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Integrating the six traits of reading into literature circle discussion groups : moving towards thoughtful literacy in a Title I classroom

Kristin N. Carew
University of Northern Iowa

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Abstract

This study examined the effects of integrating The Traits of Effective Readers into student-led literature circle discussion groups within the Title I reading classroom. This research was conducted with fourth grade students in an attempt to see if this method of instruction improved students' reading comprehension and motivation. The researcher was the teacher in the Title I classroom, and acted as a facilitator within the literature circle discussions.

The study results showed gains in students' comprehension in varying degrees, depending largely on the assessment used. Results from the attitude survey, however, showed that student motivation toward reading was significantly improved. The researcher recommends continued research using the Six Traits model integrated into student-led discussion groups to further explore the effects of this method of instruction with struggling readers.

INTEGRATING THE SIX TRAITS OF READING INTO LITERATURE CIRCLE
DISCUSSION GROUPS: MOVING TOWARDS THOUGHTFUL LITERACY IN A
TITLE I CLASSROOM

A Graduate Research Paper

Presented to the

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Masters of Arts in Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

By

Kristin N. Carew

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has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the

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Date Approved

Timothy G. Weih
Graduate Faculty Reader

7/22/04
Date Approved

Rick Traw
Graduate Faculty Reader

7/22/04
Date Approved

Rick Traw
Head, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Abstract

This study examined the effects of integrating *The Traits of Effective Readers* into student-led literature circle discussion groups within the Title I reading classroom. This research was conducted with fourth grade students in an attempt to see if this method of instruction improved students' reading comprehension and motivation. The researcher was the teacher in the Title I classroom, and acted as a facilitator within the literature circle discussions.

The process began with a read-aloud to introduce the Six Traits of Reading as well as the literature circle discussion task sheets. Following the read aloud, students ranked a list of six chapter books allowing for choice in book assignments. Students then began a process of reading their assigned books, completing various role sheets, participating in literature circle discussions, and completing activities for each of the six traits. All work completed was gathered for analysis and literature circle discussions were audiotaped for further study. Several assessments including the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, Gates MacGinity, Qualitative Reading Inventory, and Running Records using miscue analysis were used to determine growth in comprehension. An attitude survey was used to determine changes in students' attitudes toward reading.

The study results showed gains in students' comprehension in varying degrees, depending largely on the assessment used. Results from the attitude survey, however, showed that student motivation toward reading was significantly improved. The researcher recommends continued research using the Six Traits model integrated into student-led discussion groups to further explore the effects of this method of instruction with struggling readers.

"What are we doing in here today, Mrs. Carew?" Hillary (all names are pseudonyms) and the other students looked hopeful as they walked into the classroom where they receive support in the area of reading.

"We are continuing in *The Chalk Box Kid* (Bulla, 1987), where we last left off." "But what else are we doing?" they wanted to know as the hopeful looks began to waver.

"Do we have to answer more questions about the book?" asked Jason.

"We'll work together," I assured them and I was instantly met with looks that told me my students were far from enthused about the lesson that waited. At this moment I knew that I had lost them before we had even begun.

As teachers, we stand inside the doorway of an era in education where we are called to build a foundation of basic skills, a foundation that is balanced upon pillars of accountability. In my Title I classroom where I work with struggling readers, this need for providing my students with effective reading strategies and a knowledge of the basics is clouded by the reality that I am working with kids who have been turned off to the magic of reading. The challenge lies in the fact that although these students don't like reading and it is an uphill struggle to engage them in activities that require comprehending what they have read, the truth is that they need to acquire the strategies good readers use when they encounter text. Unfortunately they can't do this without reading.

Research shows that what good readers do, greatly differs from what poor readers do during the reading process (Dole, 2002). In these good readers/poor readers' studies, it has been shown that good readers are strategic readers. They appear to have a purpose when they read, they self monitor for comprehension, they reflect throughout their reading, and when comprehension breaks down, they use a variety of strategies to repair

their understanding (Routman, 1996). In addition, good readers are able to use these strategies flexibly and apply them in different contexts (Clay, 1992).

Redefining Instruction

According to Richard Allington, since the 1930's, there has been a "sorting machine" approach, which involves separating reading instruction into discrete isolated skills, to address students with variance in reading abilities (Primeaux, 2000). Since this time, teachers have been encouraged to slow the pace and teach skills in isolation to the point of mastery (Primeaux, 2000). This part-to-whole teaching approach is fueled by the assumption that remedial readers require a teacher-directed, lock-step program in order to acquire the skills needed to do well on traditional assessments (Primeaux, 2000). With today's emphasis on accountability, many educators believe that programs geared towards standardized assessments are indicators of programs that will yield test scores indicative of reading success.

A study by Ellis and Wortham, however, suggests that for struggling readers to acquire the skills and strategies necessary for success in reading, we need a "watering up" of the curriculum (Smolkin & Donovan, 2003). In providing opportunities for struggling readers by scaffolding, modeling reading strategies, supporting risk taking, and sharing control, students are found to produce greater gains in reading than if time was spent in a more traditional, teacher-dominated instructional setting (Smolkin & Donovan, 2003). Ellis and Wortham concluded that in "watering up" the curriculum, we can change the way that the struggling reader views reading by moving away from a simplified and disjointed curriculum that provides limited opportunities for developing thinking skills, towards more meaningful learning through thoughtful interactions with text centered on goals for both

the knowledge domain, which involves building basic reading skills, and affective domain, which involves appreciation of literature, of student learning (Smolkin & Donovan, 2003).

Richard Allington (2001) in his research on struggling readers has found the importance of thoughtful literacy, going beyond tasks that involve remembering towards opportunities to demonstrate thought processes about reading, in the development of comprehension skills in remedial reading instruction. "School tasks we have traditionally labeled as comprehension tasks have been largely focused on remembering, a very narrow slice of what is needed for understanding what we read" (Allington, 2001, p. 92).

Allington goes on to say that thoughtful literacy goes beyond the ability to read, remember, and recite. If we do not push our students to discuss what they have read and demonstrate their thinking to provide a picture of what they understand about text, then we will, according to Wilhelm, "...continue to develop students who don't even know that thoughtful literacy is the reason for reading" (Allington, 2001).

As I developed lessons where I was exposing my students to quality literature paired with questioning techniques designed to get at both implicit and explicit knowledge, I was not getting at the heart of comprehension with the students in my classroom. It wasn't enough. I knew my students were merely searching for answers to questions that they thought I wanted to hear. They had been programmed to take in and regurgitate information in such a way that they saw comprehension as something centered on right and wrong answers. They were not doing the things good readers do: summarizing, analyzing, evaluating, or making connections during their reading process. The challenge I faced involved redefining reading for my students in a way that involved motivating them to become engaged in the literature we explored together. I knew I needed to take a

serious look at reshaping the way I was addressing reading with the readers in my Title I classroom. I began looking for ideas to get at critical reading and in doing so I found a framework that I felt could get at the explicit teaching of comprehension skills in a way that would get my kids excited about reading. I had taken a class on The Traits Effective Readers and felt that the information I had gathered during this experience might be a good place to start. This study aims to look at the how the Six Traits of Effective Readers impacts student comprehension when integrated within student-led literature circle discussion groups in my Title I classroom.

Traits of Effective Readers (6 Traits of Reading Model)

Based upon two years of studying how students develop critical reading skills, the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (NWREL) developed a model that breaks reading down into manageable groups of teachable skills (RELnetwork, 1998). As a result of my search for ways to explicitly teach reading comprehension strategies, I used the six traits to separate reading skills into six skill areas, or traits, to more clearly identify what good readers do in an effort to describe good reading to my students.

Although standards vary by state, most reading standards consist of three main areas including comprehension, process, and application. *The Traits of an Effective Reader* address these common reading standards by advocating instruction of good reading product and process (www.nwrel.org). What was appealing to me about this model is that it served as a framework to organize and focus my teaching of reading strategies (Arrasmith & Dwyer, 2001). This model reinforces the art of critical reading by making students aware of the importance of thoughtful literacy by focusing the traits into three

areas: reading the lines, reading between the lines, and reading beyond the lines (see Table 1).

Literature Circles

The Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) stated, "Effective comprehension strategy instruction can be accomplished through cooperative learning" (Put Reading First, 2001, p. 54). As a way of teaching comprehension strategies through collaboration, I decided to integrate the *6 Traits of Reading* instruction with student-led literature circle discussion groups. Literature circles provide a vehicle for practicing comprehension strategies within a cooperative learning environment through student-initiated inquiry, choice, self-direction, and face-to-face interaction (Daniels, 2002). Literature circles also enhance critical reading by allowing students to discuss what they have read by focusing on patterns through summarizing, evaluating, revisiting the text, and making connections (Daniels & Bizar, 1998). Because these patterns are all found within the 6 Traits model, I felt that literature circles would be the perfect vehicles for my students to practice the comprehension strategies found within this framework. My goal was to use the *Traits of Effective Readers* to explicitly teach comprehension strategies while fueling student-motivation through opportunities to work cooperatively within literature circles.

Participants and methodology

This study took place in a rural school district in a small town in the Midwest. There are three sections of each grade level, with approximately 60 students per grade. The make-up of the school is quite homogeneous, with little diversity in race and socio-economic status. The majority of the students in the district are Caucasian, with parents

income levels falling somewhere between the lower to upper middle-class socioeconomic status. The school in this study is located in a small town of about 4,000 people where there is an outpouring of support for both the community and the school system.

The 10 students in this study were grouped into two groups of five consisting of three girls and two boys each. Each group came to my room for thirty minutes every other day for support in the area of reading. The study took place during the second semester of the school year from January through the end of April. Students were selected for this program based upon results on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI), and recommendations from their classroom teachers based upon student performance in the classroom.

Prior to our work with the *6 Traits of Reading*, all students were given a survey asking how often they use the strategies within the framework- always, sometimes, or never. Some of these strategies had been directly taught in my classroom or in the regular classroom, while others had not yet been addressed. They were also given a Garfield Attitude Survey (Strickland & Strickland, 2000) that helped to indicate students' attitudes about reading in general. The QRI (an informal reading inventory), the Gates MacGinitie (a standardized test given to all fourth grade students to determine vocabulary and comprehension grade level equivalencies), and the ITBS (a traditional standardized assessment) were used to help determine growth in the area of comprehension, as well as running records with miscue analysis to determine instructional reading levels. Literature circle discussions were also audiotaped to determine growth in comprehension by analyzing student responses to their reading. These tapes were listened to for indicators that growth was being made in comprehension by noting connections made, references to

the *6 Traits*, and amount of teacher guidance within discussions over time. A final interview was conducted with each student to gauge how he or she felt about this model of instruction compared to a traditional, teacher-directed approach.

Getting Started

I decided to begin my instruction of the *6 Traits* and the literature circle task sheets by using a read-aloud of the picture book *Marco Solo* (Schwinn & Harlow, 1995). This descriptive book about a boy living in the ghetto and who manages to momentarily escape the chaos of his neighborhood when he takes the train to an upscale suburban neighborhood worked well as a read-aloud. The vivid word choice, fast paced story line, and poignant message made the book an ideal choice for introducing the 6 Traits and the literature circle discussion format. When I had asked the students to describe any prior experiences with literature circles their responses ranged from descriptions of sitting in a circle listening to their teacher reading, to completing a Venn Diagram to compare cats and dogs, to sitting in a circle with friends to talk about books read for silent reading. I realized that my students had not been given the opportunity to choose and read a book in common with a small group and discuss it. Also, I learned that the terminology and concepts we would be using within this design of literature discussion would also be new for my students. Beginning with a read-aloud, provided an opportunity to introduce the traits, and model what we would be looking for within the text to help us better understand and talk about what we have read.

The read-aloud was broken up into six sessions, in which I read portions of the story aloud and then introduced one of the *6 Traits of Reading*. One thing that helped my students to understand the traits was that I gave my students terms for each trait that was

in familiar vocabulary to which they could all relate. For example "Using the Signs" helped my students understand that *Decoding Conventions* was about using anything that is printed in text including illustrations, bold type, changes in font type, blank space on the page- any signs that we take meaning from. By putting each trait into terms that they were familiar with, my students were better able to see and talk about what they needed to do in the text to enhance their comprehension. To help them better remember posters of each trait, along with the familiar terms were posted in the room, and referenced frequently throughout our discussions.

A second goal within these read-aloud sessions included introducing and working together through one of each of the six literature circle task sheets (Coleman, 2001). The task sheets included the following roles: the Word Wizard, who was responsible for identifying interesting, confusing or powerful words for discussion; the Discussion Director, who came up with three questions over the reading that would cause reactions and concerns that would initiate group discussion; the Illustrator, who drew a picture relating to the story to be explained and discussed with the group; the Passage Picker, who chose interesting passages to read aloud and discuss with the group; the Summarizer, who wrote a summary consisting of main ideas from the reading; and the Connector, who shared real life connections including text to self, text to text, and text to world. The purpose of using these task sheets was to help students guide their discussions while I acted as the facilitator.

Something that became apparent as I read and focused upon each of the *6 Traits* within the read-aloud, was that students were making connections with what they had done in their regular classroom. While we discussed the idea of Realizing Context or "Seeing the

Big Picture" Hillary commented, "This is like what we do in the room when our teacher talks about seeing a picture in your mind."

Jason added, "Yeah, like when you are able to see what is happening and where it is happening in your head you really do get the big picture of the story."

Again, when we discussed "Building Interpretations" or "Making a Case," Erin related it to the TV show CSI, where the investigators find clues to solve a case, which I pointed out was an excellent text-to-world connection. We also talked about how the authors in *Marco Solo* never come out and tell us that the men running down the alley were the ones who had committed the crime in the story, but we could take what we already knew about criminals, and the clue the author gave about the men running from the scene, to make the interpretation that those men were the ones who were guilty.

Jordan responded, "This is the same as inferring."

Erin added, "Our teacher has talked about that in our classroom- where you take something you know and put it with something from the book." In talking through and then applying each trait to the read-aloud *Marco Solo*, I was able to organize my teaching and the students were able to organize their thinking (Dwyer & Thompson, 1999). The difference I saw emerging in our discussions was the organization we achieved by using a common language- the trait terms and their accompanying skills, which helped my students become aware of the indicators of good reading (Dwyer & Thompson, 1999).

At the conclusion of the six read-aloud sessions, my students were given the opportunity to vote on which chapter book they would like to read as a group from a list consisting of *How to Eat Fried Worms* (Rockwell, 1973), *Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days* (Manes, 1982), *Tornado* (Byars, 1996), *Amber Brown Goes Fourth*

(Danziger, 1995), *Meet Samantha* (Adler, 1986), and *There's a Frog in My Sleeping Bag* (Clymer, 1997). In each group, the book chosen was in each members' top three choices. The first group was assigned *Be a Perfect Person in Just Three Days* (Manes, 1982) about a boy who discovers a book that promises to help him become perfect in three days time, while the second group was assigned *There's a Frog in My Sleeping Bag* (Clymer, 1997) about a girl whose class goes on a field trip to Camp Buffalo and it is up to her to find the camp trickster. The excitement that stemmed from having the opportunity of choice in the book they were reading, and then learning the book that had been assigned, carried over into the first day of actual literature circle discussions.

Changes In Response

Our first job was to set up some guidelines to allow for a successful literature discussion to take place. After brainstorming within both groups we came up with a list that included:

1. Talk one at a time
2. Comment/share thoughts after each role sheet is presented
3. Keep comments positive
4. Disagree in a polite manner
5. Be prepared
6. Everyone participates in the discussion

Each member of the two groups agreed upon these guidelines and each student was enthusiastic about beginning the discussions. What appealed most to my students was the fact that each student was responsible for a different task sheet and that they would come to the group with their own job that they would use to contribute to the discussion.

I organized the lessons so that every other time we met, the students would be given time to read the assigned reading and work on their task sheet. In most instances the students were able to get the reading done as well as the task sheet in the thirty minutes of class time. We alternated reading independently, reading with partners, reading orally "popcorn style" in which each student selects another student to read next after they have read aloud, and me reading aloud. The students were able to come to me if they needed guidance in completing the task sheets, but because I had modeled each job and we had done the task sheets together during the initial read-aloud the students were able to complete most of the work independently. In the following class session we would carry out our literature circle discussion during the first part of class and then we would do an activity together, which focused on one of the *6 Traits* during the last part of class.

Although my students were excited to get started, and we had come up with some guidelines to guide us, they didn't quite know how to respond to one another during our initial discussions. During the first discussion, all five students in the first group were hesitant to participate.

Mrs. C: Erin you can start. You are the Discussion Director.

Erin: My first question is: Would you check out this book from the library? [silence]

Mrs. C: Did you mean the book that fell off the shelf and hit Milo in the head?

Erin: Yes.

Mrs. C: What do you guys think?

Whitney: If I read the back and it looked good I would check it out.

Mrs. C: Well, Milo did look on the back didn't he, and what did he see?

Casey: Dr. Silverfish, see it talks about him right here [points to the book]. It says he didn't look like Milo's idea of a doctor. He wore baggy pants and a bow tie and he was really weird.

Mrs. C: So, would you check it out if you had looked at the back of the book and saw Dr. Silverfish? [silence]

Jordan: I would to see what he had to say.

In this initial discussion my role as a facilitator was essential. I was required to clarify questions and probe to get my students to react and respond to what their group members were saying. One of the problems my students experienced was that they were so excited for their turn to report on their own task sheet that they were not investing in what their group members were talking about. This lack of engagement and depth in this first discussion made me question whether or not the task sheets would work in our discussions. Despite our rough start however, I was able to see some good things happening with the student roles. Each student had put a lot of time and thought into their task sheet and were thinking critically about the book in relation to their own job which helped me realize that these roles were a critical starting point for my students. The question Erin asked was a good one for us to talk about- would we in fact check out the book from the library? This was the event that got the whole story rolling and this question led us to talk further about Dr. Silverfish, a major character in the story. I was able to see an elicitation of background knowledge and a personal connection taking place in the fact that Whitney was thinking about what she would do in the situation (look at the back of the book). And finally, Casey went back into the text to add what she learned about Dr. Silverfish. This is something I had been trying to get them to do all year with little success. None of my students ever wanted to look back in the text to explore any deeper, and here in our first discussion it was happening. Although we had our work ahead of us in how to carry out a discussion, I was elated.

Over the next few sessions we talked about what it meant to have a conversation. We talked about real situations where friends talk about topics of interest and what we needed to do to make our discussions more like those we have daily with peers. My students decided that it wasn't necessary to raise hands to talk as long as we listened to each other and talked one at a time. They also talked about paying attention and going back into the book to clarify what the speaker was saying rather than just staying silent if they had a question. As time went on, the discussions became more meaningful and natural.

Another important aspect of our class was the time spent doing activities around the *6 Traits of Effective Readers*. One activity to point out the importance of *Decoding Conventions* was a scavenger hunt where the students went back into the chapter to find different "signs" within the text. An activity to promote *Building Interpretations* was a chart activity that required students to find ambiguities in the text, locate clues, and develop their own interpretation based upon clues (Dwyer & Tompson, 1999). For *Visualizing Context*, a graphic organizer was used to describe where and when the story was taking place requiring students to think about what they might see, hear, touch, smell and taste within a particular setting in the story (Dwyer & Thompson, 1999). These, as well as the other activities completed which focused upon the *6 Traits*, gave the students opportunities to "learn to read" and "read to learn" as they interacted with the text in more challenging and complex ways (Dwyer & Thompson, 1999). In a literature circle discussion further into our lessons, my students were able to connect what they were discussing back to the Traits of Effective readers.

Jason: The last question (as the Connector) was how does this book remind you of another book you have read is, it is a mystery story. It's like a mystery because they don't know who is playing all the tricks on them.

- Hillary: Have you read another book that's kind of like a mystery?
- Jason: Yeah, it's called *Martians Don't Take Temperatures*. It's where there's a Martian at a school and they wonder if she's from Mars because she's never seen water before.
- Britney: So they were trying to solve something just like in our book?
- Jason: Yeah, but I'm not done with the story yet so I don't know how it turns out.
- Mrs. C: If we think about the connection Jason was making that goes right along with our trait number...
- Group: Five
- Jason: Juggling ideas into shape
- Mrs. C: Right, and you were taking ideas from the story and making connections either to the world, to another text, or to yourself. In this case it would be...
- Hillary: Text to text
- Mrs. C: You're exactly right and that's what good readers do.

In this discussion the students led the actual discussion and I was able to jump in as the facilitator to pull what they had been talking about back to the 6 Traits of Reading to make explicit exactly what they had done and to point out that it was something good readers do.

Effects of this Approach

My original question, which was to find out if integrating the *6 Traits of Reading* into literature circle discussion groups improved the comprehension of the struggling readers in my Title I classroom was only partially answered. Most students improved in the area of comprehension in varying degrees on at least three out of the four assessments used (see Table 2). Unfortunately the ITBS test, which is used to determine reading proficiency in our state, did not reflect the improvement I had seen in our discussions. I was slightly taken aback that the improvement was not more evident on these tests. However, as I reflected upon the types of questions asked on these one-shot assessments, the key factor

is that the types of connections and questions we were asking through our discussions were quite different than the typical multiple-choice questions found on many traditional assessments. Due to this fact I kept in mind that one-shot standardized assessments may not show a true picture of what my students' capabilities were. I realized that standardized tests tend to penalize students who read too much into the questions, which is exactly what we had been doing in our discussions and activities: reading the lines, reading between the lines, and reading beyond the lines. So although there were assessments where individual students did not show growth, it is important to note that through my observations as a facilitator in our discussion groups, I was able to observe my students thinking more thoughtfully about the books they were reading and respond in more sophisticated ways, which takes them a step towards our goal of achieving thoughtful literacy (Allington, 2001). I was also able to see them beginning to connect how they were thinking about the text- back to the activities and strategies we had talked about within the *6 Traits of Effective Readers*.

Although motivation was not originally targeted in my study, I discovered that attitudes towards reading had improved for each of my students. The motivation they displayed towards reading and activities done in class did a 360-degree turn around (see Table 3). It is interesting to me that on the post-survey, seven out of eight students felt either excited or good about spending time free reading, as opposed to only three who felt this excited or good about free reading at the onset of the study. This was encouraging, because I am a firm believer that if my students will spend time outside of class reading for enjoyment, they will begin to take ownership of the skills and strategies we have been working towards as they use them independently in free reading. Another dramatic finding was

that seven out of eight students felt excited, and the other felt good, about coming to my classroom for reading support at the conclusion of the study. As I had changed my approach to reading instruction, my students had become excited about coming to read and discuss books as a small group.

Individual conferences, which were held with each student at the conclusion of the study, provided a closer look at why this method of instruction may have increased motivation toward reading. Students' responses to this new way of learning were overwhelmingly positive.

Casey: Jobs (task sheets) are better than just answering questions because answering questions isn't fun- I always get them wrong.

Jason: Doing role sheets is fun because I don't feel like I'll be wrong. There's no wrong answer.

Hillary: I liked doing jobs better than the other way. You feel like you get to do something you don't get to do in a normal classroom and you get different opinions about the book.

Jordan: It's fun to discuss, you feel like the teacher when it's your turn. I like having different ways of learning.

Brad: It's fun and makes me like reading more.

I contribute this increased motivation partly to the fact that understanding the reading had become easier for my students due to the explicit instruction of the *Traits of Effective Readers*. I also believe that the literature circle discussions, paired with having choice in the books we read, was a big factor in my students' change in attitude. Giving my students the task sheets helped them focus in on one aspect of the reading and helped them become an expert at something that had no "right or wrong answer." These task sheets increased motivation, and also helped us get to the heart of comprehension through real reading instead of the typical skill-and-drill that has become standard in many remedial reading programs. As Fountas and Pinnell (1996) state, these intensive, open-ended discussions

provide the richness of literature experiences to all students regardless of their instructional reading level. As a Title I reading teacher, I know I will continue to provide my students with opportunities to move towards thoughtful literacy because like Allington (2001), I believe that struggling readers have the greatest need for lessons that foster thoughtfulness. The failures of the skills-emphasis remedial programs have stimulated us to rethink the nature of reading instruction (Allington, 2001). More research is needed to challenge ourselves not only to provide increased comprehension for these hardest to reach students, but also create that spark that just might turn them on to the magic of reading.

Table 1 - Six Traits of Reading

The Six Traits	Terms for Students	Skills and Strategies
<i>Reading the Lines:</i> Trait #1~ Decoding Conventions	"Using the Signs"	Deciphering anything printed on the page (words, illustrations, punctuation, grammar, charts/graphs, captions, bold print and italics) realizing genre, reading with correct expression and fluency
<i>Reading the Lines:</i> Trait #2~ Establishing Comprehension	"Getting the Message"	Identifying main ideas, supporting details, conflict & resolution, turning points, distinguishing between major/minor characters, predicting, self-monitoring, summarizing
<i>Reading Between the Lines:</i> Trait #3~ Realizing Context	"Seeing the Big Picture"	Finding vocabulary reflective of context, describing setting and time period, extending background knowledge relative of the big picture of the story
<i>Reading Between the Lines:</i> Trait #4~ Building Interpretations	"Making a Case"	Locating problems/ambiguities/gaps in the text, selecting clues and evidence to analyze problems, revising interpretations with new information, connecting interpretations with the big picture
<i>Reading Beyond the Lines:</i> Trait #5~ Integrating for Synthesis	"Juggling Ideas Into Shape"	Comparing/contrasting, explaining text order, determining cause and effect, using background experiences to extend meaning, drawing information from a variety of sources, making connections

<i>Reading Beyond the Lines:</i> Trait #6~ Critiquing for Evaluation	"Judging the Text"	Making judgments, expressing opinions, raising questions, challenging the text and author, noting bias and distortion, distinguishing between fact and opinion
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*Adapted from Six Traits of Reading

(<http://www.rhijh.lkwash.edu/Staff/BERGE/Ninth/readingtraits.html>)

Table 2 - Comprehension Results

Name	ITBS (NPR) Spring Grade 3	ITBS (NPR) Spring Grade 4	QRI Pretest	QRI Posttest	Gates Mac- Ginitie (GLE) Pretest	Gates Mac- Ginitie (GLE) Posttest	Inst. Text Level Pre- test	Inst. Text Level Post- test
Britney	19	19	50%	88%	2.2	2.4	O	S
Brad	22	7	50%	88%	1.9	3.3	P	V
Whitney	52	27	75%	88%	3.5	5.3	O	U
Casey	31	36	50%	88%	3.6	4.6	Q	S
Hillary	28	63	88%	100%	4.4	8.7	N	S
Jordan	66	44	63%	88%	3.8	4.4	P	S
Erin	28	33	63%	75%	3.7	3.5	Q	T
Jason	13	19	75%	88%	2.7	3.2	O	U

(Comprehension portions of each assessment were used)

*NPR= National Percentile Ranking

*QRI= Qualitative Reading Inventory (using 4th grade level passage)

*GLE= Grade Level Equivalency

*Instructional text levels based upon Fountas & Pinnell's (1996) leveling system for Guided Reading

Table 3 - Attitude Survey Results

QUESTION	EXCITED		GOOD		O.K.		BAD	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
How do you feel about spending free time reading?	2	3	1	4	3	1	2	0
How do you feel when teachers ask you questions about what you have read?	1	2	2	4	1	1	4	1
How do you feel about the books you read in reading class?	0	5	1	2	3	1	4	0
How do you feel when it is time for reading class (Title I Reading)?	3	7	1	1	3	0	1	0

(Numbers indicate the number of students responding with the given response on the pre and post surveys.)

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