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# Belief and practice: A self-study

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BELIEF AND PRACTICE: A SELF-STUDY

An Abstract of a Thesis  
Submitted  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts in Education

Jamie Marie Nelson

University of Northern Iowa

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this self-study was to critically examine whether or not my beliefs about literacy are reflected in my teaching practice. In addition, it was to determine if my teaching practice aligned with six instructional elements for literacy suggested by Allington and Gabriel (2012) in their article “Every Child, Every Day.”

There were three data sources in this study. I kept a time-log for one week with an instructional calendar about my schedule for literacy instruction. At the end of each day, I wrote a post-teaching reflection. The third data source was my personal, written responses to each of Allington and Gabriel’s (2012) six suggested elements. The data were analyzed using a constant-comparison method.

The findings indicated that my practice is somewhat aligned to Allington and Gabriel’s (2012) suggested literacy elements. However, my ideal beliefs do not align with my teaching practices. There is evidence of tension between my teaching practice and my beliefs. There was even evidence that suggests that my ideal beliefs do not align with my real beliefs. In an effort to improve my teaching practices, I need to better understand my beliefs.

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This Study by: Jamie Marie Nelson

Entitled: Belief and Practice: A Self-Study

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the  
Degree of Master of Arts in Education

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Learning to read is a complex process that requires a reflective teacher who makes instructional decisions based on students' needs (Allington, 2005; Clay, 2005a, 2005b; Costa, 2008; Duke, Gates, Hall, & Tower, 2006; Harvey & Goudvis, 2013; Johnston, 2004; Rumelhart, 2013). This complex theory can be difficult for some educators when policies mandate the ways in which we teach. Allington's work has prompted a shift in the way I personally view literacy education. My experience in literacy education really began with the study of Reading Recovery procedures and the research conducted by Marie M. Clay. Clay (2005a) encouraged educators to take children from where they are with their current abilities in literacy to somewhere new where they have an opportunity to learn, develop a self-extending system and become independent readers and writers. This concept from Clay encouraged me to think differently about education, especially how struggling readers acquire literacy. Clay insisted that an expertly trained teacher carefully design instruction for readers who struggle.

Clay's (2005b) theory was contrary to my understanding from my teacher preparation courses that children who struggled with reading should participate in explicit, scripted programs to remediate skill deficits. Clay's theory, however, is very different from such a remedial perspective. I understood Clay to purport that children need to be put in positive learning situations and teachers should use the child's existing knowledge to accelerate learning. During my four years of teaching Reading Recovery to

the lowest achieving first graders in our district, I began to realize that all children learn differently and there is not one way to teach a child. Throughout my training and ongoing professional development in Reading Recovery, I began to realize that children need individualized experiences that relate to their lives and interests in order to accelerate their learning.

Clay's (2005a, 2005b) writings led me to the work of Richard Allington. Allington's (2012) article, "Every Child, Every Day," co-authored with Rachel Gabriel, provides educators with a new perspective in order to provide quality literacy education to all students regardless of mandates, policies, and/or curriculum. Allington and Gabriel outline six key principles that can be incorporated in classrooms for every child, every day. Allington and Gabriel suggest that every child has the opportunity to read something of his or her choice, read accurately, understand what he or she reads, write about something personally meaningful, discuss reading and writing with peers, and listen to a fluent adult reader read aloud every day. These things can be done without any additional funds, do not require additional time, and can be occur in conjunction with any curricular resource (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). This article spoke to me personally as I was struggling with the idea of how to ensure children were receiving quality literacy instruction in my classroom while addressing the mandates and policies that govern our district.

A curricular resource can be a useful guiding document or it can be detrimental to student achievement when it is the sole source of instruction (Allington, 2002). Most curricular resources that have been developed in recent years have been authored by

literacy scholars (such as Doug Fisher) who attempt to incorporate a balance of instructional approaches while claiming to align with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS; Allington, 2002). This is appealing to districts, administrators, and teachers; it appears to make planning easier as it gives a sense of assurance that all standards are being addressed.

While it seems like the perfect fit, Allington (2002) cautions educators not to rely solely on a packaged reading series. He even shares his concern that a reading series “has the potential to produce unintended negative effects” (p. 6). Allington notes that school officials and teachers may rely on the reading series to provide an instructional guide, but he insists that there is a long history of research that supports strong teachers and teacher expertise. Another issue raised by Allington is what he determines a moral issue for literacy scholars. He argues that working with publishers to provide helpful instructional suggestions for teachers is more often sideswiped by state initiatives and mandates that undermine teacher expertise and scholarly knowledge about teaching and learning. In order to publish in the current climate, Allington suggests that scholars have to suspend their knowledge of what is effective and correct in order to conform to the demands of state policies and mandates about learning to read that trump years of evidence on effective reading instruction.

As teachers feel pressure to abide by the policies set before them, it is easy look for the silver bullet, oftentimes a basal reading series. Spiegel (1998) reminds us that there is no silver bullet in education. The history of education in the United States consists of a wide variety of information and research. The National Reading Panel

(NRP; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [NICHD], 2000) informed the education community of the results of an analysis of research on reading instruction. The NRP identified five essential components for teaching reading that demonstrated significance in learning to read. The essential components, known commonly as the five pillars of reading, included phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension (NICHD, 2000). While researchers agree that these components are important in learning to read, they also recognize that reading is a complex, interactive process (Doyle & Forbes, 2003; Forbes & Doyle, 2004; Rumelhart, 2013). Doyle and Forbes (2003) state that, “Reading is an active, decision-making process” (p. 7). This interactive process is best learned by reading and writing authentic texts (Allington, 2002; Allington, 2005; Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Duke et al., 2006; Harvey & Goudvis, 2013; Ray, 2004).

Children must use various sources of information in order to read and comprehend. They must also be flexible in the use of their strategies and be able to self-monitor their reading and writing. Researchers purport that these types of skills be taught in an authentic context which children are engaged in meaningful literacy tasks that are relatable and authentic to their lives and passions (Allington, 2002; Allington, 2005; Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Duke et al., 2006; Harvey & Goudvis, 2013; Ray, 2004). Cassidy and Ortlieb (2013) call the mixture of the previously mentioned skill-based approaches with an authentic interactive process, balanced literacy. These researchers (Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013) suggest that a balanced program uses the best pieces of all teaching philosophies and strategies to meet the various needs of the students in each

classroom. Cassidy and Ortlieb encourage educators to think about balanced literacy as an avenue for incorporating more new literacies (i.e. critical literacy, digital, and multi-modal literacy) rather than just balancing traditional approaches.

Traditional approaches have given way to new and critical literacies in recent years (Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys, 2002). New literacies involve using multimodal ways to teach, incorporate critical literacy, and combat issues related to social injustices (Lapp, Moss, & Rowsell, 2012). Critical literacy is categorized into four categories: disrupting the commonplace, interrogating multiple viewpoints, focusing on sociopolitical issues, and taking action and promoting social justice (Lewison et al., 2002). Critical Literacy prepares students to take action against oppression and to face the challenges they will likely encounter as citizens in our communities (Lewison et al., 2002). Creating justice-oriented students will eventually produce citizens who are willing to cross the dividing lines that separate culture and begin to bring social issues to justice (Lewison et al., 2002).

The ultimate goal of reading is to comprehend the author's message (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013; Stahl, 2014). Costa (2008) supports this belief by encouraging educators to teach children to "think big" (p. 24). He insists that educators should pose inquiries that stimulate the imagination, guide students in self-assessment, urge students to question norms, value multiple viewpoints, and provide a safe, non-judgmental classroom climate. This view is contrary to the traditional path schools have taken in response to recent mandates and policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB; 2001). With the adoption of the CCSS, many schools have returned to traditional approaches of teaching

literacy with a foundation based upon a linear model using basal-style texts. Costa (2008) and Harvey and Goudvis (2013) argue that children are born thinking and a linear model does not prepare children for the skills needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As stated previously, Rumelhart (2013) provides evidence that reading is an interactive process in which children make decisions based on the information obtained through their eyes and the information they have regarding context, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and background knowledge. Trends in literacy come and go and new topics appear on the annual *What's Hot in Literacy* lists but Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that there isn't one way to teach children to read. They advocate for the use of six instructional elements for students to learn how to read. They state, "all that's necessary is for adults to make the decision to do it" (p. 10).

When children fail to meet the requirements of the enacted curriculum and standardized cut scores, schools are required to intervene (Iowa Code section 279.68 and 281--Iowa Administrative Code 62, 2014). Programs such as Reading Recovery provide children an opportunity to meet grade level expectations through an individualized intervention with a specialized teacher. Reading Recovery is an intervention designed to work alongside classroom instruction to help children become strategic readers who are able to be flexible and independent readers and writers. Reading Recovery teachers receive professional development and on-going training throughout the duration of their careers as Reading Recovery teachers. Reading Recovery aligns with Costa's (2008) belief about a thinking curriculum. Jones (1995) describes Reading Recovery teacher's job as an avenue to teach children how to learn, not what to learn.



The curriculum, standards, mandates, and policies are all part of the national campaign to improve America's schools (Allington, 2002). Politicians have declared that our educational system is incompetent and that "American students cannot read even simple texts with understanding" (Allington, 2002, p. 7). This political agenda is what has reignited the reading wars. There are countless theories and ideologies that claim to solve the extensive problem with illiteracy in the United States. Allington argues that since 1988, scores for fourth-grade students actually have risen on each assessment. He says that, "the achievement levels have risen primarily in states that have invested heavily in teacher development. There's little progress evident in the states that have invested heavily in testing and curriculum standards" (p. 7).

Unfortunately, our schools are funded in ways that inhibit equal learning opportunities for all students. The wealthiest communities are able to support their schools while the poorest communities have the poorest schools (Allington, 2002). Our dilemma in the United States doesn't boil down to mandates, standards, curriculum, or methods; it is the unequal distribution of wealth and poverty. Allington's theory is grounded in his thirty years of research of exemplary teachers. He has also studied the effect of summer reading loss of children in high poverty schools and communities, which is ironically ignored by the federal government. He states that, "The negative portrayals of high-poverty schools led us to ignore what the scientific evidence suggests is the most critical factor in fostering the reading achievement gap-opportunity to read" (p. 14). What Allington has found is that while there is a rich/poor achievement gap, one

that needs addressed, there is undeniable evidence that it is a teacher and her expertise that have the most influence in teaching a child to read and closing the achievement gap.

Researchers (Allington & Gabriel, 2012) have proven time and again that there is not any one reading series that has superiority in teaching reading. “In other words, nothing worked everywhere and everything worked somewhere” (Allington, 2002, p. 16). A reading series that promises all the new and research based teaching strategies, integrated standards, no planning, and all the bells and whistles is a false safety net. The mandates, which ultimately call upon the use of a proven reading series, are a competent teacher’s worst nightmare (Allington, 2002). It seems as though our experience and expertise is useless and we are required to teach mindless activities and isolated skills (Allington, 2002).

I have asked myself many times why I give up what I know and believe to teach from the manual? The pressure. The pressure is so great. It is also easier to say it wasn’t my fault if I followed the reading series, right? No. We know better. This approach didn’t work in the 1970s and it is not going to work now. Our schools will not be successful without “autonomous, expert teachers” (Allington, 2002, p. 37). We often compare our students to Finnish students. This is unfair because it is our teachers who should be compared. Finnish teachers are very carefully selected, have a five-year university experience and master’s degree, freedom of curriculum, limited mandatory testing (which is not used to rank schools or students), and a low poverty level (Morgan, 2014). The core values of our educational systems are not the same; therefore our outcomes continue

to differ. This theory is supported by over a hundred years of educational research that declares that there is not a one-size fits all approach to instruction (Allington, 2002).

The research is very clear that there is not one instructional approach that is best suited for all children (Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Freidus, 2002). This is the precise reason why I chose to conduct a self-study of my own beliefs and practices. A self-study can bring awareness to educators in order to improve practice and impact student learning and experiences. Educators often teach based upon their own experiences, beliefs, and personal philosophies (Allington, 2002; LaBoskey, 2007; Vasquez, Tate, & Harste, 2013).

In the following chapter, I will discuss the meaning of literacy and its multiple interpretations, the NRP's findings regarding reading instruction that demonstrated significance, literacy instruction such as balanced literacy, authentic literacy, and new and critical literacies, comprehension as the ultimate goal of reading, how children learn to read, how to accelerate learning when reading is difficult, and conclude with Allington and Gabriel's (2012) suggestion for facilitating meaning-making for all children regardless of what program or policy is set before us.

The trends surrounding education are ever changing. Ten years ago when I began my undergraduate degree, I had never heard of critical literacies. I was naïve and unaware that my personal beliefs, experiences, and histories could so greatly influence my teaching (Vasquez et al., 2013). I had been trained to be the authority and when I entered the school system for my first teaching position I found myself partnered with a wonderful mentor who helped me understand that our first job was to form a relationship

with our students, ensure they feel valued, and help them become good people. I was so blessed by this experience and I soon was encouraged to participate in Reading Recovery training by another extraordinary mentor. These early days in my career began to shape who I have become as an educator. What I have found, though, is that the theory I believe in and the practices in which I engage are not always the same. Freidus (2002) says that, “As she began to study her work, she found that the gaps between her own theory and practice were greater than anticipated” (p. 82). She notes that self-study is about improving practice. I find myself in a position similar to Freidus as I wonder about my theory and practice and how I can use my strengths in content knowledge and systematic teaching all while having a learner-centered classroom that is focused on social justice. As teachers, we “must be observant, reflective, and systematic” (Freidus, 2002, p. 84). Like Allington’s (2002; 2005) argument that there is not one way to educate a child, Freidus tells us that there is not just one way to meet the needs of all literacy teachers. Our vision needs to be clear and important to our students and ourselves.

My vision is overwhelmed by the various theories to which I relate and at times it seems as though my practice is muddled, consumed by the pressure of upholding our curriculum with *fidelity*, making sure all the *components* are taught, all the standards are met. I would like to inquire about my own practices in order to critically examine the reflection of my beliefs in my practices. This inquiry will inform my teaching practices and will ultimately result in increased student learning.

Abrams, Strom, Abi-Hanna, Dacey, and Dauplaise (2014) conducted a self-study regarding their engagement with theory. This study was grounded in a theoretical

framework, similar to the framework I have chosen by Allington and Gabriel (2012). Abrams et al. wrote narratives identifying and explaining their practices and theoretical backgrounds. For some of the researchers, it was difficult to identify with one particular theory. As I begin my reflection on the article by Allington and Gabriel, I find that there isn't one particular framework with which I identify, but many. This compilation of knowledge has prepared me to develop my own theories based on other scholars, such as Allington, Harvey and Goudvis, Johnston, Duke et al., Clay, and Costa. These scholars have influenced my beliefs and practices.

My goal is that unpacking my beliefs and histories through narrative responses to Allington and Gabriel's (2012) six components of literacy instruction will help me become a more critically literate educator. Teachers are provided with an abundance of information: Rumelhart's (2013) model of interactive reading, Gough's (1972) model, the La-Berge and Samuels (1974) model, the NRP report (NICHD, 2000), various teaching philosophies, local, state, and federal mandates, and much more. This abundance of information can overwhelm teachers and greatly influence classroom instruction.

Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that educators can provide the best literacy instruction through the implementation of six instructional elements with every child, every day regardless of mandates, policies, curriculum, funds, or other common education hurdles. The six elements suggested by Allington and Gabriel empower teachers to become experts in providing children with authentic learning experiences based on their passions and desires while collaborating with peers about reading and writing. One of my goals in my classroom is for my students to be seekers of knowledge.

Abrams et al. (2014) found that not all students conform to the theories and practices of the teacher, which is why it is important to me that children have an autonomous teacher who can carefully design instruction to foster their passions and cultivate their ideas. I hope that as I begin to teach from a critically literate stance, I can transform my classroom into a community of justice-oriented students who feel the desire and passion to make the world a better place.

Analytical and reflective teaching can be connected to any curriculum or resource a school may use. This research will contribute to the field by assisting teachers in becoming more analytical about their beliefs, evaluative of their practices, and reflective in their teaching while being able to stay connected to any resource they may be using at the time. The ability to better my teaching practices is a great benefit of this study. My teaching practices will impact children and student learning in my current classroom and in future years. I will have knowledge about self-study that can be shared with my colleagues. Also, I will be able to provide insight into professional development as realized through self-study and the important role it plays in better understanding teacher beliefs and practice. Such information can assist with planning and conducting professional development for teachers.

Limitations of this study relate to my own personal belief about my practice (Schuck & Russell, 2005), which can be reflected in similar belief issues with a critical friend. In addition, self-study is not a generalizable research methodology.

My beliefs, histories, and experiences influence my teaching and the impact I have on my students. This self-study will include narrative, reflective responses to

Allington and Gabriel's (2012) article *Every Child, Every Day* and documentation and reflection upon my actual teaching practices. This study is focused on bettering my practices through the investigation of three questions:

1. As a classroom teacher trained in Reading Recovery, does my strong connection to the writing of Richard L. Allington, specifically with his article, "Every Child, Every Day" reflect my beliefs about literacy instruction?
2. Do my teaching practices reflect my beliefs regarding literacy education?
3. Do my actual teaching practices connect to the six instructional elements recommended by Allington and Gabriel in the article, "Every Child, Every Day"?

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The two research questions prompted an investigation into the reading process, the definition of literacy, models of reading, and literacy instruction. The review of the literature will include the reading process as explained by Rumelhart (2013). Rumelhart's model suggests that reading is a complex interactive process that involves higher- and lower-level thinking. While Rumelhart's research dates back to the 1980s, in the late 1990s, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development developed a National Reading Panel for the investigation on reading instruction which demonstrated significance of learning to read (Doyle & Forbes, 2003). The findings of this research have heavily influenced national and state legislation, mandates, and policies. Literacy researchers agree that the findings are important components that contribute to learning to read, but they also argue that literacy should be taught by autonomous expert teachers who use the best parts of a variety of instructional approaches to meet the needs of students (Allington, 2002; Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013). Allington and Gabriel (2012) have identified six components that can be implemented in any classroom, with every child, every day, regardless of policies, mandates, and/or curriculum. Allington and Gabriel's suggestions help teachers facilitate meaning making as they begin to teach children to put all pieces of the literacy puzzle together.



## The Reading Process

### What is Literacy?

Literacy, as defined by Merriam-Webster (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/literacy>), is the ability to read and write. While this definition is simple, literacy is not always a simple phenomenon related to the ability to perform a task. In fact, there is literature to support a more complex understanding of literacy that suggests that reading is not a bottom-up process but rather a process that includes both perceptual and cognitive skills (Rumelhart, 2013). Rumelhart states that, “Reading is a process of understanding written language. It begins with a flutter of patterns on the retina and ends (when successful) with a definite idea about the author’s intended message” (p. 719).

### Rumelhart’s Interactive Model of Reading

Rumelhart (2013) makes the argument that a reader must be able to use sensory, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information to decipher the author’s message. A reader does not only interpret the visual form, but also the author’s intended message through a complex reading process in which various sources of information are interpreted. Rumelhart reviewed two widely accepted reading models: Gough’s Model (1972) and the LaBerge and Samuels Model (1974). He found that both models suggest that the reading process is a sequential, bottom-up process in which a reader begins with input from letters, moves to words, and so on. Rumelhart argues that the reading process should be interactive in which lower- and higher-levels of thinking are able to influence one another to change the interpretation of the message whereas Gough and LaBerge and

Samuels suggest that reading begins with simple tasks and works sequentially to the understanding of the message with little to no ability to modify the initial input.

Rumelhart (2013) defends his model by explaining how readers perceive letters and symbols in context. He begins by describing an ambiguous symbol, which appears to be a cursive *w*. He explains that the *w* can be interpreted in various ways based on the context. For example, the *w* could be a *w* in one context, but perceived as an *e* followed by a *v* in another. The reader would have to use the context of the phrase or sentence in order to make an attempt at the word in which this symbol was used. This indicates that a higher-level of thinking would affect a lower-level one, contrary to Gough's (1972) and LaBerge and Samuels' (1974) models while supporting Rumelhart's theory that reading is an interactive process.

Rumelhart (2013) argues that a reader's perception of words is also influenced by syntax. He explains that often, reading errors tend to be of the same part of speech as the substituted word. In Gough's (1972) and LaBerge and Samuels' (1974) models, this would not necessarily be true as the interpretation of the word substitutions would be strictly through the use of visual information from the print and not influenced by syntax, which is a higher-level process. Rumelhart's model suggests that the syntax of the sentence affects how the reader perceives the word.

Rumelhart (2013) explains that readers not only perceive the syntax of a sentence, but also the semantic context. He says that readers can decipher messages based on the syntactic context as the reader thinks of what sounds right, but also based on what makes sense. He describes this level of his theory by stating that, "the meaning of a word is

dependent on the words surrounding it” (Rumelhart, 2013, p. 730). He argues that this very statement is indicative that reading cannot be a bottom-up process in which the reader sees the visual form of a letter, deciphers the word, understands its meaning, uses it in its correct grammatical state, understands the phrase in which it resides, and fully comprehends the sentence based on the author’s intended message. High-level processing occurs simultaneously with lower-level processing. Based on Rumelhart’s (2013) theory, readers use an interactive processing system to understand the author’s intended message.

Rumelhart’s (2013) model suggests that this interactive reading process begins with graphemic input that is sent to the visual information store (VIS) from the retina. The VIS is the location in which the brain receives the visual representations of letters, words, numbers, and symbols from the text through the eyes. The feature extraction device then extracts the critical features of the written code from the VIS. The features of the code are the sensory input sent to the pattern synthesizer. The pattern synthesizer takes information from the reader’s syntactical knowledge, semantic knowledge, orthographic knowledge, and lexical knowledge in order to make the “most probable interpretation” of the text (Rumelhart, 2013, p. 732). Rumelhart’s model demonstrates how the reader’s perception and consolidation of information from various sources comes together to make a determination of the author’s intended message.

The determination of the author’s intended message is a complex, interactive process (Rumelhart, 2013). Rumelhart describes a theory in which various knowledge sources interact to make hypotheses, revise and/or confirm attempts and assumptions, and

consolidate the various sources of information to create the most probable interpretation of the author's intended message.

### National Reading Panel Report

Rumelhart's (2013) model demonstrates how the reader's perception and consolidation of information from various sources comes together to make a determination of the author's intended message. Rumelhart's Interactive Model of Reading dates back to the 1980s. Yet, in the late 1990s, the NICHD conducted research on reading instruction, which demonstrated significance of learning to read which continues to influence literacy instruction. In 2000, the NRP (NICHD, 2000) reported the results of the analysis. Five essential components for teaching literacy were defined, which included phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension (NICHD, 2000).

Phonemic awareness is the "ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words" (NICHD, 2000, p. 19). The NRP found that improvement in phonemic awareness led students to be better readers and spellers in the early grades. The NRP report suggests phonemic awareness alone is not adequate instruction; rather it lays a foundation for the alphabetic principle.

Phonics was identified by the NRP as an important aspect of learning to read where students begin to associate letter-sound relationships (NICHD, 2000). The NRP determined that students in early grades and students with reading disabilities who received systematic phonics instruction experienced growth in word-reading and text comprehension (NICHD, 2000). Systematic phonics instruction in the older grades was

found to improve decoding of text but did not significantly improve text comprehension (NICHD, 2000).

Word recognition sometimes leads to an increase in automaticity and fluency of text reading. Fluency is the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and expression (NICHD, 2000). According to the NRP report, “it is generally acknowledged that fluency is a critical component of skilled reading” (NICHD, 2000, p. 189). The NRP found that while independent silent reading “may be beneficial,” it did not demonstrate “this in a clear and convincing manner” (NICHD, 2000, p. 191). Whereas, according to the report provided by NRP, guided repeated oral reading “had a consistent, and positive impact on word recognition, fluency, and comprehension” (NICHD, 2000, p. 191).

The NRP reports, “vocabulary occupies an important position in learning to read” (NICHD, 2000, p. 230). Vocabulary instruction leads to increased text comprehension when taught at an age-appropriate level and in equivalence to the child’s reading ability (NICHD, 2000).

The NRP recognizes comprehension as a complex process (NICHD, 2000). The NRP suggests that reading is “purposeful and active” and the “meaning resides in the intentional, problem-solving, thinking processes of the reader that occur during an interchange with a text” (NICHD, 2000, p. 232). The NRP notes that many children begin to comprehend in informal settings. The panel suggests that educators teach comprehension strategies in natural settings which can lead to gains on standardized assessments. Teaching children to use multiple strategies flexibly can improve recall, transfer of skills, and general reading comprehension (NICHD, 2000).

These five components (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension) have been identified by the NRP as the key components of reading instruction that demonstrate significance in teaching young children how to read (NICHD, 2000). In order to effectively implement a quality literacy curriculum with all five components, the NRP recommended a balance of instructional practices (NICHD, 2000). Cassidy and Ortlieb (2013) reported that balanced literacy remained for five consecutive years on the *What's Hot in Literacy* list and has only recently been removed from the list. This example demonstrates the “ever-changing field of literacy” where themes, ideas, philosophies, and methods come and go (Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013, p. 22). Allington (2002; 2005) suggests that while most everyone agrees that all children are different, there is some question about the most effective instructional approaches. Policies, such as No Child Left Behind (2001), recommend the use of evidence-based programs for literacy education.

Allington (2002) argues that good, effective teaching is not only using what science says works best. His study of exemplary elementary teachers found that programs that relied solely on research-based, one-size-fits-all curricula were not among the most effective approaches in the nation. He suggests that teachers who were more effective focused on doing the right things rather than doing things right. Allington argues that these exemplary teachers were not searching manuals for cues, but taking their cues from the children whom they were teaching. Curricular materials were not ignored or dismissed, but were used as a tool and were not delivered with “any fidelity” (Allington, 2005, p. 462). Allington sees this as a good thing, where teachers are professionally

making decisions from their observations of children and using tools to help address the needs they see in the classroom. He explains that one problem teachers face with a pre-determined curriculum is the idea that instruction can be packaged and replicated to meet the needs of all children. According to Allington, teachers felt as though researchers and curriculum developers who had not met their students, or much less taught them, did not know the best instructional moves for them. Allington (2005) reports that, “compelling evidence suggests that 30+ years of top-down federal mandates have not worked to improve reading achievement” (p. 463). These mandates spur research and investigations, such as the analysis of and report on reading research from the NRP to determine the five pillars of reading. Allington argues that the NRP was “underfunded, understaffed, and given a timeline that was far too short” (p. 463).

Allington’s (2002) main problem with the NRP report is the misinterpretation of the report by those who have not actually read the full report but have relied on the comments in the summary of the report. Allington suggests that the NRP Report and the summary are substantially mismatched. He defends his position on literacy instruction by noting that he does not suggest that decoding is not critical or that phonics instruction does not work well. Rather, he argues that decoding instruction should be accompanied by practice in continuous text and phonics instruction should be an integrated program.

There is substantial research to support Allington’s argument for an authentic, purposeful approach to literacy (Allington, 2002; Allington, 2005; Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Duke et al., 2006; Harvey & Goudvis, 2013; Ray, 2004). This idea of an authentic and purposeful approach is one in which teachers must be reflective and teach according

to individual students' needs (Allington, 2005; Duke et al., 2006). Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that the implications are great when children are provided with opportunities for choice, accurate and comprehensible reading, meaningful writing, collaboration, and listening to engaging read alouds. These methods for literacy instruction can be used with any curriculum and do not require additional funds, just a decision to do so (Allington & Gabriel, 2012).

### Literacy Instruction

In order to effectively implement a quality literacy curriculum with all five components, researchers recommend a balance of instructional practices (NICHD, 2000). Balanced literacy was a popular instructional practice in the late 1990s (Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013). While Cassidy and Ortlieb suggest using the best parts of all philosophies to provide a balanced literacy program, other researchers suggest incorporating authentic learning opportunities (Duke et al., 2006; Ray, 2004). Other researchers recommend extending upon the authentic literacy experiences with new and critical literacies (Lapp et al., 2012; Lewison et al., 2002).

A balanced approach to literacy integrates skill-based instruction accompanied by continuous text and differentiated instruction (Bingham & Kenyon, 2013; Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013; Spiegel 1998). Duke et al. (2006) and Ray (2004) suggest going beyond traditional instructional practices to create authentic learning experiences. Authentic literacy provides children with choice, meaningful experiences, a purpose for learning, ownership, and a real audience for writing (Duke et al., 2006; Ray, 2004). Lapp et al. (2012) and Lewison et al. (2002) suggest taking this experience to a deeper level with



new and critical literacies. New and critical literacies are multimodal ways of teaching literacy and offer students the opportunity to transform text, create counter texts or projects, or take social action on an issue related to the literacy topic (Lapp et al., 2012). Critical literacies expand upon the definition of authentic literacy as students begin to take social action on significant issues (Lapp et al., 2012). These philosophical approaches to teaching literacy incorporate skill-based instruction, high quality literature, multimodal ways of teaching, authentic learning opportunities, and possibilities to take social action on important issues.

### Balanced Literacy

In the late 1990s, balanced literacy grew into one of the hottest topics in literacy (Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013). Balanced literacy involves using a combination of skill-based literacy instruction alongside high-quality literature in order to help children to become better readers and writers (Bingham & Kenyon, 2013; Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013; Spiegel 1998). Trends in education are not uncommon. The balanced literacy approach gained attention after the whole language and phonics-based approaches were discredited “supposedly for its lack of a strong research underpinning” (Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013, p. 22).

Spiegel (1998) described this as a “perilous crossroads” in the United States (p. 115). She argued that states legislatures, stakeholders, and schools were looking for an answer, the silver bullet, to solve the dilemma with literacy education for all children. According to Spiegel, teachers who follow a balanced approach to literacy make thoughtful choices when working with young readers and writers. Spiegel explained that

balanced programs are “broad enough to accommodate a continuum of perspectives, across time and new debates. It is built around a small but consistent core that allows flexibility according to child, teacher, and task” (p. 116). Literacy education should involve the best parts of all philosophies (Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013).

The requirements of the CCSS have created new expectations for teachers and students, which requires that a balanced literacy approach needs to be transformed for the context of literacy that allows for differentiated instruction to be designed to meet a variety of students’ needs (Bingham & Kenyon, 2013). Cassidy and Ortlieb (2013) suggest that “perhaps with the ever-increasing focus on CCSS [Common Core State Standards], it is time to look again at what it means to provide balanced reading instruction today versus what it meant nearly 15 years ago” (p. 22). The demand for new literacies such as digital texts, technological classrooms, media, online research, online classroom forums, computer-based assessments, and social hangouts, inspires teachers to make learning an authentic experience that children will be able to practice in their daily lives (Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013).

### Authentic Literacy

Authentic literacy, a pedagogical term as defined by Duke et al. (2006), is reading and writing that is meaningful to students, has a communicative purpose, and often includes student choice. Teachers familiar with the term authentic literacy view this type of instruction as unlike any other type of teaching (Duke et al., 2006). Duke et al. suggest that authentic literacy should be fun, engaging, motivating, and provide children with choice, purpose and ownership. Authentic reading can occur during reading of narrative

or informational texts. A student's perception and interpretation of the text deems it as an authentic experience as they are in control of their book choices and find the topic to be meaningful to their lives. This is also true for informational text. In order to use informational text successfully, teachers often identify community needs or "seek information" regarding what students want to know and as a result, find science-based texts to educate the students on the topic in question (Duke et al., 2006, p. 351).

A child's literacy experiences are used as a problem-solving tool to engage with and investigate the content (Duke et al., 2006). Children often respond to the reading by taking action on a social or community need, thus making the experience authentic and purposeful (Duke et al., 2006). Authentic reading is often accompanied by instructional practices such as authentic writing. As students respond to a community need, an example may be putting up new garbage cans at the city park after reading a text about the environment, they often write to real audiences (Duke et al., 2006). According to Duke et al., a real audience is "a reader who will read the written text for its communicative purpose and not solely for evaluation, as so often happens to writing done in instructional contexts" (p. 352). Duke et al. shared that children see their ideas come alive on paper and become engrossed in their work with authentic writing. Ray (2004) stated that, "when we invite students to make something with writing instead of just asking them to write, they go about their work differently" (p. 14).

Adults often assume that a child who cannot read independently, in return, cannot write (Ray, 2004). Ray challenges educators to "consider the idea of challenging but achievable, and then the related matter of sufficient adult support" (p.15). According to

Ray, educators should stop defining what students are able to achieve and allow them to determine that on their own. When children are allowed to create literary works that are meaningful to them, they create texts in which they can read and understand, they demonstrate their knowledge of the reading and writing process, they feel empowered and motivated, and are inspired to read and write again (Ray, 2004). This process is not done alone though; there must be sufficient adult support through conferencing with children about their reading and writing (Ray, 2004). Teachers should inquire about the writing done by a child in order to fully understand the thought process during writing and how the child composed the message (Ray, 2004). Before a child is able to successfully record his message, this can be occur through illustrations and teacher support (Ray, 2004). Ray questioned how many students may have been limited by adult terms rather than allowed to define their own learning. Duke et al. (2006) found that their research provides evidence that authentic literacy activities are associated with vaster growth in the ability to read and write new genres. In an effort to expand upon the development of authentic literacy, researchers recommend taking a critical standpoint in literacy (Lapp et al., 2012; Lewison et al., 2002). New and critical literacies enhance students' potential for engagement, ownership of learning, and shaping their identity as citizens and learners (Lewison et al., 2002).

### New and Critical Literacies

New and critical literacies offer students the opportunity to engage in 21<sup>st</sup> century skills through literacy activities (Lapp et al., 2012). Lapp et al. note that as literacy changes in the world, teaching and learning must change as well. New literacies include

multimodal ways of teaching literacy, encompass critical literacy, and offer students the opportunity to transform text, create counter texts or projects, or take social action on an issue related to the literacy topic (Lapp et al., 2012).

The foundations of critical literacy are derived from the work of Paulo Freire (1996). In Freire's book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he presents the dilemma between the oppressed people and the oppressors. Freire describes the history of the world as a place of great despair. Oppressors exact power over the oppressed by exploiting, dehumanizing, and acting in violence. The acts of the oppressors degrade the oppressed and they begin to feel inferior and eventually come to "having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopt[ed] his guidelines" and "are fearful of freedom" (Freire, 1996, p. 29). The fear of the oppressed is deep and often the struggle has gone on so long that they feel as though they lack the strength and courage necessary to regain their humanity (Freire, 1996). The oppressed come to internalize the words and actions of their oppressors and "become convinced of their own unfitness" (Freire, 1996, p. 45). Freire argues that liberation can only be achieved through intelligent action and cautious reflection. He believes that this act is not achieved alone or by others, but is achieved together by an intellectual human race willing to rebuild humanity. Freire shares his concerns as he explains the "narration sickness" from which education is suffering (p. 52).

The history of education relies upon the idea that teachers are the depositors of information and students are the receptors. Freire (1996) calls this the "banking concept of education" (p. 53). Banking limits students to being receptacles rather than sources of

knowledge and power through inquiry and action. Freire (1996) states, “knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other” (p. 53). He suggests that education should not rely on the banking concept; rather both teachers and students should share roles of teaching and learning simultaneously. Freire contends that a humanist revolution must occur. He shares that teachers are often unknowingly dehumanizing students through the banking concept.

To achieve a humanistic society, educators must develop relationships, empower students, and become partners in education (Freire, 1996). Students need to be liberated and in order to do so, educators must reject all banking strategies and replace them with a presentation of the problems of humanity, society, and their worldly relations (Freire, 1996). He states that programs do not help foster a problem-posing education experience. Authentic educational experiences are constructed “*with*” students, not “*for*” them (Freire, 1996, p. 74). Freire argues education should be the practice of freedom not domination. These authentic, problem-posing, and action-taking learning experiences have come to be seen as the grounding for critical literacy.

Lewison et al. (2002) have analyzed literature over the past 30 years and have categorized critical literacy into four components. These components include disrupting the commonplace, interrogating multiple viewpoints, focusing on sociopolitical issues, and taking action and promoting social justice. Disrupting the commonplace encourages teachers and students alike to see things from a “new lens” (Lewison et al., 2002, p. 383). This dimension of critical literacy is a way to examine texts and question the position in

which the author wants the reader to take. Media sources are also analyzed to see the positions in which people are lead. Language is an important part of disrupting the common place. Critical literacy offers an opportunity to analyze language and how it “shapes identity” and “supports or disrupts the status quo” (Lewison et al., 2002, p. 383).

Interrogating multiple viewpoints is explained as “standing in the shoes of others” by Lewison et al. (2002, p. 383). Open-ended inquiries offer opportunities to analyze all perspectives relating to a topic. This type of interrogation encourages thought provoking questions. Students are challenged to consider the voices being heard, and whose perspective is being seen. Interrogating multiple viewpoints does not always require a right or wrong answer. It allows students to analyze and synthesize information, something that today’s teachers are sometimes uncomfortable with due to the pressure for high scores on standardized testing (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013; Lewison et al., 2002).

Lewison et al. (2002) interpret focusing on sociopolitical issues as an avenue for encouraging teachers and students to extend beyond their personal comfort zone and open their eyes and minds to the sociopolitical and cultural issues presented in the literature. In order to determine to which social group one belongs, critical literacy provides students with the opportunity to analyze the social constructs and discuss the challenges various groups face (Lewison et al., 2002).

Taking action and promoting social justice is the component that brings all pieces together in critical literacy according to Lewison et al. (2002). Critical Literacy is about taking action against oppression and challenges while transforming our world (Lewison

et al., 2002). Promoting social justice allows students to cross the dividing lines that separate culture and begin to bring issues to justice (Lewison et al., 2002).

### Comprehension as Meaning Making

Stahl (2014) states that “comprehension trumps all” and it involves thinking “beyond the words of text to generate inferences” (p. 384). She argues that reading comprehension is more than just understanding text on a page; rather it is the child’s ability to think beyond the print to make inferences. Like Stahl, Scull (2010) points out that children ask themselves questions regarding whether or not the reading made sense, which is described as the ultimate criterion for comprehension by Pearson and Fielding (as cited in Scull, 2010). This theory aligns well with the instructional philosophies previously presented such as balanced literacy, authentic literacy, and new and critical literacies.

Balanced literacy, authentic literacy, and new and critical literacies provide children with opportunities for authentic engagement with text in order to make sense of what they have read and apply it to their personal lives (Bingham & Kenyon, 2013; Cassidy & Ortlieb, 2013; Duke et al., 2006; Lapp et al., 2012; Lewison et al., 2002; Ray, 2004; Spiegel, 1998). In addition, Costa (2008) says that, “Curriculums must become more thought-filled in the sense of enlarging students’ capacities to think deeply and creatively” (p. 20). This statement by Costa goes beyond the simple definition of literacy. He insists that teachers agree that children must be able to function in their work and throughout life by facing adversity, solving complex problems, drawing on prior knowledge, and working with others. Costa proposes five themes for educators to use in



order to enhance a thought-filled curriculum which include: “learning to think” (p. 20), “thinking to learn” (p. 22), “thinking together” (p. 23), “think about our own thinking” (p. 23), and “thinking big” (p. 24).

According to Costa (2008), “learning to think” (p. 20) is what children must be taught. Children are born thinking and with appropriate instruction, “thought processes can become more broadly applied, more spontaneously generated, more precisely focused, more complex, and more insightfully divergent” (Costa, 2008, p. 21). According to Costa, thinking is a natural occurrence, but children must be taught to think skillfully. Thinking skillfully is optimized by teacher think alouds, thinking maps, and visual tools (Costa, 2008). He suggests that teachers should use academic vocabulary and label and identify cognitive processes.

This cognitive process is viewed as making meaning from the text and defined by Costa (2008) as “thinking to learn” (p. 22). Costa suggests that, “meaning making is not a spectator sport” (p. 22). Children should be actively involved in their learning and construct meaning derived from their own personal experiences (Costa, 2008). He says that the content should not be the only focus of instruction. He indicates that, “teachers should select relevant, generative, wondrous content to serve as a vehicle for the joyride of learning” (p. 22). Educators can equip students for this type of learning by posing inquiries that stimulate the imagination, guide students in self-assessment, urge them to questions norms, value their viewpoints, and provide a safe, non-judgmental classroom climate.

Costa (2008) insists that “thinking together” (p. 23) aids in developing a community of students who engage deep, thoughtful dialogue. This process is not an individual one. He notes that learning is reciprocal and takes place when groups of individuals influence one another. This can be a difficult process as students learn to suspend their own thoughts temporarily while opening their minds to new perspectives (Costa, 2008). As children learn to listen to others, they become more empathetic, lose their egos, and develop as individuals (Costa, 2008). Costa notes that empathy could possibly be one of the least taught skills in today’s schools, but it is a powerful skill used by gifted problem solvers. A thought-filled curriculum should encompass instruction and practice of understanding others, summarizing others’ thoughts, empathizing, clarifying communication, and setting aside judgments and personal responses.

The intent of a thought filled curriculum is to enhance awareness of a child’s own thinking, labeled “thinking about our own thinking” by Costa (2008, p. 23). Learning takes place as one recognizes his or her own thinking (Costa, 2008). Metacognition, thinking about one’s own thinking, requires the use of the whole body: emotion, sensation, ideas, beliefs, values, character, and inferences from collaboration and interaction (Costa, 2008). “When confronted with perplexing, ambiguous situations, skillful thinkers engage in an internal mental dialogue that helps them decide on intelligent actions” (Costa, 2008, p. 23). Metacognition is fostered by teacher encouragement as students are directed to convey their thoughts, plans, and strategies for facing challenges and adversity (Costa, 2008).

The last theme Costa (2008) shares is “thinking big” (p. 24). The thought-filled curriculum is part of a larger plan, a “thought-filled world” (Costa, 2008, p. 24). Teachers can assist children in deepening their thinking and begin to resolve differences with thoughtful conversations, value other perspectives, and be conscious of how harmony is achieved among the human race (Costa, 2008). Teachers can focus on a thought-filled curriculum by questioning learning goals and deeming whether said goals contribute to the goal of a thoughtful school, community, and world (Costa, 2008). Costa states that, “If we want a future that is vastly more thoughtful, cooperative, compassionate, and loving, then we have to create it. The future is in our schools and classrooms today” (p. 24).

Research indicates that the journey to literacy begins with a strong foundation consisting of teacher read-alouds, wordless picture books, conversations rich with vocabulary, and a print-rich environment (Stahl, 2014). Harvey and Goudvis (2013) argue that “instruction and thinking strategies has never been more important than today” (p. 434). In recent years, there has been a stark increase in the amount of test preparation, phonics instruction, and identifying the main idea (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013). These few skills do not adequately prepare children for the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills necessary to be successful in society today (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013).

Children are born thinking and comprehending (Costa, 2008; Harvey & Goudvis, 2013). According to Harvey and Goudvis, a prime example of comprehension is when a baby cries because it is hungry. The child knows and understands his own need and therefore communicates in order to elicit a response to fulfill the need. At an early age,

children fully comprehend the word *no* (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013). Harvey and Goudvis insist that children already know how to think; therefore educators “must teach them about their thinking” (p. 432). It is the teacher’s responsibility to help children become “aware of their thinking, think strategically, and recognize the power of their own thinking” (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013, p. 432). Harvey and Goudvis suggest that there is a difference between thinking strategically and just merely procuring information. They describe information as simply knowing things (i.e. rote memorization) whereas knowledge is the ability to use the information acquired in the complex world.

In Johnston’s (2004) book, *Choice Words*, he suggests that teachers should enable children to think for themselves and feel empowered. He says, “children should leave school with a sense that if they act, and act strategically, they can accomplish their goals. I call this a sense of agency” (p. 29). Harvey and Goudvis (2013) explain strategic reading as thinking about reading in ways that enrich learning. Children need a large repertoire of strategies and know when and how to use them (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013). As children learn to become strategic readers, they recognize the power of their thinking “by actively questioning an author’s purpose, drawing inferences about character’s actions and words to surface themes in literature or synthesizing information to build knowledge across several texts” (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013, p. 433). A sense of agency will help emphasize the importance of helping children recognize the power of their thinking (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013; Johnston, 2004). Only children “can turn what they hear, see, read, and talk about into knowledge by thinking deeply and expansively” (Harvey & Goudvis, 2013, p. 433).

### How do Children Learn to Read?

Stahl (2014) points out that word recognition and comprehension are difficult to orchestrate and provide many challenges to the novice reader. She makes the argument that children begin learning and making inferences “based on text you read to them” (p. 387). Read-alouds have long been under scrutiny but Fox (2013) suggests that the belief that read-alouds are a waste of time is “not only asinine, but frightening, and dangerous” (p. 4). Children who are read to are better able to learn to read and do so in a happy manner, and oftentimes more quickly (Fox, 2013). Listening to favorite stories over and over again fosters a love of reading that begins early (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004; Fox, 2013).

Reading aloud to children promotes vocabulary development, introduces anticipation, causes excitement, challenges children to think, and eventually the ability to confirm the meaning with printed text once children have begun reading on their own (Fisher et al., 2004; Fox, 2013). Reading aloud engages students in text and supports a classroom community rich in conversation (Morrison & Włodarczyk, 2009). The transition from read alouds to shared reading and independent reading becomes easier when the novice reader has inferencing skills already in place when he or she begins the task of decoding and word reading for himself. Skills with this level of complexity are often taught early when the child does not have to attend to both the word recognition and the task. When a child is able to generate inferences and think deeply, it is easier to attend to the physical task of reading and engage in authentic learning.

Authentic reading and writing are often accompanied by authentic questioning (Ray, 2006). Ray recommends encouraging kids to just talk. She says to ask them what they are thinking and ask them questions to better understand their thinking rather than just to probe for an answer (Ray, 2006). According to Ray, educators should avoid asking literal questions because children will respond in a “worksheet” (p. 60) manner and just wait for the next question. Morrison and Wlodarczyk (2009) describe conversation as a medium in which students can begin to use their thinking to shift from listening and talking about stories to writing about their understanding. When students begin to write about the reading that occurred during read-aloud, their personal experience, or in response to a prompt that connects to the literacy goals, they begin to deepen their thinking and go beyond the literal level and create authentic writing pieces (Fisher et al., 2004).

#### Instruction that Means Something

Schools implement a variety of literacy educational practices including: a literacy curriculum, a curricular resource, basal readers, the CAFÉ model (the Daily 5 model), STEM, project-based learning, and much more. Allington and Gabriel (2012) note that there isn't one way to teach children to read, but they argue that there are six instructional elements educators can follow to ensure that students to learn how to read without supplementary funds, “all that's necessary is for adults to make the decision to do it” (p. 10).

Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that every child reads something he or she chooses, reads accurately, understands what he or she reads, reads and writes something

meaningful, talks with peers about reading and writing, and listens to a fluent adult reader read aloud every day. While these basic elements appear simple, Allington and Gabriel note that many classrooms they observed lacked these six basic elements. At times, educators think they may be implementing these components, but Allington and Gabriel claim, “few students in the United States regularly receive the best reading instruction we know how to give” (p. 10).

Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that schools eradicate worksheets and workbooks and purchase books instead, while using the time saved for purposeful literacy activities. They also insist that schools forbid all test-preparation activities and materials. Eliminating worksheets, workbooks, and test-preparation materials only provides more time for “things that really matter in developing readers” (Allington & Gabriel, 2012, p. 14). Allington and Gabriel encourage educators to “remember adults have the power to make these decisions; kids don’t. Let’s decide to give them the kind of instruction they need” (p. 15).

Not only do Allington and Gabriel (2012) bring to light the six elements of literacy instruction educators should be implementing, Allington (2014) also points out two things educators should *not* be doing: overusing and misusing oral reading fluency practice and asking low-level questions. Allington suggests overusing and misusing oral reading fluency practice creates children who cannot self-monitor because the teacher interrupts at error rather than letting a child problem-solve for himself. He says educators know the ultimate goal of reading and writing is comprehension, so it is quite alarming that oral reading activities are so prevalent in today’s classrooms. If children are to

practice oral reading fluency, Allington (2014) suggests educators choose to do so selectively and “consciously bite your tongue as they read. Wait until the student has completed at least a full sentence before you interrupt, and then interrupt with a comment that encourages the student to self-regulate” (p. 18).

Allington (2014) has visited many classrooms in which low-level trivial questions are asked. Allington suggests low-level inquiries are a result of the use of teacher manuals accompanied by a reading series. He insists such instruction is creating two separate groups of students; those who self-regulate and those who appeal to the teacher at miscue. Allington argues, “these differences are not inherent to struggling readers” (p. 18) rather they are the result of skill-based instruction, in which teachers are directing students’ attention to basic skills only.

There are three main reasons why teachers stick with the trivial according to Allington (2014). He suggests that the reasons include the increased practice of answering multiple-choice questions for standardized assessments, the widespread use of core reading programs that provide little suggestion for discussion, and that teachers are “ill-prepared” at engaging and managing classroom discourse (Allington, 2014, p. 20). In most classrooms which Allington observed, educators did not provide efficient support; rather than responding to students flexibly, most inquired about basic information based on rereading. Allington states “engaging students in literate conversations about what they’ve been reading must become a common instructional move” (p. 21). He recommends thinking of this like a literate conversation among friends. When friends discuss a favorite book, they are not concerned with the name of the character’s next-



door neighbor or the car he or she drives. Instead, the conversation would revolve around the emotional connections in which the reader made.

Educators can make a shift in teaching with an increase in writing after reading, engaging in classroom conversations, and responding with higher-order thinking questions (Allington, 2014). Allington notes that this shift is not always easy or natural in the beginning. Students may be confused or appear inept in the beginning (Allington, 2014). Modeling literate conversations and this type of writing will support students in attaining the complex task of reading comprehension (Allington, 2014). Allington insists that educators must transition from traditional teacher-managed discussions to classrooms in which literate conversations are common practice. He suggests to “be patient; nothing worthwhile is easy to accomplish” (p. 21).

#### Reading Recovery and Learning to Read

When children are unable to meet grade level expectations with regular classroom instruction, interventions, such as Reading Recovery, offer children an opportunity for accelerated learning. “The expression, learning the ABCs, has come to represent the simplest, most basic kind of learning. Yet first grade teachers know and young children know, that learning about print and learning to read and write are not simple at all” (Jones, 1995, p. 42). Jones emphasizes the importance of Reading Recovery as a path to children’s literacy.

Reading Recovery is a literacy intervention designed by Marie M. Clay for the lowest-achieving readers in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Students are identified and provided with individualized interventions delivered by a trained professional for up to 20 weeks.

Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, and trainers can provide on-site literacy expertise to the school-wide system. Reading Recovery teachers are delivered high quality professional development initially and on-going throughout their careers as a Reading Recovery professional (Honchell, 2010). Reading Recovery teachers will always teach children at least part of the time; this equates to a high level of engagement and understanding of literacy development (Jones, 1995).

Literacy development, as described by Jones (1995), is the idea that learning isolated skills does not equate to learning to read. He notes that many children learn all the skills and are still not able to put those skills into context. Jones explains that Reading Recovery emphasizes that in order for children to read successfully, they must be able to orchestrate the brain activity it requires to make meaning along with deciphering the written code. Jones insists that the child's ability to attend to print comes after a child can make meaning from the text. This theory coincides with Rumelhart's (2013) interactive theory of reading.

Reading Recovery's effectiveness has been proven to accelerate the learning of thousands of children who have been served as the lowest readers in their classrooms (Jones, 1995). When lessons begin, many children are not able to recognize letters or even read the simplest books. Children who participate in Reading Recovery are taught by expertly trained teachers who can utilize what children know to assist them in "constructing their own knowledge" to read and write simple messages (Jones, 1995, p. 46). Jones suggests that educators should consider that most children learn to read on the laps of adults. Young children engage in stories from a very early age and begin the

journey to literacy acquisition from their parents (Jones, 1995). Jones shared that children begin the literacy acquisition process by constructing their own meaning and knowledge and, eventually, by matching their knowledge with the printed message (Jones, 1995). Reading Recovery teachers are trained to place children in similar situations; giving children the opportunity to engage in pleasurable text while offering appropriate support to accelerate literacy learning (Jones, 1995).

While the process seems simple, Jones (1995) explains that Reading Recovery teachers are sensitive observers and it requires extensive professional development to train teachers to be active without interrupting a child's thoughts, and also to support children adequately in order to assist them in meeting the classroom expectations. Reading Recovery fosters strategic reading in children who are able to read for meaning, confirm responses, crosscheck with multiple sources of information, and problem-solve in reading and writing (Jones, 1995). Jones describes a Reading Recovery teacher's job as an avenue to teach children how to learn, not what to learn (Costa, 2008).

#### Facilitating Meaning Making for Readers

Shortly after the NRP identified the five components of reading, the CCSS were developed to ensure consistent, "real-world learning goals for all students, regardless of where they live, are graduating high school prepared for college, career, and life" (Common Core State Standards, 2016) The decision to implement these standards has greatly impacted education in the United States. Allington and Gabriel (2012) argue that "we now know more than ever" how to accomplish the goal of every child becoming a reader (p. 10). Allington and Gabriel insist that the six elements of instruction they have

identified are all that is necessary to ensure every child has an opportunity to become a reader.

Allington and Gabriel (2012), like Johnston (2004), suggest that children should be provided with choice in picking books they would like to read. This creates a sense of agency for children and provides them with an opportunity for authentic literacy engagement (Duke et al., 2006; Johnston, 2004). Allington and Gabriel also recommend that every child should read accurately. Accurate reading helps to solidify the strategic processing of the child while constructing meaning (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). Children are better able to understand what they read when they are reading successfully with high interest books (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). Motivation and successful reading leads to increased comprehension, the ultimate goal of reading (Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Harvey & Goudvis, 2013).

Allington and Gabriel (2012) note that often readers who struggle receive interventions on rote basic skills, rather than reading connected text and using meaning. Children are born comprehending and using meaning therefore the time spent in literacy should be in continuous text (Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Costa, 2008; Harvey & Goudvis, 2013). The research indicates that children who spend at least two-thirds of their time reading and writing in interventions have accelerated rates of learning compared to students who practice rote skills (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). In more large scale studies, the findings indicate that highly-effective teachers have classrooms in which students spend more time reading, whereas teachers who spend time using

“worksheets, answering low-level questions, literal questions or completing before-and-after reading activities” were less effective (Allington & Gabriel, 2012, p. 13).

To consolidate the skills learned in literacy, children should spend more time writing (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). It is a different modality to practice the strategic process of literacy; from composition to the final draft, children are deeply engaged in authentic learning (Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Ray, 2004). Ray indicates that children have far more abilities than teachers often know. Children should write about something personally meaningful every day; it creates an emotional connection to the text and provides children with a text they are able to “read, reread, and analyze” (Allington & Gabriel, 2012, p. 14).

Children should not only spend time engaged in text, but engaged in rich conversations with their peers (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). According to Allington & Gabriel, this is one of the easiest strategies to employ in a classroom and it is certainly one of the most underused elements of instruction. Literate adults do not question each other on low-level, simplistic details about text. They share the emotional connections and responses in which they encountered while reading. Children should interact with the text in a similar manner and have opportunities to share that enthusiasm with their peers (Allington & Gabriel, 2012).

The read aloud battle has come and gone. Substantial evidence supports the use of read alouds to increase fluency and comprehension, expand vocabulary and background knowledge, and provides a greater awareness of genre and text structure (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). Read alouds do not require many materials or specialized training; it is

purely a decision to use class time more effectively (Allington & Gabriel, 2012).

Children love listening to their favorite stories over and over again; which is a great first step to literacy (Fox, 2013). Listening to an adult read aloud fosters engagement and provides opportunities for children to hear “the best possible words in the best possible places” (Fox, 2013, p. 4). Read alouds are often a time for the classroom to come together as a community and bond with books and each other (Fox, 2013). Fox insists that nothing holds a child’s attention more than a book itself. Read alouds have a wonderful, extraordinary place in classrooms (Fox, 2013).

Allington and Gabriel’s (2012) argument for these six elements in every classroom, every day is compelling. They insist children need to be exposed to these elements of instruction in order to put all pieces of the literacy puzzle together. The research is clear that there is not one approach to teaching children to read. With these six elements, one can teach all students to become readers (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). “Adults have the power to make these decisions; kids don’t. Let’s decide to give them the kind of instruction they need” (Allington & Gabriel, 2012, p. 15).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter will provide information regarding the data sources of my self-study and how the data were collected and analyzed. I critically examined my beliefs and pedagogies in relationship to the six critical components for literacy instruction which include student selected text, accurate reading, comprehension, collaborative conversations with peers, personally meaningful writing, and teacher read alouds as described by Allington and Gabriel (2012). The two initial questions I chose to investigate were:

1. As a classroom teacher trained in Reading Recovery, does my strong connection to the writing of Richard L. Allington, specifically with his article, “Every Child, Every Day” reflect my beliefs about literacy instruction?
2. Do my teaching practices reflect my beliefs regarding literacy education?

The data were collected through written text responses to each of the six components and through documentation of my actual teaching practices. During the analysis process, a third research question emerged:

3. Do my actual teaching practices connect to the six instructional elements recommended by Allington and Gabriel in the article, “Every Child, Every Day”?

Evolving research questions are a normal function of self-study practice. Tidwell, Thompson, Kingston, and Staples (2014) discuss “this evolving change” as a “thoughtful reflection on their practice” (p. 199). Tidwell et al. point out the in-depth nature of examining one’s own practice in the following excerpt:

It is through their own inquiry of practice that they shape not only their thinking about practice, but their decisions about what they do in the classroom, how they engage with students, and how they create a culture of learning (p. 199).

This self-study used qualitative data in order to examine and improve my own practice. Policies in education, often based on quantitative data, do not remain solely focused on PK-12 education but extend into teacher preparation both pre-service and in-service. However, the use of qualitative data to examine process, context, engagement, and other variables within teaching are often more effective than a quantitative approach (Allington, 2002; 2005). Allington argues that policy makers and their ideologies have trumped the evidence he has collected over 30 years of studying exemplary teachers. The controversy continues beyond what and how children learn to the teacher preparation programs in the United States (Cochran-Smith, 2002). The battle is based on what constitutes a research base for teacher preparation. However, the definition of research-base “is not always made explicit, and in fact, there are a number of different images or metaphors for *research* that are prevalent in the discourse” (Cochran-Smith, 2002, p. 56). This argument is a valid one as the mandates call for the use of research-based instructional strategies.

Self-study is “grounded in social constructivist learning theory” (LaBoskey, 2007). The social constructivist learning theory is evolving and includes the belief that change has to come from within oneself (LaBoskey, 2007). Personal experiences, history, and culture influence learning and teaching and can challenge “previously held assumptions through practical experiences and multiple perspectives” (LaBoskey, 2007, p. 819). Policies that encourage research-based evidence and theories that include



personal experience and history do not always align. Researchers in self-study have developed a method for “developing and testing these theories about teacher learning” (LaBoskey, 2007, p. 819). Self-study researchers examine their own practices in order to influence and empower their own teaching (LaBoskey, 2007). Russell (1998) says,

Self-study is about the learning from experience that is embedded within teachers’ creating new experiences for themselves and those whom they teach... Our goal may well be the reinvention of learning to teach, enabling others to understand learning from experience by showing them how we did it ourselves (p. 6).

Equity and social justice are core values when examining one’s own practices through self-study, (LaBoskey, 2007). Lather (as cited in LaBoskey, 2007) says that educators are intellectuals who take responsibility for “transforming our own practices so that our... work can be less towards positioning ourselves as masters of truth and justice and more towards creating a space where those directly involved can act and speak on their own behalf” (p. 819-820). Self-study assists in the advancement in the field of education through the truthfulness revealed in the results of “*the construction, testing, sharing, and re-testing of exemplars of teaching practice*” (p. 821).

Pre-service and in-service teachers benefit from various forms of knowledge including formal and practical which relate to the what and how of teaching (LaBoskey, 2007). The act of self-examination of one’s teaching practices can unpack our histories and unlearn our privileges that influence our teaching (Kuby, 2013). Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) explain, “Quality self-study research requires that the researcher negotiate a particularly sensitive balance between biography and history” (p. 15). They

outline guiding principles for autobiographical self-study research. They argue that narratives in self-study research can be powerful but they “should ring true and enable connection” (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001, p. 16).

Self-study is designed to be “flexible and generative”; it is a process rather than a product (Hamilton as cited in LaBoskey, 2007, p. 825). LaBoskey notes that, “teacher education has a history of struggling with making connections between theory and practice” (p. 827). Self-study can bridge the gap between theory and practice as it provides a closer look into the demonstration of what we know and investigation into how we know it (LaBoskey, 2007). These reflective practices demonstrate that there is “a strong relationship between what a teacher believes and how teaching occurs in the classroom” (Tidwell & Heston as cited in LaBoskey, 2007, p. 829). Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) explain that self-study research is often an investigation about the issues of education. A self-study needs to have a clear purpose, a clear voice, and an objective representation of data (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001).

#### Data Sources

As a self-study, I examined my practice through three different data sources. Throughout the analysis process, it was found that it was most appropriate to look for themes across all three data sources to address the three stated research questions.

I examined my own thinking about practice through my personal responses to each of Allington and Gabriel’s (2012) six components of effective literacy instruction, using the six components as the prompts for my responses. These responses were collected as written text. The process of writing these responses involved reading the

prompt (the component of literacy from Allington and Gabriel's article) and writing my initial responses to that prompt. I reviewed my response writing over time, edited, and revised my responses to best capture my thinking about the content being addressed. The final version of my responses became the data source for analyzing my thinking and beliefs.

The second and third sources for data collection were focused on my actual teaching practice. These data were collected through documentation of my teaching schedule and a post-teaching journal reflection about my literacy practices.

Over one week, I documented my teaching schedule as a time log, and documented the actual practices and teaching strategies I implemented using a post-teaching journal and video documentation for confirmation of my post-teaching reflection. I documented the components and instructional strategies implemented during literacy instruction in my classroom. At the end of each day, I wrote a reflection about that day's teaching that includes my thoughts on my teaching and my interpretations regarding how my practice has influenced student learning.

### Data Analysis

Schuck and Russell (2005) highlight one of the concerns with self-study: "the difficulty of assessing one's own practice and reframing it" (p. 108). A critical friendship can assist in providing support and constructive criticism (Schuck & Russell, 2005). The purpose and expectations of the friendship should be clearly defined during the beginnings stages of analysis (Schuck & Russell, 2005). A critical friendship can benefit both participants but should ultimately provide support for and encourage the researcher

(Schuck & Russell, 2005). I utilized a critical friendship for the analysis of the data collected. Data were shared electronically via GoogleDocs and the record of communication was in narrative format via email and comments on GoogleDocs. A self-study of one's own practice can be challenging and "risky" (Schuck & Russell, 2005, p. 120) but it also provides room for growth and a shift in teaching to better impact student learning. A critical friend was utilized in this study two separate times. First, the critical friend spent time reading the initial labels based on the language in all three data sources. She sent reflective questions and suggestions for larger themes that she believed had emerged from the data. The critical friend was utilized a second time after the larger themes had been organized and defined. Again, she provided clarifying questions and suggestions for reorganization of data, and also confirmed the themes that had been developed.

The content and language of my personal responses to Allington and Gabriel's six components of effective literacy instruction, the content and language of my documentation of my time log (reflecting my practices in class), and the language used in my post-teaching journal were coded and analyzed using a constant-comparison method (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000). The initial data analysis was conducted separately for each data source.

Each statement from the time log, journal, and response data of my teaching practices was identified with an initial label based on the language in each statement. As labels began to accrue, I compared the various labels for accuracy and moved back and forth across the labels repeatedly to determine consistency of labeling for similar content

and ideas. Once all the data were analyzed, I combined the text under each label and read through the text to determine the definition for that label. Once all the labels were defined, I then read through the definitions to determine where label categories could be collapsed. After the initial analysis, the data were refined and modified and initial themes were established. Labels were subsumed under the initial themes. The second time I went through the categorized data, I read the theme, labels, and sentences from the journal, time log, and responses categorized under the particular theme. I then highlighted key words related to the label. If there were sentences that did not align with the label, they were moved to a more appropriate theme or label. If more information was needed, anecdotal notes were made in brackets. Labels that represented similar ideas were collapsed into a single category.

Once the data had been organized with initial themes and labels, the data were sent electronically to my critical friend for feedback. Based on suggestions and reflection by the critical friend, the data were collapsed and larger themes were established.

After the collapsing of categories to establish larger themes, the themes were sent back to the critical friend for feedback. Again, after feedback and reflection from the critical friend, definitions were edited to accurately reflect the language used in the labels and from the data sources.

Some data sources were reflected in multiple categories. In order to better make determinations from the data, I counted how many times each theme or label was mentioned in my data and calculated a total amount of occurrences which assisted me in determining which themes appeared most to least often in my language (see Appendix A

for final determinations of themes, categories, and occurrences). The larger themes were analyzed for similarities, differences, and patterns related to my beliefs, the actual teaching practices in which I implement in my classroom, and how Reading Recovery has influenced my teaching decisions as a classroom teacher (Dye et al., 2000).

In the process of analyzing and coding data, I determined that in order to answer my research question, As a classroom teacher trained in Reading Recovery, does my strong connection to the writing of Richard L. Allington, specifically with his article, “Every Child, Every Day” reflect my beliefs about literacy instruction? I would need to align the language of my teaching practices and beliefs with the six components that Allington and Gabriel (2012) argue should be implemented for every child, every day. This determination developed into a third research question, Do my actual teaching practices connect to the six instructional elements recommended by Allington and Gabriel in the article, “Every Child, Every Day”? In order to answer the third research question, I examined my language, key terms, and words that demonstrated a consensus from the themes and labels that I had developed and defined with the six instructional elements for every child, every day as recommended by Allington and Gabriel.

As the data were reviewed, the examination of categories indicated “meaningful patterns” (Patton as cited in Dye et al., 2000, p. 2). These patterns assisted in determining whether data were combined, discarded, or categorized in alternate ways (Dye et al., 2000). The data were compared, refined, and used to determine a theory based upon the two initial research questions being researched and the third research question developed during the analysis process:

1. As a classroom teacher trained in Reading Recovery, does my strong connection to the writing of Richard L. Allington, specifically with his article, “Every Child, Every Day” reflect my beliefs about literacy instruction?
2. Do my teaching practices reflect my beliefs regarding literacy education?
3. Do my actual teaching practices connect to the six instructional elements recommended by Allington and Gabriel in the article, “Every Child, Every Day”?

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The information from my teaching journal, time log, and written responses to Allington and Gabriel's six instructional elements became the data sources used in this study. Each sentence from each data source was labeled, categorized, and defined based on the language in each sentence. The initial analysis of the post-teaching journal data contained 44 categories (see Appendix B), the time log contained 29 categories (see Appendix C), and the written responses contained 31 categories (see Appendix D). Each data source was reexamined to ensure accurate definitions and categorization. These categories for each of the data sources were not mutually exclusive; there were some categories that overlapped across data.

After the reexamination of the data sources, I began to look for themes within the data. With the assistance of a critical friend, I analyzed and found connections across the language of the labels and definitions within the three data sources to establish larger themes. I then collapsed the data into 12 larger themes with each label listed under the appropriate theme (see Appendix A). In order to answer the third research question, which emerged from the data, it was necessary to compare my language, key terms, and words that demonstrated a consensus from the themes and labels that had emerged with the six instructional elements suggested by Allington and Gabriel (2012). The 12 larger themes and the comparison of the themes and labels with the six instructional elements suggested by Allington and Gabriel were determined to be the final data. The largest themes that emerged were instruction, teacher beliefs, authentic literacy, discussion,



student choice, student roles, and writing. The smaller themes that emerged were teacher roles, differentiated instruction, reading levels, teaching schedule, and school decisions. These themes will be used to answer the three research questions.

### Instruction

Instruction was the largest theme that emerged from the data, and was defined as a variety of teaching strategies and processes used to educate students. The component of my instruction that was most evident was guided reading instruction. From the data, guided reading instruction was defined as a short-term organization of students guided by a teacher with a specific instructional purpose. I value guided reading instruction and believe that it is something that should be provided for all children based on their specific instructional needs. During guided reading instruction, there is a component of direct instruction to meet those specific needs.

One component of instruction that was especially large was direct instruction. During the analysis of my teaching practice, I found that direct instruction occurred a great deal of the time. It occurred during large group reading instruction and during guided reading instruction. In conjunction with direct instruction, reading series components were a significant part of my instruction. My school district implements a reading series called Wonders. This reading series includes several direct instruction components that I implemented in my classroom.

While direct instruction was a large component of my instruction, there were other pieces of data that supported my ideal beliefs and values. Meaningful writing, activating prior knowledge, building background knowledge, real-world connections,

read alouds, student engagement, and guided writing were all components of my instruction. These instructional practices align with my ideal belief that learning should be authentic and purposeful.

Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that every child should listen to a fluent adult read aloud each day. This component of my instruction emerged from the data and aligned with one of Allington and Gabriel's six instructional elements. I have enjoyed and valued reading aloud in the past, but my class does not always seem engaged in this portion of my instruction this year and it is not my favorite time of the day. This component would have been easy to eliminate from my instruction based on the reaction I believe I see from my students. While I am pleased to see my practices align with one of Allington and Gabriel's six instructional elements, I do believe I need to investigate why it appears to me that my students are not engaged in this portion of my instruction.

One of the few components of my instruction that emerged from the data was balanced literacy. I thought I was implementing a balanced literacy curriculum in my classroom. However, the data suggests that I actually only minimally reference balanced literacy and my actual teaching practices would indicate that I spend a large amount of time implementing direct literacy instruction. There are times when I am teaching with a more authentic approach to literacy, but it appears that my teaching is far from balanced. The data would suggest that there is a disconnect between my ideal beliefs and values with my actual teaching practices.

### Teacher Beliefs

Another large theme that was developed based on the data was teacher beliefs, which were defined as what is valued by the teacher that becomes what is important to instruction and is reflected in personal response. Beliefs can be influenced by a number of factors. I found that my experiences (events and histories) had a large impact on my beliefs. Part of my experience includes my participation in professional development and professional learning communities.

Through the data analysis process, I found that there were also other factors that contributed to my beliefs. My feelings, wants, hesitations, and reflections also impact my beliefs. There were times that my feelings towards an instructional component influenced my practice. This was true as I found that critical literacy was a component that I valued and believed in, but it was not often reflected in my practice because I was hesitant in fear of disrupting the status quo in our small community. My school district is in a small, rural town in Iowa. There is little diversity in our community and our school district. We have only a small amount of minority students and no same-sex families. Most of the people in the community have traditional values and conservative beliefs. I feared that bringing up a topic that would disrupt the status quo would upset parents and families within the community. Disrupting the status quo is not a comfortable situation. In the classroom, it felt easy to bring up issues of social justice and children seemed ready to address the issue. I was mostly concerned with the backlash that might come from parents and families when children went home and shared what they had learned at school that day.

However, there were glimpses of critical literacy in my practice. Critical literacy was most evident during read alouds. One example was a read aloud of *The Butterfly* by Patricia Polacco (2000). *The Butterfly* is a story of a small girl living in Germany during the Nazi regime. The girl's family is hiding a Jewish family in their basement. The story tells of the unlikely friendship and bravery between these young children. The students in my classroom felt compassion and empathy toward the young Jewish girl and her family. We discussed situations that still occur today that would be similar to what the families in the story had experienced. This is where I felt as though it became difficult. When discussing immigration and why some families want to come to the United States, some children have heard their parents talk about this and already have some ideas or assumptions. There was not any negative conversation that happened in my classroom, or any negative responses from parents or families. However, we just skimmed the surface of critical literacy and did not address the social injustices currently facing the oppressed in our society today. It seems as though I allowed my desire to keep the peace to get in the way of my practice and the best interests of the students.

#### Authentic Literacy

Authentic literacy experiences were evident in my instruction. From the data, authentic literacy was defined as student learning through personal connections, meaning making, comprehension, engagement, excitement, and reading and writing that is personally meaningful and applicable to one's own life. This definition aligns well with my ideal beliefs, unlike the direct instruction component that was also evident in my practice and suggests that it is a part of my beliefs as well.

The authentic literacy components that were evident in my practice were predominantly through the avenues of writing and discussing. Meaningful writing was the largest component of authentic literacy. Writing is something that I have worked to improve in my classroom and I feel as though I have creative students who enjoy writing. While there is a large portion of time spent on writing, I often provide a topic, guide, or teacher-directed prompt for writing a personal connection to conclude their writing. The problem with this instruction is that I am creating a contrived writing by the students that requires them to make a personal connection that may or may not exist. This is a real conundrum. In actuality, there was a smaller portion of writing time where students had the freedom to create authentic writing that is personally meaningful and completely authentic. In an effort to better align my practices with Allington and Gabriel's (2012) suggestion of including personally meaningful writing each day, I would need to provide more opportunities for children to engage in what Allington and Gabriel refer to as personally meaningful writing.

Authentic literacy through discussion was demonstrated by students' personal connections with literacy. I created opportunities for children to activate their prior knowledge and make real-world and personal connections to the learning. This occurred through creating meaningful links within and across content areas. Within my data, I found that part of authentic literacy is seen through helping children understand the value of learning and its real-world application.

Comprehension was another component that was evident within authentic literacy. Comprehension was defined from the language in my data as a meaning making

process. The process of making meaning from a text is indicative of an authentic literacy task. The meaning derived from text by children is usually based upon their prior knowledge and personal connections. From my language within the data, especially in the post-teaching journal and in my responses to Allington and Gabriel (2012), my belief emerged: comprehension is the ultimate purpose for reading.

### Discussion

Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that children talk with their peers about reading and writing each day. From the data, discussion in my classroom was defined as the deep discourse among students and teachers to activate prior knowledge, build background, and provide an opportunity to learn from their peers. Children did have an opportunity during the literacy block each day to engage in discussion about reading and writing with their peers. Discussion was predominantly facilitated by me and occurred during whole group and guided reading instruction. This provided children with an opportunity to share their personal connections and learn from their peers.

Discussion also happened during teacher read alouds. Discussion during a teacher read aloud transpired from the students' curiosity about the book. This was a time in my instruction that was led primarily by the students rather than myself. Discussion was typically sparked by questions about meaning, personal connections children made with the text, and predictions about what was going to happen next.

Our school district implements the gradual release of responsibility model to support student learning. This model is meant to provide children with opportunities to learn from one another. The discussion that occurred in my classroom was evidence of

the cooperative learning component of this model. The gradual release model is designed to transfer the responsibility in the classroom from the teacher to the students, thus creating a more student-centered classroom. From the data, it would suggest that student discussion is going on in my classroom during several places throughout the day. However, there is a tension between discussion and a true student-centered environment. This is due to this constant teacher-directed approach that appears in the data again and again. What appears to be missing is the eventual release to the students.

### Student Choice

Student choice was another theme that emerged from the data, defined as an unrestricted dynamic that enables the individual to focus on actions that are personally meaningful to the individual and provides a sense of autonomy. Students have an opportunity to make choices about their literacy each day in my classroom. Students have a variety of choices which include the type of work in which they engage, the content, where they work, and with whom they work.

The emotions, interests, engagement, and motivation of the students influence their choices. These indicators suggest that students feel autonomy and take pride in making decisions about their education. Allington and Gabriel (2012) recommend that children be provided choices about what they read each day. These feelings a child has may impact the child's book choices. Children in my classroom are not assigned to a specific reading level for their self-selected reading. They are encouraged to find a book that interests them and that they can read and understand independently. In an effort to provide a variety of books at different levels and easy access to books, I provide each

desk group with a box of books in which they can choose books to read. If they would rather choose a book that is not in the book boxes, they may do so before school begins. We have a classroom bookshelf from which they can choose books. They also visit the library each week and may choose two books to check out. The use of book boxes is not designed to restrict choices; rather it is a management tool so students do not spend their literacy block choosing books from an overwhelming amount.

The influence of peers can also impact a student's choice. Through discussion and recommendations by peers, students are exposed to literature that they may not have encountered on their own. According to my data, peer influence was a small indicator of student choice in my classroom, but it was evident that it had somewhat of an impact on how children chose books.

### Student Roles

Another theme that emerged was student roles, defined as the various responsibilities of students in the classroom. This correlates with the gradual release of responsibility model to some degree. It suggests that the learning is expected to be the responsibility of the child.

The biggest role of the students in my classroom was students as readers. The second largest role was students as participants in the classroom. This role of participant aligns well with a significant portion of my pedagogy that was direct instruction. The smallest component of student roles was students as engaged thinkers. Data supported a belief that when children are engaged in their learning, they make more connections and are passionate about the learning that is taking place. There appeared to be a disconnect



between my belief about engaged learning and data supporting students as engaged learners in my classroom.

### Writing

Writing was a theme that emerged from the data, defined as the act of creating printed work to convey a message. Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that children should write about something personally meaningful each day. However, the majority of the writing that occurred in my classroom was related to or in response of reading. This type of writing leaves little autonomy to students and was completed mostly during whole group reading instruction. While this was the predominant source of writing, personally meaningful writing emerged, which is more aligned with Allington and Gabriel's suggestion. Personally meaningful writing leaves more autonomy to children and reflects their personal experiences through writing. I provided little instruction on how to create personally meaningful writing, but children were provided with choices each day during the literacy block. It was during this time that children were mostly engaged in personally meaningful writing.

A small portion of writing occurred during small group settings in conjunction with guided reading. I called this guided writing. Guided writing was typically in response to the guided reading text. Guided writing was used to teach the writing process and mechanics of writing. Mostly, the writing was related to reading (such as creating summaries, writing about a favorite character, etc.) but at times, students wrote personal responses to text.

### Teacher Roles

Teacher roles was one of the smaller themes that emerged from the data, defined as the various responsibilities of the teacher in the classroom. There was evidence that my classroom is more teacher-centered than student-centered. From the data reflecting teacher roles, the primary component in my roles in the classroom was as an evaluator. The two other components that were evident were teacher facilitation and fostering the love of reading. These two components, which are more aligned with my ideal beliefs, were the two that appeared least.

### Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction emerged as a very small theme and was defined as the intentional act by the teacher to provide strategies and processes to accommodate multiple learning needs in the classroom whether through support and enrichment for learners who struggle, for learners performing at grade level expectations, or for learners who have already met the expectation. This category was an original label and developed into a small theme so it only consists of two smaller categories, one in which is the actual label of differentiated instruction. Through the implementation of the gradual release model, I differentiated my instruction using components of the model (I model, we do it together, you do it together, you do it independently). I was able to scaffold learning based on the amount of teacher modeling, student groupings, etc. However, the minimal amount of differentiated instruction would again support that a large amount of my teaching was direct instruction.

### Reading Levels

Reading levels, defined as the degree in which a child is able to process and understand a text associated with specific grade-level expectations in terms of vocabulary, text structure and other features of text reading, was another small theme. I do not assign specific reading levels to students in my classroom. I do, however, make determinations about grouping and instruction based on a child's processing and comprehension of text associated with specific grade-level expectations.

Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that children should read accurately. Reading accuracy was a component of this theme. A child's accuracy is sometimes associated with a child's reading level. It is during small group instruction (based on a child's reading level) that I am able to teach strategic reading to promote accuracy and comprehension (another instructional element that Allington and Gabriel suggest). Strategic reading is the use of multiple sources of information to develop a self-extending system in reading. One of the goals in grouping children with similar reading levels is to be able to isolate their instructional needs in order to support accuracy and comprehension.

### Teaching Schedule

My teaching schedule emerged as a small theme and was defined as the calendar and instructional agenda of the teacher. Most often, schedule changes interrupted literacy instruction but based on the language in my data, the plans were still carried out by a substitute teacher. Schedule changes can be planned or unplanned but the data suggest that literacy is valued and still taught even in the absence of the teacher.

### School Decisions

The smallest category that emerged was school decisions, defined as the choices of a school district regarding students through their decisions about faculty and staff, schedules, and policies. School decisions and policies typically govern the district. Our school district requires the implementation of the Wonders reading series. The district also requires the use of the FAST assessments three times per year, weekly oral reading fluency progress monitoring for at-risk and substantially deficient students, and interventions (such as repeated readings, LETRS, and/or Phonics Boost/Blast/ Blitz) for students who are substantially deficient. My data reflected the use of repeated readings during student interventions and the weekly progress monitoring for at-risk and substantially deficient students.

As I began to look at these themes in relationship to the six instructional elements suggested by Allington and Gabriel (2012), I found that throughout my literacy instruction, I implement each of the components, but not necessarily every day. My language in response to these six elements would suggest that I believe in and value these six components. It appears as though several of the themes that emerged from the data would align with the elements of literacy instruction recommended by Allington and Gabriel. However, there were themes that would not align with the suggestions and would suggest a more direct instruction approach in a teacher-centered classroom.

### Every Child Reads Something He or She Chooses

The major themes that support this suggestion by Allington and Gabriel (2012) are student choice, student roles, and teacher roles. Children have the opportunity to

make choices in the classroom each day (the only time that children did not have this opportunity was one instance of a late start due to inclement weather). Children chose from a menu of literacy activities, where they work, and with whom they work. When children choose from the menu items, they have the autonomy to pick any book for reading or any topic for writing. I have found that in my classroom, giving autonomy to children appears to increase their engagement in literacy and seems to make their learning more meaningful. The roles of the children in my classroom impact their choices. My role in this theme of student choice is to foster the love of reading within each child.

#### Every Child Reads Accurately

Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that every child should read accurately. This was a difficult element to measure. There was evidence in my classroom that I provided instruction to assist children in improving their reading accuracy. The primary theme that supported student accuracy was instruction.

Instruction was the largest theme that supported accurate reading. There were several components of instruction that impacted children's reading accuracy. The largest component for instruction of reading accuracy occurred during guided reading instruction. From the data, guided reading was defined as a short-term instructional organization consisting of a small group of learners guided by a teacher with a specific instructional purpose [i. e., vocabulary (meaning), word work (within word structure), language, reading, and writing]. This learning scenario with a specific instructional purpose is one way to improve reading accuracy. This can occur through direct

instruction that is rather explicit, or in a more strategic manner in which children learn to use multiple sources of information to read, monitor, self-correct, and comprehend.

Ideally, I would use a strategic approach similar to the approach I used during my years as a Reading Recovery teacher during small group reading instruction to improve reading accuracy. However, it was evident in my practice that I provided a large amount of direct instruction using components of the Wonders reading series instead.

This evidence would indicate that my ideal beliefs suggest that children should read accurately, I am not actively ensuring that it truly takes place as Allington and Gabriel (2012) have suggested. Allington and Gabriel state, “reading at 98 percent or higher accuracy is essential for reading acceleration” (p. 12). I agree that children should be able to read accurately, however, I disagree with Allington and Gabriel on their insistence of 98% accuracy or higher. There is not any research cited by Allington and Gabriel to support that children must read at 98% or better for reading acceleration. I would argue that in my experience working with children, not all children have read at 98% accuracy or higher but I would have evidence that some of those children were accurate readers who understood what they read. This was especially true when analyzing running records. Some children may read at 96% accuracy on a consistent basis and I would argue that reading at 96% accuracy is indicative of accurate reading that supports the ultimate goal of comprehension.

#### Every Child Reads Something He or She Understands

The third element of instruction that Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest is every child should read something he or she understands each day. Like reading

accuracy, this element was difficult to measure because I did not collect student data. While I do not have data to support student comprehension, there was evident in several of the themes that emerged from the data that would suggest students understand what they read. These components include instruction, authentic literacy, student choices, and the roles of the students.

During small group guided reading instruction, I used literature that is appropriate to each group. The focus of small group instruction is to create strategic readers, which includes comprehension. Each day, children are provided with the opportunity to engage in authentic literacy experiences. Through authentic literacy, children make choices about their learning and engage through personal connections and meaning making.

#### Every Child Writes About Something Personally Meaningful

Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that every child writes about something personally meaningful each day. The data indicate that I provide children with the opportunity to write about something personally meaningful each day. Personally meaningful writing was part of three themes: instruction, authentic literacy, and writing. These three themes demonstrate the opportunity children have to engage in personally meaningful writing, but not all children chose to engage in that opportunity.

During instruction, children often write related to or in response of reading. This can happen through a summary, a reflection, or a combination of ways. There was evidence that through responsive writing, children had limited opportunities to make personal connections. However, during literacy centers, children were provided with options about which literacy task they would engage with during that time. Some children

chose to write during literacy centers and engage in personally meaningful writing. These opportunities are authentic experiences for children where they create printed work to convey a message. Some children chose to write about something personally meaningful each day and some did not. Unfortunately, I have not ensured that this occurs for every child in my classroom.

#### Every Child Talks with Peers About Reading and Writing

There were several themes that demonstrated the use of discussion in my classroom each day. Discussion was evident through my instruction, authentic literacy, student choice, and differentiated instruction. These avenues give children the opportunity to have meaningful discourse with their peers and to learn from one another.

During instructional times, I often use teaching strategies to activate prior knowledge and build background. It is through discussion that children share their experiences with the content or topic. From the data, real-world connections a child makes are authentic links from new learning to a child's background knowledge or a topic that is applicable to one's own life. During instructional times I follow the gradual release of responsibility model to promote discussion of partners, peers in small groups, with the whole class, and/or with the teacher.

Authentic literacy appears to increase engagement in my classroom. I have noticed that students tend to feel positive emotions and exhibit excitement when they are able to make personal connections to the learning and interact with their peers. During these times, children can share about their personal experiences. These discussions among peers can be influential. Students in my classroom recommend books to their



peers, suggest websites for learning, share content they learned that day, or even share their writing with a peer as a real audience. I am also able to differentiate instruction with groupings during discussion. Children had opportunities to learn from one another and become inspired. Children who are not always able to make connections easily had a chance to learn a great deal from students who actively make connections and share their personal experiences.

One of my roles during discussion was as facilitator. According to the data, my job as a facilitator is to initiate student participation in classroom discussions. During these times, I posed open-ended questions to spark discussions rather than engage in a traditional IRE (inquire-respond-evaluate) method. However, there was evidence that some instruction was a traditional IRE method. I desire a student-centered classroom. Yet, the evidence suggests that I while there is some authentic discussion among students, there is also a component of my instruction that is more teacher-centered where the discussion is controlled.

#### Every Child Listens to a Fluent Adult Read Aloud

During literacy, I read aloud for two different purposes: for teaching and for pleasure. When I read aloud for teaching purposes (i.e. modeling of a new skill or strategy to the whole class), my students appeared engaged and interested in the text. However, when I read aloud during story time, strictly for pleasure, they seemed less engaged. I read aloud to children each day, which aligns with Allington and Gabriel's (2012) suggestion that every child should listen to a fluent adult read aloud each day.

My role of fostering the love of reading within each child is demonstrated through reading aloud for pleasure and providing children the opportunity to discuss the story and their personal connections with peers. The active participation and engagement from students appears to make the learning more meaningful and student-centered rather than teaching based on my own personal agenda, which was also evident in my practice.

### Research Questions

The data from this study provided examples of my beliefs and teaching practices, which were analyzed through a critical lens. This study was designed to answer three research questions:

1. As a classroom teacher trained in Reading Recovery, does my strong connection to the writing of Richard L. Allington, specifically with his article, “Every Child, Every Day” reflect my beliefs about literacy instruction?
2. Do my teaching practices reflect my beliefs regarding literacy education?
3. Do my actual teaching practices connect to the six instructional elements recommended by Allington and Gabriel in the article, “Every Child, Every Day”?

### My Professional History and My Ideal Beliefs

What I found through the examination of my practice is that Reading Recovery has played an important role in shaping my ideal beliefs about literacy. My experience with Reading Recovery also influenced the strong connections I made to Allington and Gabriel’s (2012) work. My ideal beliefs have been shaped through intense, professional training such as Reading Recovery. This influence has inspired my work and my

profession. In the next section, I will discuss whether or not my ideal beliefs align with my actual teaching practices.

### My Ideal Beliefs and My Reported Practice

The data would indicate that my ideal beliefs and my practices are not completely aligned. However, there is evidence to suggest that there is a disconnect between my ideal beliefs and my real beliefs. My ideal beliefs would suggest that I value authentic, purposeful learning in a student-centered environment. However, the evidence would suggest that my practice involves a large amount of direct instruction in a teacher-controlled environment. This indicates a tension in my teaching. In addition to direct instruction, there were elements of my practice that supported a more authentic and purposeful environment such as student choice, real-world connections made through classroom and peer discussions, and authentic literacy experiences such as personally meaningful reading and writing.

The direct instruction that took place in my classroom was based on the components of a reading series, Wonders, implemented by our district. The components implemented include phonemic awareness, phonics, grammar, vocabulary skills, and comprehension skills and strategies. These components have been designed to implement in a direct and explicit manner. While I did adhere to the policies of our district in regards to implementation of the Wonders components, I tried to incorporate authentic literacy experiences in order to align my beliefs with my practice. This tension would suggest that I think I value and believe in authentic literacy, but there must be a part of me that also values and believes in teacher control and direct instruction.

In an effort to balance the literacy instruction, I implemented the minimal requirements of the Wonders reading series. I used the materials as a resource for the remainder of my literacy instruction. I used the stories from the series for reading and writing during whole group teaching. In order to make this experience more authentic, I facilitated classroom discussions about students' personal experiences with the topic and provided opportunities for meaningful engagement through writing.

#### Every Child, Every Day and My Practice

While my practices are not completely aligned with my beliefs, there is evidence to suggest that my practice mostly reflects the six instructional elements as suggested by Allington and Gabriel (2012). Each day, children read something they choose, children read something they understand, children have a choice to write about something personally meaningful, and listen to a fluent adult read aloud. Two elements that I am not sure is evident is that every child reads accurately and understand what he or she reads. I do not have student data to support or refute this element suggested by Allington and Gabriel. In my classroom, it appears, however, that when I provide children with a wide variety of literature to choose from, they are read books that are meaningful to them and seem more likely to read accurately and understand what they read.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

This self-study provided me with an in-depth examination of my own beliefs and practices. The results were eye opening and indicate that I need to improve my practice to align with my ideal beliefs. Some of the results I had expected to see, while other results were quite shocking.

#### Summary of Findings

##### Instruction

The theme of instruction as the largest component of the self-study data. I found that guided reading instruction was a large component of my instruction. My ideal beliefs about literacy and my experience with Reading Recovery have influenced how I conduct my small group instruction. This influence directly relates to having a large portion of guided reading in my instruction.

On the other hand, another large component of my data suggested that I used direct instruction a great deal of the time, especially during whole group reading instruction. I did not think I valued large amounts of direct instruction and would have said that it does not align with my beliefs about literacy education. It appears as though I have allowed the use of a reading series to influence my teaching judgment rather than use it solely as a resource to support my teaching. In addition, the data would suggest that maybe there is a part of me that likes the control of direct instruction where I can carefully plan out the teaching sequences and have a game plan of what will happen in my classroom. From my responses to Allington and Gabriel (2012) and the discussion of

my ideal beliefs in my journal, it would suggest that children's interests should have driven my instruction, yet my focus on direct instruction suggests that I may have a need to control content and actions in the classroom. This is not to say that direct instruction should never be used. However, the amount of direct instruction that emerged from the data created a tension between my beliefs and my actions in the classroom.

Read alouds were another large component of my instruction. I have always enjoyed being read to, and as a teacher, I thought it would be my favorite time of the day, especially when using read aloud for pleasure reading in class. However, data revealed that my students enjoyed read alouds when connected to instruction (such as read alouds with think-pair-share, writing prompts, etc.), but they did not appear to enjoy read alouds when I read a book for pleasure to the whole class. I am curious as to what Allington and Gabriel (2012) would say about the two purposes for read alouds that I use in my classroom: for pleasure and for teaching. Is reading aloud for instructional purposes as beneficial as reading aloud for pleasure? Allington and Gabriel suggest that every child should listen to a fluent adult read aloud each day. Does that include reading aloud for instructional purposes or would they suggest that the reading should be for pleasure? My ideal belief would be that children should hear a story for pleasure each day. To me, this sends the message that reading is a pleasurable activity rather than a task they must complete for the teacher or a particular instructional purpose.

The data also suggested that there was only one incident of balanced literacy reflected in my language about my instruction. Balanced literacy in this context was defined as providing a variety of literacy experiences to the children. I thought that I had

created a class with balanced literacy instruction. Allington and Gabriel (2012) do not use the term balanced literacy in their article, but the way in which they talk about providing a variety of literacy activities for children reflects the balanced literacy definition I used. However, the plethora of direct instruction discussion in my journal suggests that I my instruction may not be as balanced as I would like it to be.

These conclusions from my instruction were not what I had expected to find as I examined my own practices, based on what I thought were my ideal beliefs and values. This tension in my teaching creates an evolving understanding about my engagement with students. In order to better serve the students in my classroom in an authentic, student-centered environment, I will need to better understand my beliefs and why I use direct instruction so much in my classroom.

### Teacher Beliefs

Teacher beliefs was another large theme. My experience with Reading Recovery training and professional development impacted what I thought were my ideal beliefs about literacy education. That learning continued through my engagement in a professional learning community as our facilitator was a former Reading Recovery teacher who also valued a comprehensive approach to literacy through the avenues of authentic and critical literacies. After I trained in Reading Recovery I felt like there had to be more in the world of literacy education. At that time, I entered the graduate program for literacy education at the University of Northern Iowa. Through this program, my ideal beliefs continued to be impacted by my experience in learning about authentic and critical literacy. These experiences helped shape my changing beliefs, which culminated

in the reading and analysis of the Allington and Gabriel (2012) piece. However, the data suggest that there is still a part of me that values some of the traditional approaches to teaching, such as direct instruction. One piece of direction instruction that I seem to value is teacher control. It appears to be uncomfortable for me to teach without a specific plan in place and without knowing where I think the learning will go. Although, in a student-centered classroom, teaching happens based on the wants, needs, and desires of the students rather than the teacher's agenda. I allowed my concern of disrupting the status quo with parents and families to influence my judgment rather than diving into critical literacy in my classroom. There were small signs of critical literacy in my classroom through read alouds. It was almost as if I was testing the waters to see if I could overcome my fear of disrupting the status quo. I may not have been ready to challenge the current system, however, the children in my classroom appeared to be willing to do so. This was another piece of evidence that demonstrates that my need for control of the situations that happen in my classroom overpowered my ideals about critical literacy. A continued tension is the apparent disconnect between my beliefs and my practice.

### Authentic Literacy

Authentic Literacy was a theme that emerged as one of the largest from the data. The data suggested that meaningful writing was a large part of authentic literacy in my classroom. However, what I referred to as meaningful writing in my classroom typically happened in connection with a contrived writing assignment directed by me. I asked students to make a personally meaningful connection even if a personal connection may not have existed, creating a teacher directed assignment focused on steps of writing rather



than enabling students to determine their own writing focus and purpose. Again, this indicates that the reality of my actions appear to overpower my ideals.

Comprehension was evident throughout my authentic literacy practices. I place much value in a child's ability to comprehend over other skills such as decoding and fluency. I believe children should be able to read and understand a text and how it relates to their own lives. I want the students to be able to make meaning and read for the purpose of understanding. When given the freedom to make choices, I have noticed that children tend to pursue their passions and desires in literacy. I found that when children in my classroom are excited and personally engaged with reading, they are more likely to work hard and comprehend because they have a vested interest in the content. Allington and Gabriel (2012) suggest that children should read something they understand each day. Comprehension is an area where the data and my beliefs intersect well.

### Discussion

A student-centered classroom is where children discuss and learn from one another. The theme of discussion that emerged from the data suggests that my instruction does include many opportunities for children to discuss personal experiences, reading, and writing. As I took a closer look at the data, there were several types of discussion that happened in my classroom. Children discussed their personal experiences and real-world connections with partners, peer groups, and the whole class. They also discussed reading and writing in similar settings. Allington and Gabriel (2012) would agree such a diverse use of discussion across different context and settings for students to explore their ideas and their thinking. However, there were times in the data where I was looking for a

specific answer during what I labeled as discussion. I asked questions and evaluated responses in a traditional initiate-respond-evaluate (IRE) manner. These IRE moments suggest that my desire for control outweighed my belief of a student-centered classroom.

### Student Choice

Student choice emerged as a theme. It is evident from the data on my practice that I value student choice. Students made choices about which literacy activities they would engage during literacy centers. There were a variety of choices which included the type of work in which they engaged, the content, where they worked, and with whom they worked. Student choice is an element recommended by Allington and Gabriel (2012) as an important component of authentic, student-driven learning. This study suggests that my practice does demonstrate authentic, student-driven learning experiences. However, the data also suggest that I desire control in my classroom. Perhaps this need for control is based on a concern that my students' choices may not be good enough or may not help them learn. Could this be a lack of trust in students' decision making?

### Student Roles

Student roles emerged from the data. The data suggested that the primary role of the students in my classroom was to be readers. The role of students as readers aligns with Allington and Gabriel's (2012) suggestion that children should read books each day. However, there was some data to suggest that my use of direct instruction limited students' roles. The data suggest at times students were only participants in the classroom, rather than readers. This would include instances when I posed questions in an

IRE manner or during times of direct instruction when children had less autonomy to make choices about their learning.

### Writing

My experience in Reading Recovery and suggestions by Allington and Gabriel (2012) helped me understand the value of writing instruction and the importance of encouraging students to compose a personally meaningful message. In an effort to better align my practices with Allington and Gabriel's suggestion of including personally meaningful writing each day, I need to provide more opportunities for children to engage in what Allington and Gabriel refer to as personally meaningful writing. Personally meaningful writing should not be a contrived purpose directed by the teacher. It should be an opportunity for children to engage in an authentic task that has meaning to them, and whose purpose is driven by their passions or desires.

### Teacher Roles

I found that my role was mostly as an evaluator in the classroom. The evaluation was not always in a formal sense, but was sometimes conducted in guided reading groups, informally through discussion, or during whole group instruction when I was expecting a specific answer based on the skill or strategy I was teaching. While part of teaching is being able to evaluate student progress to know how to maximize learning for each child, the data would suggest that I was evaluating students a large portion of the time.

Fostering the love of reading was another role that emerged from the data. My ideal beliefs suggest that all children can learn when given the opportunity. I shared my

goal for each of my students with them at the very beginning of the school year. My goal was that each child develops a love of reading. I believe that if a child loves to read, the other pieces, comprehension and accuracy, will come. Once children develop a passion for something and become engaged, they are more likely to succeed (Vasquez et al., 2013). I provided children with choices each day in an effort to create independent learners who are confident in their decisions about learning. Allington and Gabriel (2012) discuss the importance of providing children with choices about their reading and ensuring they understand what they read. It appears in my data that I may have focused more on ensuring they understand what they read than in offering student choice.

The role as a facilitator was a small component of the data. In my belief discussions I saw the role of facilitator as an important one. But the data did not support that belief. My role as facilitator mostly showed up during discussion but was questionable as truly facilitating since most of that dynamic was IRE. One component I would really like to improve is my role as a facilitator in the classroom. I need to step back and give up some of my control to allow students to guide the conversations and allow them to take responsibility for their learning.

### Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction was only a small theme that occurred in the data. As a former Reading Recovery and special education teacher, I had expected this to be apparent in my practices. I believe that teachers should adjust instruction to meet the learning needs of students, and I understand the value in doing so. However, that was not evident in my practices based on the data collected.

### Reading Levels

Reading levels emerged as a small theme. The data included discussion of guided reading levels and leveled books related to student choice. Our district has the option to use Accelerated Reader to monitor student reading and STAR test achievement. It is not a requirement, so I opted not to utilize this program in my classroom. I do not think it is valuable for children to be assigned a reading level and limit their reading selection. During Reading Recovery lessons, I was always amazed at the children who were able to read a text level higher than I had anticipated because they had prior knowledge about the topic, a personal connection to the text, or a passion for the content or story. I want children in my classroom to be able to make choices about what they read and to understand that reading is a pleasurable activity, not a job they should complete for me.

### Teaching Schedule

My teaching schedule was a small theme that emerged from the data. Most of the data referred to times in my schedule when I did not complete a task and times when I was absent and needed to schedule literacy for the substitute to follow. My discussion from the journal about my teaching schedule revealed a concern I had about my literacy instruction being cut short too often due to interruptions where I had to leave the classroom for meetings and a substitute would take over. I discovered through the substitute's notes that the literacy components I was concerned would not be addressed were actually completed. Allington and Gabriel (2012) strongly support a classroom that includes all six elements of literacy instruction. While the substitute's notes were not part of the data I analyzed, they were an important addendum because it confirmed that all six

elements of literacy instruction in my plans were delivered to the students whether I was there or not.

### School Decisions

The decisions made by a school often effects teachers and students directly or indirectly. At times, a district will make recommendations for the use of curricular materials and/or instructional strategies. There are also policies developed by the district administration regarding instructional practices. I was somewhat surprised that this was the smallest theme that emerged from the data because I wanted to believe that school policy was the primary reason for the large amount of my direct instruction.

After the first two years of the implementation of Wonders, my district made the decision to leave autonomy to the teachers and allow them to use the reading series as a resource as long as all components of the series were implemented. This autonomy allowed me to make instructional decisions about literacy, but I still felt like there was pressure to implement the components of the reading series. I also worried about what other teachers would think about my students in future years if they had not been trained to sit through an hour of whole group instruction, learned the prerequisite skills they would need for the upcoming years, etc. I did make the decision that I would not have my students complete the weekly workbook pages that went along with the skills and strategies and instead, they would have choices during our literacy block. While I was able to give up some control, the data suggest that changing to a child-centered approach means that I have to completely let go of control in my classroom.

### Limitations

There are two limitations of this study. The first is that the results of a self-study are not generalizable to the education community. This study was about my own beliefs and practices. The second limitation is that I was examining my own beliefs and practice, which can be difficult. As the researcher, I am close to the data and it may be difficult to make unbiased conclusions. However, the use of a critical friend helped support the idea of truthfulness of the data (LaBoskey, 2007).

### Conclusions and Implications

Reading Recovery training was my first real experience with literacy education that made sense. During my undergraduate program, teaching reading was focused on the five pillars of reading as defined by the National Reading Panel. After graduation, I was offered a teaching position in my current district as a special education teacher providing specially designed instruction in reading and math. It was not until three years later that I trained as a Reading Recovery teacher. During training, I realized that I really had no idea about how children learned to read, but it all made perfect sense.

During Reading Recovery training, I was introduced to the work of Richard Allington. Allington's (2002, 2005, 2014) work, along with Gabriel (2012), continued to shape my thinking about how children learn to read and the value of authentic literacy experiences. I have always felt a strong connection with his work, even from my very early experiences with it. The writings by Clay (2005a, 2005b) and Allington created a desire within me to learn more about literacy. I attended the National Reading Recovery and K-6 Literacy Conference twice, a regional conference in Illinois, a presentation by

Nell Duke, and as a result of all this, I knew there had to be even more. I decided to pursue a master's degree in literacy education from the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). Through this program, I encountered Allington's work once again. In addition, I was introduced to critical literacy, which impacted my beliefs about literacy and how children learn to read through meaningful avenues. This knowledge prepared me to present at the annual literacy conference at UNI on the problems and possibilities with response to intervention (now known as multi-tiered systems of support). This presentation was based on literature that suggests that a systematic, explicit intervention approach is not always the best option for all children. I presented literature that supported the idea that, assisting readers who struggle can be done through authentic, purposeful avenues by an expertly trained teacher who responds to the individual needs of each child.

The six instructional elements suggested by Allington and Gabriel (2012) were closely aligned with my ideal beliefs. Throughout the language of my data, it was mostly evident that the six elements were included as part of my practice each day. However, there was a piece of my practice that did not align well with Allington and Gabriel's suggestion that every child should read accurately. Allington and Gabriel purport that in order for reading acceleration to occur, children must read at 98% accuracy or higher. In my response to this instructional element, I questioned the reasoning behind this statement. There was no citation in the Allington and Gabriel article to reference the research that would support this claim. What makes 98% accuracy the magic number? I would agree with Allington and Gabriel that children should read accurately, but I would



argue that a specific number does not always signify accuracy. Would they suggest that a child who reads at 96% accuracy and comprehends what he or she reads not be a good reader? The reason that I had little evidence to prove that children read accurately in my classroom was because my beliefs are not completely aligned with the argument that Allington and Gabriel make about what qualifies as accurate reading.

Throughout this study I was surprised by some of the practices evident in my data. The data would suggest that my beliefs and my practices are not completely aligned. My practice is influenced by three primary sources: my ideal beliefs, my real beliefs, and the district expectation of implementation of the Wonders reading series. Even when I know that an authentic experience would be more beneficial than direct instruction on a grammar skill for example, there is still a sense of pressure to implement those components to ensure that all children receive the same opportunities. Not only was I influenced by the pressure to implement the Wonders components, there was evidence of a tension in my teaching. There is a part of me that appears to believe in the value of direct instruction and that likes (or possibly needs) the control of knowing what will happen in my classroom.

Although the results suggest that my ideal beliefs are not completely reflected in my practice as I had hoped, there are many things I can learn from this study. I need to further examine what I thought were my beliefs about literacy and the beliefs that emerged from the data, which also suggested that I value direct instruction in a teacher-centered environment. I need to investigate the tensions in my teaching to improve my practice to better reflect my ideal beliefs.

Experiencing this self-study and examining my beliefs and my practice have changed how I think about my teaching and suggest possible new venues for research. One area I would like to examine more closely is this notion of direct instruction within my teaching. I would like to focus more closely on how that direct instruction is realized in my teaching, perhaps through video recording of my practice and analysis of my language and actions. Another area I would like to examine is my use of student choice. How and when do I use student choice in my classroom? What are the purposes behind student choice? How do I engage students in choice? These potential research projects will further my understanding of my practice and my understanding of literacy learning.

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## APPENDIX A

## CATEGORIES AND LABELS WITH OCCURRENCES

Instruction-A *variety of teaching strategies and processes used to educate students.*

\*264 Occurrences

- Guided Reading Instruction-A *short-term instructional organization consisting of a small group of learners guided by a teacher with a specific instructional purpose [i. e., vocabulary (meaning), word work (within word structure), language, reading, and writing].* \*31 Occurrences
- Direct Instruction- *Explicit instruction providing specific information about process and components within literacy.* \*30 Occurrences
- Meaningful Writing- *Writing that involves personal connections by the writer and has an authentic purpose for the writer.* \*25 Occurrences
- Making Connections-A *way of personally linking new knowledge with what a child already knows.* \*22 Occurrences
- Reading Series Component-An *element of a predesigned [commercial] literacy curriculum used by the teacher to teach literacy skills.* \*19 Occurrences
- Real-World Connections-*Authentic links from new learning with a child's background knowledge a topic that is applicable to one's own life (made through reading, writing, and/or discussing).* \*18 Occurrences
- Teacher Directives-*Verbal instructions for students follow given by the teacher.* \*17 Occurrences
- Read Aloud for Pleasure-*Story time performed by the teacher without a specific instructional purpose.* \*16 Occurrences
- Student Engagement during Read Aloud-A *child's active attention to the teacher and response to the story while the teacher reads from literature.* \*15 Occurrences
- Need-The *teacher's perception of the type of instruction a student requires in order to learn the content presented.* \*15 Occurrences
- Building Background Knowledge-An *instructional approach used to construct meaning and support new learning for students.* \*14 Occurrences
- Read Aloud for Teaching-An *instructional tool used through interaction between the teacher and students to build background, activate prior knowledge, model fluent and accurate reading, allow teachers to model through think alouds, and also to allow children to access text they might not be able to read otherwise.* \*14 Occurrences
- Gradual Release of Responsibility-An *instructional strategy used by teachers to scaffold student learning through a process of shifting the work from the teacher to the students.* \*12 Occurrences
- Activating Prior Knowledge-A *way of triggering a child's understanding of a topic in order to make connections to new learning.* \*8 Occurrences

- *Teacher Modeling-A teaching strategy used to guide student learning and model teacher thinking. \*4 Occurrences*
- *Guided Writing-An instructional strategy sometimes consisting of a large group or small group of learners guided by a teacher to teach the writing process. \*3 Occurrences*
- *Balanced Literacy-A theory that suggests that literacy instruction should include a sensible variety of literacy components. \*1 Occurrence*

*Teacher Beliefs-What is valued by the teacher that becomes what is important to instruction and is reflected in personal response.*

*\*150 Occurrences*

- *Teacher Experiences-The events and histories from a teacher's past that can greatly influence teaching. \*33 Occurrences*
- *Teacher Feelings-The emotions a teacher experiences toward her own teaching practices and outside factors which influence her practice. \*20 Occurrences*
- *Teacher Wants-The desires of the teacher for a well-managed classroom with engaged students. \*15 Occurrences*
- *Need-The teacher's perception of the type of instruction a student requires in order to learn the content presented. \*15 Occurrences*
- *Teacher Questions-The internal struggles of the teacher about her instructional practices. \*11 Occurrences*
- *Unfavorable Feelings-Negative emotions a teacher experiences regarding her practice and outside factors which influence her practice. \*10 Occurrences*
- *Teacher Hesitations-The reluctances a teacher feels about instructional decisions designed to disrupt the status quo. \*8 Occurrences*
- *Teacher Reflection-The critical thinking of the teacher in response to instruction. \*6 Occurrences*
- *Professional Development-Training and professional growth opportunities for teachers to improve instruction. \*3 Occurrences*
- *PLC-Teams of teachers who examine student data and plan for instruction based on the conclusions of the data. \*2 Occurrences*
- *Teacher Assumptions-The theories developed by the teacher about what students are able to do. \*1 Occurrence*

*Authentic Literacy-Student learning through personal connections, meaning-making, comprehension, engagement, excitement, and reading and writing that is personally meaningful and applicable to one's own life.*

*143 Occurrences*

- *Meaningful Writing-Writing that involves personal connections by the writer and has an authentic purpose for the writer. \*25 Occurrences*



- Student Excitement and Engagement-*The positive emotions students feel when they are able to make personal connections to the learning and the interaction between the students and teacher that guide learning.* \*24 Occurrences
- Making Connections-*A way of personally linking new knowledge with what a child already knows.* \*22 Occurrences
- Real-World Connections-*Authentic links from new learning to a child's background knowledge a topic that is applicable to one's own life (made through reading, writing, and/or discussing).* \*18 Occurrences
- Comprehension-*The meaning-making process in which a child engages while reading to understand.* \*16 Occurrences
- Personally Meaningful Writing-*A literacy component used by teachers to help student make connections to the content through written expression.* \*10 Occurrences
- Cross-Curricular Connections-*Meaningful links between content areas.* \*9 Occurrences
- Student Excitement-*The positive emotions students feel when they are able to make personal connections to the learning.* \*9 Occurrences
- Activating Prior Knowledge-*A way of triggering a child's understanding of a topic in order to make connections to new learning.* \*8 Occurrences
- Reading for Meaning-*The interpretation of text for an authentic purpose.* \*2 Occurrences

Discussion-*The deep discourse among students and teachers to activate prior knowledge, build background, and provide an opportunity to learn from their peers.*

\*111 Occurrences

- Real-World Connections-*Authentic links from new learning with a child's background knowledge a topic that is applicable to one's own life (made through reading, writing, and/or discussing).* \*18 Occurrences
- Read Aloud for Pleasure-*Story time performed by the teacher without a specific instructional purpose.* \*16 Occurrences
- Gradual Release of Responsibility-*An instructional strategy used by teachers to scaffold student learning through a process of shifting the work from the teacher to the students.* \*12 Occurrences
- Teacher Facilitation-*An instructional strategy used to initiate student participation in classroom discussions.* \*9 Occurrences
- Peer Influence-*The recommendations and inspiration of peers to encourage reading and writing.* \*6 Occurrences

Student Choice-*An unrestricted dynamic that enables the individual to focus on actions that are personally meaningful to the individual and provides a sense of autonomy.*

\*107 Occurrences

- Student Excitement and Engagement-*The positive emotions students feel when they are able to make personal connections to the learning and the interaction between the students and teacher that guide learning.* \*24 Occurrences
- Student Emotion-*The passion and pride students demonstrate when reading, writing, and discussing something personally meaningful.* \*12 Occurrences
- Access to Books-*The opportunity to self-select appropriate literature from a variety of choices.* \*10 Occurrences
- Student Excitement-*The positive emotions students feel when they are able to make personal connections to the learning.* \*9 Occurrences
- Book Boxes-*A collection of materials at a variety of reading levels to meet the various reading abilities and styles of the students and provided for student selected reading.*
- Peer Influence-*The recommendations and inspiration of peers to encourage reading and writing.* \*6 Occurrences
- Student Interest-*The desire of students to engage in enjoyable literacy experiences.* \*6 Occurrences
- Student Motivation-*The internal drive within students to engage in learning.* \*2 Occurrences
- Work-*The physical act of creating and organizing materials for students.* \*1 Occurrences

Student Roles-*The various responsibilities of students in the classroom.*

\*86 Occurrences

- Students as Readers-*Students who seek to gain knowledge beyond what they know and achieve pleasure through literature.* \*53 Occurrences
- Students as Participants-*Students who complete work, follow teacher directives, are compliant, and/or contribute to the learning activity.* \*23 Occurrences
- Student as Engaged Thinkers-*Students who make personal connections, are inquisitive, they wonder and question, and are actively involved with their work of reading or writing.* \*10 Occurrences

Writing-*The act of creating printed work to convey a message.*

\*78 Occurrences

- Writing Related To/In Response of Reading-*The physical task of transcribing knowledge of what has been read.* \*37 Occurrences
- Meaningful Writing- *Writing that involves personal connections by the writer and has an authentic purpose for the writer.* \*25 Occurrences
- Personally Meaningful Writing-*A literacy component used by teachers to help student make connections to the content through written expression.* \*10 Occurrences
- Guided Writing-*An instructional strategy sometimes consisting of a large group or small group of learners guided by a teacher to teach the writing process.* \*3 Occurrences

- Graphic Organizers-*A tool used to arrange ideas and information when reading or writing.* \*3 Occurrences

Teacher Roles-*The various responsibilities of the educator in the classroom.*

\*36 Occurrences

- Teacher as Evaluator-*The teacher's role to assess and analyze student work and data to plan for instruction.* \*19 Occurrences
- Teacher Facilitation-*An instructional strategy used to initiate student participation in classroom discussions.* \*9 Occurrences
- Fostering the Love of Reading-*The role of the teacher to assist in developing the enjoyment and passion for reading within students.* \*8 Occurrences

Reading Levels-*The degree in which a child is able to process and understand a text associated with specific grade-level expectations in terms of vocabulary, text structure and other features of text reading.*

\*33 Occurrences

- Reading Accuracy-*A child's ability to read words of a text correctly to support comprehension.* \*10 Occurrences
- Above Average Readers-*Students who are able to read and comprehend books and text at a level that is above the classroom average based on assessments and teacher observations.* \*6 Occurrences
- Average Readers-*Students who are able to read and comprehend books and text at a level that is similar to the classroom average based on assessments and teacher observations.* \*3 Occurrences
- Readers Who Struggle-*Students who are typically unable to read and comprehend books and text at a level that is similar to the classroom average based on assessments and teacher observations.* \*3 Occurrences
- Strategic Reading-*The use of multiple sources of information to develop a self-extending system in reading.* \*3 Occurrences
- Student Growth-*The demonstration of increased student achievement.* \*2 Occurrences

Teaching Schedule-*The calendar and instructional agenda of the teacher.* \*22

Occurrences (These occurrences came from the data before this became a larger theme)

\*25 Occurrences Total

- Schedule Changes-*The unforeseen events throughout the day that effect literacy instruction.* \*2 Occurrences
- Substitute Plans-*The directions for literacy instruction left for a temporary replacement in the event of the teacher's absence.* \*1 Occurrence

Differentiated Instruction-*The intentional act by the teacher to provide strategies and processes to accommodate multiple learning needs in the classroom whether through*

*support and enrichment for learners who struggle, for learners performing at grade level expectations, or for learners who have already met the expectation.*

20 Occurrences

- *Gradual Release of Responsibility-An instructional strategy used by teachers to scaffold student learning through a process of shifting the work from the teacher to the students. \*12 Occurrences*
- *Differentiated Instruction- The intentional act by the teacher to provide strategies and processes to accommodate multiple learning needs in the classroom whether through support and enrichment for learners who struggle, for learners performing at grade level expectations, or for learners who have already met the expectation. \*8 Occurrences*

*School Decisions-The choices of a school district regarding students through their decisions about faculty and staff, schedules, and policies.*

4 Occurrences

- *District Policy-The rules set by a school administration regarding instructional practices. \*3 Occurrences*
- *District Recommendations-The strong suggestions of the use of curricular materials and instructional strategies by the administration. \*1 Occurrence*

Uncategorized

*Label: Classroom Management-The act of a teacher to create a classroom climate that is well managed and efficient. \*11 Occurrences*

*Label: Student Disengagement-The act of disconnecting during instruction or classroom discussion due to a lack of motivation or excitement. \*6 Occurrences*

*Label: Busy Work-A dynamic whereby a child is being managed and kept busy through the act of engaging with materials provided, such as worksheet style practice to support the skills taught throughout the week. \*4 Occurrences*

## APPENDIX B

## INITIAL JOURNAL DATA

## Label: Unforeseen Events

- Journal Monday: Today we had a two-hour delay.
- Journal Thursday: At the end of the day, I had an IEP meeting and I left notes for my substitute to teach phonemic awareness, phonics, and grammar and read loud from “James and the Giant Peach”. Her note said she did do all those things.

## Label: Teacher Decision-Making

- Journal Monday: Stacie (the other 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher) and I decided to do whole group reading from 10:30-11:30 rather than doing centers.
- Journal Monday: I think it is important to balance the learning.
- Journal Monday: On Monday, the learning is new and so are the stories we read.
- Journal Monday: So, I like to practice the skills we already know on Monday to scaffold the learning as we dive into new content.
- Journal Tuesday: We keep each instructional week aligned with one school week (Monday-Friday) to help with a consistent schedule.
- Journal Tuesday: Tuesday, day 2, is usually the main teaching day.
- Journal Tuesday: Our whole group reading instruction is a one-hour block.
- Journal Tuesday: On the first day of the week, we read the leveled readers from Wonders during our small group reading instruction.
- Journal Tuesday: Groups 4 & 5 have to share a 30-minute block.
- Journal Tuesday: On the first day when we read the leveled reader, I have them all (16 students) at once.
- Journal Tuesday: Most of the time, they are reading and journaling on their own and we just meet for 15 minutes to discuss what they have read and what they will be reading.
- Journal Tuesday: Group 2 needs more instruction.
- Journal Tuesday: Something new I am trying is silent reading from 11:00-11:30 each day.
- Journal Tuesday: Previously, this was still a seatwork time when they could work on must do/can do menu items.
- Journal Tuesday: I don’t love doing repeated readings, but I also struggled to find something that is 5-7 minutes and effective.
- Journal Tuesday: So I decided to do the repeated reading and put a little spin on it.
- Journal Tuesday: On the other hand, I know how important read aloud is, so how can I make this work?
- Journal Wednesday: Because of our early dismissal on Wednesday, we do not have time to do phonemic awareness, phonics, and grammar.
- Journal Wednesday: I do still make time at the end of the day for read aloud.

- Journal Thursday: We have Art on Thursday mornings, so we only have a 30-minute block rather than an hour.
- Journal Thursday: Once she came in, she worked with these students to help them complete their summaries.
- Journal Thursday: While she worked with these students, I did quarter three fluency assessments.
- Journal Friday: Fridays are test days in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- Journal Friday: I orally administer the spelling and grammar tests.
- Journal Friday: Everyone begins seatwork and I call groups to take their test on the computer.
- Journal Friday: I usually have about six kids taking that test at their desks while I have two or three at the back table with me.
- Journal Friday: I would like to eventually do more with project-based assessments but we do a lot of project based learning with science, social studies, and event through writing.
- Journal Friday: We try to connect our literacy topic to our science, social studies, and writing. We rotate those three throughout the year during a 30-45 minute block in the afternoons.
- Journal Friday: On Fridays, we only have time for our lowest groups.
- Journal Friday: We feel like it is important to meet with our lowest students every day.
- Journal Friday: I have been trying various seating arrangements for read aloud.
- Journal Friday: If I bring them to the carpet, they still talk to each other, some try to lay down and that bugs the people around them, or they touch each other and cause disruptions.
- Journal Friday: Is this a classroom management issue or an issue with them being bored with the content and how do I know?

Label: Instructional Decision Making

- Journal Tuesday: Once they all start reading, I listen to a couple students read aloud and often take a short running record of just a page or two to analyze how they take action on new text.
- Journal Tuesday: I try to do this for each student at least one time each week.
- Group 2 just started a beginning chapter book.
- Journal Tuesday: Up until a couple months ago, I was doing a CIM style guided reading lesson with them.
- Journal Tuesday: I haven't been trained in CIM but have read sections of the book and our PLC has been working on guided reading using the videos and PD information from Clemson University, which has really strengthened my guided reading for students who struggle with reading.
- Journal Tuesday: So I decided to do the repeated reading and put a little spin on it.
- Journal Wednesday: We usually have a great story to read and I vary in how we read the story.

- Journal Wednesday: Sometimes I read it aloud, we listen to it via our online component of Wonders, they read it with a partner, etc.
- Journal Wednesday: Today, I did it as a read aloud and the kids loved it!
- Journal Wednesday: If there is time on Wednesdays, we usually have a writing activity to go along with what we have read.
- Journal Thursday: By Thursday, I expect the majority of my students to have a good grasp of the skills for the week.
- Journal Thursday: My hopes by Thursday are that they can independently engage with and respond to literature.
- Journal Thursday: We scaffold learning throughout the week and slowly transfer the responsibility to the students.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like my teaching could be stronger here, but I also feel like they just need time to practice reading, discussing, and responding.
- Journal Thursday: \*Note about small groups. Our groups have changed several times throughout the year.

Label: Teacher Excitement

- Journal Monday: I'm really excited for this unit because the kids should be able to really connect with the content.
- Journal Monday: With all the presidential campaigns, caucuses, and voting, it will be really fun to get the kids engaged in something similar without bringing actual politics into our classroom.
- Journal Monday: I love this story about him.
- Journal Monday: My favorite part of school was always story time.
- Journal Tuesday: As a SPED teacher, I hated the idea of this and I thought I would hate teaching whole group reading instruction, but I really like it.
- Journal Tuesday: I love this time and so do most of my students.
- Journal Tuesday: I never believed in the value of silent reading, but all my students (other than one student who is with our SPED teacher for SDI during this time) read a book or books of their choice and are actually reading and I love that.
- Journal Tuesday: I also have kids who giggle while they are reading which is so fun!
- Journal Wednesday: Usually, Wednesday is my favorite whole-group teaching day.
- Journal Wednesday: We usually have a great story to read and I vary in how we read the story.
- Journal Wednesday: This was awesome!
- Journal Wednesday: They were able to make some authentic connections and think about how to be a good citizen and make informed decisions.
- Journal Wednesday: I love helping them make these real-life connections through our stories.
- Journal Wednesday: This was great.

- Journal Wednesday: I loved the story, the discussion, and the writing that we did!

Label: Unfavorable Feelings

- Journal Monday: I hate this part of the day.
- Journal Monday: I have never liked isolated skill practice and I always feel like this is a pointless time of day.
- Journal Monday: While I hate it, several kids seem to like it.
- Journal Monday: Unfortunately, the students who need the practice with phonics skills, are rarely the ones who participate or are able to keep up and I'm afraid it becomes invaluable.
- Journal Monday: But this year, it certainly isn't my favorite time of day.
- Monday Journal: I always imagined them on the edge of their seats, giggling, gasping, and just hanging on my every last work. That is not the case.
- Journal Tuesday: This is the hardest time to manage and teach.
- Journal Tuesday: I don't love doing repeated readings, but I also struggled to find something that is 5-7 minutes and effective.
- Journal Tuesday: I love teaching reading, but again, my read aloud time causes me so much stress because I feel like my kids do not pay attention!
- Journal Tuesday: But now that I think about it, maybe I am being selfish and I am only thinking about myself and not them.
- Journal Friday: If they stay at their desks, they mess around with their scissors, or color, some read or write, others try to talk to the person next to them, etc.

Label: Prior Knowledge/Building Background

- Journal Monday: I'm really excited for this unit because the kids should be able to really connect with the content.
- Journal Monday: With all the presidential campaigns, caucuses, and voting, it will be really fun to get the kids engaged in something similar without bringing actual politics into our classroom.
- Journal Monday: Once we talked about a man who works to provide clean water in rural Kenya, they started getting ideas about good citizens.
- Journal Monday: Part of our reading series is a read aloud to build background.
- Journal Monday: I read aloud a story called "A Boy Named Martin" about MLK Jr.
- Journal Monday: The kids were so excited because they know about MLK Jr. and they loved hearing about him as a child.
- Monday Journal: We discussed Martin's life as a child and how he became a good citizen.
- Journal Monday: This read aloud helps hook them.
- Journal Monday: So, I like to practice the skills we already know on Monday to scaffold the learning as we dive into new content.



- Journal Monday: We talked about what a hard decision that would be and what each child was thinking or feeling (an intro to point of view, but I did not introduce the term yet).
- Journal Tuesday: If both comprehension skills are review, I spend the most time with the skill that is most difficult for my students.
- Journal Tuesday: I really try to make authentic connections and relate the learning to them personally.
- Journal Tuesday: I introduce the book and then they split into partners (one from group 4 with one from group 5) and write a written response.
- Journal Tuesday: I spend more time teaching vocabulary in the story they will read, pointing out unfamiliar language structures, and giving a strong book introduction.
- Journal Friday: I also give an introduction to the reading test.
- Journal Friday: We try to connect our literacy topic to our science, social studies, and writing. We rotate those three throughout the year during a 30-45 minute block in the afternoons.

Label: Real-World Connections/ Authentic Experiences

- Journal Monday: With all the presidential campaigns, caucuses, and voting, it will be really fun to get the kids engaged in something similar without bringing actual politics into our classroom.
- Journal Monday: Once we talked about a man who works to provide clean water in rural Kenya, they started getting ideas about good citizens.
- Journal Monday: I read aloud a story called “A Boy Named Martin” about MLK Jr.
- Journal Monday: The kids were so excited because they know about MLK Jr. and they loved hearing about him as a child.
- Monday Journal: We discussed Martin’s life as a child and how he became a good citizen.
- Journal Monday: This read aloud helps hook them.
- Journal Monday: We talked about what a hard decision that would be and what each child was thinking or feeling (an intro to point of view, but I did not introduce the term yet).
- Journal Monday: To practice the skill of summarizing and engage in authentic writing, I had the students write a summary about a time they had to make a difficult decision.
- Journal Tuesday: I really try to make authentic connections and relate the learning to them personally.
- Journal Tuesday: We role played the scenario and discussed how each person acted and felt which helps us understand their point of view.
- Journal Tuesday: At the end, they had time to finish their summary of a time when they had to make a difficult decision.

- Journal Wednesday: The story was “Grace for President” and they immediately asked about doing an election for our own class president.
- Journal Wednesday: They were excited about Grace and all she wanted to do to help her school.
- Journal Wednesday: This story also sparked some discussion about politics and the election process we are in right now.
- Journal Wednesday: This was awesome!
- Journal Wednesday: They were able to make some authentic connections and think about how to be a good citizen and make informed decisions.
- Journal Wednesday: I love helping them make these real-life connections through our stories.
- Journal Friday: They usually have a project or writing activity related to the learning for the week.
- Journal Friday: Today, they are writing based on the prompt “If I was the mayor of New Sharon...”
- Journal Friday: I would like to eventually do more with project-based assessments but we do a lot of project based learning with science, social studies, and event through writing.
- Journal Friday: This week, we are teaching social studies connected to citizenship and government.
- Journal Friday: We had a class election between two characters, Grace and Duck, from books we have read this week (“Grace for President” and “Duck for President”).
- Journal Friday: After the election, they wrote about whom they voted for and why.
- Journal Friday: They had a great time voting and writing about their choice.

Label: Teacher Hesitations/Assumptions

- Journal Monday: With all the presidential campaigns, caucuses, and voting, it will be really fun to get the kids engaged in something similar without bringing actual politics into our classroom.
- Journal Monday: Initially, I wanted to do an actual caucus using the candidates left in the race, but we are in a small rural community and I was afraid it would upset some parents.
- Journal Monday: While I hate it, several kids seem to like it.
- Journal Monday: I think it is because it is something that is easy and fast paced (and they get to use their whiteboards).
- Journal Monday: Unfortunately, the students who need the practice with phonics skills, are rarely the ones who participate or are able to keep up and I’m afraid it becomes invaluable.
- Journal Tuesday: I was trying to do interventions and it was loud and I wasn’t always sure that everyone was choosing to read at least some each day.

- Journal Tuesday: I never believed in the value of silent reading, but all my students (other than one student who is with our SPED teacher for SDI during this time) read a book or books of their choice and are actually reading and I love that.
- Journal Tuesday: I don't love doing repeated readings, but I also struggled to find something that is 5-7 minutes and effective.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like my teaching could be stronger here, but I also feel like they just need time to practice reading, discussing, and responding.
- Journal Friday: I always thought testing would be stressful for such little kids but my students really like test days.
- Journal Friday: I would like to eventually do more with project-based assessments but we do a lot of project based learning with science, social studies, and event through writing.

Label: Discussion

- Journal Monday: As we began our discussion about good citizens, many of them just wanted to share stories about people they know who are good people, not always connecting to how they are good citizens.
- Journal Monday: Once we talked about a man who works to provide clean water in rural Kenya, they started getting ideas about good citizens.
- Monday Journal: We discussed Martin's life as a child and how he became a good citizen.
- Journal Monday: We talked about what a hard decision that would be and what each child was thinking or feeling (an intro to point of view, but I did not introduce the term yet).
- Journal Tuesday: It's a time when the majority of kids are engaged in literacy and discussion and they really seem to enjoy it.
- Journal Tuesday: We role played the scenario and discussed how each person acted and felt which helps us understand their point of view.
- Journal Tuesday: Most of the time, they are reading and journaling on their own and we just meet for 15 minutes to discuss what they have read and what they will be reading.
- Journal Tuesday: Once they have all read the book, we discuss it and then do a written response.
- Journal Tuesday: They all run up to me and tell me they read a whole chapter and what they are excited about in their books.
- Journal Tuesday: I always engage in a comprehension question immediately following the reading to make sure I am conveying the message of reading is to understand. ??
- Journal Wednesday: The story was "Grace for President" and they immediately asked about doing an election for our own class president.
- Journal Wednesday: They were excited about Grace and all she wanted to do to help her school.
- Journal Wednesday: They really wanted Grace to become class president.

- Journal Wednesday: This story also sparked some discussion about politics and the election process we are in right now.
- Journal Wednesday: This was awesome!
- Journal Wednesday: They were able to make some authentic connections and think about how to be a good citizen and make informed decisions.
- Journal Wednesday: I loved the story, the discussion, and the writing that we did!
- Journal Wednesday: Today my groups discussed the previous chapter, read a new section, and wrote a summary.
- Journal Thursday: When there was about five minutes left of the class period, I brought the group back together to share their writing.
- Journal Thursday: We discuss their reading and writing, which is great, but I am also nervous and think I should be doing more but I don't know what else to do.
- Journal Thursday: Group 2 still needs more guidance and I discuss more with them while reading and we share out ideas for journaling.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like my teaching could be stronger here, but I also feel like they just need time to practice reading, discussing, and responding.

Label: Read Aloud for Teaching

- Journal Monday: Part of our reading series is a read aloud to build background.
- Journal Monday: I read aloud a story called "A Boy Named Martin" about MLK Jr.
- Journal Monday: The kids sat on the carpet while I read aloud and they were very excited and engaged.
- Journal Monday: This read aloud helps hook them.
- Journal Monday: After the read aloud, I read a story called "A Difficult Decision" about two boys who find a handheld game at the playground.
- Journal Wednesday: We usually have a great story to read and I vary in how we read the story.
- Journal Wednesday: Sometimes I read it aloud, we listen to it via our online component of Wonders, they read it with a partner, etc.
- Journal Wednesday: Today, I did it as a read aloud and the kids loved it!
- Journal Wednesday: I loved the story, the discussion, and the writing that we did!
- Journal Thursday: I read it to them and we began the summary together.

Label: Reading Series Component

- Journal Monday: Part of our reading series is a read aloud to build background.
- Journal Monday: Our comprehension skills for the week are to understand a character's point of view and to be able to summarize.
- Journal Monday: On Monday, the learning is new and so are the stories we read.
- Journal Monday: In the afternoons, we spend about 20 minutes on phonemic awareness, phonics, and a grammar skill for the week.

- Journal Monday: The phonemic awareness and phonics practice is connected to our spelling words (there is a pattern for each week).
- Journal Tuesday: Our Wonders series has six units which each contains six instructional weeks.
- Journal Tuesday: Our whole group reading instruction is a one-hour block.
- Journal Tuesday: On the first day of the week, we read the leveled readers from Wonders during our small group reading instruction.
- Journal Wednesday: Sometimes I read it aloud, we listen to it via our online component of Wonders, they read it with a partner, etc.
- Journal Thursday: Fridays are test days in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.
- Journal Friday: I orally administer the spelling and grammar tests.
- Journal Friday: Everyone begins seatwork and I call groups to take their test on the computer.
- Journal Friday: Each test is a story with five comprehension questions and five vocabulary questions.

Label: Teacher Wants

- Journal Monday: I love this story about him.
- Journal Monday: I think it is important to balance the learning.
- Journal Monday: So, I like to practice the skills we already know on Monday to scaffold the learning as we dive into new content.
- Journal Monday: Some are engaged and excited some of the time, but I wish it were all the time.
- Journal Monday: I always imagined them on the edge of their seats, giggling, gasping, and just hanging on my every last word.
- Journal Tuesday: I love this time and so do most of my students.
- Journal Tuesday: I never believed in the value of silent reading, but all my students (other than one student who is with our SPED teacher for SDI during this time) read a book or books of their choice and are actually reading and I love that.
- Journal Tuesday: I also have kids who giggle while they are reading which is so fun!
- Journal Tuesday: I feel like this makes the reading more meaningful and my instruction more meaningful and it isn't just reading for speed.
- Journal Tuesday: I love teaching reading, but again, my read aloud time causes me so much stress because I feel like my kids do not pay attention!
- Journal Tuesday: I wish they would love the read aloud portion of our day as much as I did!
- Journal Tuesday: But now that I think about it, maybe I am being selfish and I am only thinking about myself and not them.
- Journal Tuesday: On the other hand, I know how important read aloud is, so how can I make this work?

- Journal Wednesday: This story also sparked some discussion about politics and the election process we are in right now. This was awesome!
- Journal Wednesday: They were able to make some authentic connections and think about how to be a good citizen and make informed decisions.
- Journal Wednesday: I love helping them make these real-life connections through our stories.
- Journal Thursday: My hopes by Thursday are that they can independently engage with and respond to literature.
- Journal Friday: I would like to eventually do more with project-based assessments but we do a lot of project based learning with science, social studies, and event through writing.
- Journal Friday: How can I get them excited???

Label: Student Excitement/Engagement

- Journal Monday: The kids were so excited because they know about MLK Jr. and they loved hearing about him as a child.
- The kids sat on the carpet while I read aloud and they were very excited and engaged.
- Journal Monday: This read aloud helps hook them.
- Journal Monday: While I hate it, several kids seem to like it.
- Journal Monday: I think it is because it is something that is easy and fast paced (and they get to use their whiteboards).
- Journal Monday: Some are engaged and excited some of the time, but I wish it were all the time.
- Journal Monday: I always imagined them on the edge of their seats, giggling, gasping, and just hanging on my every last word.
- Journal Tuesday: It's a time when the majority of kids are engaged in literacy and discussion and they really seem to enjoy it.
- Journal Tuesday: I really try to make authentic connections and relate the learning to them personally.
- Journal Tuesday: We role played the scenario and discussed how each person acted and felt which helps us understand their point of view.
- Journal Tuesday: I love this time and so do most of my students.
- Journal Tuesday: They are so excited at the end of the 30 minutes.
- Journal Tuesday: They all run up to me and tell me they read a whole chapter and what they are excited about in their books.
- Journal Tuesday: I also have kids who giggle while they are reading which is so fun!
- Journal Wednesday: Today, I did it as a read aloud and the kids loved it!
- Journal Wednesday: The story was "Grace for President" and they immediately asked about doing an election for our own class president.

- Journal Wednesday: They were excited about Grace and all she wanted to do to help her school.
- Journal Wednesday: They really wanted Grace to become class president.
- Journal Wednesday: This story also sparked some discussion about politics and the election process we are in right now.
- Journal Wednesday: This was awesome!
- Journal Wednesday: They were able to make some authentic connections and think about how to be a good citizen and make informed decisions.
- Journal Wednesday: I love helping them make these real-life connections through our stories.
- Journal Thursday: My hopes by Thursday are that they can independently engage with and respond to literature.
- Journal Friday: I always thought testing would be stressful for such little kids but my students really like test days.
- Journal Friday: Many look forward to test days and are proud of their accomplishments.
- Journal Friday: They had a great time voting and writing about their choice.
- Journal Friday: How can I get them excited???

Label: Direct Instruction

- Monday Journal: Our comprehension skills for the week are to understand a character's point of view and to be able to summarize.
- Journal Monday: We talked about what a hard decision that would be and what each child was thinking or feeling (an intro to point of view, but I did not introduce the term yet). ??
- Journal Monday: In the afternoons, we spend about 20 minutes on phonemic awareness, phonics, and a grammar skill for the week.
- Journal Monday: The phonemic awareness and phonics practice is connected to our spelling words (there is a pattern for each week).
- Journal Monday: I hate this part of the day.
- Journal Monday: I have never liked isolated skill practice and I always feel like this is a pointless time of day.
- Journal Monday: I try to help make connections to reading and writing, but I am not sure it is very significant.
- Journal Monday: While I hate it, several kids seem to like it.
- Journal Monday: I think it is because it is something that is easy and fast paced (and they get to use their whiteboards).
- Journal Tuesday: Tuesday, day 2, is usually the main teaching day.
- Journal Tuesday: I spend the majority of the time teaching the new comprehension skill.
- Journal Tuesday: Today we (they-change after I watched the video) reread "A Difficult Decision" and I taught point of view.

- We completed a graphic organizer about the two characters' point of view and the clues from the text that helped us make that decision.
- Journal Tuesday: Group 2 needs more instruction.
- Journal Tuesday: I spend more time teaching vocabulary in the story they will read, pointing out unfamiliar language structures, and giving a strong book introduction.
- Journal Tuesday: During the silent reading time, I work with one-to-one with students who are substantially deficient or at-risk according to our FAST universal screening data.
- Journal Tuesday: So I decided to do the repeated reading and put a little spin on it.
- Journal Tuesday: I always engage in a comprehension question immediately following the reading to make sure I am conveying the message of reading is to understand.
- Journal Tuesday: I then pick a teaching point or two and we do some word work from the text or we practice phrasing, etc.
- Journal Wednesday: We usually have a great story to read and I vary in how we read the story.
- Journal Wednesday: Sometimes I read it aloud, we listen to it via our online component of Wonders, they read it with a partner, etc.

Label: Graphic Organizers

- Journal Tuesday: We completed a graphic organizer about the two characters' point of view and the clues from the text that helped us make that decision.

Label: Gradual Release of Responsibility

- Journal Monday: The skill of summarizing is a review skill, so I always start the week with reviewing that skill.
- Journal Monday: So, I like to practice the skills we already know on Monday to scaffold the learning as we dive into new content.
- Journal Wednesday: We usually have a great story to read and I vary in how we read the story.
- Journal Wednesday: Sometimes I read it aloud, we listen to it via our online component of Wonders, they read it with a partner, etc.
- Journal Thursday: By Thursday, I expect the majority of my students to have a good grasp of the skills for the week.
- Journal Thursday: We usually do a quick check for understanding on Thursdays.
- Journal Thursday: My hopes by Thursday are that they can independently engage with and respond to literature.
- Journal Thursday: We implement the GRR model and I think that this format flows well.
- Journal Thursday: We scaffold learning throughout the week and slowly transfer the responsibility to the students.



Label: Guided Instruction/Scaffolding (Whole Group)

- Journal Monday: The skill of summarizing is a review skill, so I always start the week with reviewing that skill.
- To practice the skill of summarizing and engage in authentic writing, I had the students write a summary about a time they had to make a difficult decision.
- Journal Tuesday: If both comprehension skills are review, I spend the most time with the skill that is most difficult for my students.
- Journal Wednesday: We usually have a great story to read and I vary in how we read the story.
- Journal Wednesday: Sometimes I read it aloud, we listen to it via our online component of Wonders, they read it with a partner, etc.
- Journal Thursday: We scaffold learning throughout the week and slowly transfer the responsibility to the students.
- Journal Thursday: I worked with three students who needed guidance to complete this task.
- Journal Thursday: I read it to them and we began the summary together.
- Journal Friday: I orally administer the spelling and grammar tests.
- Journal Friday: I also give an introduction to the reading test.

Label: Balanced Literacy

- Journal Monday: I think it is important to balance the learning.

Label: Meaningful Writing

- Journal Monday: To practice the skill of summarizing and engage in authentic writing, I had the students write a summary about a time they had to make a difficult decision.
- Journal Tuesday: At the end, they had time to finish their summary of a time when they had to make a difficult decision.
- Journal Wednesday: We had a paragraph about Grace and her point of view, one about Thomas, and a conclusion about who they would choose and why.
- Journal Wednesday: This was great.
- Journal Wednesday: I loved the story, the discussion, and the writing that we did!
- Journal Friday: They usually have a project or writing activity related to the learning for the week.
- Journal Friday: Today, they are writing based on the prompt “If I was the mayor of New Sharon...”
- Journal Friday: This afternoon we did some authentic writing.
- Journal Friday: After the election, they wrote about whom they voted for and why.
- Journal Friday: They had a great time voting and writing about their choice.

Label: Literacy Connections/Cross-Curricular

- Journal Monday: I try to help make connections to reading and writing, but I am not sure it is very significant.
- Journal Friday: They usually have a project or writing activity related to the learning for the week.
- Journal Friday: Today, they are writing based on the prompt “If I was the mayor of New Sharon...”
- Journal Friday: I would like to eventually do more with project-based assessments but we do a lot of project based learning with science, social studies, and event through writing.
- Journal Friday: We try to connect our literacy topic to our science, social studies, and writing. We rotate those three throughout the year during a 30-45 minute block in the afternoons.
- Journal Friday: This week, we are teaching social studies connected to citizenship and government.
- Journal Friday: We had a class election between two characters, Grace and Duck, from books we have read this week (“Grace for President” and “Duck for President”).
- Journal Friday: After the election, they wrote about whom they voted for and why.
- Journal Friday: They had a great time voting and writing about their choice.

Label: Read Aloud for Pleasure

- Journal Monday: My favorite part of school was always story time.
- Journal Monday: But this year, it certainly isn’t my favorite time of day.
- Journal Monday: My students do not seem consistently engaged or excited about the stories.
- Journal Monday: Some are engaged and excited some of the time, but I wish it was all the time.
- Journal Monday: I always imagined them on the edge of their seats, giggling, gasping, and just hanging on my every last word.
- Journal Tuesday: I love teaching reading, but again, my read aloud time causes me so much stress because I feel like my kids do not pay attention!
- Journal Tuesday: I wish they would love the read aloud portion of our day as much as I did!
- Journal Tuesday: But now that I think about it, maybe I am being selfish and I am only thinking about myself and not them.
- Journal Tuesday: On the other hand, I know how important read aloud is, so how can I make this work?
- Journal Wednesday: I do still make time at the end of the day for read aloud.
- Journal Friday: I have been trying various seating arrangements for read aloud.
- Journal Friday: If they stay at their desks, they mess around with their scissors, or color, some read or write, others try to talk to the person next to them, etc.

- Journal Friday: How do I know if they are actually listening and paying attention? Does it matter?
- Journal Friday: If I bring them to the carpet, they still talk to each other, some try to lay down and that bugs the people around them, or they touch each other and cause disruptions.
- Journal Friday: How can I get them excited???
- Journal Friday: My teaching partner has no trouble at all during her read aloud and she says they love it, which I cannot understand because most of the time we are reading the same book.
- Journal Friday: Is this a classroom management issue or an issue with them being bored with the content and how do I know?

Label: Teacher's Past Experience

- Journal Monday: This is my first year in the general education classroom, but I have done read alouds with my small groups in special education because often they missed that when they were with me and I would spend just a few minutes at the end of each lesson with story time.
- Journal Monday: They always loved it and hated stopping!
- Journal Tuesday: As a SPED teacher, I hated the idea of this and I thought I would hate teaching whole group reading instruction, but I really like it.

Label: Student Disengagement

- Journal Monday: Journal Monday: But this year, it certainly isn't my favorite time of day.
- Journal Monday: My students do not seem consistently engaged or excited about the stories.
- Journal Monday: I always imagined them on the edge of their seats, giggling, gasping, and just hanging on my every last word. That is not the case.
- Journal Tuesday: I was trying to do interventions and it was loud and I wasn't always sure that everyone was choosing to read at least some each day.
- Journal Tuesday: I love teaching reading, but again, my read aloud time causes me so much stress because I feel like my kids do not pay attention!
- Journal Friday: If they stay at their desks, they mess around with their scissors, or color, some read or write, others try to talk to the person next to them, etc.
- Journal Friday: How do I know if they are actually listening and paying attention? Does it matter?
- Journal Friday: If I bring them to the carpet, they still talk to each other, some try to lay down and that bugs the people around them, or they touch each other and cause disruptions.
- Journal Friday: Is this a classroom management issue or an issue with them being bored with the content and how do I know?

Label: Students as Readers

- Journal Tuesday: Today we (they-change after I watched the video) reread “A Difficult Decision” and I taught point of view.
- Journal Tuesday: I introduce the book and then they split into partners (one from group 4 with one from group 5) and write a written response.
- Journal Tuesday: Most of the time, they are reading and journaling on their own and we just meet for 15 minutes to discuss what they have read and what they will be reading.
- Journal Tuesday: I never feel like I am actually teaching them anything, they are really practicing and reading on their own.
- Journal Tuesday: They need guidance and someone to facilitate, but they can read and respond without me.
- Journal Tuesday: Once they all start reading, I listen to a couple students read aloud and often take a short running record of just a page or two to analyze how they take action on new text.
- Journal Tuesday: I try to do this for each student at least one time each week.
- Journal Tuesday: Group 2 just started a beginning chapter book.
- Journal Tuesday: Something new I am trying is silent reading from 11:00-11:30 each day.
- Journal Tuesday: I never believed in the value of silent reading, but all my students (other than one student who is with our SPED teacher for SDI during this time) read a book or books of their choice and are actually reading and I love that.
- Journal Tuesday: They all run up to me and tell me they read a whole chapter and what they are excited about in their books.
- Journal Tuesday: I also have kids who giggle while they are reading which is so fun!
- Journal Tuesday: I always engage in a comprehension question immediately following the reading to make sure I am conveying the message of reading is to understand.
- Journal Tuesday: I feel like this makes the reading more meaningful and my instruction more meaningful and it isn’t just reading for speed.
- Journal Wednesday: We usually have a great story to read and I vary in how we read the story.
- Journal Wednesday: Sometimes I read it aloud, we listen to it via our online component of Wonders, they read it with a partner, etc.
- Journal Wednesday: Today my groups discussed the previous chapter, read a new section, and wrote a summary.
- Journal Thursday: My hopes by Thursday are that they can independently engage with and respond to literature.
- Journal Thursday: Today, students read a short story and wrote a summary with the closing sentence stating the point of view.
- Journal Thursday: While she worked with these students, I did quarter three fluency assessments.

- Journal Thursday: All three groups are still working on their chapter books and response journals.
- Journal Thursday: Group 2 still needs more guidance and I discuss more with them while reading and we share out ideas for journaling.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like my teaching could be stronger here, but I also feel like they just need time to practice reading, discussing, and responding.
- Journal Friday: I met with group two today and worked on their chapter book.
- Journal Friday: They are reading “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride” by Kate DiCamillo.

Label: Small Group Guided Reading Instruction

- Journal Tuesday: On the first day of the week, we read the leveled readers from Wonders during our small group reading instruction.
- Journal Tuesday: This week, I taught groups 2, 4 and 5.
- Journal Tuesday: On the first day when we read the leveled reader, I have them all (16 students) at once.
- Journal Tuesday: This is a large group of above average readers.
- Journal Tuesday: Most of the time, they are reading and journaling on their own and we just meet for 15 minutes to discuss what they have read and what they will be reading.
- Journal Tuesday: I never feel like I am actually teaching them anything, they are really practicing and reading on their own.
- Journal Tuesday: They need guidance and someone to facilitate, but they can read and respond without me.
- Journal Tuesday: Group 2 needs more instruction.
- Journal Tuesday: I spend more time teaching vocabulary in the story they will read, pointing out unfamiliar language structures, and giving a strong book introduction.
- Journal Tuesday: Once they all start reading, I listen to a couple students read aloud and often take a short running record of just a page or two to analyze how they take action on new text.
- Journal Tuesday: I try to do this for each student at least one time each week.
- Journal Tuesday: Once they have all read the book, we discuss it and then do a written response.
- Journal Tuesday: Group 2 just started a beginning chapter book.
- Journal Tuesday: Up until a couple months ago, I was doing a CIM style guided reading lesson with them.
- Journal Tuesday: I haven’t been trained in CIM but have read sections of the book and our PLC has been working on guided reading using the videos and PD information from Clemson University, which has really strengthened my guided reading for students who struggle with reading.
- Journal Wednesday: Today my groups discussed the previous chapter, read a new section, and wrote a summary.

- Journal Thursday: All three groups are still working on their chapter books and response journals.
- Journal Thursday: Depending on the book and comprehension skill for the week, the response assignment is different.
- Journal Thursday: This is still a time when I don't feel like I am really teaching much.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like groups 4 & 5 don't really need me, but I don't think it is appropriate to not meet with them either.
- Journal Thursday: We discuss their reading and writing, which is great, but I am also nervous and think I should be doing more but I don't know what else to do.
- Journal Thursday: Yet, when I look at their work and assessments, they are above average and have made significant growth throughout the year.
- Journal Thursday: Group 2 still needs more guidance and I discuss more with them while reading and we share out ideas for journaling.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like my teaching could be stronger here, but I also feel like they just need time to practice reading, discussing, and responding.
- Journal Thursday: These students have made significant growth as well.
- Journal Thursday: \*Note about small groups. Our groups have changed several times throughout the year.
- Journal Friday: On Fridays, we only have time for our lowest groups.
- Journal Friday: We feel like it is important to meet with our lowest students every day.
- Journal Friday: I met with group two today and worked on their chapter book.
- Journal Friday: They are reading "Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride" by Kate DiCamillo.

Label: Writing Related To/In Response of Reading

- Journal Tuesday: I introduce the book and then they split into partners (one from group 4 with one from group 5) and write a written response.
- Journal Tuesday: Since we are working on summaries this week, their writing was a summary of the text.
- Journal Tuesday: Most of the time, they are reading and journaling on their own and we just meet for 15 minutes to discuss what they have read and what they will be reading.
- Journal Tuesday: They need guidance and someone to facilitate, but they can read and respond without me.
- Journal Tuesday: Once they have all read the book, we discuss it and then do a written response.
- Journal Wednesday: If there is time on Wednesdays, we usually have a writing activity to go along with what we have read.
- Journal Wednesday: Today, we compared Grace and Thomas.

- Journal Wednesday: We had a paragraph about Grace and her point of view, one about Thomas, and a conclusion about who they would choose and why.
- Journal Wednesday: This was great.
- Journal Wednesday: I loved the story, the discussion, and the writing that we did!
- Journal Wednesday: Today my groups discussed the previous chapter, read a new section, and wrote a summary.
- Journal Thursday: My hopes by Thursday are that they can independently engage with and respond to literature.
- Journal Thursday: Today, students read a short story and wrote a summary with the closing sentence stating the point of view.
- Journal Thursday: Most students were able to do this easily using a topic sentence, supporting details, and a closing sentence.
- Journal Thursday: I read it to them and we began the summary together.
- Journal Thursday: Once she came in, she worked with these students to help them complete their summaries.
- Journal Thursday: All three groups are still working on their chapter books and response journals.
- Journal Thursday: Depending on the book and comprehension skill for the week, the response assignment is different.
- Journal Thursday: Group 2 still needs more guidance and I discuss more with them while reading and we share out ideas for journaling.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like my teaching could be stronger here, but I also feel like they just need time to practice reading, discussing, and responding.
- Journal Friday: They usually have a project or writing activity related to the learning for the week.
- Journal Friday: Today, they are writing based on the prompt “If I was the mayor of New Sharon...”
- Journal Friday: I met with group two today and worked on their chapter book.

Label: Classroom Management

- Journal Tuesday: This is the hardest time to manage and teach.
- Journal Tuesday: I was trying to do interventions and it was loud and I wasn't always sure that everyone was choosing to read at least some each day.
- Journal Tuesday: I love this time and so do most of my students.
- Journal Friday: Everyone begins seatwork and I call groups to take their test on the computer.
- Journal Friday: We only have nine computers so we have to take the test in shifts.
- Journal Friday: I usually have about six kids taking that test at their desks while I have two or three at the back table with me.
- Journal Friday: I try to have the ones who are less confident close to me in case they have questions, but I rarely help them.
- Journal Friday: I have been trying various seating arrangements for read aloud.

- Journal Friday: If they stay at their desks, they mess around with their scissors, or color, some read or write, others try to talk to the person next to them, etc.
- Journal Friday: How do I know if they are actually listening and paying attention? Does it matter?
- Journal Friday: If I bring them to the carpet, they still talk to each other, some try to lay down and that bugs the people around them, or they touch each other and cause disruptions.
- Journal Friday: Is this a classroom management issue or an issue with them being bored with the content and how do I know?

Label: Reading Levels

- Journal Tuesday: This is a large group of above average readers.
- Journal Tuesday: They are about average or just a bit below.
- Journal Tuesday: Group 2 just started a beginning chapter book.
- Journal Tuesday: Up until a couple months ago, I was doing a CIM style guided reading lesson with them.
- Journal Friday: We feel like it is important to meet with our lowest students every day.
- Journal Friday: They are reading “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride” by Kate DiCamillo.

Label: Need

- Journal Tuesday: Most of the time, they are reading and journaling on their own and we just meet for 15 minutes to discuss what they have read and what they will be reading.
- Journal Tuesday: I never feel like I am actually teaching them anything, they are really practicing and reading on their own.
- Journal Tuesday: They need guidance and someone to facilitate, but they can read and respond without me.
- Journal Tuesday: Group 2 needs more instruction.
- Journal Tuesday: I spend more time teaching vocabulary in the story they will read, pointing out unfamiliar language structures, and giving a strong book introduction.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like groups 4 & 5 don’t really need me, but I don’t think it is appropriate to not meet with them either.
- Journal Thursday: We discuss their reading and writing, which is great, but I am also nervous and think I should be doing more but I don’t know what else to do.
- Journal Thursday: Group 2 still needs more guidance and I discuss more with them while reading and we share out ideas for journaling.
- Journal Thursday: I feel like my teaching could be stronger here, but I also feel like they just need time to practice reading, discussing, and responding.
- Journal Friday: I try to have the ones who are less confident close to me in case they have questions, but I rarely help them.



- Journal Friday: It seems like the proximity to me just helps.
- Journal Friday: We feel like it is important to meet with our lowest students every day.

Label: Reading Recovery Experience

- Journal Tuesday: Once they all start reading, I listen to a couple students read aloud and often take a short running record of just a page or two to analyze how they take action on new text.
- Journal Tuesday: Up until a couple months ago, I was doing a CIM style guided reading lesson with them.
- Journal Tuesday: I haven't been trained in CIM but have read sections of the book and our PLC has been working on guided reading using the videos and PD information from Clemson University, which has really strengthened my guided reading for students who struggle with reading.
- Journal Tuesday: So I decided to do the repeated reading and put a little spin on it.
- Journal Tuesday: I always engage in a comprehension question immediately following the reading to make sure I am conveying the message of reading is to understand.
- Journal Tuesday: I then pick a teaching point or two and we do some word work from the text or we practice phrasing, etc.
- Journal Tuesday: I feel like this makes the reading more meaningful and my instruction more meaningful and it isn't just reading for speed.
- Journal Friday: I also give an introduction to the reading test.

Label: Teacher as Evaluator

- Journal Tuesday: Once they all start reading, I listen to a couple students read aloud and often take a short running record of just a page or two to analyze how they take action on new text.
- Journal Tuesday: I try to do this for each student at least one time each week.
- Journal Tuesday: I always engage in a comprehension question immediately following the reading to make sure I am conveying the message of reading is to understand.
- Journal Thursday: We usually do a quick check for understanding on Thursdays.
- Journal Thursday: While she worked with these students, I did quarter three fluency assessments.
- Journal Friday: I orally administer the spelling and grammar tests.
- Journal Friday: Everyone begins seatwork and I call groups to take their test on the computer.
- Journal Friday: I would like to eventually do more with project-based assessments but we do a lot of project based learning with science, social studies, and event through writing.

Label: PLC

- Journal Tuesday: I haven't been trained in CIM but have read sections of the book and our PLC has been working on guided reading using the videos and PD information from Clemson University, which has really strengthened my guided reading for students who struggle with reading.
- Journal Wednesday: Every Wednesday we have a 2:00 dismissal for PLCs.

Label: SSR

- Journal Tuesday: Journal Tuesday: Something new I am trying is silent reading from 11:00-11:30 each day.
- Journal Tuesday: Previously, this was still a seatwork time when they could work on must do/can do menu items.
- Journal Tuesday: I love this time and so do most of my students.
- Journal Tuesday: I never believed in the value of silent reading, but all my students (other than one student who is with our SPED teacher for SDI during this time) read a book or books of their choice and are actually reading and I love that.
- Journal Tuesday: They are so excited at the end of the 30 minutes.
- Journal Tuesday: They all run up to me and tell me they read a whole chapter and what they are excited about in their books.
- Journal Tuesday: I also have kids who giggle while they are reading which is so fun!
- Journal Tuesday: During the silent reading time, I work with one-to-one with students who are substantially deficient or at-risk according to our FAST universal screening data.

Label: Interventions

- Journal Tuesday: I was trying to do interventions and it was loud and I wasn't always sure that everyone was choosing to read at least some each day.
- Journal Tuesday: During the silent reading time, I work with one-to-one with students who are substantially deficient or at-risk according to our FAST universal screening data.
- Journal Tuesday: Our district highly recommends repeated reading.
- Journal Tuesday: I don't love doing repeated readings, but I also struggled to find something that is 5-7 minutes and effective.
- Journal Tuesday: So I decided to do the repeated reading and put a little spin on it.
- Journal Tuesday: I always engage in a comprehension question immediately following the reading to make sure I am conveying the message of reading is to understand.
- Journal Tuesday: I then pick a teaching point or two and we do some word work from the text or we practice phrasing, etc.
- Journal Tuesday: I feel like this makes the reading more meaningful and my instruction more meaningful and it isn't just reading for speed.

Label: Student Choice

- Journal Tuesday: I never believed in the value of silent reading, but all my students (other than one student who is with our SPED teacher for SDI during this time) read a book or books of their choice and are actually reading and I love that.
- Journal Tuesday: They all run up to me and tell me they read a whole chapter and what they are excited about in their books.
- Journal Tuesday: I also have kids who giggle while they are reading which is so fun!

Label: District Recommendations

- Journal Tuesday: Our district highly recommends repeated reading.

Label: District Policy/Decisions

- Journal Wednesday: Every Wednesday we have a 2:00 dismissal for PLCs.
- Journal Thursday: We have Art on Thursday mornings, so we only have a 30-minute block rather than an hour.
- Journal Thursday: I have an associate who comes in for 30-45 minutes to support students during literacy.

Label: Reading for Meaning/Purpose of Reading

- Journal Tuesday: I always engage in a comprehension question immediately following the reading to make sure I am conveying the message of reading is to understand.
- Journal Tuesday: I feel like this makes the reading more meaningful and my instruction more meaningful and it isn't just reading for speed.

Label: Teacher Questions

- Journal Tuesday: On the other hand, I know how important read aloud is, so how can I make this work?
- Journal Thursday: We discuss their reading and writing, which is great, but I am also nervous and think I should be doing more but I don't know what else to do.
- Journal Friday: How do I know if they are actually listening and paying attention? Does it matter?
- Journal Friday: How can I get them excited???
- Journal Friday: My teaching partner has no trouble at all during her read aloud and she says they love it, which I cannot understand because most of the time we are reading the same book.
- Journal Friday: Is this a classroom management issue or an issue with them being bored with the content and how do I know?

Label: Professional Development

- Journal Wednesday: Every Wednesday we have a 2:00 dismissal for PLCs.

Label: Student Achievement

- Journal Thursday: Yet, when I look at their work and assessments, they are above average and have made significant growth throughout the year.
- Journal Thursday: These students have made significant growth as well.

Label: Students as Participants

- Journal Friday: I orally administer the spelling and grammar tests.

Label: Differentiation

- Journal Friday: Everyone begins seatwork and I call groups to take their test on the computer.
- Journal Friday: I usually have about six kids taking that test at their desks while I have two or three at the back table with me.
- Journal Friday: I try to have the ones who are less confident close to me in case they have questions, but I rarely help them.
- Journal Friday: It seems like the proximity to me just helps.
- Journal Friday: I have two students who I read the questions to in order to make sure they understand the question and the choices.
- Journal Friday: On Fridays, we only have time for our lowest groups.
- Journal Friday: We feel like it is important to meet with our lowest students every day.

Label: Student Motivation

- Journal Friday: I think it is for a few of my students but we have worked a lot of growth mindset and they work really hard.
- Journal Friday: Many look forward to test days and are proud of their accomplishments.

## APPENDIX C

## INITIAL TIME LOG DATA

## Label: Activating Prior Knowledge

- Calendar Monday: I encouraged them to think about people they know who make a difference [during whole group].
- Calendar Monday: The students were then able to share about people who are making a difference [during whole group].
- Calendar Monday: Students were instructed to write about a time when they had to make a difficult decision [this was related to the story we read called “A Difficult Decision”].

## Label: Building Background Knowledge

- Calendar Tuesday: I explained [to groups 4 & 5] that we are learning about good citizens this week and today they would be reading a story about good citizens.
- Calendar Tuesday: I gave a book introduction [to group 2] to “The Food Crew” and we discussed what a food pantry is and how it can help people.
- Calendar Wednesday: I explained that we [whole group] would read two stories this week about characters who were running for president and at the end of the week, they will vote for the best candidate.
- Calendar Wednesday: We had a brief discussion about hearing about each character [from the stories] before making a choice [about who they would vote for].
- Calendar Wednesday: My students were very inquisitive [about the characters and election], especially with this being an election year.
- Calendar Wednesday: They wondered about political and governmental vocabulary [during the read aloud of “Grace for President”].
- Calendar Wednesday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters [for group 2].
- Calendar Thursday: I gave them [whole class] a book introduction about a short narrative nonfiction text.
- Calendar Thursday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters [group 2].
- Calendar Friday: I gave a brief introduction to the story for today’s reading test [for the whole class].
- Calendar Friday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters [group 2].

## Label: Making Connections

- Calendar Monday: We [whole group] made a connection to “Horton Hears A Who” when the littlest who made a big difference.

- Calendar Monday: As a class, we discussed “A Boy Named Martin” and students made connections to other stories like it [“A Boy Named Martin”] that they had heard before.
- Calendar Tuesday: As we finished the point of view graphic organizer [for the story “A Difficult Decision”], I connected back to our writing yesterday [about a difficult decision that they had to make].
- Calendar Wednesday: The students made a lot of connections to this story [“Grace for President”].
- Calendar Thursday: We are studying government in social studies this week and connecting to our literacy topic of being a good citizen. We discussed why it is important to vote.

Label: Student as Engaged Thinkers/Responders/Evaluators

- Calendar Monday: I encouraged them to think about people they know who make a difference.
- Calendar Monday: We made a connection to “Horton Hears A Who” when the littlest who made a big difference.
- Calendar Monday: I read “A Boy Named Martin” aloud to the class. During this read aloud, I modeled my thinking and allowed for discussion.
- Calendar Monday: As a class, we discussed “A Boy Named Martin” and students made connections to other stories like it that they had heard before.
- Calendar Monday: I read the story aloud as students followed along and we discussed each character and the difficult decision they had to make.
- Calendar Tuesday: I explained point of view and they discussed the point of view of each character in small groups
- Calendar Tuesday: Then they shared their ideas in a large group discussion.
- Calendar Tuesday: Children role-played the situation from “A Difficult Decision” and we discussed each character and what they wanted to do.
- Calendar Tuesday: I explained that we are learning about good citizens this week and today they would be reading a story about good citizens.
- Calendar Tuesday: I partnered one person from group 4 with group 5 and they read the leveled reader called “How Many Greats.”
- Calendar Tuesday: I gave a book introduction to “The Food Crew” and we discussed what a food pantry is and how it can help people.
- Calendar Tuesday: They read the Wonders leveled reader in a whisper voice and I listened to a couple students read.
- Calendar Tuesday: Once they were finished we discussed the story and how the characters in the story were good citizens.
- Calendar Tuesday: Today, I did progress monitoring with 3/5 of my intervention students (2 were absent), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: The students were excited and wondered if we were going to vote for a class president.

- Calendar Wednesday: I explained that we would read two stories this week about characters who were running for president and at the end of the week, they will vote for the best candidate.
- Calendar Wednesday: We had a brief discussion about hearing about each character before making a choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: I read “Grace for President” aloud to the class and stopped often for discussion or for questions.
- Calendar Wednesday: My students were very inquisitive, especially with this being an election year.
- Calendar Wednesday: They wondered about political and governmental vocabulary.
- Calendar Wednesday: The students made a lot of connections to this story.
- Calendar Wednesday: They were thinking and discussing who would be the best president and why.
- Calendar Wednesday: They were engaged and interested in the story and excited to find out who the students would vote for.
- Calendar Wednesday: As a class, we wrote a paragraph comparing and contrasting Grace and Thomas.
- Calendar Wednesday: I modeled the format of the paragraph, but students came up with the ideas for the sentences.
- Calendar Wednesday: The closing sentence was a personal connection in which they had to write who they would vote for and why.
- Calendar Wednesday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Wednesday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Wednesday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters.
- Calendar Wednesday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Wednesday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Wednesday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 2/5 of my intervention students and I did progress monitoring with 2/5 of my intervention students (the 2 who were absent yesterday), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Thursday: After using a gradual release model throughout the week, I like to transfer the responsibility to the students.
- Calendar Thursday: I gave them a book introduction about a short narrative nonfiction text.
- Calendar Thursday: They were responsible for reading the text and writing a summary about what they read.
- Calendar Thursday: I read the story to them.

- Calendar Thursday: At the end of the literacy period, we came back together as a large group and discussed the summaries.
- Calendar Thursday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Thursday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Thursday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters.
- Calendar Thursday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Thursday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Thursday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Thursday: All students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Thursday: We are studying government in social studies this week and connecting to our literacy topic of being a good citizen. We discussed why it is important to vote.
- Calendar Thursday: I also asked them to listen to what Duck wants to do as president so we can compare and contrast him with Grace.
- Calendar Thursday: After the read aloud, we discussed Duck and Grace and what kinds of presidents they would be.
- Calendar Friday: Their must do work today is a writing activity with a story starter: “If I was the mayor of New Sharon...” related to our social studies unit.
- Calendar Friday: I gave a brief introduction to the story for today’s reading test.
- Calendar Friday: Some students take the test (answer the questions) on the computer at their desks while I have some with me at the teaching table so I can assist them. Four students (2 who are substantially deficient and 2 who are at-risk) have the opportunity to check each answer choice and change their answer if they choose. I have 2 students who I read the questions and answers to and help them find evidence to support their answers in the story.
- Calendar Friday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Friday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters.
- Calendar Friday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Friday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Friday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Friday: I also read with one substantially deficient student from his choice book.



- Calendar Friday: All students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Friday: Today, our class voted for Duck or Grace for president. After voting, students wrote a paragraph about who they voted for and reasons supporting their choice.
- Calendar Friday: As they finished up, they could read or write while we waited for everyone to come back.

Label: Meaningful Conversation/Engagement

- Calendar Monday: The students were then able to share about people who are making a difference.
- Calendar Monday: I read “A Boy Named Martin” aloud to the class. During this read aloud, I modeled my thinking and allowed for discussion.
- Calendar Monday: As a class, we discussed “A Boy Named Martin” and students made connections to other stories like it that they had heard before.
- Calendar Monday: I read the story aloud as students followed along and we discussed each character and the difficult decision they had to make.
- Calendar Tuesday: I explained point of view and they discussed the point of view of each character in small groups
- Calendar Tuesday: Then they shared their ideas in a large group discussion.
- Calendar Tuesday: Children role-played the situation from “A Difficult Decision” and we discussed each character and what they wanted to do.
- Calendar Tuesday: Students had this time to finish their summary and share their experience with a partner.
- Calendar Tuesday: Most days they can do this work alone or with a partner.
- Calendar Tuesday: I partnered one person from group 4 with group 5 and they read the leveled reader called “How Many Greats.”
- Calendar Tuesday: Once they were finished we discussed the story and how the characters in the story were good citizens.
- Calendar Wednesday: The students were excited and wondered if we were going to vote for a class president.
- Calendar Wednesday: We had a brief discussion about hearing about each character before making a choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: I read “Grace for President” aloud to the class and stopped often for discussion or for questions.
- Calendar Wednesday: My students were very inquisitive, especially with this being an election year.
- Calendar Wednesday: They wondered about political and governmental vocabulary.
- Calendar Wednesday: The students made a lot of connections to this story.
- Calendar Wednesday: They were thinking and discussing who would be the best president and why.

- Calendar Wednesday: They were engaged and interested in the story and excited to find out who the students would vote for.
- Calendar Wednesday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Wednesday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Wednesday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Thursday: At the end of the literacy period, we came back together as a large group and discussed the summaries.
- Calendar Thursday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Thursday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Thursday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Thursday: We are studying government in social studies this week and connecting to our literacy topic of being a good citizen. We discussed why it is important to vote.
- Calendar Thursday: After the read aloud, we discussed Duck and Grace and what kinds of presidents they would be.
- Calendar Friday: Sometimes when given seatwork such as the writing activity for today, they do something quickly just to get it done. I really wanted them to think about their writing and do their best work. I decided to share some poems that were written a couple weeks ago during seat work thinking it would inspire others to work hard today on their writing activity.
- Calendar Friday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Friday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Friday: I also read with one substantially deficient student from his choice book.

Label: Literature Connections

- Calendar Monday: We made a connection to “Horton Hears A Who” when the littlest who made a big difference.
- Calendar Monday: As a class, we discussed “A Boy Named Martin” and students made connections to other stories like it that they had heard before.
- Calendar Thursday: We are studying government in social studies this week and connecting to our literacy topic of being a good citizen. We discussed why it is important to vote.

- Calendar Thursday: I also asked them to listen to what Duck wants to do as president so we can compare and contrast him with Grace.
- Calendar Thursday: After the read aloud, we discussed Duck and Grace and what kinds of presidents they would be.
- Calendar Friday: Their must do work today is a writing activity with a story starter: “If I was the mayor of New Sharon...” related to our social studies unit.
- Calendar Friday: I gave a brief introduction to the story for today’s reading test.
- Calendar Friday: Today, our class voted for Duck or Grace for president. After voting, students wrote a paragraph about who they voted for and reasons supporting their choice.

Label: Teacher as Prompter/Controller

- Calendar Monday: I encouraged them to think about people they know who make a difference.
- Calendar Monday: I read the story aloud as students followed along and we discussed each character and the difficult decision they had to make.
- Calendar Tuesday: As we finished the point of view graphic organizer, I connected back to our writing yesterday.
- Calendar Tuesday: Each day, students have work they must do and work they can do during our literacy block.
- Calendar Tuesday: Their must do work was a Wonders spelling practice page.
- Calendar Tuesday: I explained that we are learning about good citizens this week and today they would be reading a story about good citizens.
- Calendar Tuesday: I gave a book introduction to “The Food Crew” and we discussed what a food pantry is and how it can help people.
- Calendar Tuesday: We talked about a good summary and each student wrote a summary of the text.
- Calendar Wednesday: We had a brief discussion about hearing about each character before making a choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: Their must do work was a Wonders vocabulary practice page.
- Calendar Wednesday: This week, their journaling will be writing a summary as that is our comprehension skill we are learning in Wonders.
- Calendar Wednesday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Wednesday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 2/5 of my intervention students and I did progress monitoring with 2/5 of my intervention students (the 2 who were absent yesterday), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Thursday: They were responsible for reading the text and writing a summary about what they read.

- Calendar Thursday: (A teacher's associate comes into my room to provide assistance for literacy.) She then worked with those students in a small group to write a summary together.
- Calendar Thursday: Their must do work was a Wonders spelling practice page.
- Calendar Thursday: This week, their journaling will be writing a summary as that is our comprehension skill we are learning in Wonders.
- Calendar Thursday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Thursday: I also asked them to listen to what Duck wants to do as president so we can compare and contrast him with Grace.
- Calendar Friday: Their must do work today is a writing activity with a story starter: "If I was the mayor of New Sharon..." related to our social studies unit.
- Calendar Friday: Some students take the test (answer the questions) on the computer at their desks while I have some with me at the teaching table so I can assist them. Four students (2 who are substantially deficient and 2 who are at-risk) have the opportunity to check each answer choice and change their answer if they choose. I have 2 students who I read the questions and answers to and help them find evidence to support their answers in the story.
- Calendar Friday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.

Label: Direct Instruction

- Calendar Monday: I introduce the word, have students repeat, teach a student friendly definition, and discuss each word.
- Calendar Monday: Students were instructed to write about a time when they had to make a difficult decision.
- Calendar Monday: We discussed a topic sentence, details, and a closing as important parts of a good summary.
- Calendar Monday: Phonemic Awareness: We did initial and final phoneme substitution with ow/ou words.
- Calendar Monday: Grammar: We reviewed suffixes -ly (in a way) and -ful (full of). I introduced the suffix -less (without or don't have). I then wrote examples on the board and children identified root words and suffixes to determine meaning.
- Calendar Monday: Pronouns: I taught the pronouns he, she, and it.
- Calendar Tuesday: I explained point of view and they discussed the point of view of each character in small groups.
- Calendar Tuesday: As a class, we completed a graphic organizer which identified the characters, points of view, and clues from "A Difficult Decision."
- Calendar Tuesday: I reviewed the expectations for writing about a time when my students had to make a difficult decision.
- Calendar Tuesday: I taught the pronouns we, they, and you.

- Calendar Tuesday: Today, I did progress monitoring with 3/5 of my intervention students (2 were absent), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: I explained that we would read two stories this week about characters who were running for president and at the end of the week, they will vote for the best candidate.
- Calendar Wednesday: As a class, we completed a graphic organizer which identified the characters, points of view, and clues from “Grace for President.”
- Calendar Wednesday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Wednesday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Wednesday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 2/5 of my intervention students and I did progress monitoring with 2/5 of my intervention students (the 2 who were absent yesterday), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Thursday: We discussed that a good summary has a topic sentence, details (including first, next, then, last, or other transition words), and a closing sentence.
- Calendar Thursday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Thursday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Thursday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 4/5 of my intervention students.
- Calendar Friday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Friday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Friday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 4/5 of my intervention students (one student was absent).
- Calendar Friday: I also read with one substantially deficient student from his choice book.

Label: Teacher as Model

- Calendar Monday: I then shared a short bio of a man named Ryan who helps purify water in Africa. (Is this modeling?)
- Calendar Monday: I read “A Boy Named Martin” aloud to the class. During this read aloud, I modeled my thinking and allowed for discussion.
- Calendar Wednesday: This was to help model how organize one’s thoughts before writing a paragraph.
- Calendar Wednesday: I modeled the format of the paragraph, but students came up with the ideas for the sentences.

Label: Read Aloud with Teaching

- Calendar Monday: I read “A Boy Named Martin” aloud to the class.
- Calendar Monday: I read the story aloud as students followed along and we discussed each character and the difficult decision they had to make.
- Calendar Wednesday: I read “Grace for President” aloud to the class and stopped often for discussion or for questions.
- Calendar Thursday: I read the story to them.
- Calendar Thursday: I also asked them to listen to what Duck wants to do as president so we can compare and contrast him with Grace.

Label: Teacher as Facilitator

- Calendar Monday: As a class, we discussed “A Boy Named Martin” and students made connections to other stories like it that they had heard before.
- Calendar Tuesday: Children role-played the situation from “A Difficult Decision” and we discussed each character and what they wanted to do.
- Calendar Tuesday: Once they were finished we discussed the story and how the characters in the story were good citizens.
- Calendar Wednesday: I gave a brief book introduction to the story “Grace for President.”
- Calendar Wednesday: My students were very inquisitive, especially with this being an election year.
- Calendar Wednesday: They were thinking and discussing who would be the best president and why.
- Calendar Wednesday: As a class, we wrote a paragraph comparing and contrasting Grace and Thomas.
- Calendar Wednesday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Wednesday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Wednesday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters.
- Calendar Wednesday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Thursday: I gave them a book introduction about a short narrative nonfiction text.
- Calendar Thursday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Thursday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Thursday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters.

- Calendar Thursday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Thursday: We are studying government in social studies this week and connecting to our literacy topic of being a good citizen. We discussed why it is important to vote.
- Calendar Thursday: After the read aloud, we discussed Duck and Grace and what kinds of presidents they would be.
- Calendar Friday: I gave a brief introduction to the story for today's reading test.
- Calendar Friday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in "Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride."
- Calendar Friday: I gave a brief introduction for the next two chapters.
- Calendar Friday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Friday: I also read with one substantially deficient student from his choice book.

Label: Personally Meaningful Writing

- Calendar Monday: Students were instructed to write about a time when they had to make a difficult decision.
- Calendar Tuesday: Students had this time to finish their summary and share their experience with a partner.
- Calendar Tuesday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Wednesday: The closing sentence was a personal connection in which they had to write who they would vote for and why.
- Calendar Wednesday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Thursday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, work on a St. Patrick's Day packet that had sight words or writing activities, and/or write.
- Calendar Friday: Their must do work today is a writing activity with a story starter: "If I was the mayor of New Sharon..." related to our social studies unit.
- Calendar Friday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Friday: Today, our class voted for Duck or Grace for president. After voting, students wrote a paragraph about who they voted for and reasons supporting their choice.
- Calendar Friday: As they finished up, they could read or write while we waited for everyone to come back.

Label: Read Aloud for Pleasure

- Calendar Monday: During this time, I read aloud strictly for pleasure. I do not do any teaching during this time. At times, I will discuss the meaning of a word or we will have a discussion about what is coming next, but overall, this is just a pleasurable, relaxing time for listening to good literature.
- Calendar Tuesday: Reading for pleasure.
- Calendar Wednesday: Reading for pleasure.
- Calendar Friday: Reading for pleasure.

Label: Students as Readers

- Calendar Tuesday: Students independently reread “A Difficult Decision.”
- Calendar Tuesday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Tuesday: I partnered one person from group 4 with group 5 and they read the leveled reader called “How Many Greats.”
- Calendar Tuesday: They read the Wonders leveled reader in a whisper voice and I listened to a couple students read.
- Calendar Tuesday: Today, I did progress monitoring with 3/5 of my intervention students (2 were absent), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Wednesday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Wednesday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Wednesday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Wednesday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 2/5 of my intervention students and I did progress monitoring with 2/5 of my intervention students (the 2 who were absent yesterday), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Thursday: They were responsible for reading the text and writing a summary about what they read.
- Calendar Thursday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, work on a St. Patrick’s Day packet that had sight words or writing activities, and/or write.
- Calendar Thursday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.



- Calendar Thursday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Thursday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Thursday: All students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Friday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Friday: Every week, we have assessments on Friday. This week's test will assess point of view (comprehension) and suffixes (vocabulary strategy). The story was about a girl who wants to help her teacher who broke her arm.
- Calendar Friday: Each student reads the test independently and then begins working on seatwork.
- Calendar Friday: Some students take the test (answer the questions) on the computer at their desks while I have some with me at the teaching table so I can assist them. Four students (2 who are substantially deficient and 2 who are at-risk) have the opportunity to check each answer choice and change their answer if they choose. I have 2 students who I read the questions and answers to and help them find evidence to support their answers in the story.
- Calendar Friday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Friday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Friday: I also read with one substantially deficient student from his choice book.
- Calendar Friday: All students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Friday: As they finished up, they could read or write while we waited for everyone to come back.

Label: Students as Participants

- Calendar Monday: Phonemic Awareness: We did initial and final phoneme substitution with ow/ou words.
- Calendar Monday: Grammar: We reviewed suffixes -ly (in a way) and -ful (full of). I introduced the suffix -less (without or don't have). I then wrote examples on the board and children identified root words and suffixes to determine meaning.
- Calendar Monday: Pronouns: I taught the pronouns he, she, and it.
- Calendar Tuesday: As a class, we completed a graphic organizer which identified the characters, points of view, and clues from "A Difficult Decision."
- Calendar Tuesday: Each day, students have work they must do and work they can do during our literacy block.
- Calendar Tuesday: Their must do work was a Wonders spelling practice page.

- Calendar Tuesday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Tuesday: I taught the pronouns we, they, and you.
- Calendar Tuesday: I explained that we are learning about good citizens this week and today they would be reading a story about good citizens.
- Calendar Tuesday: They wrote a summary of the text with their partner.
- Calendar Tuesday: We talked about a good summary and each student wrote a summary of the text.
- Calendar Tuesday: Today, I did progress monitoring with 3/5 of my intervention students (2 were absent), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: As a class, we completed a graphic organizer which identified the characters, points of view, and clues from “Grace for President.”
- Calendar Wednesday: Their must do work was a Wonders vocabulary practice page.
- Calendar Wednesday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Wednesday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 2/5 of my intervention students and I did progress monitoring with 2/5 of my intervention students (the 2 who were absent yesterday), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Thursday: They were responsible for reading the text and writing a summary about what they read.
- Calendar Thursday: I read the story to them.
- Calendar Thursday: (A teacher’s associate comes into my room to provide assistance for literacy.) She then worked with those students in a small group to write a summary together.
- Calendar Thursday: During this time, I did end of the quarter fluency assessment checks.
- Calendar Thursday: Their must do work was a Wonders spelling practice page.
- Calendar Thursday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, work on a St. Patrick’s Day packet that had sight words or writing activities, and/or write.
- Calendar Thursday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Thursday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 4/5 of my intervention students.
- Calendar Friday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Friday: During this time I administered a 15 word spelling test.

- Calendar Friday: I read the grammar test aloud during this time. It was eight sentences in which they had to mark the correct pronoun to replace the pronoun in the sentence.
- Calendar Friday: Every week, we have assessments on Friday. This week's test will assess point of view (comprehension) and suffixes (vocabulary strategy).
- Calendar Friday: Some students take the test (answer the questions) on the computer at their desks while I have some with me at the teaching table so I can assist them. Four students (2 who are substantially deficient and 2 who are at-risk) have the opportunity to check each answer choice and change their answer if they choose. I have 2 students who I read the questions and answers to and help them find evidence to support their answers in the story.
- Calendar Friday: During this time other students are working on seatwork while waiting their turn to test.
- Calendar Friday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Friday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 4/5 of my intervention students (one student was absent).

Label: Student Choice

- Calendar Tuesday: Each day, students have work they must do and work they can do during our literacy block.
- Calendar Tuesday: Most days they can do this work alone or with a partner.
- Calendar Tuesday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Tuesday: Today, I did progress monitoring with 3/5 of my intervention students (2 were absent), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Wednesday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 2/5 of my intervention students and I did progress monitoring with 2/5 of my intervention students (the 2 who were absent yesterday), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Thursday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, work on a St. Patrick's Day packet that had sight words or writing activities, and/or write.
- Calendar Thursday: All students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Friday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.

- Calendar Friday: During this time other students are working on seatwork while waiting their turn to test.
- Calendar Friday: I also read with one substantially deficient student from his choice book.
- Calendar Friday: All students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Friday: During this time on Friday, students take turns going to the library.
- Calendar Friday: As they finished up, they could read or write while we waited for everyone to come back.

Label: Curricular Requirements

- Calendar Tuesday: The first day that they meet for the week is to read the Wonders leveled reader.
- Calendar Friday: During this time I administered a 15 word spelling test.
- Calendar Friday: Each test has 10 words that have some sort of pattern. This week's pattern was ou and ow. There are also two review words and three high frequency words.
- Calendar Friday: I read the grammar test aloud during this time. It was eight sentences in which they had to mark the correct pronoun to replace the pronoun in the sentence.
- Calendar Friday: Every week, we have assessments on Friday. This week's test will assess point of view (comprehension) and suffixes (vocabulary strategy).
- Calendar Friday: Some students take the test (answer the questions) on the computer at their desks while I have some with me at the teaching table so I can assist them. Four students (2 who are substantially deficient and 2 who are at-risk) have the opportunity to check each answer choice and change their answer if they choose. I have 2 students who I read the questions and answers to and help them find evidence to support their answers in the story.

Label: Student writing related to reading

- Calendar Tuesday: They wrote a summary of the text with their partner.
- Calendar Tuesday: We talked about a good summary and each student wrote a summary of the text.
- Calendar Wednesday: As a class, we wrote a paragraph comparing and contrasting Grace and Thomas.
- Calendar Wednesday: I modeled the format of the paragraph, but students came up with the ideas for the sentences.
- Calendar Wednesday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Wednesday: This week, their journaling will be writing a summary as that is our comprehension skill we are learning in Wonders.

- Calendar Wednesday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Wednesday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Wednesday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Wednesday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Thursday: They were responsible for reading the text and writing a summary about what they read.
- Calendar Thursday: (A teacher’s associate comes into my room to provide assistance for literacy.) She then worked with those students in a small group to write a summary together.
- Calendar Thursday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, work on a St. Patrick’s Day packet that had sight words or writing activities, and/or write.
- Calendar Thursday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Thursday: This week, their journaling will be writing a summary as that is our comprehension skill we are learning in Wonders.
- Calendar Thursday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Thursday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Thursday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Thursday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Friday: Their must do work today is a writing activity with a story starter: “If I was the mayor of New Sharon...” related to our social studies unit.
- The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, and/or write.
- Calendar Friday: We shared their journal entries and discussed the last two chapters they had read in “Mercy Watson Goes for a Ride.”
- Calendar Friday: They read the chapters independently and then wrote a summary for the two chapters.
- Calendar Friday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Friday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.

- Calendar Friday: Today, our class voted for Duck or Grace for president. After voting, students wrote a paragraph about who they voted for and reasons supporting their choice.

Label: Teacher as Evaluator

- Calendar Tuesday: They read the Wonders leveled reader in a whisper voice and I listened to a couple students read.
- Calendar Tuesday: Today, I did progress monitoring with 3/5 of my intervention students (2 were absent), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Wednesday: I listened to students as they read and discussed the story with them.
- Calendar Wednesday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 2/5 of my intervention students and I did progress monitoring with 2/5 of my intervention students (the 2 who were absent yesterday), several students took the STAR test, and all students in the classroom had time to read a book (or books) of their choice.
- Calendar Thursday: During this time, I did end of the quarter fluency assessment checks.
- Calendar Thursday: I did a repeated reading with 4/5 of my intervention students.
- Calendar Friday: During this time I administered a 15 word spelling test.
- Calendar Friday: I read the grammar test aloud during this time. It was eight sentences in which they had to mark the correct pronoun to replace the pronoun in the sentence.
- Calendar Friday: Every week, we have assessments on Friday. This week's test will assess point of view (comprehension) and suffixes (vocabulary strategy).
- Calendar Friday: Some students take the test (answer the questions) on the computer at their desks while I have some with me at the teaching table so I can assist them. Four students (2 who are substantially deficient and 2 who are at-risk) have the opportunity to check each answer choice and change their answer if they choose. I have 2 students who I read the questions and answers to and help them find evidence to support their answers in the story.
- Calendar Friday: Today, I did a repeated reading with 4/5 of my intervention students (one student was absent).

Label: Teacher Wants

- Calendar Tuesday: I wanted every child to have time to read each day, and I wasn't sure that they were always choosing to read during reader's workshop.
- Calendar Tuesday: It was also difficult to work one-to-one with children when I was being interrupted by others.
- Calendar Friday: Sometimes when given seat work such as the writing activity for today, they do something quickly just to get it done. I really wanted them to think about their writing and do their best work. I decided to share some poems that

were written a couple weeks ago during seat work thinking it would inspire others to work hard today on their writing activity.

Label: Teacher Assumptions

- Calendar Tuesday: This time is now quiet and effective for all students.

Label: Student Excitement/Interest

- Calendar Wednesday: The students were excited and wondered if we were going to vote for a class president.
- Calendar Wednesday: They were engaged and interested in the story and excited to find out who the students would vote for.
- Calendar Wednesday: They shared their journal responses and we had a brief discussion for the last chapter they had read then I assigned the next chapter and journal assignment.
- Calendar Friday: Sometimes when given seat work such as the writing activity for today, they do something quickly just to get it done. I really wanted them to think about their writing and do their best work. I decided to share some poems that were written a couple weeks ago during seat work thinking it would inspire others to work hard today on their writing activity.

Label: Graphic Organizers

- Calendar Tuesday: As a class, we completed a graphic organizer which identified the characters, points of view, and clues from “A Difficult Decision.”
- Calendar Wednesday: As a class, we completed a graphic organizer which identified the characters, points of view, and clues from “Grace for President.”

Label: Busy Work

- Calendar Tuesday: Their must do work was a Wonders spelling practice page.
- Calendar Wednesday: Their must do work was a Wonders vocabulary practice page.
- Calendar Thursday: Their must do work was a Wonders spelling practice page.
- Calendar Thursday: The can do (choice) items were computers (Wonders, KidRex for research, Epic! Books, True Flix, Book Flix, and NewsELA), read, work on a St. Patrick’s Day packet that had sight words or writing activities, and/or write.

Label: Need

- Calendar Wednesday: I worked with Group 4 for about 10-15 minutes.
- Calendar Thursday: I worked with Group 4 for about 10-15 minutes.
- Calendar Friday: Some students take the test (answer the questions) on the computer at their desks while I have some with me at the teaching table so I can assist them. Four students (2 who are substantially deficient and 2 who are at-risk) have the opportunity to check each answer choice and change their answer if they

choose. I have 2 students who I read the questions and answers to and help them find evidence to support their answers in the story.

Label: Guided Writing

- Calendar Wednesday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Thursday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Friday: I also guided them with writing and prompted them during writing.
- Calendar Friday: Today, our class voted for Duck or Grace for president. After voting, students wrote a paragraph about who they voted for and reasons supporting their choice.

Label: Gradual Release of Responsibility

- Calendar Thursday: After using a gradual release model throughout the week, I like to transfer the responsibility to the students.

Label: Differentiated Instruction

- Calendar Thursday: The students got started and I worked with two students in my classroom who have difficulty accessing grade level text.

Label: Substitute Plans

- Calendar Thursday: I had an IEP meeting at the end of the day. I left plans for my substitute to do phonemic awareness, phonics, and grammar. Read aloud for James and the Giant Peach was also on the lesson plan.

APPENDIX D

INITIAL RESPONSE DATA

Label: Student Choice

- Response 1: Child choice is an integral part of literacy achievement.
- Response 1: I think that when children are able to choose something to read that is of interest to them, they find enjoyment in what they are doing.
- Response 1: I have had a positive experience by allowing children the opportunity to choose books in my classroom.
- Response 1: Each book box has a wide variety of books that children are able to choose from throughout the day if they need a book to read.
- Response 1: Some children choose chapter books from the bookshelf, others bring books from home, some keep several books from the book box or the library in their desks, and others strictly read from the book box each day.



- Response 1: They are able to choose as many books from the bookshelf as they want before the day starts, but they need to have books at their desks or choose from the book boxes the rest of the day.
- Response 1: It is a lot of work to pick books for each group and I spend a lot of time doing that job, so I asked the students if they like having the book boxes at their groups.
- Response 1: The highest readers said that they don't really care because they have their own books, but it is nice to have books right there if they need a book.
- Response 1: The majority of the other children shared that they really like having books at their groups so that they don't have to look for a book.
- Response 1: I provide students time to read books of their choice several times throughout the day.
- Response 1: They may read after getting their materials ready for the day, during seatwork during literacy centers, and then all students read books of their choice during silent reading.
- Label: Many of my students read books that they may not have read if they were restricted to a certain level as determined by Accelerated Reader which is the program that many of the teachers in my building use.
- Response 1: I love that my students have time to read a book that they have chosen each day; I believe that it sends the message to them that reading should be for enjoyment.
- Response 4: The students in my classroom have writing as a choice every day during literacy centers.
- Response 4: My goal is to make sure children are able to write about something of their choice each day if they so choose.
- Response 4: It is sometimes difficult for my students to come up with ideas for writing in a fictional genre, but if I allow them to write about their own experience or something they do or like, they are able to convey meaning and will write much more successfully.

Label: Teacher Beliefs

- Response 1: I think that when children are able to choose something to read that is of interest to them, they find enjoyment in what they are doing.
- Response 1: Educators should make sure children have access to books with a variety of topics on a continuum of reading levels.
- Response 1: My reasoning for this is that children spend a lot of wasted time looking for books on the shelf and I find that they are often overwhelmed by the amount of books.
- Response 1: I also think it encourages them to read a variety of books that they may not have chosen off the shelf.
- Response 1: I think that we are pushing chapter books upon children too quickly because they can read them.

- Response 1: Rather than pushing chapter books on kids just because they can read them, I think we should foster the love of reading.
- Response 1: I love that my students have time to read a book that they have chosen each day; I believe that it sends the message to them that reading should be for enjoyment.
- Response 2: I do agree with Allington, though, that children should read accurately to support their comprehension of the text.
- Response 2: Reading with 98% accuracy seems ridiculous to me, especially in the early years as children are learning to become strategic readers.
- Response 2: I do believe we must teach children how to use multiple sources of information to ensure accurate reading, but it can take time and we should not penalize children who are not yet accurate.
- Response 2: So maybe there is a difference as to when a child should experience this [reading accurately].
- Response 2: When children are reading independently I do think they need to be able to read accurately to support their comprehension.
- Response 3: Meaning is the purpose for reading.
- Response 3: I think this [reading for meaning] is crucial for successful reading.
- Response 3: Reading for meaning should be of the utmost importance from the very beginning of a child's literacy experience.
- Response 3: When I teach children in my classroom, I always think about how children learn to read; on the laps of adults.
- Response 3: I believe that when children are reading independently, they should read books that they enjoy and can understand.
- Response 4: After attending the National RR and K-6 Literacy conferences and hearing Katie Wood Ray and Lucy Calkins speak about writing, I realized that I needed to do more.
- Response 4: I think this is indicative of the pride they have when writing about something personally meaningful.
- Response 5: I also believe that children are self-centered, empathetic, and compassionate all at the same time.
- Response 5: I believe that allowing kids time to talk also increases their ability to develop people skills, the art of taking turns, and encourages them to be a good listener and to challenge their peers in a respectful manner.
- Response 6: Creating an environment that values literacy and devotes times to reading aloud is a must to develop a love of reading in all children.
- Response 6: Listening to a story should be an enjoyable and pleasurable experience.
- Response 6: Reading aloud can be a gateway for children to develop or strengthen a passion for reading.
- Response 6: I think sometimes children do not have a sense of story if they have not had a rich literacy experience at home (or even at school) and cannot connect to books yet.

- Response 6: Once they experience read alouds, they begin to get excited about the story, the characters, and are always ready to hear more.

Label: Access to Books

- Response 1: Educators should make sure children have access to books with a variety of topics on a continuum of reading levels.
- Response 1: I have a wide selection of books, magazines, audio books, and digital/media texts available to all children.
- Response 1: Each desk group (4-5 students) has a book box at their group.
- Response 1: Each book box has a wide variety of books that children are able to choose from throughout the day if they need a book to read.
- Response 1: They are able to choose as many books from the bookshelf as they want before the day starts, but they need to have books at their desks or choose from the book boxes the rest of the day.
- Response 1: I am sure to provide a wide variety of topics in the boxes at all levels.
- Response 1: The book box has the same books for one week and then I change them.
- Response 1: The highest readers said that they don't really care because they have their own books, but it is nice to have books right there if they need a book.
- Response 1: The majority of the other children shared that they really like having books at their groups so that they don't have to look for a book.
- Response 1: I also think it encourages them to read a variety of books that they may not have chosen off the shelf.

Label: Teacher Experiences

- Response 1: I have had a positive experience by allowing children the opportunity to choose books in my classroom.
- Response 2: In my experience as a former Reading Recovery and special education teacher, I have heard many benchmark numbers which are supposed to equate accuracy with comprehension.
- Response 2: During my years as a RR teacher, we used the guide that between 90-95% accuracy deemed a text an instructional level and 95% and above was a level in which children could independently read and (usually) comprehend what they read.
- Response 2: On the other hand, I have seen children who are not accurate (or fluent for that matter) readers be able to read and comprehend because of their extensive content and background knowledge.
- Response 3: I think back to when my own children were babies.
- Response 3: I never tried to teach them [my own children] to read.
- Response 3: We [my own children and I] read stories because they were fun and exciting.
- Response 3: We [my own children and I] looked at the pictures to find out more about the story.

- Response 3: As they got bigger, we [my own children and I] talked about the story, the characters, and our feelings about the books.
- Response 3: Never did I read a book to them I didn't think they [my own children] would enjoy and understand.
- Response 3: I know my interpretation of a book is not always the same as a child's.
- Response 4: When I trained in Reading Recovery and began teaching Reading Recovery lessons, I quickly realized the power behind writing.
- Response 4: I have found that allowing children time to write about authentic experiences or to tell stories has greatly impacted their reading success and overall interest and enjoyment in literacy.
- Response 4: I have found that the students in my classroom prefer to write about their own personal experiences or things they like rather than creating fictional stories (although a few do like writing fictional stories).
- Response 6: One of my favorite memories as a child is listening to an adult read aloud.
- Response 6: Whether at home or at school, I have always loved listening to stories.
- Response 6: Still today, I enjoy listening to stories.
- Response 6: I recently listened to an audio book read aloud by the author.
- Response 6: Her enthusiasm and passion was evident and it made the book even better.

Label: Teacher Wants

- Response 1: I prefer that children do not choose books off the bookshelf throughout the day.
- Response 1: They are able to choose as many books from the bookshelf as they want before the day starts, but they need to have books at their desks or choose from the book boxes the rest of the day.
- Response: My goal is to make sure children are able to write about something of their choice each day if they so choose.
- Response 6: When reading aloud, I always try to choose books that will evoke a plethora of moods and emotions while providing suspense and wonder about what is coming next.

Label: Above Average Readers

- Response 1: My highest achieving readers often always have a book and never need a book from the book box as they are highly self-motivated.
- Response 1: The highest readers said that they don't really care because they have their own books, but it is nice to have books right there if they need a book.
- Response 1: I have noticed that even a lot of my highest achieving readers read from the book boxes.
- Response 1: They still enjoy reading picture books and I love that.

Label: Average Readers

- Response 1: The average readers in my class sometimes have their own books and sometimes read from the book boxes.

Label: Readers Who Struggle

- Response 1: The readers who struggle in my classroom are ones who often never have books to read.
- Response 1: They [readers who struggle] mostly read books from the book boxes.

Label: Book Boxes

- Response 1: Each desk group (4-5 students) has a book box at their group.
- Response 1: Each book box has a wide variety of books that children are able to choose from throughout the day if they need a book to read.
- Response 1: The average readers in my class sometimes have their own books and sometimes read from the book boxes.
- Response 1: They mostly read books from the book boxes.
- Response 1: The book box has the same books for one week and then I change them.
- Response 1: I have noticed that even a lot of my highest achieving readers read from the book boxes.

Label: Work

- Response 1: It is a lot of work to pick books for each group and I spend a lot of time doing that job, so I asked the students if they like having the book boxes at their groups.

Label: Teacher Feelings

- Response 1: I sometimes worry that I am limiting their options for choice when I ask them to read from the book boxes, but I do feel like it saves time for them and they have an assortment of books to choose from.
- Response 1: They still enjoy reading picture books and I love that.
- Response 1: I love that my students have time to read a book that they have chosen each day; I believe that it sends the message to them that reading should be for enjoyment.
- Response 6: Response 6: I use expression and emotion as I read to help children hear and feel the story.

Label: The Love of Reading

- Response 1: Rather than pushing chapter books on kids just because they can read them, I think we should foster the love of reading.

- Response 1: I love that my students have time to read a book that they have chosen each day; I believe that it sends the message to them that reading should be for enjoyment.
- Response 4: I have found that allowing children time to write about authentic experiences or to tell stories has greatly impacted their reading success and overall interest and enjoyment in literacy.
- Response 6: Response 6: Creating an environment that values literacy and devotes times to reading aloud is a must to develop a love of reading in all children.
- Response 6: Listening to a story should be an enjoyable and pleasurable experience.
- Response 6: When reading aloud, I always try to choose books that will evoke a plethora of moods and emotions while providing suspense and wonder about what is coming next.
- Response 6: Response 6: I use expression and emotion as I read to help children hear and feel the story.
- Response 6: Reading aloud can be a gateway for children to develop or strengthen a passion for reading.

Label: Student Excitement

- Response 1: The majority of my students enjoy reading and they are always excited about what they are reading.
- Response 3: I try to make reading enjoyable and relatable so that children can understand what they are reading.
- Response 3: I believe that when children are reading independently, they should read books that they enjoy and can understand.
- Response 4: I have found that allowing children time to write about authentic experiences or to tell stories has greatly impacted their reading success and overall interest and enjoyment in literacy.
- Response 5: The students in my classroom love to write and to share with their peers.
- Response 5: Students love to see others reading their work, while other children are inspired by the writing done by their peers.
- Response 6: Listening to a story should be an enjoyable and pleasurable experience.
- Response 6: When reading aloud, I always try to choose books that will evoke a plethora of moods and emotions while providing suspense and wonder about what is coming next.

Label: Teacher Questions

- Response 2: I have the most questions with this component [Every child reads accurately].
- Response 2: What defines accuracy?
- Response 2: Is it a number, or accurate enough to comprehend?

- Response 2: Maybe during small group reading instruction, I should be teaching the skills and strategies and accuracy between 90-95% is okay, but when children are reading independently, they should be reading text between 95-98% accuracy in order to increase reading achievement.
- Response 2: I know this recommendation [every child reads accurately] is for the majority of children and there will always be a few outliers, but this one component is the one that I have the hardest time with.
- Response 3: I am not sure why a teacher would ask or encourage a child to read something he or she did not understand.
- Response 3: I am not always sure children pick the best books for themselves, or always fully understand the author's intended message.
- Response 3: Although, I sometimes wonder, what does it really mean to comprehend?
- Response 3: Is it being able to answer some pre-determined questions about the events of a text or story or is it the ability to read something and make personal connections to what one reads?
- Response 3: Are we really going to say they cannot comprehend because they cannot answer questions about a text which were thought up by an outside source and really give only a glimpse about what a child can do?

Label: Comprehension

- Response 2: Is it a number, or accurate enough to comprehend?
- Response 2: I do agree with Allington, though, that children should read accurately to support their comprehension of the text.
- Response 2: In my experience as a former Reading Recovery and special education teacher, I have heard many benchmark numbers which are supposed to equate accuracy with comprehension.
- Response 2: During my years as a RR teacher, we used the guide that between 90-95% accuracy deemed a text an instructional level and 95% and above was a level in which children could independently read and (usually) comprehend what they read.
- Response 2: When children are reading independently I do think they need to be able to read accurately to support their comprehension.
- Response 2: On the other hand, I have seen children who are not accurate (or fluent for that matter) readers be able to read and comprehend because of their extensive content and background knowledge.
- Response 3: Meaning is the purpose for reading.
- Response 3: I think this [reading for meaning] is crucial for successful reading.
- Response 3: Reading for meaning should be of the utmost importance from the very beginning of a child's literacy experience.
- Response 3: I try to make reading enjoyable and relatable so that children can understand what they are reading.

- Response 3: I believe that when children are reading independently, they should read books that they enjoy and can understand.
- Response 3: I am not always sure children pick the best books for themselves, or always fully understand the author's intended message.
- Response 3: When talking with children about books, they often see things differently or they relate to a character in a way I had not thought about.
- Response 3: Some kids may not really understand the deep message or moral as determined by the author, but are able to personally connect with a character or scenario.
- Response 4: They have to be able to compose a story, encode it, physically produce the writing, read it to ensure accuracy and comprehension, and convey meaning.

Label: Reading Recovery

- Response 2: In my experience as a former Reading Recovery and special education teacher, I have heard many benchmark numbers which are supposed to equate accuracy with comprehension.
- Response 2: During my years as a RR teacher, we used the guide that between 90-95% accuracy deemed a text an instructional level and 95% and above was a level in which children could independently read and (usually) comprehend what they read.
- Response 2: Reading with 98% accuracy seems ridiculous to me, especially in the early years as children are learning to become strategic readers.
- Response 2: In the early grades children have not yet developed a self-extending system to use all sources of information from a text and not always is the reading accurate.
- Response 4: When I trained in Reading Recovery and began teaching Reading Recovery lessons, I quickly realized the power behind writing.
- Response 4: As Clay indicates, writing is the slowed process of reading.
- Response 4: After attending the National RR and K-6 Literacy conferences and hearing Katie Wood Ray and Lucy Calkins speak about writing, I realized that I needed to do more.

Label: Reading Accuracy

- Response 2: I do agree with Allington, though, that children should read accurately to support their comprehension of the text.
- Response 2: In my experience as a former Reading Recovery and special education teacher, I have heard many benchmark numbers which are supposed to equate accuracy with comprehension.
- Response 2: During my years as a RR teacher, we used the guide that between 90-95% accuracy deemed a text an instructional level and 95% and above was a level in which children could independently read and (usually) comprehend what they read.



- Response 2: On the other hand, I was required to attend Phonics Boost training as a special education teacher and was told that all children should read with 98% accuracy.
- Response 2: In the early grades children have not yet developed a self-extending system to use all sources of information from a text and not always is the reading accurate.
- Response 2: I do believe we must teach children how to use multiple sources of information to ensure accurate reading, but it can take time and we should not penalize children who are not yet accurate.
- Response 2: So maybe there is a difference as to when a child should experience this [reading accurately].
- Response 2: When children are reading independently I do think they need to be able to read accurately to support their comprehension.
- Response 2: I know this recommendation [every child reads accurately] is for the majority of children and there will always be a few outliers, but this one component is the one that I have the hardest time with.
- Response 4: They have to be able to compose a story, encode it, physically produce the writing, read it to ensure accuracy and comprehension, and convey meaning.

Label: Professional Development

- Response 2: On the other hand, I was required to attend Phonics Boost training as a special education teacher and was told that all children should read with 98% accuracy.
- Response 4: After attending the National RR and K-6 Literacy conferences and hearing Katie Wood Ray and Lucy Calkins speak about writing, I realized that I needed to do more.

Label: Strategic Reading

- Response 2: Reading with 98% accuracy seems ridiculous to me, especially in the early years as children are learning to become strategic readers.
- Response 2: In the early grades children have not yet developed a self-extending system to use all sources of information from a text and not always is the reading accurate.
- Response 2: I do believe we must teach children how to use multiple sources of information to ensure accurate reading, but it can take time and we should not penalize children who are not yet accurate.

Label: Small Group Guided Reading

- Response 2: Maybe during small group reading instruction, I should be teaching the skills and strategies and accuracy between 90-95% is okay, but when children are reading independently, they should be reading text between 95-98% accuracy in order to increase reading achievement.

Label: Independent Reading

- Response 2: Maybe during small group reading instruction, I should be teaching the skills and strategies and accuracy between 90-95% is okay, but when children are reading independently, they should be reading text between 95-98% accuracy in order to increase reading achievement.
- Response 2: When children are reading independently I do think they need to be able to read accurately to support their comprehension.
- Response 3: I believe that when children are reading independently, they should read books that they enjoy and can understand.

Label: Background Knowledge

- Response 2: On the other hand, I have seen children who are not accurate (or fluent for that matter) readers be able to read and comprehend because of their extensive content and background knowledge.

Label: Meaning

- Response 2: On the other hand, I have seen children who are not accurate (or fluent for that matter) readers be able to read and comprehend because of their extensive content and background knowledge.
- Response 3: Meaning is the purpose for reading.
- Response 3: Reading for meaning should be of the utmost importance from the very beginning of a child's literacy experience.
- Response 3: I try to make reading enjoyable and relatable so that children can understand what they are reading.
- Response 3: When talking with children about books, they often see things differently or they relate to a character in a way I had not thought about.
- Response 3: Some kids may not really understand the deep message or moral as determined by the author, but are able to personally connect with a character or scenario.
- Response 4: They have to be able to compose a story, encode it, physically produce the writing, read it to ensure accuracy and comprehension, and convey meaning.
- Response 4: It is sometimes difficult for my students to come up with ideas for writing in a fictional genre, but if I allow them to write about their own experience or something they do or like, they are able to convey meaning and will write much more successfully.
- Response 6: I think sometimes children do not have a sense of story if they have not had a rich literacy experience at home (or even at school) and cannot connect to books yet.

Label: Writing

- Response 4: When I trained in Reading Recovery and began teaching Reading Recovery lessons, I quickly realized the power behind writing.
- Response 4: As Clay indicates, writing is the slowed process of reading.
- Response 4: Children have to use several modalities to be able to write messages.
- Response 4: They have to be able to compose a story, encode it, physically produce the writing, read it to ensure accuracy and comprehension, and convey meaning.
- Response 4: This task [writing] is not something that is done easily by all children.
- Response 4: It takes time to build these [writing] skills.
- Response 4: Even the youngest children can tell stories through illustrations and conversations.
- Response 4: The students in my classroom have writing as a choice every day during literacy centers.
- Response 4: We also do a great deal of writing in response to reading and also during our writing time.
- Response: My goal is to make sure children are able to write about something of their choice each day if they so choose.
- Response 4: I have found that the students in my classroom prefer to write about their own personal experiences or things they like rather than creating fictional stories (although a few do like writing fictional stories).
- Response 4: It is sometimes difficult for my students to come up with ideas for writing in a fictional genre, but if I allow them to write about their own experience or something they do or like, they are able to convey meaning and will write much more successfully.
- Response 4: I think this is indicative of the pride they have when writing about something personally meaningful.
- Response 5: The students in my classroom love to write and to share with their peers.
- Response 5: They are proud of the work they do and I allow them to put their writing in a basket on the bookshelf for others to read.
- Response 5: Students love to see others reading their work, while other children are inspired by the writing done by their peers.

Label: Multimodal Learning

- Response 4: Children have to use several modalities to be able to write messages.

Label: Conversation

- Response 4: Even the youngest children can tell stories through illustrations and conversations.
- Response 4: I have found that allowing children time to write about authentic experiences or to tell stories has greatly impacted their reading success and overall interest and enjoyment in literacy.

- Response 5: Most adults share their love of what they have read through talking with peers.
- Response 5: Children need the same opportunities [share their love of what they have read through talking with peers].
- Response 5: They also like to share their favorites with each other.
- Response 5: The students in my classroom love to write and to share with their peers.
- Response 5: I believe that allowing kids time to talk also increases their ability to develop people skills, the art of taking turns, and encourages them to be a good listener and to challenge their peers in a respectful manner.
- Response 6: We also discuss what it would be like to be part of the story.

Label: Authentic Experiences

- Response 4: I have found that allowing children time to write about authentic experiences or to tell stories has greatly impacted their reading success and overall interest and enjoyment in literacy.
- Response 4: I have found that the students in my classroom prefer to write about their own personal experiences or things they like rather than creating fictional stories (although a few do like writing fictional stories).
- Response 4: It is sometimes difficult for my students to come up with ideas for writing in a fictional genre, but if I allow them to write about their own experience or something they do or like, they are able to convey meaning and will write much more successfully.
- Response 4: I think this is indicative of the pride they have when writing about something personally meaningful.
- Response 5: Most adults share their love of what they have read through talking with peers.
- Response 5: Children need the same opportunities [share their love of what they have read through talking with peers].
- Response 5: They are proud of the work they do and I allow them to put their writing in a basket on the bookshelf for others to read.
- Response 5: Students love to see others reading their work, while other children are inspired by the writing done by their peers.
- Response 5: I believe that allowing kids time to talk also increases their ability to develop people skills, the art of taking turns, and encourages them to be a good listener and to challenge their peers in a respectful manner.

Label: Student Emotion

- Response 4: I think this is indicative of the pride they have when writing about something personally meaningful.
- Response 5: Response 5: I also believe that children are self-centered, empathetic, and compassionate all at the same time.
- Response 5: They are so caring, but yet very focused on themselves.

- Response 5: The students in my classroom love to write and to share with their peers.
- Response 5: They are proud of the work they do and I allow them to put their writing in a basket on the bookshelf for others to read.
- Response 5: Students love to see others reading their work, while other children are inspired by the writing done by their peers.
- Response 6: Listening to a story should be an enjoyable and pleasurable experience.
- Response 6: When reading aloud, I always try to choose books that will evoke a plethora of moods and emotions while providing suspense and wonder about what is coming next.
- Response 6: I use expression and emotion as I read to help children hear and feel the story.
- Response 6: Some children even share that they feel like they are part of the story.
- Response 6: Reading aloud can be a gateway for children to develop or strengthen a passion for reading.

Label: Peer Influence

- Response 5: Children are easily influenced by their peers and are often very in tune with their peers' interests.
- Response 5: Children in my classroom always recommend books to one another.
- Response 5: They know the student who loves to hunt and are always telling him about hunting books when they find them.
- Response 5: They also know the students who love animals, and share those books with those students.
- Response 5: They also like to share their favorites with each other.
- Response 5: Students love to see others reading their work, while other children are inspired by the writing done by their peers.

Label: Student Interest

- Response 5: Children are easily influenced by their peers and are often very in tune with their peers' interests.
- Response 5: They know the student who loves to hunt and are always telling him about hunting books when they find them.
- Response 5: They also know the students who love animals, and share those books with those students.
- Response 5: They also like to share their favorites with each other.
- Response 6: When reading aloud, I always try to choose books that will evoke a plethora of moods and emotions while providing suspense and wonder about what is coming next.

Label: Read Aloud

- Response 6: Creating an environment that values literacy and devotes times to reading aloud is a must to develop a love of reading in all children.
- Response 6: Listening to a story should be an enjoyable and pleasurable experience.
- Response 6: When reading aloud, I always try to choose books that will evoke a plethora of moods and emotions while providing suspense and wonder about what is coming next.
- Response 6: I use expression and emotion as I read to help children hear and feel the story.
- Response 6: We also discuss what it would be like to be part of the story.
- Response 6: Some children even share that they feel like they are part of the story.
- Response 6: Reading aloud can be a gateway for children to develop or strengthen a passion for reading.