story maps and gives feedback to the students.

Teacher C stated that the intervention did not teach the students to really understand what they read, just parts of a story. "Group story mapping is useful with teaching my students how to organize important information from a story." Teacher B stated the following about group story mapping, "The intervention is good for teaching students the basics and parts of a story, but they can't tell me what the story is about because my students do not pay attention during the intervention." Evidence of this was shown during the second day of pre-observation; the researcher noticed two boys playing with their crayons in their desk as the group story mapping intervention was being

implemented. The boys who were playing with the crayons did not complete the story map. They attempted to copy from the other students who were completing the group story mapping. On another occasion, the researcher observed three students drawing on their graphic organizer paper instead of reading the story with the other group members.

Teacher A stated, "Group story mapping has helped my students with story structure. They can tell me who the characters are and where the story took place but they cannot tell me anything about the events in the story." The researcher observed evidence of this on day four. The students completed the graphic organizer for the story "Tops and Bottoms." The students worked together to complete each portion of the graphic organizer. The teacher began asking follow-up comprehension questions about the events that took place in the story. For example, she asked, "What deal did bear and rabbit make?" Participant B stated, "The characters were rabbit and bear" Participant G stated, "Rabbit."

From the researchers' observations, group story mapping did not show evidence of development in reading comprehension for the third-grade students. The students read the story first and then attempted to complete the story map graphic organizer. The teacher rephrased parts of the story map so that they could have the opportunity to answer. For instance, she asked who the characters are and no one answered. To clarify, she then asked who were the people in the story. The students went back in the story to identify characters. The setting is another example. The teacher asked where was the setting, they didn't know. She then asked where were the people in the story. After no one answered, she gave them verbal prompts such as "were they at the store, school, or at home?" The intervention served as a means to identify parts of a story in which students

are remembering by rote or going back in the story to locate details.

The next intervention that is currently being used with students who are having difficulty with grade-level text is the questioning before reading. This intervention teaches the students to read the questions before reading the passage to become familiar with what they need to look for while they are reading. Teacher C stated, "This strategy can be difficult to teach because the students are trying to understand the questions and can't focus on what they are reading." Teacher D agreed in that the students do not benefit from this intervention as much as they would like in that the students become confused. "My students don't know why they are reading the questions first, they are used to seeing the questions after reading."

After observation, the researcher concludes that questioning before reading was the least effective reading intervention for comprehension development. This was the least effective because the students were focused upon understanding what the question asked and locating an answer instead of reading to understand. For example, students looked at the questions first and immediately began to scan the passage for key words. The students stated an answer based on a key word they located from the question. This intervention provided a strategy for answering comprehension questions instead of comprehending what they read.

Differentiation

In addition to the interventions that are used to help third graders comprehend grade-level text, the third-grade teachers also differentiate their reading lessons and assignments for their low-level readers who are having difficulty with grade-level texts. The teachers stated that their low-level readers receive a differentiated version of a

reading passage and comprehension questions. The reading passage is not as long and contains simple vocabulary words rather than more complex words. The reading comprehension questions are basic and simple. For example, the comprehension questions are "right there" questions. The questions asked begin with the question stem of who, what, when, where, and how. The answers can be located in the passage.

The researcher observed how differentiation was utilized to help readers comprehend. The researcher observed how the teacher modified reading passages by adding simpler vocabulary words and shorter reading passages to help low level readers. The researcher observed this intervention to be useful in that the students were able to work independently on reading assignments without becoming frustrated or feeling as if the work was too challenging. Though this intervention was useful to the low-level readers, they completed their assignments earlier than everyone else in the classroom. This left time for them to get off task and disturb other students.

In closing, the instructional practices the third-grade teachers are using with students who are having difficulty with grade-level text are reading interventions such as Group story mapping and questioning before reading. The third-grade teachers use these interventions in an effort to provide help with their readers who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level text. Lastly, the third-grade teachers differentiate the reading passages and the comprehension questions to help third-grade readers who are having difficulty reading grade-level text.

(Supporting research question) "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?"

The next supporting research question, "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect

students' motivation to read?" was answered during Phase III of the study. The researcher used an observation form to monitor and observe the participants reading behaviors while they were using the Reciprocal Teaching strategies. Additionally, this supporting question was answered using the results of a motivation to read survey.

Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is the theme that emerged to answer the second supporting research question, "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?" During week five, the researcher began to notice how the participants began to look forward to using the Reciprocal Teaching strategies to read and construct their own understanding of what they read. Evidence of this was shown through the participants' actions and behaviors during the sessions. For instance, the participants rushed to the classroom where the sessions were taking place. Once in the classroom, the participants excitedly began setting up the table for the sessions to begin. Next, the participants began practicing using the strategies before the session began to ensure they were using the Reciprocal Teaching strategies correctly. Additionally, at the end of a session, the participants would begin discussing what reading roles they wanted to have the next day and why. These behaviors were evidence to the researcher that the participants looked forward to using the Reciprocal Teaching strategies to comprehend what they read.

Further evidence of this was also shown with the results of the post-motivation to read survey. The survey revealed that the participants like reading for leisure. The questions on the leisure reading section changed significantly from the pre-motivation to read survey. The pre-motivation survey revealed that the participants "did not like" to read at home, on the weekends, or after school. The survey also revealed that the

participants would rather play than read a book. The post motivation to read survey revealed that the participants "liked" reading after school and on weekends. This information is evidence that the participants were motivated to read for leisure after learning to use the Reciprocal Teaching strategies.

The motivation to read survey revealed that the participants' attitude regarding reading for learning changed from the beginning of the study to after the study. When asked about completing reading worksheets, answer reading comprehension questions, and taking reading test, the participants revealed that they "liked it." The pre-survey revealed that they did not like completing reading assignments. The post-survey also revealed that the participants "liked reading for learning, coming to reading class, and reading their reading books in class."

Relevance

The predicting strategy motivated the participants to read in that the predicting strategy gave the participants the opportunity to have meaningful dialogue. The dialogue led the participants to activate background knowledge about the topic. As background knowledge was activated, the participants were able to see and experience the relevance of the topic about which they were reading. Reciprocal Teaching enhances a student's motivation for reading by allowing struggling readers to activate background knowledge during pre-reading activities such as predicting and in monitoring their reading (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). The relevance gave the participants the motivation to read being that they were reading about a topic that they could relate to. Social interaction improves the students' ability to resolve comprehension difficulties, improves their higher thinking or metacognition, and increases their motivation (Hurst et al., 2013).

For instance, Participant E made a prediction about the title *Strawberry Festival*. "The title tells me this is going to be about strawberries, and maybe how they grow," said Participant E. Participant C agreed, saying, "Look there are pictures of strawberries here." Participant F stated, "When I was in first grade I went to a strawberry garden, where they grow strawberries, they showed us where they grow strawberries and how to pick the strawberries." Participant B nodded his head and smiled. He then added, "My dad says strawberries are good for you because they give us Vitamin C." At this point the other participants began to share their background knowledge and add to the dialogue. It is the interactive nature of sharing and listening that motivates readers to want to share even more (Nueman et al., 2014). Participant A stated, "My mom likes strawberries, she buys them when we go to the fruit market on the weekend." The other participants smiled and agreed that their parents bought strawberries too. Participant B stated, I bet the strawberries at the market come from the strawberry garden Participant F went to." Participant F smiled and said, "we got to take some strawberries home too." The participants became even more interested at this point. "What did you do with the strawberries you took home?" said Participant C. "I ate some on the bus when I was going home" said Participant F. The participants laughed and agreed that they would do the same if they were him too.

After this dialogue took place the participants eagerly began reading the text. Evidence of this was shown by the participants carefully tracking the words in the text with their index finger. Quincy the questioner used the questioning strategy at certain points to ask questions about the text. Claire the clarifier stopped to clarify the meaning of unknown words. Sam the summarizer stated the main idea at the end of each

paragraph.

In closing, the Reciprocal Teaching strategies motivated the participants to read by activating background knowledge which provided the participants relevance as to what they were reading about. The relevance to the topic gave the participants the motivation to continue reading for meaning by using the other Reciprocal Teaching strategies.

(Supporting research question), "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?"

To answer the last supporting research question, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?" the researcher interviewed the participants about if and how they use the Reciprocal Teaching strategies after the study was completed. Additionally, the researcher completed a post observation in their classroom to answer the last supporting research question.

Reading Plan

The first theme to emerge to answer the supporting research question, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching (RT), do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting after exposure?" was how the participants independently used the Reciprocal Teaching strategies to create a reading plan. The participants revealed during the post interview that they study their Reciprocal Teaching bookmark before reading. Participant I stated, "I like to look at my bookmark to remind me of what things I can do if I don't understand something."

Participant G stated, "I like to have the strategies I might need lined up so I don't waste a lot of time."

During the post observation, the researcher observed the following: Participant B was reading the science textbook about fossils. Before he began reading, he took out his bookmark and studied the strategies. Participant B personalized his bookmark with annotations of when to use each strategy. Next to each strategy, he wrote when to use the strategy. Next to Predicting, he wrote "help me remember what I already know about topic" Next to questioning he wrote, "if I want to know more information about what I am reading and to check to see if I understand what I am reading" Next to clarify, "use a dictionary or thesaurus to understand meaning of words I don't know" and "re-read sentence to understand." Next to summary, "underline important ideas to help remember main idea." This was evidence to the researcher of how the participants used the Reciprocal Teaching strategies independently to help with their comprehension.

Furthermore, the participants stated that they always begin their reading plan with the Reciprocal Teaching Strategy of predicting. They believe that with predicting they can think of other ideas that they might know of to help with understanding new things. For instance, Participant G stated the following: "I preview everything before I begin reading. I look at the title, pictures, bold faced words, and charts. I then write down everything I know about the preview. This gets my thoughts to go to what I am finna read." Participant E stated the following:

> When I first start with reading, I try and guess what the story will be about by using the pictures, if there are not any, I look at the words to see what words I see over and over again. I can tell what the story will be about so I can prepare my

mind.

The participants use the Reciprocal Teaching strategy clarifying independently when they arrive at a vocabulary word and sentences of which they do not know the meaning. Participant G stated,

I did not know how to use a dictionary or why I would use a dictionary until I learned about the clarify strategy. A dictionary is nice to have because I can easily look in this book and find the meaning to words that I do not know.

During his interview, Participant D recalled a moment when he was stuck on a word:

I did everything I could think of to try and find the meaning of the word decompose, I re-read the word, the sentence, looked at words all around the unknown word, finally I grabbed my dictionary to define the word. I read the definition twice and drew a picture to help memorize the word.

Participant E stated that clarifying is his favorite strategy to use when reading non-fiction science books:

It's like a magic wand that I can use that will tell me something I don't know about. Before I learned about clarifying, I would skip words and read the words I knew the meaning to. Now that I know how to use strategies that help me to clarify, I make sure to use the clarify strategy to know the meaning to all the words because knowing what they mean can help me know what the book is talking about.

Reciprocal Teaching Strategies Used Across Other Subjects

The next theme that emerged to answer the research question, "After exposure to

Reciprocal Teaching, do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?" was how the participants independently used the Reciprocal Teaching strategies with other subjects such as science and social studies.

Science text. For instance, the summarizing strategy is independently used by the participants to help them remember important details in their science text. Participant G described how summarizing has helped with remembering the important details in the science text.

> If the lesson for the day is about something I have no idea about, I take out my pink highlighter and underline the important details of every paragraph. When I finish reading a paragraph I read the important details and write a summary in my notebook or next to the paragraph if I'm reading an article. This helps me to review and remember all the important things I read about. When I continue reading and I read an idea that is familiar to one I think I may have read previously, I can go to my summary to review.

Participant J stated that he uses summarizing to review as well:

> I didn't like summarizing at first, it didn't make sense to me. Once I began to practice using this strategy I saw like a pattern with science topics. I noticed the first sentence and the last sentence were telling me about the paragraph I was reading. I still underline things as I am reading, but I know that the first sentence in a science paragraph gives me the main idea of the paragraph.

Social studies. The majority of the participants stated in their interview how using the clarifying and questioning strategy has led to a deeper understanding of social

studies topics being studied. Furthermore, the participants are expanding their vocabulary as well by independently using the questioning and clarifying strategies. Participant C stated that social studies was always a subject that was difficult for her because she did not understand, but using questioning and clarifying has allowed her to understand the concepts better. For example, she stated that they were learning about Frederick Douglass and she did not know any of the vocabulary used in the details. She stated she normally would skip over the words she did not know and keep reading. Since she has learned some strategies to help, she stated clarifying during reading had a major impact on her understanding as well as expanding her vocabulary. For example, Participant C stated that she did not understand the vocabulary word "abolish." "I used the re-read the sentence strategy and tried using context clues to help, but that did not work." She stated that she used the glossary in the textbook to define the unknown word. She then stated she used the paperback dictionary in the classroom to define the word as well.

The participants especially used the questioning strategy independently as they read and completed science and social studies assignments. The questioning strategy gave the participants the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding about what they were reading. For example, Participant I described how questioning during social studies led to a deeper understanding about a historical figure of whom she was learning.

The text had some information about Frederick Douglass, like it told us where he was born, how he escaped slavery and became a great speaker. I still had questions about him. I wanted to know if he had brothers and sisters and if they escaped slavery too. I also wanted to know how he became a great speaker if he couldn't read. I wrote my questions down and looked at other information on my

own. I went to the school library to check out books about Frederick Douglass. After reading the books some of my questions were answered and I know more about Frederick Douglass. I know that he did have other brothers and sisters but it was unknown if they escaped slavery. I found out that he learned to read by using the bible.

In closing, the participants used the Reciprocal Teaching strategies independently after exposure to them by creating a reading plan to help in their comprehension. The Reciprocal Teaching strategies were used in their plan to guide the participants through their reading to ensure they reached their goal of comprehension. Additionally, the participants used the Reciprocal Teaching strategies independently with other subjects such as social studies and science. The participants used questioning and clarifying with science and social studies to define the meaning of unknown words and to deepen their understanding of that in which they were reading.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

This chapter is a discussion of the findings from Chapter 4. In this chapter the researcher summarizes the results as they relate to the research questions. After the results are summarized, the researcher discusses how the findings are interpreted based upon the research questions and literature. After the interpretation of the findings, this chapter discusses the implications of the results in relation to theory, research, and practice. Next, limitations of the study are described and discussed. Lastly, future directions of the study are discussed based on the findings of the research questions.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe if and how Reciprocal Teaching aids in the comprehension development of struggling third-grade readers. The researcher also wanted to determine if Reciprocal Teaching increases the ability of struggling third-grade students to comprehend grade-level text. Reciprocal Teaching is a strategy instruction model that can help students in developing knowledge modules in long-term memory. Students have the ability to access their modules when needed. Additionally, students learn cognitive strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing, which can be used whenever they are reading independently. Studies (Brown & Palincsar, 1985; Kelly et al., 2001; Rosenshine & Meister, 1994; Sporer et al., 2009; Stricklin, 2011) show that students who master the four strategies used in Reciprocal Teaching have better comprehension skills. Moreover, teachers implementing Reciprocal Teaching have an opportunity to observe students' reading behaviors and comprehension strategies (Cobb & Kallus, 2011).

The following research questions were studied by the researcher:

1. **(Central research question)** How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?

2. **(Supporting research question)** What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?

3. **(Supporting research question)** How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?

4. **(Supporting research question)** After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, how do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting?

Summary and Interpretation of the Findings

(Central research question) How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?

Predicting. The findings from Research Question 1 suggest that the Reciprocal Teaching strategy of predicting affected the reading comprehension abilities of third graders by giving the third graders the opportunity to generate ideas about the topic through dialogue. Dialogue encouraged all the participants to discuss the text and their predictions based on the text features. The text features were used as prompts to predict. Each participant discussed a different experience with the topic that was brought to the dialogue. The different experiences each participant brought to the dialogue enriched the dialogue with a different meaning related to the topic that they were preparing to read. Research (McKeown et al., 2009) suggests that dialogue is important because it allows

readers to exchange ideas and share information about the topic. The dialogue then activated background knowledge. Background knowledge is information that a person already knows that is relevant to that which they are reading. Background knowledge was key in comprehending because background knowledge gave the participants relevant information that prepared the participants to connect to new information that they were preparing to read (Anderson, 1994; Anderson & Pearson, 1984). The ability to make connections during reading is one of the easiest ways for a reader to understand the text. Background knowledge can be used to help readers receive and comprehend new information in their reading (Al-Faki & Siddiek, 2013).

Questioning. Actively questioning during reading effected the comprehension of the participants in that it allowed the participants to frequently check their understanding as they read. Research suggests that questioning during reading is evidence that readers are thinking during reading and decreasing confusion, thereby providing clarification (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). Actively questioning to check for understanding during reading is characterized as metacognitive awareness. Metacognitive awareness (Flavell, 1979) is becoming cognitively aware of one's thinking and allows for understanding by the reader. It increases their ability to regulate and control cognitive processes. This is an important skill that affects comprehension because readers become aware when they do not understand. Once a reader becomes aware that they do not understand they have an opportunity to fix the misunderstanding by using a Reciprocal Teaching strategy. During the study, in the event that the participants did not understand what they were reading, they asked a question to clarify. Also, in the event that the participant asked a question to clarify, the participants went back into the text to locate the answer. The participants

selected the strategy of re-read and search for key words from the question to answer the question. Research (Dermody, 1998) suggests that readers who are metacognitively aware are more likely to succeed and achieve in reading comprehension because they are aware when they do not understand. Thus, the participants are controlling the way in which they receive and understand new information. When one strategy is not working, the participant is aware and can switch to a new strategy to reach their goal of reading comprehension.

The questioning strategy was also a strategy that gave the participants an opportunity to expand upon the knowledge of which they were reading. The participants asked questions during reading out of curiosity to find out more information relating to the topic they were reading. With this finding, the participants are deepening their comprehension beyond the text which results in the participants having a wholistic approach to understanding more of that which they are reading. Extending their understanding beyond the text by questioning is evidence that the reader is engaged and interested in that which is being read—so much so that the reader has a desire to learn more about the topic by inquiring/questioning the topic with an adult, research on a computer, or other reading books about the topic. Reading and questioning beyond the text about a topic gives the reader more information about the topic and exposure to vocabulary words. This results in the reader having an extensive amount of information that can be used immediately during reading or later during reading related to similar topics (Janssen, 2002).

Clarifying. Clarifying affected the participants' comprehension in that it gave the participants the opportunity to stop/pause when they did not understand or were confused

about a sentence, phrase, or word they were reading. By pausing, the participants were

cognitively aware that there was a breakdown in comprehension. As stated previously,

becoming aware that there is confusion or a misunderstanding is also characterized as

metacognitive awareness. Being aware that a sentence, phrase, or word was difficult to

understand was important because it gave the participants the opportunity to address the

misunderstanding instead of ignoring or skipping over information. During the study, the

participants did not skip information that was confusing; instead, the participants paused

and selected a clarifying strategy such as re-read, read-on for more information, use

context clues, and use a dictionary. These strategies helped the participants in that it gave

them the opportunity to read details they may have missed the first time they read it.

Also, re-reading helps readers to comprehend by exposing them to words more than once,

allowing them more time to understand what they read and permitting them to retain

information they read for a longer period (Beers, 2003). During this part of metacognitive

awareness, the participants are taking control of their learning in that they realize they

need to do something cognitively different to understand (Flavell, 1979).

  Summarizing. The participants used the summarizing strategy to emphasize and

identify the important details in a text. Using summarizing during reading allowed the

participants to become more engaged and focused on what they were reading. Evidence

of this was shown by the participants underlining important details and writing notes

about what they were reading. By the participants identifying the important details, they

were able to answer comprehension questions more easily. The participants referred to

the underlined details to answer comprehension questions as well as create summaries at

the end of each paragraph. The summary helped the participants to connect to new

information as they read.

(Supporting research question) What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?

The researcher learned that the third-grade teachers were implementing reading interventions to aid in the comprehension of third graders who were having difficulty comprehending grade-level text. The third-grade teachers implemented *group story mapping* and *questioning before reading* to help aid in the participants' comprehension. The participants read a story together and completed a story map graphic organizer. Group story mapping introduced the participants to the parts of a story; however, the teachers felt as if the intervention did not help with their comprehension. However, the intervention did help with the participants learning the parts of a story, such as characters, setting, events, problem, and solution. Furthermore, the teachers felt that the intervention did not hold the attention of the participants. The participants did not pay attention to the story and did not complete the graphic organizer correctly.

The second intervention, questioning before reading, was used to help the participants understand grade-level text. The intervention taught them to read the questions first before reading in an effort to remember key words from the question as they were reading. If students read the question before, they can locate the answer as they read. The participants were not able to successfully answer comprehension questions with this strategy. The participants were confused. They did not understand how to locate the answers as they were reading. The participants were in the habit of reading first and then going back into the story to locate the answer.

The last instructional practice the third-grade teachers used was the practice of

differentiating the reading lessons and assignments. The teachers stated that they use shorter versions of reading passages as well as simpler vocabulary to tailor to the needs of the participants. This instructional strategy helped the participants.

The findings of this research question indicate that *group story mapping* and *questioning before reading* did not help the participants with comprehending that which they read. The results suggest group story mapping helped with story structure and questioning before reading helped the participants to answer comprehension questions. The findings revealed that differentiated instruction did help in that it gave the participants reading material that was on their level which made it easier to understand. The difficulty with differentiated reading text and assignments is that one is not receiving grade-level instruction which could in turn stagnate the reading growth if the reader is not being exposed to new vocabulary words or sentence structures. As students are promoted to the next grade level, there is an expectancy in regard to the level of words and sentences that can be read and understood by the student. If a student has been reading on a lower level than his actual grade level requires, he will have a difficult time trying to catch up and read on grade level. This is characterized as the Matthew Effect of reading. Struggling readers who have a difficult time comprehending continue to have a difficult time reading throughout their lives, and the readers who read well continue to read well throughout their lives (Stanovich, 1986; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Guthrie et al., 2001; Rigney, 2010). This happens because low-level readers are not exposed to or taught how to derive meaning from what they read. Instead, low-level readers receive reading material that does not introduce new vocabulary words, sentences, or phrases. *(Supporting research question) How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students'*

motivation to read?

  The Reciprocal Teaching (RT) strategies affected the participants' motivation to read in that the participants were enthusiastic about using the RT strategies to read. The participants were eager to participate in the RT sessions; evidence of this was shown by how the participants would set the table before the session. The participants would also practice using the RT strategies before the lesson to ensure they were well prepared for comprehending what they read. Research (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000) suggests that students with interest will prepare themselves in learning to ensure they have what they need to reach their goal of comprehension. The post-motivation to read survey (see Appendix D) revealed that the participants liked reading for leisure and learning whereas the pre-motivation to read survey was the opposite, they did not like to read for leisure or learning.

  The RT strategies affected the motivation of the participants to read in that they used the predicting strategy to activate background knowledge. The background knowledge helped in making the new information being read relevant. The relevance gave the participants the opportunity to remain engaged and motivated with the text until they completely finished reading. Studies (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000) state that students who have an interest in what they read tend to learn successfully, whereas students without interest in what they read do not have a tendency to learn well. The participants were also motivated to continue reading because they were aware that they had RT strategies available that they could use if they did not understand what they were reading. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) suggest that readers who employ reading strategies during reading are highly motivated readers. The participants of the study remained engaged

while actively using the RT strategies during reading to gain an understanding. The participants were confident and motivated in that they could successfully finish reading and comprehending should they come across some difficulty during reading. The results of this research question mean that the RT strategies motivated the participants by allowing the participants to remain engaged during reading.

(Supporting research question) After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, how do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting?

Students independently applied the Reciprocal Teaching (RT) reading strategies by creating a reading plan with the RT strategies. The reading plan created by the participants helped guide them through their reading. Research suggests that by creating a plan before reading ensures readers reach their goal of comprehension. The reading plan begins with the participants using the predicting strategy. The participants preview the pictures and the words to get a preview of what they will read. After previewing, the participants begin reading. As they read, the participants actively use clarify when they arrive at a word of which they do not know the meaning. The participants use a dictionary to define the meaning of unknown words. The participants underline important information as they read and refer back to the information underlined as they continue to read to make meaningful connections.

In lieu of using the RT strategies during reading, the participants also independently used summarizing, questioning, and clarifying independently with other subjects such as science and social studies. The participants used summarizing to help them remember important details. The clarifying strategy helped the participants in that

they were able to define Tier 3 vocabulary words that they would have skipped over before they learned RT strategies. The participants used questioning to gain a deeper understanding of what they were reading.

Implication of Findings

This section of Chapter 5 addresses the implications of the findings in relation to the research questions. The findings of each research question will be addressed in the context of theory, research, and practice.

Theory. The findings of the central research question, "How did the Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension of third graders?" are consistent with the schema theory (Bartlett, 1932). Schema is characterized as compartments of information and knowledge that one has received through experiences and interactions with what they read and in their everyday life experiences. The compartments of information are activated and come to life once one reads or comes in contact with that which is similar to their schema. Schema, also known as background knowledge, helps to build upon what one already knows. Schema helps readers to comprehend because what they already know makes it easier to understand new information (Bartlett, 1932). The participants used the predicting strategy to generate ideas in which they already knew, which ultimately leads to background knowledge being activated (Al-Faki & Siddiek, 2013). As the background knowledge was activated the participants were able to make a connection to new information which led to comprehension.

The next theory that was in support of the central research question was metacognitive regulation. Metacognitive regulation (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011) involves learners becoming aware when they do not understand what they read and the

learners having the ability to select a strategy to address their misunderstanding. During the study, the participants stopped to ask questions to check for understanding and to clarify sentences, phrases, and words that did not make sense. When the participants used the strategy of re-read, read-on, use context clues, and use a dictionary (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011), the participants were controlling the way in which they received or understood information. By controlling a strategy, the participants were addressing their need to understand by switching to a tactic that would help them to understand. Metacognitive regulation gives learners the ability to successfully achieve their goal because readers have control of the way in which they learn and receive information in the event that they are confused and do not understand what they read.

The findings of the supporting research question, "How did the Reciprocal Teaching strategies motivate students to read?" support the theory of intrinsic-extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is characterized as reading for internal value, reading out of curiosity, a desire to learn more, and an internal want to read and learn. Extrinsic motivation is characterized as reading for a reward or condition outside of oneself. Intrinsic motivation leads to a will to want to read and achieve academic success whereas extrinsic motivation does not warrant a long-term effect in reading achievement (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). Evidence from the study shows that the participants displayed intrinsic motivation in that the post-motivation to read survey (see Appendix D) revealed that the participants liked reading for leisure and learning. For example, the Motivation to Read survey statements "How do you feel about spending free time reading?" and "How do you feel about reading for summer vacation?" were answered with "I like it." The results changed from the pre-motivation to read survey in which the participants did not like to

read for leisure or learning.

The schema theory (Bartlett, 1932) also supported the findings of this research question. The background knowledge was used by the participants as a guide to continue reading. The background knowledge gave the participants something of relevance or interest to connect with that which they were reading. The participants remained focused and motivated throughout reading because of the interest in the topic which they read. Having an interest in what they read gave the participants a desire to reach their goal of comprehension. As the participants read, they displayed that they were engaged and focused on understanding that which they read. The participants actively used the RT strategies during reading. This is evidence that the participants were intrinsically motivated because they were aware of how and when to use the RT strategies to help them should they have a breakdown in comprehension.

The findings of the supporting research question, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, how do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?" are consistent with the Zone of Proximal development theory by Lev Vygotsky. This theory states that learners are taught through social interaction with a goal to complete a task (Vygotsky, 1978.) The first phase of this theory involves a teacher or parent who models how to complete a task. With this, the participants were explicitly taught how to use the RT strategies during Phase I of the study. The next phase of this theory allows the learners to practice completing a task with group members. During the study the participants interacted together to complete the task of comprehending by using the RT strategies. With this, the responsibility of learning was passed from the teacher to the group members and placed upon each participant.

After the group practices using the RT strategies together, per the theory the participants ought to feel comfortable with completing the task independently, which means the responsibility of completing the task eventually leads to the learner independently completing the task.

In this phase, the learner has little help or dependence on others. This phase of the theory supports the research question in that the participants independently created a reading plan using the RT strategies to prepare for reading comprehension. The participants used the RT strategies with science and social studies reading to ensure they understood what they read. During social studies, a participant explained that the vocabulary was difficult to understand so she used the clarifying strategy to define the word. The I Do phase of the gradual release model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) is critical in that it is the main goal of instruction. The main goal of instruction is to give and prepare students to independently apply that which is taught. By doing this, learners have the foundation and opportunity to become lifelong independent learners.

Research. The research implications of the central research question, "How did instruction using Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the reading comprehension abilities of third graders?" allow researchers the opportunity to conduct research to further understand the impact of Reciprocal Teaching strategies on reading comprehension development for different populations of students. The findings for this population of students were positive; however, research can be conducted with younger readers and readers in higher grades, such as high school through college, to measure the effect Reciprocal Teaching has on reading comprehension. If the RT strategies had a positive impact on the comprehension of third graders, what impact can the RT strategies

have on others and how they learn? Additionally, the research design could change to an experimental design in which there is a control group and a group that receives Reciprocal Teaching treatment. This design could measure the effect that Reciprocal Teaching has on comprehension in comparison to how comprehension is affected without using the RT strategies.

In addition, research could be conducted on students who scored exceptionally high on the beginning of the year (BOY) benchmark assessment. The study could be conducted to assess the impact that the Reciprocal Teaching strategies have on learners who comprehend well. The results of this study could possibly show how the Reciprocal Teaching strategies enrich the comprehension level of high achieving readers. With this data, teachers of gifted learners could learn how to enrich the reading comprehension of their learners.

The findings from the supporting research question: "How does Reciprocal Teaching affect student's motivation to read?" provide future researchers the opportunity to expand and further their research in readers' interest and the effect and/or correlation it has on reading comprehension. The results from this study suggest that readers were intrinsically motivated to read because the RT strategy of predicting gave them background knowledge which was relevant to the new topic about which was being read. There is an opportunity for research to take place in discovering other variables that have an impact on the intrinsic motivation of young learners.

The supporting research question, "What instructional strategies are currently in place to help struggling readers derive meaning from text" gives researchers the opportunity to research further on classroom level reading interventions that specifically

address the comprehension needs of low-level readers who can decode and read words, but cannot comprehend what they read. The findings show evidence that the reading interventions currently in place are not beneficial to comprehension development. Research can be conducted on reading interventions that can be implemented in the classroom with the goal of teaching comprehension in a timely manner.

The findings from the supporting research question, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, how do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?" give researchers a foundation of continuing research on the impact RT has on readers after 2 or 3 years of exposure. Research could be conducted to find out how RT strategies are being implemented with students who were introduced to them in grade 2 and who are currently in grade 8. This research would provide data related to if the strategies are still utilized after the initial exposure and if the strategies have value to readers in later grades. Evidence of this study could play an important role in strategies teachers use to teach comprehension development.

Practice. Findings from the central research question, "How did instruction using the Reciprocal Teaching strategies affect the comprehension of third-grade readers?" imply that Reciprocal Teaching strategies can be used by reading teachers, ESL teachers, and special education teachers to teach students how to derive meaning from that which they read. The findings reveal that students can benefit from RT instruction from their teacher in that they learn to remain engaged and active during reading which allows them an opportunity to understand, whether they read for learning or leisure. RT can be implemented as a supplement to the reading instruction that is already in place to support

the reading comprehension development in low-level readers and ESL learners. Low-level readers and ESL learners can benefit in that they can have the opportunity to define difficult words and clarify confusing sentences and phrases. Being that vocabulary instruction is a huge component of comprehension, teaching learners how to pause when they arrive at a word that is of some challenge can help in developing their comprehension. The findings imply that this intervention can be implemented in the classroom through explicit instruction.

An implication can be made from the action of the teacher who implemented Reciprocal Teaching (RT) to the third-grade participants of this study. The teacher attended a non-mandatory training on RT afterschool on her own time. The results of this study imply that this action measure greatly benefited the third-grade participants. One can imply that attending teacher trainings which help to develop methods in their current teaching role can benefit students in significant ways. Implications can be made regarding professional developments, teaching workshops, and trainings have a significant benefit to teachers as they are equipped with new and innovative ways of delivering curriculum and maximizing the success of their students.

Evidence that supports the research question, "How do Reciprocal Teaching strategies motivate third graders to read?" implies that RT strategies can be used by reading teachers as pre-reading activities to prepare readers for reading (Al-Faki & Siddiek, 2013). If readers are prepared to read, they have an increased opportunity at understanding what they read. The findings imply that the predicting strategy can be used to prepare learners by activating background knowledge. The value in activating background knowledge is in the relevant connections that can easily be made to the topic.

The relevance creates an internal interest that will motivate and lead learners to continue reading for comprehension. The findings also imply that reviewing the RT strategies with the readers before reading will help the readers motivation to read in that they will remain engaged throughout reading by being aware of strategies to use when they come to a point in which they do not understand that in which they read. Finally, the findings imply that using these strategies are incentives to readers to continue reading for comprehension because they know how to monitor their reading so that they become aware when they do not understand. Readers then have the opportunity to choose a strategy again to help continue the process of comprehending.

The findings from the research question, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, do students independently apply reading strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing?" imply that students can greatly benefit from independently using Reciprocal Teaching strategies to derive meaning in the subject of reading as well as science and social studies. The findings imply that using the RT strategies can lead students to take an active role in their own learning. Taking an active role in their own learning, students become independent learners, which may result in them becoming life-long learners. Finally, the findings imply that RT strategies can be used with other subjects in which reading is involved. This implication is useful for science and social studies teachers (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). The current Common Core curriculum has sentences, phrases, and words that can be challenging to understand by third graders. In this instance the RT strategies clarifying and questioning are beneficial to use.

Limitations

The researcher observed a limitation in describing the current instructional

strategies taking place to help low-level readers. The supporting research question, "*What instructional methods are currently being used with third-grade students who are having difficulty comprehending grade-level texts?*" was a part of the study to measure the validity of current reading instructional strategies in the third-grade classroom. The researcher interviewed the teachers for their view of what instructional strategies were being used and why they felt their low-level readers could not comprehend. Though this was beneficial information, after the study took place, the researcher believed a pre-interview with the participants would have been beneficial to help explain the current instructional strategies from the view of the participants. The pre-interview with the participants could have been a baseline to describe how the participants described how they derived meaning from the text before the implementation of RT began. The pre-interview from the participants and that of the third-grade teachers could have provided a full scope of the current reading instructional strategies being used. With this, the findings measurement would be more subjective on how the RT affected the students' comprehension.

The researcher noticed a limitation in the study with the supporting research question, "*How does Reciprocal Teaching affect students' motivation to read?*" The researcher used a Motivation to Read survey (see Appendix D) before and after the implementation of Reciprocal Teaching. The survey was an instrument used to measure the participants' motivation by allowing the participants to answer statements about motivation to read. The researcher feels there was a limitation in this instrument in that the Motivation to Read survey did not provide the participants an opportunity to provide details explaining why they were motivated to read. A motivation to read interview

would be more beneficial in measuring the participants' motivation from using the RT

strategies because the interview would provide specific details of what the participants

said about the RT strategies and motivation to read for leisure and learning. The

motivation to read survey asked the participants to rate how they felt about reading but

did not provide the opportunity for the participants to explain how and why the strategies

motivated them.

Future Directions

Future directions of this study suggest further research in the direction of

Reciprocal Teaching strategies and its impact on adult learners who have difficulty

deriving meaning from text. This study focused on third-grade readers who were unable

to comprehend what they read. The findings support that the use of RT was beneficial to

third graders who had difficulty deriving meaning from what they read. Research would

be helpful in identifying if and how these strategies are helpful to adult learners who have

difficulty comprehending what they read. There are adults who do not have the capacity

to understand and make connections they read. If RT strategies are beneficial to third

graders, could they be of use to adults who do not know how to read? Being that reading

comprehension is an essential skill that is needed to survive in the world, this study could

provide a framework for a reading program that could help facilitate a reading

comprehension program for adult learners.

Motivation to read is an important factor in comprehension in that readers are

more likely to read if what they are reading is of interest to them (Guthrie & Wigfield,

2000). A study could be conducted on ways in which to motivate students to read, even if

what they are reading is not of interest. As readers progress in school to middle and high

school, their required reading may be in the form of non-fiction and historical fiction text. These texts are challenging in connecting with students and their interest; however, they will have to read these genres. How can the Reciprocal Teaching strategies help in motivating students to read that which is not interesting? A future study could be of use to a population and sample size of readers in middle school or high school who have such reading requirements.

The findings of the study for the research question, "After exposure to Reciprocal Teaching, do students independently apply reading strategies such as questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting?" could lead to a longitudinal study to see if and how the RT strategies are being used by participants in grades 4-5. The study would address the long-term effects RT strategies have on readers who were initially introduced to RT strategies in grade 3. The implications from this study could drive the way in which reading is taught and how the materials of reading are presented to readers in all grade levels.

Lastly, a longitudinal study could take place that compares third graders' beginning of the year (BOY) scores with the scores of their fourth-grade BOY scores after Reciprocal Teaching was implemented. This study's results could provide a view of how effective the strategies of Reciprocal Teaching are to comprehension a year after the strategies were implemented. With this information, teachers can have a better idea of the longevity of the results, if there are any.

Final Conclusion

In closing, The Reciprocal Teaching strategies were successful in helping third-

grade readers to derive meaning from what they read. The participants worked together in a group to help one another derive meaning from the text. The participants used the RT strategy Predicting as a pre-reading strategy to prepare for reading. Preparing for reading in this instance was characterized as activating background knowledge before reading which made reading and learning new information easier (Al-Faki & Siddiek, 2013). As the participants read, they actively used the RT strategies to monitor their understanding and to deepen their understanding of what they read. The RT strategies gave the third-grade participants the opportunity to remain engaged and focused as they read by underlining and taking notes. Furthermore, the RT strategies had a role in motivating the participants to read by giving the participants an interest in what they were preparing to read. Reciprocal Teaching helped in guiding the participants to become independent learners who created a reading plan to help derive meaning from not only reading but also derive meaning with their science and social studies texts.

The instructional strategies that were currently being used to help third graders derive meaning from the text did not have an impact on the third-grade participants' comprehension. The current instructional interventions did not engage the third-grade participants. The reading interventions were not helpful in that they did not give the participants strategies or skills that could be used during reading to help derive meaning. The only instruction that was helpful to the third-grade participants was the differentiating of the reading assignments.

Develop a passion for learning, if you do you will never cease to grow. After the implementation of the Reciprocal Teaching strategies, the researcher believes the Reciprocal Teaching strategies are a valuable asset to help readers derive meaning from

that which they read. The RT strategies proved to be reading tools that can be used when there comes a time when there is a breakdown in comprehension. The researcher believes that if students are equipped with reading strategies that not only help them derive meaning but also motivate them to read, they can become successful lifelong learners. The main goal of education is to teach and by teaching spark an interest in young learners so that they can become independent learners and thinkers. With this, young readers have the capacity to develop a passion for learning that results in further their own learning on their own terms.

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Appendix A

Teacher Interview Questions

Teacher Interview Questions

1. How long have you been teaching?

2. What is your highest level of education?

3. What grade do you currently teach?

4. Describe any extra-curricular or professional development in reading that you have participated in.

5. How much time is spent each day on ELA instruction?

6. Do you have the opportunity to work with small groups during ELA instruction? If so, how many times a week and for how long?

7. Describe the instruction that takes place during small group.

8. Describe the whole group reading instruction that takes place in your classroom.

9. Describe the instructional resources that are available to teach ELA.

10. Why are your readers having difficulty comprehending grade-level text?

11. What reading instructional strategies are you using with your readers who are having difficulty comprehending text?

12. Describe the strategies the reading core curriculum has in place, to address comprehension with struggling readers.

13. Describe the extra reading instructional support your readers receive.

Appendix B

Post-Interview Questions for Third-Grade Participants

Post-Interview Questions for Students
(DiLorenzo, 2010)

1. What is your plan before you read?

2. Do you think predicting can help you improve your reading? Why?

3. While you are reading, what Reciprocal Teaching strategies do you use?

4. Do you think questioning can help you improve your reading?

5. How do you use the questioning strategy?

6. Do you think a clarifying strategy can help you improve your reading? How do you use a clarifying strategy?

7. While you are reading, do you have other reading strategies that you use to help you besides predicting, questioning, and clarifying?

8. While reading, do you check your understanding of the passage? How?

9. When you do not understand the passage, what will you do?

10. After reading, do you think summarizing will help you comprehend the passage?

11. How do you summarize the passage you have read?

Appendix C

Comprehension Probe

Third-Grade Reading Comprehension Probe

Albert was a goldfish in a bowl. He ate a breakfast of green (**and**, but, from) brown flakes each morning. Then he (finished, fishbowl, **watched**) the children go off to school. (Which, **Albert**, Himself) hated being stuck in his bowl (**because**, children, finally) he could only swim around in (**circles**, children, flakes). He'd rather go to school. Poor (loved, **Albert**, Alone) couldn't even read a book. The (night, **pages**, flakes) would get soaked! Albert was quite (**a**, an, if) smart fish. He could do flips (**under**, mean, rock) water. He could spell his name (**in**, one, ate) the pebbles on the bottom of (he, they, **his**) bowl. No matter how brilliant Albert (are, **was**, when) though, he still had a problem. (Mean, **Only**, And) the cat spoke to him. And (a, **the**, on) cat was not particularly nice to (**him**, his, day).

"I'll eat you up one day," (home, an, **the**) cat would tell Albert when they (was, **were**, and) all alone in the house. "I'll (Albert, would, **gobble**) you right up. You will be (**surprised**, fishbowl, brilliant) to discover that no one will (sent, **miss**, off) you."
It seemed to Albert that (**everyone**, problem, breakfast) loved the cat. No one seemed (in, **to**, for) notice the cat was mean. No (they, by, **one**) seemed to care that the cat (brown, seemed, **hated**) books and wasn't smart. The cat (**couldn't**, hiding, school) even spell his own name, but (us, **the**, to) children played with him every day. (**One**, At, You) day the cat dipped his paw (up, to, **in**) Albert's fishbowl. To save himself, Albert (under, found, **swam**) to the very bottom of his (breakfast, **fishbowl**, soaking). He hid behind some rocks. When (**the**, go, can) children came home from school that (bowl, **day**, paw), they saw the cat was wet. (Have, **They**, House) didn't see Albert hiding behind the (flakes, happy, **rocks**) in the bottom of his fishbowl, (**and**, if, his) that scared them.

"You are a (such, each, **very**) naughty cat!" they shouted.
Finally, one (a, **of**, it) the children found Albert hiding in (**the**, was, it) bottom of the bowl. "I found (cat, his, **him**)! I found our wonderful fish!" Albert (ate, **felt**, day) happy that his family loved him (**after**, could, under) all.

Now the cat gets locked (for, you, **in**) the basement every day, and the (someone, **children**, wonderful) read books to Albert every night.

Note: Adapted from http://www.aimsweb.com/uploaded/files/sample_maze.pdf

Appendix D

Motivation for Reading Pre- and Post-Survey

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Scoring Sheet
Adapted from: **McKenna, M. C., & Kear, D. J. (1990)**

Test Administrator name_____

Student_____

Grade Level_____

Date of Administration_____

Scoring Guide	
4 points	Happiest face
3 points	Slightly smiling face
2 points	Mildly upset face
1 point	Very upset face

Recreational Reading		Academic Reading	
Test Item Number	**Number of Points**	**Test Item Number**	**Number of Points**
1.		11.	
2.		12.	
3.		13.	
4.		14.	
5.		15.	
6.		16.	
7.		17.	
8.		18.	
9.		19.	
10.		20.	
Raw Score		**Raw Score**	
Full Scale Raw Score (Recreational + Academic) =			
Percentile Ranks **NOTE: Divide raw score by 80 to determine percent.**	**Recreational**		
	Academic		

	Full Scale	

ELEMENTARY READING ATTITUDE SURVEY

Student_____   Grade_____

1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

5. How do you feel about spending free time reading?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

6. How do you feel about starting a new book?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
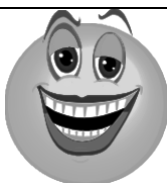
8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
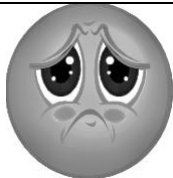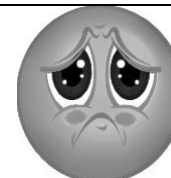
10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?

Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

11. How do you feel when the teacher asks you questions about what you read?

Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

12. How do you feel about doing reading workbook pages and worksheets?

Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

13. How do you feel about reading in school?

Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

14. How do you feel about reading your school books?

Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

15. How do you feel about learning from a book?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
16. How do you feel when it's time for reading class?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
17. How do you feel about the stories you read in reading class?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!
19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?			
Love it!	Like it.	Ho Hum …	Don't like it!

Appendix E

Reciprocal Teaching Transparencies

Reciprocal Teaching Transparencies
(DiLorenzo, 2010)

Clara and Clarence Clarifier

Their job is to assist group
members with confusing words of
ideas by using FIX-UP
STRATEGIES.

Refer to the glossary or a dictionary
when needed to answer questions
about spelling

Clarence Clarifier
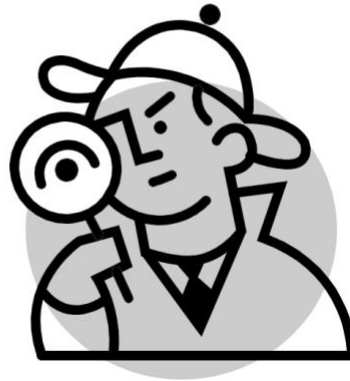
Clara Clarifier

Peggy and Peter Predictor:

Their job is to lead the group through the assigned pages and make predications based on the pictures, graphs, tables, and headings.

They use phrases such as: I think, I'll bet, I wonder if, and I predict as they make their predictions.

The predictor reminds the group of the predictions while they are reading and determines if the predications were correct or incorrect

Peggy Predictor   Peter Predictor

Quincy Questioner

Quincy and Quinn Questioner

Their job is to ask *Who? What? Where? When? Why?* About the text.

They ask questions before, during, and after reading.

They think, "Would this be a good teacher question about this part?"

Quinn Questioner

Sue Summarizer

Sammy and Sue Summarizer:

Their job is to find the main idea of each section that is read by rewording details into a simple summary.
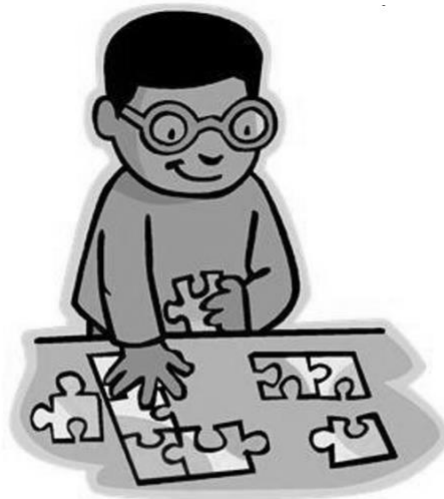
Sammy Summarizer

Lydia Leader

Larry and Lydia Leader:

Their job is to lead the group as they use the
Fantastic Four while reading their assignment.

1. Before Reading: ask the Predictor to make predictions
2. During Reading:
      Ask if anyone if they need something clarified
      Ask the Questioner to form questions
      Remind the Predictor to confirm/correct predictions
3. After Reading: Ask summarizer to create a concise summary

Larry Leader

RETELL

What did you notice? Include:

- Details
- Dialogue
- Events in order
- Detailed descriptions

SUMMARIZE

What did you notice? Include:

- Words such as first, next, then, finally
- Most important details: definitions, concepts, ideas in the correct order

Appendix F

Reciprocal Teaching Group Script

Reciprocal Teaching Group Script:

(DiLorenzo, 2010)

1. Larry/Lydia asks Peggy/Peter to make predictions

2. Peggy/Peter makes predictions

3. Begin Reading:
   a. Peggy/Peter reads first
   b. Quinn/Quincy reads second
   c. Clara/Clarence reads third
   d. Sammy/Sue reads fourth/last
   e. Larry/Lydia reads (last)

4. Clara/Clarence recommends fix-up strategies

5. Peggy/Peter confirms or corrects predictions

6. Larry/Lydia reminds everyone to use their strategies

7. Stop after each paragraph!
   a. Quinn/Quincy asks questions
   b. Sammy/Sue points out key words, definitions, details

8. Stop at the end of each section!
   a. Sammy/Sue states simple summary (main idea)

Appendix G

Third-Grade Participant Bookmarks

Clara Clarifier

Assist group members with confusing words or ideas by using

FIX-UP STRATEGIES:

*c*at
*sh*e
*tr*ee

won-der-ful ☑

th-ink r**ing**

st-ring st**art** f**ish**

Clarence Clarifier

Assist group members with confusing words or ideas by using

FIX-UP STRATEGIES:

*c*at
*sh*e
*tr*ee

won-der-ful ☑

th-ink r**ing**

st-ring st**art** f**ish**

142
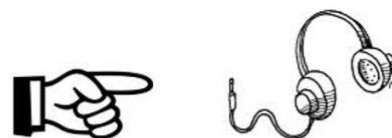
Peggy Predictor

Lead the group through the assigned pages and make predictions.

Look at:

Headings
Pictures
Tables
Graphs

Use the phrases:

I think...

I'll bet...

I wonder if... I

predict...

After reading:

- Remind the group of the predictions

- Were they right or wrong?

Peter Predictor

Lead the group through the assigned pages and make predictions.

Look at:

Headings
Pictures
Tables
Graphs

Use the phrases:

I think...

I'll bet...

I wonder if... I

predict...

After reading:

- Remind the group of the predictions

- Were they right or wrong?

Quincy Questioner

Ask...

Who was it that...?

What would happen if...?

Where could you find...?

When would you...?

Why would you...?

How are ___ and ___ similar or different?

...about the text.

Ask questions BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER reading.

What would be a good teacher question about this part?

Quinn Questioner

Ask...

Who was it that...?

What would happen if...?

Where could you find...?

When would you...?

Why would you...?

How are ___ and ___ similar or different?

...about the text.

Ask questions BEFORE, DURING, and AFTER reading.

What would be a good teacher question about this part?

Sue Summarizer

Find the MAIN IDEA:

Detail 1

+

Detail 2

+

Detail 3

=

Put is all
together:
SUMMARY
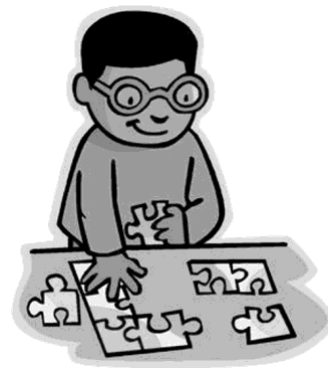
Sammy Summarizer

Find the MAIN IDEA:

Detail 1

+

Detail 2

+

Detail 3

=

Put is all
together:
SUMMARY

Lydia Leader

1. Before reading:

Ask predictor to make a prediction about what the group will learn about.

2. During reading:

Make sure all members have a chance to read using Group Directions

Ask if anyone needs a word or a section clarified; call on Clarifier to go through checklist to assist in clarifying.

Remind the Questioner to create questions from the text.

3. After reading:

Ask the summarizer to provide a summary of the paragraph/section.

Larry Leader

1. Before reading:

Ask predictor to make a prediction about what the group will learn about.

2. During reading:

Make sure all members have a chance to read using Group Directions

Ask if anyone needs a word or a section clarified; call on Clarifier to go through checklist to assist in clarifying.

Remind the Questioner to create questions from the text.

3. After reading:

Ask the summarizer to provide a summary of the paragraph/section.

Appendix H

Reciprocal Teaching Group Observation Form

Reciprocal Teaching Observation Form

Group participant's name _____

Date _____

1. Participant refers to Reciprocal Teaching bookmark   Yes   No

2. Participant makes predictions   Yes   No

3. Participant made prediction using   Title   Subtitle   Pictures   Reading passage

4. Participants use fix up strategies to clarify when they do not understand   Yes   No

5. Participant uses: dictionary   context-clues   other: _____   to clarify unknown words.

6. Level of questions asked during dialogue

    Basic (knowledge/ comprehension)
    Higher level (application/analysis/synthesis)

7. Participants' answer to questions are accurate   Yes   No

8. Participant creates an accurate summary of paragraph using their own words   Yes   No

9. Participants are actively engaged in group dialogue   Yes   No

10. Participants show enthusiasm about reading the passage   Yes   No

11. Motivating reading behaviors displayed

    _____

    _____

    _____

Comment:

Appendix I

Pre- and Post-Classroom Observation Form

Pre- and Post-Observation Form

Date _____   Location _____

Illustration of Classroom	Description of classroom
Teacher Behaviors: Teacher Talk: Student Behaviors: Student Talk:	

Appendix J

Implementing Reciprocal Teaching Observation Form

Implementing Reciprocal Teaching Observation Form

Date _____

Reciprocal Teaching strategy implemented _____

Teacher implementing the intervention discourse:

Teacher implementing the intervention Actions:

Participant dialogue:

Participant Actions during implementation of strategy:

Participant Actions after implementation of strategy:

Participant use of strategy:

Comments:

Appendix K

Third-Grade Reading Comprehension Probe

Third-Grade Reading Comprehension Probe

Albert was a goldfish in a bowl. He ate a breakfast of green (**and**, but, from) brown flakes each morning. Then he (finished, fishbowl, **watched**) the children go off to school. (Which, **Albert**, Himself) hated being stuck in his bowl (**because**, children, finally) he could only swim around in (**circles**, children, flakes). He'd rather go to school. Poor (loved, **Albert**, Alone) couldn't even read a book. The (night, **pages**, flakes) would get soaked! Albert was quite (**a**, an, if) smart fish. He could do flips (**under**, mean, rock) water. He could spell his name (**in**, one, ate) the pebbles on the bottom of (he, they, **his**) bowl. No matter how brilliant Albert (are, **was**, when) though, he still had a problem. (Mean, **Only**, And) the cat spoke to him. And (a, **the**, on) cat was not particularly nice to (**him**, his, day).

"I'll eat you up one day," (home, an, **the**) cat would tell Albert when they (was, **were**, and) all alone in the house. "I'll (Albert, would, **gobble**) you right up. You will be (**surprised**, fishbowl, brilliant) to discover that no one will (sent, **miss**, off) you." It seemed to Albert that (**everyone**, problem, breakfast) loved the cat. No one seemed (in, **to**, for) notice the cat was mean. No (they, by, **one**) seemed to care that the cat (brown, seemed, **hated**) books and wasn't smart. The cat (**couldn't**, hiding, school) even spell his own name, but (us, **the**, to) children played with him every day. (**One**, At, You) day the cat dipped his paw (up, to, **in**) Albert's fishbowl. To save himself, Albert (under, found, **swam**) to the very bottom of his (breakfast, **fishbowl**, soaking). He hid behind some rocks. When (**the**, go, can) children came home from school that (bowl, **day**, paw), they saw the cat was wet. (Have, **They**, House) didn't see Albert hiding behind the (flakes, happy, **rocks**) in the bottom of his fishbowl, (**and**, if, his) that scared them.

"You are a (such, each, **very**) naughty cat!" they shouted. Finally, one (a, **of**, it) the children found Albert hiding in (**the**, was, it) bottom of the bowl. "I found (cat, his, **him**)! I found our wonderful fish!" Albert (ate, **felt**, day) happy that his family loved him (**after**, could, under) all.

Now the cat gets locked (for, you, **in**) the basement every day, and the (someone, **children**, wonderful) read books to Albert every night.

Albert was a goldfish in a bowl. He ate a breakfast of green **(and, but, from)** brown flakes each morning. Then he **(finished, fishbowl, watched)** the children go off to school.

(Which, Albert, Himself) hated being stuck in his bowl **(because, children, finally)** he could only swim around in **(circles, children, flakes)**. He'd rather go to school. Poor **(loved, Albert, Alone)** couldn't even read a book. The **(night, pages, flakes)** would get soaked!

Albert was quite **(a, an, if)** smart fish. He could do flips **(under, mean, rock)** water. He could spell his name **(in, one, ate)** the pebbles on the bottom of **(he, they, his)** bowl. No matter how brilliant Albert **(are, was, when)** though, he still had a problem. **(Mean, Only, And)** the cat spoke to him. And **(a, the, on)** cat was not particularly nice to **(him, his, day)**.

"I'll eat you up one day," **(home, an, the)** cat would tell Albert when they **(was, were, and)** all alone in the house. "I'll **(Albert, would, gobble)** you right up. You will be **(surprised, fishbowl, brilliant)** to discover that no one will **(sent, miss, off)** you."

It seemed to Albert that **(everyone, problem, breakfast)** loved the cat. No one seemed **(in, to, for)** notice the cat was mean. No **(they, by, one)** seemed to care that the cat **(brown, seemed, hated)** books and wasn't smart. The cat **(couldn't, hiding, school)** even spell his own name, but **(us, the, to)** children played with him every day.

(One, At, You) day the cat dipped his paw **(up, to, in)** Albert's fishbowl. To save himself, Albert **(under, found, swam)** to the very bottom of his **(breakfast, fishbowl, soaking)**. He hid behind some rocks. When **(the, go, can)** children came home from school that **(bowl, day, paw)**, they saw the cat was wet. **(Have, They, House)** didn't see Albert hiding behind the **(flakes, happy, rocks)** in the bottom of his fishbowl, **(and, if, his)** that scared them.

"You are a **(such, each, very)** naughty cat!" they shouted.

Finally, one **(a, of, it)** the children found Albert hiding in **(the, was, it)** bottom of the bowl. "I found **(cat, his, him)**! I found our wonderful fish!" Albert **(ate, felt, day)** happy that his family loved him **(after, could, under)** all.

Now the cat gets locked **(for, you, in)** the basement every day, and the **(someone, children, wonderful)** read books to Albert every night.

Note: Adapted from http://www.aimsweb.com/uploaded/files/sample_maze.pdf

Appendix L

Benchmark Assessment

Part 1: Reading

Read the article "Saving the Peregrine Falcon" before answering Numbers 1 though 10.

Saving the Peregrine Falcon

The peregrine falcon flies faster than any other bird. It can reach speeds of more than 200 miles an hour! The bird uses this speed to snatch its food with its strong claws when it is flying. Bird lovers have been interested in this special bird for a long time. It almost disappeared over 50 years ago.

The Disappearance of the Peregrine Falcon

Starting in 1950, farmers began using a chemical called DDT. They put this chemical on crops to kill insects. About six years later, people noticed that many animals were dying, including the peregrine falcon. Then, in 1962, an expert named Rachel Carson wrote a book called *Silent Spring*. This book explained how harmful chemicals like DDT could be. These chemicals were killing the animals that ate the insects. Scientists studied the chemicals. They agreed with Rachel Carson. Then, harmful chemicals such as DDT were no longer allowed to be used in the United States starting in 1973.

GO ON →

The peregrine falcon was one of the animals harmed by the chemical. The chemical made their eggs thin and brittle. When the females sat on their eggs to warm them, the eggs cracked. No baby chicks were born. There were fewer peregrine falcons each year.

Protecting the Peregrines

Peregrine falcons are strong fliers. They can fly thousands of miles in a year. Even though the United States did not allow the use of DDT, some other countries still used it. Peregrines could still eat animals that contained the chemical from other places. To protect the birds, scientists took some adult birds to a nursery to lay their eggs. Then they took the chicks to safe places. There the chicks could safely grow into adults.

Scientists chose Acadia National Park as one of the safe places. In 1984, scientists brought the bird to the park. In two years, they brought 22 chicks there when they were three or four weeks old. The park is a good place for the peregrines because it has high mountain ledges where the birds like to live. The birds were placed outside in a wooden box for three more weeks. They were fed food and water from a long tube. This meant that the chicks would not have contact with people. The chicks learned to live in their new home. Finally, they began to hunt for food on their own. When it was time to lay their eggs, they built nests at this site.

A Success Story

The first eggs from the replaced chicks hatched in 1991. From 1991 to 2011, at least 87 chicks have hatched in the park. Both Canada and the United States have worked hard to save peregrine falcons. Today, the peregrine falcon is back and stronger than ever. In some places, there are more peregrines than there were 60 years ago. For scientists and bird lovers, the story of the peregrine falcon is a success.
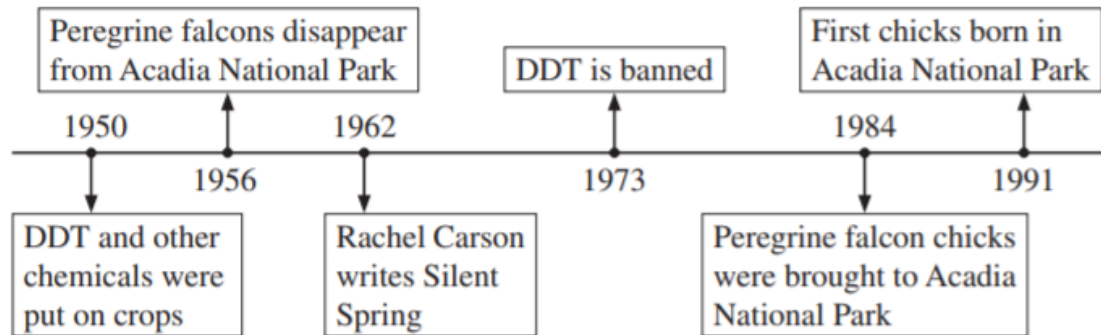
Peregrine falcons disappear from Acadia National Park		DDT is banned	First chicks born in Acadia National Park
1950	1962		1984
1956		1973	1991
DDT and other chemicals were put on crops	Rachel Carson writes Silent Spring		Peregrine falcon chicks were brought to Acadia National Park

Part 1: Reading

Read the article "Saving the Peregrine Falcon" before answering Numbers 1 though 10.

Saving the Peregrine Falcon

Now answer Numbers 1 through 10. Base your answers on "Saving the Peregrine Falcon."

1 Which sentence BEST explains the MAIN idea of the article?

Ⓐ Our country has banned DDT since 1973.

Ⓑ The peregrine falcon is the fastest flier of all birds.

Ⓒ Today, the peregrine falcon can be found in the rocky cliffs of Acadia National Park.

Ⓓ Peregrine falcons have been saved after a chemical called DDT almost destroyed them.

2 What did DDT do to harm the peregrine falcon?

(F) It made the peregrine falcon fly much slower.

(G) It forced peregrines to fly further away for food.

(H) It prevented peregrine chicks from having contact with people.

(I) It made the peregrines' eggshells thin and brittle so their chicks could not hatch.

3 Read this sentence from the article.

To protect the birds, scientists took some adult birds to a nursery to lay their eggs.

What does the word *nursery* mean in the sentence above?

(A) a child's room

(B) a place where plants are grown

(C) a place where animals are cared for

(D) a hospital room for newborn babies

4 Which sentence BEST describes the author's point of view about peregrine falcons?

(F) They should not have been returned to Acadia.

(G) They would not be able to live outside of Acadia.

(H) They would have disappeared if they did not fly so fast.

(I) They were able to live mainly through the help of others.

5 Read this sentence from the article.

> **The bird uses this speed to snatch its food with its strong claws when it is flying.**

Which word has almost the SAME meaning as the word *snatch* as used in the sentence above?

Ⓐ find   Ⓒ prepare

Ⓑ grab   Ⓓ throw

6 Based on evidence from the text, the author would MOST likely agree that

Ⓕ the chemical DDT only harmed insects.

Ⓖ the peregrine falcon is a special bird.

Ⓗ the peregrine falcon disappeared over 60 years ago.

Ⓘ the chemical DDT should not have been banned in

7 What information can you find using the header "Protecting the Peregrines"?

Ⓐ the plan to save the Peregrine falcons

Ⓑ how the peregrine falcons disappeared

Ⓒ the success of the peregrine falcons

Ⓓ how the peregrine falcons were removed from Acadia

8 Which information can you find using the timeline?

Ⓕ why DDT was created

Ⓖ when DDT was banned in the United States

Ⓗ when the first peregrine chick died in Acadia National Park

Ⓘ when the last peregrine chick was born in Acadia National Park

9 According to the article, scientists took some of the adult peregrines to a nursery because they wanted to

Ⓐ keep them away from prey that contained DDT.

Ⓑ make sure they had plenty of food to catch and eat.

Ⓒ give them space away from humans to build their nests.

Ⓓ let tourists who visited the national park see

10 Read these sentences from the article.

> **The chemical made their eggs thin and brittle. When the females sat on their eggs to warm them, the eggs cracked.**

What does the word *brittle* mean in the sentences above?

Ⓕ slippery

Ⓖ hard to crack

Ⓗ easily broken

Ⓘ not fully grown

Appendix M

Parental Consent Form

Parental Consent form

Title of Study: Implementing a research based reading intervention focused upon Increasing Reading Comprehension amongst Third Grade Students

What is a research study?

We are asking you to be in a research study. Research helps us learn new things. Only people who decided they want to help will be in the study. We will tell you about the study and then you should take time to make your decision. You should talk to your parent or guardian before you decide.

Who is doing this research study?

Kamaria McNair with Abraham S. Fischler College of Education with Barbara Christina and Camille Fareri.

Why is this study being done?

This study is being done to assess if and how Reciprocal Teaching reading strategies affect the development of reading comprehension in readers who have difficulty understanding what they read. Reciprocal teaching is a comprehension reading model that teaches four reading comprehension strategies. The four strategies are predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing.

What will happen during the study

Your child will participate in a small group in which your child will learn four different reading strategies. After learning the strategies of reciprocal teaching, your child will practice using the strategies in a small group setting with other students. Your child will be observed over six weeks to describe if and how your child is using the Reciprocal Teaching reading strategies.

How long will my child be in the study?

Your child will be in this study for six weeks. The study will take place during your child's regular small group reading time which is forty-five minutes a day.

What are the good things about my child being in this study?

Your child may benefit by learning reading comprehension strategies that may help him/her derive meaning from text.
Your child may have more motivation to read more.
Your child may become more confident with their reading abilities.

Will being in this study hurt my child?

We do not think your child will be hurt by helping us with this study.

Will people know my child is in the study?

The people doing the study will know that your child is participating in the study. They will not tell anyone else. If they talk about the study or write about it, they will not use your child's name.

Is it ok if I say "No, I do not want my child to be in the study"?

Your child does not have to be in this study if you do not want them to be in the study. No one will be mad or upset with your child if you change your mind. You can decide at any time to stop your child from being in the study.

Who can I talk to about the study?

If you have questions now, feel free to ask us. Remember, you should talk with your parents or guardian about this study.

If later you have more questions about the study, you can contact Kamaria McNair. Kamaria can be reached at 404-232-9968

If you have questions about the study but want to talk to someone else who is not a part of the study, you can call the Nova Southeastern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (954) 262-5369 or toll free at 1-866-499-0790 or email at IRB@nova.edu

All space below was intentionally left blank.

_____ Yes, I give my child permission to participate in this study.

_____ No, I do not give my child permission to participate in this study.

Student name _____ Classroom teacher _____

Signature of parent or guardian _____ Date _____

Signature of investigator _____ Date _____

Appendix N

Parent Letter

Dear parents,

My name is Kamaria McNair and I am a teacher at your child's school. I am also a doctoral student at Nova Southeastern University. I am pursuing a doctorate in reading. I am in the process of conducting a study to determine if a reading model: Reciprocal Teaching, can help below level readers comprehend what they are reading. Reciprocal teaching is a reading model that uses four reading strategies (predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing) that may promote reading comprehension. I would like to ask for your permission for your child to participate in the study.

If you decide to allow your child to participate in this study, your child will learn the four reading strategies of Reciprocal Teaching from a reading specialist at your child's school. Once your child learns the four strategies of Reciprocal teaching, they will practice using the strategies daily during their reading block, for six weeks. I will be present during this time to observe and document your child's reading behaviors and to document if there is progress with their reading comprehension.

Your child does not have to be in this study if you do not want them to be and they can quit at any time. No one will be upset with you or your child if you decide you do not want them to participate. There will be a meeting for parents and students on __/__/__ at 5:30 PM in the school's library to further discuss questions and concerns about this study. I hope to see you there.

Remember, this is completely voluntary.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Ms. McNair

Appendix O

Teacher Consent to Participate in a Research Study

General Informed Consent Form
NSU Consent to be in a Research Study Entitled

Implementing a research-based reading intervention focused upon Increasing Reading Comprehension amongst Third Grade Students

Who is doing this research study?

College: Abraham S. Fischler college of Education

Principal Investigator: Kamaria McNair, Bachelor in Science in Education, Masters in Curriculum and instruction

Faculty Advisor/Dissertation Chair: Dr. Barbara Christina

Funding: Unfunded

What is this study about?

The study is about the reading intervention: Reciprocal teaching. The researcher would like to describe if and how the strategies of Reciprocal teaching may help below grade level readers with comprehension. The research is being done to assess a different method of teaching reading to below-level third-grade students.

Why are you asking me to be in this research study?

You are being asked to be in a research study describing the reading strategies used in your third-grade classrooms to aid in the comprehension development of below- grade level readers. You were selected as a possible participant because of your position as a third-grade classroom teacher. You are being asked to be in this study because the researcher would like to know what reading methods are currently used in the classroom. In addition, the researcher would like to observe how reading is currently taught.

What will I be doing if I agree to be in this research study?

Research Study Procedures - as a participant, this is what you will be doing:
The researcher asks that third-grade teachers answer interview questions about the effective reading strategies/interventions used with below-grade level readers in their classrooms. There are eight interview questions that will take approximately twenty to thirty minutes to complete. This will take place after school in the researchers' classroom. After the interviews, the researcher will observe your reading instruction

for 5 consecutive days for 45 minutes. The researcher will observe the reading instruction taking place with your below-grade level readers.

Are there possible risks and discomforts to me?

This research study involves minimal risk to you. To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would have in everyday life.

What happens if I do not want to be in this research study?
You have the right to leave this research study at any time, or not be in it. If you do decide to leave or you decide not to be in the study anymore, you will not get any penalty or lose any services you have a right to get. If you choose to stop being in the study, any information collected about you **before** the date you leave the study will be kept in the research records for 36 months from the end of the study but you may request that it not be used.

What if there is new information learned during the study that may affect my decision to remain in the study?
If significant new information relating to the study becomes available, which may relate to whether you want to remain in this study, this information will be given to you by the investigators. You may be asked to sign a new Informed Consent Form, if the information is given to you after you have joined the study.

Are there any benefits for taking part in this research study?

There are no direct benefits from being in this research study. We hope the information learned from this study will be of use to new teachers as well as help veteran teachers with new and innovative ways of teaching below-grade level readers to comprehend.

Will I be paid or be given compensation for being in the study?

You will not be given any payments or compensation for being in this research study.

Will it cost me anything?

There are no costs to you for being in this research study.

How will you keep my information private?

Information we learn about you in this research study will be handled in a confidential manner, within the limits of the law and will be limited to people who have a need to review this information. All confidential data will be kept securely in a locked file cabinet in the researchers' classroom for 36 months. After 36 months, the information will be destroyed. The data will be destroyed by shredding the documents with a paper shredder. The audio used will be deleted from the recording device as well. This data will be available to the researcher, the Institutional Review Board and other representatives of this institution. If we publish the results of the study in a scientific journal or book, we will not identify you.

Will there be any Audio or Video Recording?
This research study involves audio and/or video recording. This recording will be available to the researcher, the Institutional Review Board and other representatives of this institution. The

recording will be kept, stored, and destroyed as stated in the section above. Because what is in the recording could be used to find out that it is you, it is not possible to be sure that the recording will always be kept confidential. The researcher will try to keep anyone not working on the research from listening to or viewing the recording.

What Student/Academic Information will be collected and how will it be used?
The following information will be collected from student educational records: Students reading assignments. These records will be used to determine if and how the Reciprocal teaching strategies help below-grade level readers with their comprehension after exposure to Reciprocal teaching strategies. The reading assignments will be analyzed to assess if and how the reading strategies are used. These records will be given to the Principal Investigator by the classroom teacher.

<u>Whom can I contact if I have questions, concerns, comments, or complaints?</u>

If you have questions now, feel free to ask us. If you have more questions about the research, your research rights, or have a research-related injury, please contact:

Primary contact:
Kamaria McNair, Bachelor in Science in education, Masters in Curriculum and instruction
can be reached at 404-232-9968.

If primary is not available, contact: Dr. Barbara Christina
can be reached at 603-986-6074

Research Participants Rights
For questions/concerns regarding your research rights, please contact:

Institutional Review Board
Nova Southeastern University
(954) 262-5369 / Toll Free: 1-866-499-0790
IRB@nova.edu

You may also visit the NSU IRB website at www.nova.edu/irb/information-for-research-participants for further information regarding your rights as a research participant.

All space below was intentionally left blank.

Research Consent & Authorization Signature Section

Voluntary Participation - You are not required to participate in this study. In the event you do participate, you may leave this research study at any time. If you leave this research study before it is completed, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

If you agree to participate in this research study, sign this section. You will be given a signed copy of this form to keep. You do not waive any of your legal rights by signing this form.

SIGN THIS FORM ONLY IF THE STATEMENTS LISTED BELOW ARE TRUE:
- You have read the above information.

Your questions have been answered to your

Adult Signature Section

I have voluntarily decided to take part in this research study.

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name of Participant	Signature of Participant	Date
_____	_____	_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent and Authorization	Signature of Person Obtaining Consent & Authorization	Date

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Appendix P

Student Letter

Dear students,

Hello, as many of you may know, I am Ms. McNair. I am a doctoral student at Nova Southeastern University. I am conducting a study about a reading model: Reciprocal Teaching. I would like to know if and how the four strategies of Reciprocal Teaching can aid readers who are having difficulty understanding what they read. I would like for you to be in the study to see if the reading strategies will help you understand what you read.

The study will take place during your regular reading time. If you decide to participate in the study, you will learn four reading strategies from our reading specialist, Ms. Carter. After learning the reading strategies, you will practice using the four reading strategies with other group members for six weeks. I will be in the room to observe and write down if and how the reading strategies are helping with your comprehension.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be and you can quit at any moment. No one will be upset with you if you decide you don't want to participate in the study. If you decide to participate in the study, you will still be taught reading strategies that may help you understand what you read. Only your teacher, the reading, specialist, and myself will know you are in the study. If you would like to participate in this study, please read and sign the assent form.

Thank you,
Ms. McNair

Appendix Q

Student Assent Form

Child Assent Form
NSU Assent to be in a Research Study Entitled
Implementing a Research-Based Reading Intervention Focused upon Increasing Reading
Comprehension amongst Third Grade Students

What is a research study?

We are asking you to be in a research study. Research helps us learn new things. Only people who decided they want to help will be in the study. We will tell you about the study and then you should take time to make your decision. You should talk to your parent or guardian before you decide.

Who is doing this research study?

Kamaria McNair with Abraham S. Fischler College of Education with Barbara Christina and Camille Fareri.

Why is this study being done?

I would like to know if four reading strategies (predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing) can help you become a better reader who understands what you are reading.

What will happen to me in this study?

You will work in a small group in which you will learn four different reading strategies. After learning the strategies for reciprocal teaching, you will practice using the strategies in a small group setting with other students. You will be observed over six weeks to describe if and how you are using the reading strategies of Reciprocal Teaching.

How long will I be in the study?

You will be in this study for six weeks. The study will happen during your regular small group reading time which is forty-five minutes a day.

What are the good things about being in this study?

There are no direct benefits to you, but:

- You may learn reading comprehension strategies that may help you understand what you read.
- You may want to read more.
- You may become more confident with your reading abilities.

Will being in this study hurt me?

We do not think you will be hurt by helping us with this study.

Do I have other choices?

Yes, you can decide not to be in this study and still receive reading instruction that may help you understand what you read.

Will people know I am in the study?

The people doing the study will know that you are in the study. They will not tell anyone else. If they talk about the study or write about it, they will not use your name.

Is it ok if I say "No, I do not want to be in the study"?

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. No one will be mad or upset with you if you change your mind. You can decide at any time to stop being in the study.

Who can I talk to about the study?

If you have questions now, feel free to ask us. Remember, you should talk with your parents or guardian about this study.

If later you have more questions about the study, you can contact Kamaria McNair. Kamaria can be reached at 404-232-9968

If you have questions about the study but want to talk to someone else who is not a part of the study, you can call the Nova Southeastern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (954) 262-5369 or toll free at 1-866-499-0790 or email at IRB@nova.edu

All space below was intentionally left blank.

<u>Do you understand and do you want to be in the study?</u>

I understand and all my questions were answered.

❑ I want to be in the study.

❑ I do not want to be in the study.

<u>Child Assent Signature Section</u>

I have voluntarily decided to be in this research study.

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name of Child	Signature of Child	Date
_____	_____	_____
Printed Name of Person Explaining the Study	Signature of Person Explaining the Study	Date