The reading basal adoption process: What do teachers have to say?

Jennifer Bowling

University of Northern Iowa
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This paper examines the reasons three separate school districts in Iowa have chosen to adopt reading basal programs, and the process that led them to a final selection. Nine teachers in three school districts in a metropolitan area of a large town in the Midwest were interviewed for their opinions on the importance of reading, why a basal was chosen, the adoption process and the extent to which they were involved, and suggestions to make this process better.

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The Reading Basal Adoption Process: What Do Teachers Have To Say?

A Graduate Research Paper
Submitted to the
Division of Reading and Language Arts
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by
Jennifer Bowling
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Titled: The Reading Basal Adoption Process: What Do Teachers Have To Say?

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

Penny L. Beed

Date Approved

Rick Traw

Date Approved

Rick Traw

Date Approved
December, 1999

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Dear Editors,

Enclosed please find five copies of the manuscript titled, "The Reading Basal Adoption Process: What Do Teachers Have To Say?" to review for publication. This paper examines the reasons three separate school districts in Iowa have chosen to adopt reading basal programs and the process that led them to a final selection. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bowling  
1440 Blairs Ferry Rd. F-8  
Hiawatha, IA 52233  
Home (319) 395-0627  
Work (319) 377-4698
The Reading Basal Adoption Process:
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Abstract
This paper examines the reasons three separate school districts in Iowa have chosen to adopt reading basal programs and the process that led them to a final selection. Nine teachers in three school districts in a metropolitan area of a large town in the Midwest were interviewed for their opinions on the importance of reading, why a basal was chosen, the adoption process and the extent to which they were involved, and suggestions to make this process better.
The Reading Basal Adoption Process: What Do Teachers Have To Say?

How are basal readers selected by school districts? "As a district we discovered that whole language wasn't meeting the needs of all students, so we wanted to find something that had a little more language development in it," said Beth, a teacher from a large urban district that recently completed the basal adoption process. "In a district this size, perhaps a basal is the best way to go just because (it's a way of) tracking skills that are taught or not taught," said Joan, another teacher from the same district. How do other teachers and districts make basal selections? Are the processes that districts use for basal selection similar? What are the criteria that the various districts use? The purpose of this paper is to investigate the views of teachers who were members of basal reading adoption committees and to learn how various districts' selection processes work.

Background

Basals have remained a predominant source for reading instruction throughout the last several decades. Why do schools place such an importance on basals for instruction? How do they select them? Are there state requirements or guidelines?

Basal Popularity

Studies in the 1980's suggested that 80% to 90% of the children in U. S. schools learned to read from basals (Aaron, 1987; Farr, Tulley & Powell, 1987; Weaver & Watson, 1989). Interviews and questionnaires in the 1990's have reinforced these statistics (e.g., Hoffman, McCarthey, Elliott, Bayles, Price, Ferree, & Abbott, 1998.). Why are basals still around and used as a primary source in teaching reading? Basals come as a package deal, meaning that teacher manuals, student texts, workbooks, and supplemental support materials are all included. Teachers and administrators like having an organized curriculum for reading instruction (Wepner & Feeley, 1993). In a five-state study in which teachers were surveyed, two-thirds of the respondents said they preferred a basal in combination with tradebooks for teaching reading, and about one fifth used only a basal for reading instruction (Canney & Neuenfeldt, 1993). This study illustrates that many teachers
are moving to a balanced literature approach which combines tradebooks with skills. Basals provide a framework for skill development. Baumann & Heubach (1996) conducted a study in which they surveyed elementary educators regarding their opinions on basal reading programs. They found that, “Philosophically, the majority of respondents characterized themselves as eclectics who believed that students need to acquire a set of basic reading skills or strategies in order to become fluent readers. However, the majority also referred to themselves as embracing literature-based and whole language perspectives but agreed that such orientations would include the use of basal readers” (p. 516). “(Educators) contend that basals provide structure, instructional suggestions and practice materials as well as some quality text selections. Adding tradebooks greatly enhances the range, selection and the quality of reading material” (Canney & Neuenfeldt, 1993, p.238).

Some researchers criticize basals, claiming they deskill teachers. “The view that learning must be controlled, which is built into the basal, takes meta-cognition, a property of the learner, and makes it a property of the program” (Goodman, Shannon, Freeman, & Murphy, 1988, p.100). “The purpose for reading is set not by the learner or the teacher but by the basal” (Goodman et al., 1988, p.101). Baumann (1992) argued that the research on deskillling was limited, not generalizable, and not representative of materials or practices contained in the basals of the nineties. Research has indicated that the basal is a source of teaching ideas and not a set of prescribed directions (Baumann & Heubach, 1996). In the 1980’s critics suggested that there was an emphasis on controlled vocabulary rather than the telling of the story, and meaning was lost due to the focus on isolated words and skills (Goodman et al., 1988). In the 1990’s vocabulary control and repetition had been significantly reduced, if not completely abandoned (Hoffman et al., 1998). Despite all the criticisms toward basals, many teachers and administrators still believe that basals are the best way to cover the necessary skills required. They also feel that basals have improved and have moved more towards a balanced literature-based approach.
Basal Selection Processes

There are 22 adoption states where the state boards of education determine the basal programs from which adoption committees can choose (Farr, Tulley, & Powell, 1987). Texas, because of its large population, is considered one of the major adoption states. New texts are provided free for students in all of the major curriculum areas in districts across Texas on a cycle of every five to seven years (Hoffman, McCarthey, Abbott, Christian, Corman, Curry, Dressman, Elliott, Matherne, & Stahle, 1994). Research suggests there are three advantages to a statewide adoption: (1) a reduction in textbook costs through volume purchasing, (2) the selection of better textbooks, and (3) some assurance of a uniform statewide curriculum (Farr, Tulley, & Powell, 1987). Schools and districts in the other 28 states are essentially free to choose whichever basal they prefer with little or no state control.

A variety of selection processes are used. In some districts the curriculum coordinator may select the basal program with little or no help from teachers, and in other districts teachers may have an equal vote with or without information about the different programs (May, 1998). Some researchers suggested that during the 1980's, basal programs were selected more for their surface appearance than for their underlying philosophy and instructional design (Farr, Tulley, & Powell, 1987). In the 1980's few classroom teachers were directly involved in the selection process (Farr, Tulley, & Powell, 1987). This course of action is changing. For example, Lare (1993) described a district of more than 10,000 students that underwent a 4 year process in which volunteer teachers piloted different programs. Currently the trend is for teachers to be involved significantly in the decision about materials (Baumann & Heubach, 1996). “Our data suggest that teachers of the 1990's perceive and report having much freedom when it comes to selecting and using instructional materials” (Baumann & Heubach, 1996, p.520). Teachers who used the materials were most likely the ones to make a final decision.
The Current Study

Recently, there was a noticeable trend in the metropolitan area in the Midwest in which I teach. Within a span of about 2 years, the three major school districts all underwent the process of adopting new basal reading programs. As a first grade teacher in one of those districts, I was a member of a basal reading adoption committee. I found the process to be very time consuming, yet interesting. All three districts chose different basals. I was curious about the processes that other districts use. I wondered why certain basals were selected, who was part of the process, what criteria were used, what approaches the districts had taken to arrive at final basal decisions, and how the teachers ultimately felt about the basals selected. How did they make their decisions? I decided the best way to find out was to ask teachers. After all, they are the ones who must teach it. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to research processes for basal reader selection and to determine educator’s perceptions about those processes.

Method

Setting and participants.

The selected area for my research was a metropolitan area of a large town in the Midwest. The total population (1997 census) is around 142,000 (Drahozal, Bergen, Merta, Morrison, Seckman, Wolf, Clark, & Steffes, 1999). Four school districts reside within this area. Information was gathered from the three districts which recently selected new basal reading programs. For the purposes of this research the school districts will be referred to as Lak-through-fourth-grade elementary schools and serves 1,868 middle to upper-class European-American students, 4.3% of whom receive free or reduced lunch. Camden Falls has the largest population among the three districts. Camden Falls includes 23 kindergarten-through-fifth-grade elementary buildings serving 7,942 students, with 28.1% receiving free or reduced lunch. Martinville contains one kindergarten center, two-first-through-third-grade elementaries and one middle school with grades fourth through seventh. Martinville
serves 1,046 students who are mostly middle-class European-American, with 4.1% receiving free or reduced lunch.

At the time of this study Camden Falls and Lakeview had already purchased a series and were in their first year of implementation. The Martinville district had just made its final purchase selection. Figure 1 shows the number of series and the final selections of each of these school districts in this study.

Procedure

I contacted administrators from all three districts to obtain a list of primary and intermediate teachers who served on the reading adoption committees. From these lists, I randomly selected three teachers from each district to call for interviews. Every teacher who was called agreed to participate. The participants consisted of 8 female teachers and 1 male teacher (see Table 1 for participant information). Peggy, Margaret, and Danielle taught in Lakeview and averaged 14 years of teaching. Beth, Joan and Kirk taught in Camden Falls, and averaged 20 years of teaching. Anne, Tracy, and Barb taught in Martinville and averaged 16 years of teaching.

The goal of the interviews was to learn about the process, the extent of teacher involvement, the criteria used, and suggestions for improvement. Eight questions were developed (see Figure 2), to support the research objective of discovering how districts select basal programs. The questions were open-ended so that teachers could elaborate on their responses. These questions were reviewed and approved by my graduate advisor. The interviews were conducted in the spring of 1999 and took place at the participant's schools after school hours. Each interview was conducted one-on-one. Interviews ranged from twenty to thirty minutes. I audiotaped each session and took field notes on teacher's responses. The constant comparative method was used to review the data. I first read and reread the field notes and listened to the tapes many times to identify categories. I then reviewed the data many more times to refine the categories of response. I organized and analyzed each question by district, and then made comparisons to find common points as well as differences.
Findings

I was curious to find out why so many districts were purchasing new reading programs and why they chose to adopt a basal for their materials.

Purpose for a new reading program.

According to five out of the nine respondents questioned, a new reading program was needed because the literature of the current program was not of the best quality and teachers wanted authentic and multicultural literature. Danielle suggested that the state was beginning to require more (evidence of progress), so a core set of skills and ideas for their instruction were needed. Kirk said that the old series was not meeting the needs of every individual. Anne mentioned that new teaching techniques were needed to reflect current philosophies.

Why a basal?

Danielle, Peggy, and Margaret, all from the Lakeview district, mentioned that consistency was a big reason for why a basal was selected. “Everybody is on the same page,” said Peggy, “We needed a program that built on the previous year to show horizontal and vertical development.” Joan and Peggy pointed out that with a basal, new teachers to the district would have a structured program to begin teaching. The quality and authenticity of the literature in the new basals had increased, which was important to Barb from Martinville. Joan from Camden Falls felt that the decision to go with a basal was made from the top down, and that there was no other option. “I never felt like there was a choice of anything besides a basal program,” Anne said from Martinville. Tracy, also from Martinville, believed that guided reading was not a choice for the entire district, although the supplemental readers available from basals would help to instruct children at levels appropriate for success.

Teacher participation.

When asked why they chose to become a part of the selection process, the majority of teachers said they volunteered because they were interested. They had a background in reading and language arts. They wanted to see what the new basals had to offer. “I feel it so greatly impacts my teaching and my students,” said
Anne, a Martinville teacher. Beth, a teacher from Camden Falls humorously commented, "I really felt like I couldn't complain about a series unless I was willing to work on selecting one that I liked." Two of the nine teachers said they were asked by their principals to be on the committee.

**Basal adoption process.**

When the participants were asked to describe the process and the extent to which they were involved, it became apparent that the three districts took different approaches. There were two reasons given for these differences. The first was the variance in the size of the districts. As Joan stated earlier, Camden Falls is larger than Martinville and a large district needs to have a uniform curriculum and consistency so skills can be tracked. The second reason was to fit particular reading needs to meet district expectations. For example, Lakeview wanted a "balanced reading program" which included the aspects of guided reading set forth in the currently popular book, *Guided Reading* (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). Camden Falls' district mission statement for the balanced development of literacy stated that the following components needed to be included in the daily instructional schedule: read aloud, shared reading, guided/supported reading, independent reading, writing, and speaking and listening. Martinville does not have a literacy mission statement, but rather relies on its language arts/communication expectations which include word analysis strategies, recognizing familiar words, comprehension, fluency, reading for enjoyment, writing, spelling, speaking, and listening. Camden Falls and Martinville wanted a basal for a total reading program, but one that offered the option of incorporating guided reading strategies.

Lakeview took an approach which included piloting a program for an entire year. There was an initial presentation given to one teacher, a principal, and the language arts coordinator from the publishers of Series D. "We sat and had an extensive conversation about assessment and the benefits of a reading series and at that point thought it would be worthwhile to think about adopting a new basal," said Peggy. A larger committee was formed consisting of one teacher from every grade level (K-2) from each of the four buildings, a principal, the language arts.
coordinator and a reading specialist. The committee developed a criteria sheet for
evaluation of each series which consisted of ten main headings: philosophy/
authors/research base, literature, components of a balanced reading program, skills
instruction, assessment, integration-language arts/other curricular areas, teacher
support/management, fiscal considerations, and use of series. Under the heading
were sub-categories. All of these criteria were arranged in chart form with ratings
placed in three columns: seldom evident, occasionally evident, and consistently
evident. Peggy said, "(We thought about) what criteria should any reading program
have, and then how does the program we have now within the district fit this criteria,
and if we adopted a reading series, how would it fit this criteria? So we were really
evaluating what we do now, and what we want." Seven publishing companies
presented to the larger committee. Six companies were chosen for consideration.
Using the criteria sheet, the committee narrowed the field to three. The large
committee decided to pilot only one series (Series A) because that series had an
overwhelming total of votes over the other two and there would not be enough time
to efficiently pilot all three. A year of piloting and evaluating using a modified and
condensed criteria checklist from the one already used to eliminate other basals,
compared the new series to the one currently being used. An overwhelming all-staff
majority vote made the decision to adopt the pilot series. One teacher in this study
was involved from start to finish, one joined the large committee and was involved
from there on, and the other teacher spent only 4 months piloting the program.
Camden Falls, the largest of the three districts, relied on many teachers for
their input and opinions. Six classroom teachers and administrators met the summer
prior to beginning the one-year adoption process. During the previous school year,
each staff brainstormed important and necessary criteria, which were given to this
small group. They developed a criteria sheet for the evaluation of a new series.
The criteria sheet was in the form of a checklist with main categories of read-aloud,
shared reading, grade-level anthologies, grade-level trade books, teacher edition,
formal/informal assessment, and supplementary language arts materials. A rating
scale of 0-5 was used with 0 being "not found," and 5 being "strong." The language
Basal Process

arts coordinator preselected five of the top selling publishing companies. Next, a committee was formed consisting of one representative from each of the 23 buildings. The committee members broke into small groups to review the basals using the criteria sheet, then reported back to the large committee. Based on these reports, the large committee narrowed the field to two basals (Series B and Series D). The two basal series were passed from school to school for each member on the committee (one representative from each of the 23 buildings) and other staff members to review. On an inservice day, representatives from both publishing companies were invited to present information on their series, and a final vote was taken that day from every elementary teacher in the district. Series B was chosen. The three teachers interviewed were involved in every aspect of the process except for the initial meeting to establish criteria. Only one of the teachers had attended that first meeting.

Martinville took on the task of piloting three programs within one school year. A committee which included two principals, one teacher from every K-5 grade level at the two elementary buildings and one middle school, and two Title 1 reading teachers was formed. A criteria checklist was developed from staff input at an inservice where each grade level brainstormed characteristics of an effective reading program and recorded those on chart paper. The committee compiled this data into a rubric with headings of vocabulary, language arts, reading selection, teacher edition, assessment and skill development. Under each heading were sub headings. A rating scale of 0-3 was used with 0 being "not found," and 3 being "excellent." A section for comments was also included. The committee looked at six publishing companies' materials, then voted on their top three. Those three publishing companies were invited to present to the committee over the summer prior to piloting (Series A, B and C). The committee decided to pilot Series A and Series B consecutively, spending about 6 weeks on each program in order to complete one unit. At the end of the 12-week pilots, teachers decided that the two series did not meet the needs of the teachers or the students. Teachers had found that the manuals were confusing, the skills presented were in a non-sequential order, and the
readings were too difficult for their students. After several meetings, and at the end of the second pilot, it was decided to pilot Series C which had been presented originally during the summer prior to the pilots. A final unanimous vote was made in February by the committee to adopt Series C. The three teachers interviewed in this district were involved in every phase and decision of the process.

Criteria for selection.

When asked to specify the criteria for the selection of a reading series, the first and most common response (7 out of 9) was authentic and high quality literature (see Table 2). Many of the old basals had stories written by the publishers. Teachers said that children want to be able to go to the library and pick out a book that they have read in their reading text. The second most popular response (6 out of 9) was that skills presented in a scope and sequence were important. A scope and sequence is a list of skills that are covered and the order in which they appear. "In the lower grades people were concerned that there was some sort of sequence of vocabulary development," Joan said. A structured program was necessary, meaning that reading, writing, language arts, spelling, and daily oral language are all included. A strong phonics component, a teacher friendly manual, integrated areas that span across social studies, science, math and art, spelling and vocabulary, assessment, and supplemental support were also mentioned along with several other needs among the teachers interviewed. "I think what we were looking for was something with quality literature, something that had a strong phonics base, and some cutting-edge kind of strategies such as daily oral language and word building, and something that might lend itself down the road such as guided reading," said Anne.

Decision-making.

When asked to describe the decision-making process and to explain how certain basal programs were eliminated, the responses were very similar. Lakeview's large committee tallied points from a rating system to narrow the decision down to Series A. After the pilot and through teacher input the administration decided that the funding was there to adopt Series A. "I think all the supplemental
materials sold our team on Series A. People did like that, the wealth of material that came with it,” Peggy added.

Camden Falls took an all-staff vote to make the final adoption decision. “We narrowed it down to two after putting the series in front of us, looking at all of the components, weighing the strong points and the weak points, and a big component of this is what the sales representatives promise you from the company, and what could be promised within a certain price range and a certain package. We were able to narrow it down to the package that would give us the most from the company that would give us the most,” Beth from Camden Falls said.

Martinville educators made their final decision based on a committee vote. Anne said, “I felt everything went really smoothly, through the consensus of the group, for whatever reason. Either it was way too difficult or it didn’t meet the needs of our children. It was so simple, we never had to argue about anything.” The elimination of basals was made based on the criteria checklists and rubrics and committee votes in all three districts.

**Final recommendations.**

When asked to state their final recommendation and to tell why they chose it, the teachers’ answers indicated that all three districts chose a different reading basal series program. Lakeview chose Series A because the pilot had gone well, it had strong overall components, and contained a variety of teaching options. “The skills do keep cycling through, not only from grade level to grade level, but within our anthology unit. They revisit it several times,” replied Danielle.

Camden Falls chose Series B because teachers liked the way it was put together; it included phonics development, and it was the most teacher-friendly for the amount of materials they received. “I like how the skills are set out, the follow-up activities that go along with those skills, and the literature is wonderful,” commented Joan.

Martinville chose Series C because it was manageable to teach, teachers thought it would be interesting to kids, and the series provided lots of possibilities as
far as teaching options such as flexible grouping. Anne suggested that, “When we put it all together, I think we will see good achievement for the children.”

**Feelings of confidence in the selection.**

Teachers were asked whether they were confident and happy with the basal program that their school/district adopted. Two teachers said a strong, “Yes.” “It is a program that a novice teacher could pick up and do,” replied Beth from Camden Falls. “I'm real excited to teach it from day one,” said Anne from Martinville. Seven teachers also said, “Yes,” but they were quick to indicate that they would still supplement their reading with tradebooks and novels. “I'm happy, but a little leery of how I'm going to meet the needs of the wide range of kids, so I'm hoping the training will enlighten me,” said Barb from Martinville. Three respondents indicated that the basal is not the answer to a balanced reading program. “It's hard to get all the components of a balanced reading program to fit in your day. I still pick and choose. I don't think there's ever a perfect basal,” replied Danielle.

**Suggestions for improvement.**

When asked about ideas or suggestions to make the process better and more effective, the majority of teachers indicated a great deal of satisfaction with the whole process. However, teachers had a few suggestions (see Figure 3). Beth, from Camden Falls recommended that experienced teachers need to be on the reading committee, while Margaret, from Lakeview, said a broad base of people is needed on the committee. Other points were that more teachers need to pilot the program, more time is needed to pilot, more teacher input, more programs piloted, and more supportive and available publisher representation. Materials should arrive on time so that all components can be taught, and a better job of staff development is needed.

**Discussion**

The findings indicate that in the teachers' opinions, the main purpose for adopting a new reading program was to make literature available that was authentic and multicultural. Teachers also wanted a program that meets more individual needs and offers ideas for skill instruction. It's evident that teachers feel challenged to meet
the wide range of abilities in each classroom. This shows that teachers need a program that offers options for students so they can achieve and succeed at their own levels. The fact that teachers want more skill ideas suggests that teachers feel skills are crucial to the development of reading.

In these three school districts teachers played a major role in the selection of basal reading materials. Although there were differences in the three districts' approaches to basal selection, all three districts relied heavily on teacher input. Most of the participants volunteered to be a part of the selection process because they had a genuine interest in reading. This suggests that teachers are becoming more involved in the decision-making of selecting reading materials. Just as Farr, Tulley, & Powell (1987) pointed out, few teachers in the 1980's had any input in the selection process, but the 1990's are changing the way teachers are perceived. Administrators seem to be encouraging more teacher participation when it comes to designing instruction for the reading needs of children.

Committees were formed, materials were either evaluated or piloted, and some sort of voting process was used to make a final purchase decision. Districts knew what they wanted beforehand from criteria sheets developed by staff. It's important to note that unlike Farr, Tulley & Powell's (1987) findings that basal programs were selected more for their surface appearance than for their underlying philosophy and instructional design, all the teachers in this study spent considerable time diving into each series and making notes on strengths and weaknesses, so that physical appearance was not the determining factor. These teachers did not take it for granted that all basals were pretty much the same.

Authentic literature and skills were at the top of the criteria list mentioned by teachers. Teachers commented that children wanted to read books that they could check out in the library. This suggests that districts did not have the best quality of literature available before the adoption took place. Skills presented in a logical sequence were important so that students could see a connection to the story as well as build on previous skills.
The decision-making step for all three districts included a voting process by either the whole staff or the adoption committee members. The Lakeview and Camden Falls districts were both influenced by the amount of supplemental materials and the opportunity to receive the most for their money. Martinville's decision was based on the success of the pilots. One series stood above the rest which made the choice a simple one. It's apparent that although the selection process was teacher-driven, the final decision for at least two of the districts was ultimately made by the administration.

District philosophies and expectations varied; therefore each district selected a different program based on the reading needs of the children. Through piloting, differences emerged that made making the final decision relatively easy. It's evident that piloting was the determining factor for some districts because teachers had the opportunity to teach and evaluate all the components to see how the whole program worked together.

All teachers had positive feelings about the use of a basal, even though many said they would still supplement with tradebooks. Overall, the participants agreed that basals cover the necessary skills needed for a reading program.

Most teachers were happy with the approach their district took, although a few ideas were suggested to improve the process. It seems to work most effectively when teachers are able to have input from the beginning. Through developing criteria lists, evaluating the entire program and piloting the series, teachers can determine if a certain basal is right for their district.

Conclusion

Selecting a new basal reading program is a long and extensive process as illustrated by the teachers in this study. The procedures that these three districts used show that it works well when a district first decides on the purpose that a basal will satisfy and what components are most important for a reading program. It's likely that the process will flow more smoothly when the committee members consist of trusted, committed, and experienced staff. It appears that through piloting teachers gain a better understanding of a program's strengths and weaknesses. A final vote
from teachers who were on the adoption committee and who have piloted the program seems to work best because they have experienced the most contact with the basal. Many teachers said that support from publishers is crucial. This implies that continuing staff development efforts need to be scheduled for novice and veteran teachers. Perhaps if these suggestions are followed, other districts will also have few problems in determining the best basal for their students.


Table 1

Participant Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudo Name</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Years of Teaching</th>
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<td>Danielle</td>
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<td>Peggy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Martinville</td>
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### Table 2

**Criteria Input by Teachers for Selection of a Basal**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Criteria Mentioned by Teachers</th>
<th>Number of teachers out of 9 who mentioned criteria</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authentic literature/high quality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structured program</td>
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<td>Phonics</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher friendly manual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated areas</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Spelling component</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting stories</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take home books</td>
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<td>Vocabulary development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
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<td>Individual needs</td>
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<td>Supplemental materials</td>
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<td>Multi-culture literature</td>
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<td>Support from publisher</td>
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<td>Writing component</td>
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<td>Extension Activities</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levelability</td>
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Figure Captions

Figure 1. District’s consideration and selection of series.
Figure 2. Teacher interview questions for basal adoption process.
Figure 3. Teacher suggestions for improvement by district.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>District</th>
<th>Considered</th>
<th>Selected</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lakeview</td>
<td>Series A</td>
<td>Series A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden Falls</td>
<td>Series B</td>
<td>Series B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Series D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martinville</td>
<td>Series A</td>
<td>Series C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Series B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Series C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. What was the purpose in selecting a new basal reading program and why a basal?

2. Why did you choose to become a part of this process?

3. Describe the process and the extent to which you were involved.

4. What were the criteria for a reading series?

5. Describe the decision making process. How were certain basal programs eliminated?

6. What was your final recommendation and why?

7. Are you confident and happy with the basal program that your school/district has adopted?

8. What ideas or suggestions do you have to make this process better and more effective?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions for Improvement</th>
<th>Teacher's District</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. More teachers need to pilot the program.</td>
<td>1. Lakeview</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Broad base of people on the committee.</td>
<td>2. Lakeview</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Better job of staff development.</td>
<td>3. Lakeview and Martinville</td>
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<td>4. Experienced teachers need to be on the reading committee.</td>
<td>4. Camden Falls</td>
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<td>5. More teacher input.</td>
<td>5. Camden Falls</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. More time to pilot/review materials.</td>
<td>6. Camden Falls and Martinville</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Pilot 2 programs, not 3.</td>
<td>7. Martinville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Better representation from publishers.</td>
<td>8. Martinville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Materials need to arrive on time.</td>
<td>9. Martinville</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>