Pleasure reading workshop: Meeting SEL competencies based on sustained (and maybe not so silent) reading

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University of Northern Iowa

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Pleasure reading workshop: Meeting SEL competencies based on sustained (and maybe not so silent) reading

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Abstract
The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the benefits pleasure reading had on students’ understanding of social emotional learning and the Teacher Librarian’s (TL) foundational role for providing an environment for pleasure reading that fostered social emotional learning (SEL) at the middle school level. The participants included one language arts class of 14 seventh graders at a private K-8 school located in the Midwest. Students were given ample class time to read, and their writing, discussions, and evaluations centered around social and emotional learning. Results in 6 themes showed that using pleasure reading as a base, teachers can satisfy a majority of the Iowa SEL Competencies (Iowa DE, 2020) and that the pleasure reading workshop facilitated student SEL competencies for all 14 students at the expected developmental level. For example, for Theme 1 students demonstrated SEL Competency 1, Self-Awareness. With time to reflect on themselves as readers, students’ self-awareness increased which positively impacted SEL Competency two, Self-Management. Theme 2 was Pleasure Reading Workshop Facilitated Student Agency, and students exemplified SEL Competency 4 Relationship Skills by Theme 4, Students Made Social Connections through Reading. All themes are represented throughout the final list of ten strategies that TLs use and that were used in this workshop to promote pleasure reading.

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PLEASURE READING WORKSHOP: MEETING SEL COMPETENCIES BASED ON
SUSTAINED (AND MAYBE NOT SO SILENT) READING

A Graduate Research Paper
Submitted to the
Division of School Library Studies
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

by
Lora Sink
August 2022
This Research Paper by: Lora Sink
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the benefits pleasure reading had on students' understanding of social emotional learning and the Teacher Librarian’s (TL) foundational role for providing an environment for pleasure reading that fostered social emotional learning (SEL) at the middle school level. The participants included one language arts class of 14 seventh graders at a private K-8 school located in the Midwest. Students were given ample class time to read, and their writing, discussions, and evaluations centered around social and emotional learning. Results in 6 themes showed that using pleasure reading as a base, teachers can satisfy a majority of the Iowa SEL Competencies (Iowa DE, 2020) and that the pleasure reading workshop facilitated student SEL competencies for all 14 students at the expected developmental level. For example, for Theme 1 students demonstrated SEL Competency 1, Self-Awareness. With time to reflect on themselves as readers, students’ self-awareness increased which positively impacted SEL Competency two, Self-Management. Theme 2 was Pleasure Reading Workshop Facilitated Student Agency, and students exemplified SEL Competency 4 Relationship Skills by Theme 4, Students Made Social Connections through Reading. All themes are represented throughout the final list of ten strategies that TLs use and that were used in this workshop to promote pleasure reading.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Justification of Problem

Because good mental health plays a positive role in children’s overall health and their ability to learn, the Report of the Surgeon General's Conference on Children's Mental Health: A National Action Agenda (2000) was a call to action for schools and other child-centered institutions to address the mental health crisis of our nation’s children. Unfortunately, stress and mental health issues in children continued to rise (Hill, Harriman, & Grosso 2021). To address this problem, schools’ newest initiatives center around ways to meet their students’ social and emotional learning needs; the Iowa Core’s Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies (2020) support this endeavor. A meta-analysis of 213 school SEL curricula show these programs are successful in increasing students’ social understanding, development, (Durlak, Weissburg, Dymnick, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011) and academic achievement (Leece, Caputi, Pagnin, & Banerjee, 2017). However, there is evidence that pleasure reading also increases a child’s social understanding (Wulandini, Kunto, & Handayani, 2018) and aids teen development into adulthood (Howard, 2011). This connection between reading fiction and the role it plays in social understanding is “scarce” (Kozak & Recchia, 2018, p. 570), and to realize its potential, additional research is pertinent.

Reading for pleasure is defined by Clark and Rumbold (2006) as “reading that we do of our free will anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading”
The nature of pleasure reading is engaged reading. It is also called reading for enjoyment, leisure reading, recreational reading, independent reading, Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) and Free Voluntary Reading (FVR).

At its base, the Iowa Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies (2020) has five competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision Making. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL] (2021) is composed of the same five learning competencies. SEL is sometimes referred to as social understanding or mentalizing and has many overlapping characteristics with Theory of Mind (ToM), including empathy, social awareness, and relationship building. Kidd and Castano (2016) define Theory of Mind as "our ability to infer and understand others' thoughts and feelings" (p. 474).

**AASL Standards and the Importance of Reading and SEL**

The American Academy of School Librarians ([AASL], 2018) outline six Common Beliefs that guide librarians. Belief four addresses the importance of reading: “Reading is the core of personal and academic competency” (p. 11). Both the AASL (2020) Position Statement and the Iowa School Library Standards (Iowa DE, 2019) express the teacher librarian’s (TL) important role of establishing a positive reading culture that fosters a love of reading. It is further supported in ASSL (2018) Shared Foundation V: Explore: “Reading widely and deeply in multiple formats” is key to learner discovery and innovation (p. 104).

The AASL (2018) Standards for Learners and Standards for School Librarians make clear the TL’s role in fostering SEL components. For example, in Shared Foundation I:
Inquire, the TL provides opportunities for learners to share and reflect with other learners during inquiry. In Shared Foundation II: Include, the TL encourages many types of social interactions with multiple perspectives. For Shared Foundation III: Collaborate, the TL guides students to work effectively with each other for common goals.

Furthering Past Research About the Role of Reading for Pleasure

Ivey and Johnston’s (2013) research of student-perceived causes and outcomes of engaged reading not only highlighted the socioemotional aspects of engaged reading, but also its complexity. Most of the student-perceived outcomes were also viewed as causal, resulting in an interlinking and overlapping web. The findings showed that “engagement clearly cannot be reduced to a solitary cognitive relationship focused on attention;” engagement is “fully personal and inseparably relational” (p. 271). This study’s findings question the traditional curriculum and indicate the need for further research into the socioemotional causes and effects of sustained (and maybe not so silent) reading in the language arts classroom.

Rationale for Leadership in Reading for Pleasure

A group that will benefit from this study are language art teachers who may find new best practices when it comes to their reading curriculum. Another is teacher librarians who will gain a more comprehensive understanding of the benefits reading for pleasure has on student understanding of SEL competencies and the role they can play in fostering SEL. The findings will be valuable when implementing many of the AASL (2018) School Librarian Standards’ domains and competencies that require TL guidance and facilitation with student collaboration. Curriculum writers can connect this study’s
findings to meeting Iowa Core SEL Competencies (Iowa DE, 2020) regarding student relationships. Teacher librarians, myself included, may share these findings with teachers during an inservice, with their curriculum team when considering implementing or adjusting the SEL curriculum. They can place the recommendations for best practices on the library’s website page, and provide information in parent newsletters.

**Summary of Problem Statement**

Although many developments in education have studied means to engage students in increased pleasure reading and thereby increasing the amount they read, there remains a need for further study into how the TL influences students’ reading for pleasure and the effect it has on student understanding of SEL competencies at the middle school level.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to examine the benefits pleasure reading has on students' understanding of SEL competencies and the Teacher Librarian’s foundational role for providing an environment for pleasure reading that fosters relationship skills at the middle school level.

**Research Questions**

1. What are the benefits of pleasure reading on student understanding of SEL competencies?
2. How can a Teacher Librarian influence students’ pleasure reading as part of the SEL curriculum?
Assumptions

This study assumes that reading for pleasure will have emotional, psychological, and social benefits, and as such, give students a stronger social and emotional understanding.

It is additionally assumed that this study will give classroom teachers and teacher librarians another avenue to better meet the Iowa SEL Competencies (Iowa DE, 2020).
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to examine the benefits pleasure reading has on students' understanding of SEL competencies and the Teacher Librarian’s foundational role for providing an environment for pleasure reading that fosters SEL at the middle school level. Previous studies reviewed fall under three subthemes: reading communities and pleasure reading, pleasure reading and social understanding, and social understanding and school achievement.

Reading Communities and Pleasure Reading

Howard (2010) explored the pleasure reading habits of 68 junior high students (ages 12-15) from Nova Scotia, Canada, through a succession of nine focus groups. This article focused on one part of a larger study: the role of peer influence in the recreational reading of young teens. Howard analyzed focus group discussions using a grounded theory approach to glean data about peer influence and used inductive analysis to categorize readers based on their self-reported reading frequency (Avid, Occasional, Reluctant). Next, Howard categorized readers by the self-identified ways peers influenced their reading practices (Social Communal, Detached Communal, Solitary). The intersection of these two self-assessed components formed nine groups, which Howard labeled Taxonomy of Teen Readers. Howard’s study showed the complexity of peer influence on teen readers. For example, Reluctant Solitary Readers did not value reading nor being a part of a reading community, while Avid and Occasional Social
Communal Readers enjoyed a very social reading experience “in which friends encourage reading for pleasure and shared reading experiences solidify friendships” (p. 36). This study called attention to the positive role reading communities played for many teen readers and the potential roles reading communities can play for teens; for example, students who are Avid Solitary Readers but are open to being part of a reading community.

Merga (2020) also showed the positive role reading communities had on leisure reading. Interviews with 30 Australian teacher librarians investigated the ways they promoted reading engagement and pleasure reading. When Merga’s initial data showed all 30 TLs used discussions about books as a strategy to foster pleasure reading and engagement, one aspect of the study became “to identify the array of expressions that book discussion took within school libraries” (par. 4), resulting in six categories. These six components of book discussions that lead to a more social and integrative reading environment included 1) peer promotion and recommendations, 2 ) teacher and student-led book talks and discussions, 3) discussions on the benefits of pleasure reading, 4) talking with authors, 5) student recommendations supporting collection building, and 6) modeling being a reader. Debbie, one of the TLs in the study, encouraged students to become a reading community in which students talked about and recommended books to one another. Merga concluded that the TL’s common use and varying styles of book discussions “recognizes the role of social factors that can shape reading engagement” (para. 49).
Pleasure Reading and Social Understanding

Ivey and Johnston’s (2013) qualitative study investigated 71 students’ perspectives about their reading curriculum, which focused extensively on reading engagement. The characteristics of engaged reading included motivation, comprehension, reading strategies, and socioemotional processes. In order to put a greater focus on engaged reading, the grade eight teachers at a public middle school in the mid-Atlantic region replaced their traditional reading curriculum with one that consisted of three central components: free choice of reading material, free choice of response to reading material, and teacher books talks. Within this learning environment, Ivey and Johnston posed two research questions: “What do students perceive to be the outcomes of engaged reading of young adult literature?” and “What do students perceive to be the causal processes of engaged reading?” (p. 258). An inductive analysis of their primary data (71 end-of-the-year student interviews) and supporting data (end-of-the-year teacher interviews, bi-weekly observation, “on the fly” conversations with students, and recorded book discussions) resulted in 14 student-perceived outcomes and 10 student-perceived causes of engaged reading. Notably, the outcomes and causes interlinked and overlapped forming a complex web; in other words, many of the dimensions of achievement (outcomes) also became causal. The outcomes and causes from their findings relevant to the current study included “talk through and about books” [mentioned by 91% of the students interviewed] (p. 261), student agency (91%), world knowledge (77%), sense of self (73%), positive changes in relationships (70%), social imagination (45%), intellectual and moral stance (31%), and happiness (27%). The data showed the nature of
engaged reading as socioemotional; relationships are formed both inside the book (with characters) and outside the book (with others). Namely, students do not just find meaning from their books, they also find meaning about others and themselves. The results showed that engaged reading is “an integral part of complex social practices, that are at once processes and outcomes that promote a healthy development of personhood” (p. 272).

Through a series of focus groups, Howard (2011) examined the importance of pleasure reading in the lives of 68 Canadian 12-15 year olds. Howard put the data collected from the focus group discussions through a process of inductive analysis to answer the research question, “What role does reading for pleasure fill in the lives of young teens (aged 12-15)?” (p. 48). Howard found pleasure reading enhanced academic performance, social engagement, and personal development. Teens reported pleasure reading broadened their understanding of the world, both past and present; it supported their developing social conscience and empathy; and brought them a sense of empowerment. Additionally, this study showed reading made many teens feel better about themselves. In conclusion, when reading for pleasure, “teens gain significant insights into self-identification, self-instruction, and self-awareness, all of which aid them in the transition from childhood to adulthood” (p. 53).

Wulandini, Kuntoro and Handayani (2018) also examined the effect reading fiction had on social understanding by comparing genres middle grade students read and their social understanding. Researchers assigned 108 children aged 9-10 to read one of three genres (literary fiction, popular fiction, or nonfiction) for five consecutive days; a
fourth group served as a control and were given non-reading activities. The researchers differentiated fiction by its complexity; for example literary fiction’s writing was deemed more sophisticated, its characters were layered, and its conflicts thought-provoking, while popular fiction was characterized by a formulaic plotline and its appeal to readers of a specific genre. To test their hypothesis that children who read literary fiction will gain better social understanding than children who read other genres, the children were given a Theory of Mind (ToM) test. The test consisted of a complex story followed by student predictions of the story’s characters’ emotions. Wulandini et al. used the test scenario to assess students’ ToM that was defined through the following characteristics: Diverse Belief (understanding thinking), Knowledge Access (understanding that seeing leads to knowing), False Belief (understanding that others do not have the same knowledge as oneself), and Hidden Emotion (understanding hidden feelings). The results showed that children who read literary fiction made better predictions about characters’ emotions than children who read popular fiction or nonfiction. Wulandini et al. (2018) concluded that “reading is a beneficial activity which can be undertaken to improve ToM abilities (p. 164).

Social Understanding and School Performance

Leece, Caputi, Pagnin, and Baanerjee (2017) administered a longitudinal study to investigate the connection between social understanding and school performance of 73 Italian children at three different stages (age 5, age 7 and age 8). The authors triangulated social understanding tests (including ToM), social competence ratings by teachers and peers, and school achievement results to examine the link between early social
understanding and later school achievement, as well as, the role social competence played in the relationship. The results showed that social understanding at age 5 predicted social competence at 7, which in turn predicted academic performance at age 8. Additionally, social competence mediated this relationship. Leece et al. concluded that their findings suggested that interventions which improve the social understanding of young children may lead to improved social competence, resulting in stronger academic achievement.

**Summary**

These studies all showed the social nature of engaged reading and its connection to children's socioemotional development. Two studies demonstrated the social aspect of engaged reading through reading communities (Howard, 2010; Merga, 2020). Merga’s six components that TLs used to lead to a more social and integrative reading environment for book discussions included: 1) peer promotion and recommendations, 2) teacher and student-led book talks and discussions, 3) discussions on the benefits of pleasure reading, 4) talking with authors, 5) student recommendations supporting collection building, and 6) modeling being a reader. Three studies highlighted the benefits pleasure reading had on social emotional learning (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, Howard, 2011; Wulandini et al., 2016). Specifically, Ivey and Johnston (2013) found 14 socioemotional causes and outcomes related to engaged pleasure reading; eight provided context for initial coding of this study: talking about books, student agency, sense of self, positive changes in relationships, social imagination, intellectual and moral stance, happiness, and world knowledge. The last article tied social emotional learning to academic achievement, illustrating the connection between positive mental health and
learning (Leece et al., 2017). To extend the work of previous studies, this study examines the role pleasure reading plays in SEL, and the TL’s role in fostering pleasure reading to meet the Iowa Core’s Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies (2020).
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Research Design

According to Wildemuth (2017), “the case study method focuses on examining contemporary events in a natural setting” (p. 58). Because this study investigated SEL in a setting that fostered engaged reading, the research used a qualitative case study design.

Participants

The participants included one language arts class of 14 seventh graders at a private K-8 school located in the Midwest. The class consisted of eight males and six females. At the study’s start, the students’ reading abilities were diverse. Based on their fall Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST) scores taken on October 1, 2021, ten of the students were on track, three were low risk, and one student was at the some risk range.

Procedures

Data Collection

I collected data for this study over two months for approximately one hour per day in a seventh grade English language arts classroom. Three pieces of data collection were used: the researcher/teacher’s (1) Lessons and Student Written Work, (2) Field Notes about Book Conversations (focus groups), and (3) Final Interviews with students. The first data source was the teacher’s reading and writing workshop lessons based upon Nancie Atwell’s (2015) strategies, four students’ written work writing about reading, and two students’ written self-evaluations as readers. My teaching was structured on Atwell’s
simple philosophies of providing ample time for students to read books of their choice, write about and discuss their reading, and evaluate themselves as readers. For this study, students continued to have ample time to read, but I centered student writing, discussions, and evaluations around social and emotional learning.

The second data source, Field Notes about Book Conversations (see Appendix A) included nine book discussions each based on one of the CASEL’s (2020) SEL Discussion and Writing Prompts. (Appendix B) At the start of the study in the second half of the school year, I had an established teacher-student relationship with the participants, but I wished to build additional rapport. Wildemuth (2017) suggested three ways: join their activities, converse with the group, and be interested in the participants (p. 222). So, I joined their silent reading time and modeled being a good reader of young adult fiction. Then, to show interest and converse with the group, I initiated informal conversations about their books and reading, and I intentionally, but authentically, validated their thoughts, feelings, and epiphanies with my words and actions. As a follow-up to the three changes I made in teacher behavior, I conducted the nine book discussions.

The third data source, Final Interviews, included the end of the year prompts adapted from Ivey & Johnston’s (2013) End of the Year Interview Questions (see Appendix C) asked of students and recorded for analysis.

Data Analysis

This study used qualitative content analysis of the data, and as the researcher, I used the 8 steps of qualitative analysis (Wildemuth, 2017, pp. 320-323). Following step 1, I
prepared the data by transcribing the sections of the end of the year interviews I deemed useful. In step 2, I defined the unit of analysis using the five Iowa SEL Competencies (2020) as codes with each competency defined by their “Targets and Indicators.” In step 3, I developed the categories and an initial coding scheme by aligning components from past research by Howard (2011), Merga (2020), and Ivey & Johnston (2013) under the five SEL competencies as initial codes: (1) self-awareness, (2) self-management, (3) social awareness, (4) relationship skills, and (5) responsible decision making (see Appendix F). In step four I tested my coding scheme by interviewing a seventh grade volunteer who was not one of the 14 language arts students. The applicable end of the year interview questions were used and the session recorded. In step five, I coded data from Student Written Work, my analysis of participant observer notes from Book Conversations, and transcripts from the recorded End of the Year Interviews. In step 6, I assessed my coding consistency and continued to use the five Iowa SEL Competencies. In step 7, I drew conclusions from the coded data by identifying relationships between categories that became six themes. In step 8, I reported my methods and findings.

**Limitations**

One limitation of this study was the small sample size. A second limitation is that I was the only researcher who analyzed and coded the data. The final limitation is the potential bias of knowing and teaching these students for over three years as their teacher librarian and then as their first semester language arts teacher.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Research Question 1

Research question 1 asked, What are the benefits of pleasure reading on student understanding of social and emotional learning? The findings related to this question came from the Student Written Work, Book Conversations, and Final Interviews and are presented according to each Iowa SEL Competency (Iowa DE, 2020).

Self-Awareness (Iowa SEL)

Theme 1: Self as a Reader Developed through Time to Reflect on Self as a Reader

Self-Awareness is the first of the Iowa SEL Competencies (Iowa DE, 2020) and defined as a person’s ability to identify their emotions, have an accurate self-perception, and have confidence in their abilities. All 14 seventh graders reported perceived changes in their self-awareness as readers. Table 1 shows quotes from all 14 students from their Student Written Work, Field Notes about Book Discussion, and the Final Interviews. Although many quotes include evidence of more than one target, Table 1 organizes them by those that most resonate with each target in this order: self-perception, confidence, and emotion.

Table 1: Student Quotes about Self Awareness as a Reader from Student Written Work, Book Discussions and Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iowa SEL #1: Self-awareness: identifying emotions, accurate self-perception, and self-confidence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Accurate Self-Perception</td>
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Student 1: I … have added some new favorite genres … I like dystopian, fiction, and historical fiction.

Student 2: I found my perfect book, Harry Potter.

Student 3: I can read in environments that are a little noisy once I’m really into my book and not get distracted as much, and before I could only read when it was silent or I would get distracted right away.

Student 4: Last year, any book would do, and I didn’t care which book I read because I barely read it or paid attention to it ….Now, I am very picky in what book I choose, I keep in mind the genre, plot, and main topic. I have become a faster reader and I can read for a longer time.

Student 5: The first way that i (sic) changed as a reader is that i (sic) got faster, my second is that i (sic) built up my reading stamina and my third is that i (sic) found new authors (sic).

**Self-confidence**

Student 6: I am starting to read complicated words and reading at a faster pace than how I used to read. I also am starting to read longer books and longer pages.

Student 7: I am more interested in reading which made me read more than I ever have.

Student 8: I realized that my strengths are reading fast, but still picking up the information.

Student 9: In my reading survey from August I stated that I had read 5 books in the last 12 months and I can tell that I have improved as a reader because in the last 9 months I have read 6 books. So it is obvious that I have gotten faster at reading.

Student 10: I have grown … because I have started to read stories with more complex plots and storylines. My brain has learned to adapt to this and to understand these complicated things better.

**Identifying Emotions**

Student 11: Back in august … I was pretty scared to be in 7th grade…. especially since i (sic) was gone last year but once i (sic) started reading i (sic) really enjoyed it.

Student 12: Now I enjoy reading and it isn’t something that when a teacher tells me we have to read a book i’m (sic) not like “ughhhh”, now i (sic) am willing to read.

Student 13: I don’t dread having to read like I did then, now I don’t see reading as boring and unentertaining.

Student 14: I feel a lot more happy and comfortable to read in the classroom.
Self-Awareness consists of three learning targets: accurate self-perception, self-confidence, and identifying emotions. Student quotes 1-5 exemplified the first Self-Awareness learning target: an accurate self-perception. Students met this by identifying personal interests and/or recognizing personal skills and strengths. Students showed personal reading preferences when they identified with a particular genre, series, or author, as evidenced by Student 1, “I like dystopian, fiction, and historical fiction.” Additionally, they accurately identified their reading skills and strengths, as indicated by Student 5’s increased “reading stamina.”

As students reflected on themselves as readers, their self-perceptions developed, which resulted in an increase in the learning target, self-confidence. Student quotes 6-10 exemplified self-confidence; they showed students’ positive beliefs in their own abilities to achieve. Students 6 and 10 are two examples of this; Student 6 wrote, “I am starting to read complicated words and reading at a faster pace than how I used to read. I also am starting to read longer books and longer pages.” Student 10 stated, “I have grown … because I have started to read stories with more complex plots and storylines.”

As the students’ self-confidence grew, there was a shift in their feelings about reading for pleasure, which is the third Self-Awareness learning target: identifying emotions. Student quotes 11-14 identified the emotional response they felt when given class time to read, as illustrated by Student 12, “Now I enjoy reading and it isn’t something that when a teacher tells me we have to read a book i’m (sic) not like
‘ughhhh,’” and Student 14, who noticed he was “a lot more happy and comfortable to read in the classroom.”

Time for students to reflect on themselves as readers nurtured Self Awareness. It also contributed to the next learning competency, Self-Management.

**Self-Management (Iowa SEL)**

**Theme 2: Pleasure Reading Workshop Facilitated Student Agency**

The second Iowa SEL Competency, Self-Management, is one’s ability to regulate emotions and stress, keep organized, and be self-motivated. It also includes an ability to set, work for, and meet goals. Table 2 shows quotes from all 14 students which demonstrate two related learning targets for Self-Management: self-discipline and self-motivation, and goal setting. Examples related to Self-Management came from Student Written Work, Field Notes about Book Discussion, and the Final Interviews. Although many quotes include evidence of more than one target, Table 2 organizes them by those that most resonate with each target in this order: self-discipline and self-motivation, and goal setting.

**Table 2: Student Quotes about Self-Management Facilitated by Pleasure Reading Workshop from Student Written Work, Book Discussions and Interviews**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iowa SEL #2 Self-Management: impulse control, stress management, self-discipline &amp; self-motivation, goal setting, and organizational skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Discipline &amp; Self-Motivation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student 1: Last year, I really did not read, and when our class would read I would not, but this year I can read whatever I want and have definitely liked books way more, understanding how interesting they are and their storylines. I guess I now know the importance of reading and (am) becoming better at it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student 2: (Mrs. Sink) lets us choose our books which is really nice because it gives you that feeling that you don’t have to do something you don’t want to. She lets us abandon our books… It is helpful. It gives you the feeling of choosing what you want to do and not have to go along with other people.

Student 3: *Found* was confusing but I kept reading it. It was a mystery book.

**Goal Setting**

Student 4: In the last quarter of this school year, I want to complete the 3rd Harry Potter book of the series. I am almost finished with the 2nd book and I still have two weeks of this quarter to finish it. So I feel confident with this goal and that I will succeed in it.

Student 5: This last quarter I want to finish the series I am currently reading and find a new one to complete. I enjoy books that have multiple in the series because it makes a story more interesting and makes the course of reading more adventurous.

Student 6: I would like to find a book that fits me the best, to find a book that I fall in love with or has an amazing plot. I would want to be super excited to read the book and mainly just want to find a good genre so I can find more books like it.

Student 7: With the time I have left in this school year, I would like to try to read other types of books (other than dystopian) and figure out if there are other books I like. If I do this I think it will broaden my view of all books.

Student 8: I want to continue to work on making connections to real life, but mainly to other books. If I learn to make connections from one book to another, I will be able to find more interesting books that I’ll love to read.

Student 9: I have read 4 books this quarter: *The Haymeadow* (realistic fiction) by Gary Paulsen, *Canyons* (realistic fiction) by Gary Paulsen, *Father Nature Mother Woods* (realistic fiction) by Gary Paulsen, and *Pee-Wee's Tale* (animal fantasy) by Jonanna Hurwitz.

Student 10: I read a 500 page book called *Divergent* and I am in the middle of reading the second book of this series that is also around 500 pages *Insurgent*.

Student 11: I think that it is better to imagine things than to actually learn about something because life is a mystery and you’ll never know what you're gonna get. (On why he chooses fantasy books.)
Students met two of the five learning targets for Self-Management: self-discipline and self-motivation, and goal setting. Self-discipline and self-motivation is demonstrated in student quotes 1-3; students showed active engagement, initiative, and perseverance in their reading. This is exemplified by Student 1, “Last year, I really did not read, and when our class would read I would not, but this year I can read whatever I want and have definitely liked books way more, understanding how interesting they are and their storylines. I guess I now know the importance of reading and (am) becoming better at it.”

The second learning target, goal setting, was also met. Student quotes 4 - 14 voiced stages of this process: setting goals, tracking progress, and reflecting. Students 4 - 8 exhibited the setting goals phase, as evidenced by Student 4, “In the last quarter of this school year, I want to complete the 3rd Harry Potter book of the series. I am almost finished with the 2nd book and I still have two weeks of this quarter to finish it. So I feel confident with this goal and that I will succeed in it.” Students 9 and 10 demonstrated progress tracking, and students 11-14 showed the reflecting phase. Student 13’s quote came from her reflection on why she struggled with a certain book, “I have learned that I hate reading books about history and wars because I think they are boring.”

Students were successful in the Self-Management competency because they developed a sense of agency over their reading: they made genuine choices about the
books they read, explored their own interests and curiosities, chose and monitored their
own goals, and had a voice in their assessments

Social Awareness (Iowa SEL)

Theme 3: Text-to-Self Connections Increased Student Social Awareness

The third Iowa SEL (2020) Competency is Social Awareness; it occurs when one shows understanding, appreciation, and respect for others. It celebrates what makes each person unique. Social Awareness includes having a social conscience and knowing the social supports available. Table 3 shows quotes from all 14 students who met the Social Awareness learning targets: perspective taking and empathy, and appreciating diversity and respect for others. Examples related to Social Awareness came from Student Written Work, Field Notes about Book Discussion, and the Final Interviews.

Table 3: Student Quotes about Increased Social Awareness Using Text-to-Self Connections from Student Written Work, Book Discussions and Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iowa SEL #3 Social Awareness: perspective taking &amp; empathy, appreciating diversity &amp; respect for others, and civic engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perspective Taking &amp; Empathy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 1: I do not think this character has a healthy perspective on the situation. He is too caught up in his own feelings like anger and revenge which is not the right perspective … It is hard to handle your emotions when something serious … is happening, yet anger is never the answer and will only make situations worse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2: I have connected with and understood so many more characters and grown with them throughout their stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3: She (the protagonist) mainly listens to the fear and she needs to listen to … the good side of things. She has a pretty good group of friends … (she) is a person who needs good influences to help her … focus … on the things she should be grateful for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4: (the protagonist) is good at staying out of trouble. I’m good at that too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5: I think that being ignored for Conor is like being hurt physically, and that he would rather be hurt (physically) because at least people acknowledge him, even if it's in a bad way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student 6: I have found that trying to feel what the characters are feeling immerses yourself in the book even more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7: The character in my book is brave, but I am not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 8: I identify with Mailee the most because she is very kind, helpful, and she also worries about friends and family a lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 9: I think that after the camping trip if i (sic) would have said all of that stuff and whined about going I would feel mad at myself and I would most definitely apologize to Tobin and Charlie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 10: Although this book is really messed up the way it is, we can feel the same as the people in the book … we would feel just as selfish … We would be left with no choice but to want more, which will always be … less for other people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 11: because of his (the protagonist’s) brave mentality and his determination …. He is never afraid of what he knows he has to face and I can compare that to myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciating diversity &amp; Respect for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 12: God made us all different and I don’t think it's physically possible to change who you are. An example is me and my brother, our (sic) twins and we have so many differences, but I can’t make (his brother) more like me and (his brother) can’t make me more like him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 13: Any society that includes people with different ideas, priorities, opinions and backgrounds will encounter debates and divides; which in the long run can promote a healthier society than an attempted utopia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 14: It shows how lucky we are to live in a place with plenty of food and we are not controlled by such a strong and terrible government.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All 14 students met two of the three Social Awareness learning targets: perspective taking and empathy, and appreciating diversity and respect for others. Student
quotes 1 - 11 encompassed perspective taking and empathy because they demonstrated awareness of other people's emotions, experiences and perspectives; predicted others’ feelings and reactions; or validated another person's feelings. For example, Student 5 shared insights into a protagonist’s actions, “I think that being ignored for Conor is like being hurt physically, and that he would rather be hurt (physically) because at least people acknowledge him, even if it's in a bad way.”

Student quotes 12 - 14 supported the second Social Awareness learning target, appreciating diversity and respect for others. Student 12 explained why differences should be celebrated and respected, “God made us all different and I don’t think it's physically possible to change who you are.” Students 13 and 14 identified the importance of a society that embraces diverse thinking, as described by Student 13, “Any society that includes people with different ideas, priorities, opinions and backgrounds will encounter debates and divides; which in the long run can promote a healthier society than an attempted utopia.” Student 14 was grateful for living in a diverse society, “It shows how lucky we are to live in a place with plenty of food and we are not controlled by such a strong and terrible government.”

Social Awareness is important because positive relationships and social interactions are key to a successful, authentic life. As readers, students made important social connections using the text-to-self strategy, which deepened their understanding of themselves, others, and the world. It also made them attentive readers; as Student 6 explained, “I have found that trying to feel what the characters are feeling immerses yourself in the book even more.”
Relationship Skills (Iowa SEL)

Theme 4: Students Connected Socially Through Reading

The fourth Iowa SEL Competency (Iowa DE, 2020) Relationship Skills is defined by being an effective communicator, listener, and teammate. It includes accepting and respecting others’ viewpoints, and solving conflicts maturely. Relationship Skills include four learning targets: communication, social engagement, relationship building, and teamwork.

All five students who participated in the Final Interview told of at least one social connection made because of books; Table 4 student quotes 1-5 are examples of the learning targets, social engagement and relationship building; they came from the Final Interviews. Based on students’ pleasure reading, students participated in small group discussions and activities to build learning targets, communication, and teamwork skills; student quotes 6 - 9 are reflections on this experience and come from student Written Work. Although many quotes include evidence of more than one target, Table 4 organizes them by those that most resonate with each target in this order: social engagement, relationship building, and teamwork.

Table 4: Student Quotes About Relationship Skills Development as Students Made Social Connections through Reading from Student Written Work, Discussions, and Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iowa SEL #4 Relationship Skills: communication, social engagement, relationship building, teamwork</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 1: I found an author I really, really like. I read like three of her books. I told</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
(student a) and (student b) and they read them too. I think it's fun to talk with your friends about books. (Student c) told me to read *Divergent* and I loved that book.

Student 2: He’s (student d) a Harry Potter fan, too. (Student d) has a collection of Harry Potter stuff. I thought it was cool. His knowledge on it made me interested in it. We (student d, student e,) and I talk about Harry Potter a lot.

Student 3: My friend (student f). He reads good books. I tried it (*The Hunger Games*) and it was good. He talked about the action and the good parts. That made me want to read it.

**Relationship Building**

Student 4: (Student g) gave a book talk that made me want to read *Pee-Wee's Tale*.

Student 5: (Student h). At the book fair, he said there is a new book by Alan Gratz and that’s my favorite author so I wanted to read it.

**Teamwork**

Student 6: I liked to compare how similar the plots are between the books even if they are different genres. Even though they are based on completely different stories, they still seem similar in their own ways. The main one I realized was the similarity between me and (student j’s) book. They both conclude on an answer and even though Harry Potter is a fantasy book, it also has some mystery aspects to it.

Student 7: I like talking about books in this format (small group) because we can talk about our books with other people and give our opinions.

Student 8: I liked how we got to share our opinions based on all our different characters.

Student 9: I got to learn about other people’s books and what they thought about them.

SEL competency Relationship Skills includes four learning targets: communication, social engagement, relationship building, and teamwork. Student quotes 1 - 3 were evidence of the learning target, social engagement, because they showed peer-to-peer social interaction over books. These social interactions motivated the students to read a certain book, as Student 3 explained, “He reads good books. I tried it
(The Hunger Games) and it was good. He talked about the action and the good parts. That made me want to read it.”

Student quotes 4 and 5 exemplified the next Relationship Skills learning target, relationship building, because they expressed interest or appreciation of others. Student 5 told about a time another student expressed interest in him: Through class discussions students knew their peers’ reading preferences; Student 5’s favorite author had a new release at the book fair; a peer discovered this new release and told him, “there is a new book by Alan Gratz.” Student 5 explained, “that’s my favorite author so I wanted to read it.”

All 14 students participated in small group learning activities and discussions based on their pleasure reading which met the other two Relationship Skills learning targets, communication and teamwork. Student quotes 6 - 9 were examples of student feedback on one of these experiences, and exhibited the learning target, teamwork, because of the collaboration involved. Student 6 explained a text-to-text connection made, “I liked to compare how similar the plots are between the books even if they are different genres. The main one I realized was the similarity between me and (student j’s) book. They both conclude on an answer and even though Harry Potter is a fantasy book, it also has some mystery aspects to it.”

Relationship Skills are fundamental for appropriate and effective lifelong social interactions. Using books as a basis, students connected socially both inside and outside of the classroom. In turn, they became further motivated to read.

Responsible Decision Making (Iowa SEL)
Theme 5: Pleasure Reading Workshop Addresses Responsible Decision Making through Fiction

The final Iowa SEL (2020) Competency Responsible Decision Making is the proactive process of identifying the problem, context, ethics, and possible outcomes before making a choice. Then, reflecting, accepting, and learning from the results. Responsible Decision Making is composed of four learning targets: identifying problems; analyzing situations and solving problems; evaluating and reflecting; and ethical responsibility. Table 5 shows quotes from all 14 students that exemplified aspects of Responsible Decision Making. Examples came from Student Written Work, Field Notes about Book Discussion, and the Final Interviews. Although many quotes include evidence of more than one target, Table 5 organizes them by those that most resonate with each target.

Table 5: Student Quotes about Responsible Decision Making Addressed Through Pleasure Reading Workshop from Written Work, Discussions, and Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iowa SEL #5 Responsible Decision Making</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>identifying problems, analyzing situations &amp; solving problems, evaluating &amp; reflecting, and ethical responsibility</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identifying Problems</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1: The problem that Mailee is facing … is that her best friend, Cara, is going through a rough time this summer because her little sister died the summer before so she has gone through a lot since that happened, and seems to be pushing Mailee away. Mailee and Cara are in a big fight and Mailee is worried that they will never be friends again.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student 2: Dara (is) feeling sad because Will, her now ex-boyfriend, broke up with her and everyone thought that they would last forever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3: (The protagonist) is not likable because he is annoying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4: I am not ready to be an adult because it seems stressful; there is too much responsibility.</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing Situations &amp; Problem Solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 5: Both sides have a valid reason, so it is hard to determine whether what's happening is fair, right, or wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 6: She (the protagonist) needs to make her own decisions and take into account what matters to her and what she wants for her life…I would do what I felt was right to do for me, and to remember in the end the only person's opinion that matters is mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating &amp; Reflecting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7: I think this was the worst choice she made. (I) would have told my grandfather, got the police involved, and stayed as far away from him as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 8: Harry obviously made a very bad decision and it could’ve been easily avoided if he just had followed the rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 9: So next time if he doesn’t want to humiliate himself in front of his class, he can do it my way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 10: When I think about this (the mom’s decision) I am disappointed in the mom for letting a 13 year old boy go back in time to one of the most dangerous decades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 11: I don't think Greg made the right decision until the end of the book when he returns the camera to the owner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 12: It makes me mad that gas prices are so high, and my parents have to spend so much on it and don’t have that much money to go out or do other fun things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 13: I question if some things that go on in the world need to be stopped no matter how unfair the consequence is, some things just get too far out of hand that it doesn't matter how wrong the thing is that needs to be stopped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 14: This makes me wonder why someone's actions should have to affect the whole entire world.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responsible Decision Making is composed of four learning targets: identifying problems; analyzing situations and solving problems; evaluating and reflecting; and ethical responsibility. All 14 students easily communicated conflicts fictional (and some real) characters faced, which met the first the first learning target, identifying problems. Student quotes 1 - 4 are examples. Student 1 summed up the protagonist’s conflict with her best friend, “Mailee and Cara are in a big fight and Mailee is worried that they will never be friends again.”

The second learning target, analyzing and solving problems, was also met by all 14 students and exemplified in student quotes 5 and 6. Student 6 analyzed the protagonist’s decision making process and concluded that the character tried too hard to please others; she explained, “She (the protagonists) needs to make her own decisions and take into account what matters to her and what she wants for her life…I would do what I felt was right to do for me, and to remember in the end the only person's opinion that matters is mine.”

All 14 students met the third learning target, evaluating and reflecting, by reflecting on the positive and negative consequences of their characters’ decisions and the possible impact these decisions have on their future; student quotes 7 - 10 are samples. Students 7 and 8 disagreed with how their characters’ solved conflicts, as expressed by Student 7, “I think this was the worst choice she made. (I) would have told my grandfather, got the police involved, and stayed as far away from him as possible.” Student 9 recognized the negative consequences of the characters’ bad choice, and voiced
his opinion strongly, “So next time if he doesn’t want to humiliate himself in front of his class, he can do it my way.”

The final learning target for Responsible Learning is ethical responsibility. Students met this target when they demonstrated awareness of equity, justice, fairness, and respect, or when they identified ways decisions are based on greater good, even if not good for them individually, and are exemplified in student quotes 11 - 14. Students 11 and 12 voiced fictional and real-life injustices; Student 12 stated, “It makes me mad that gas prices are so high, and my parents have to spend so much on it and don’t have that much money to go out or do other fun things.” Students 13 and 14 grappled with the greater good. Student 13 questioned when war was necessary; she wrote, “I question if some things that go on in the world need to be stopped no matter how unfair the consequence is.” On the real-life topic of the Ukrainian situation, Student 14 said, “This makes me wonder why someone's (Russian President Putin) actions should have to affect the whole entire world.”

Book Discussions provided a means for addressing Responsible Decision Making. By using mostly fictional conflicts, choices, and consequences, students objectively voiced injustices, morals, and the greater good; they supported their thoughts, questions, and opinions with reason. The discussions never became personally or emotionally offensive.

**Research Question 2**

Research question 2 asked, How can a Teacher Librarian influence students’ pleasure reading as part of the SEL curriculum?
Theme 6: Encourage Pleasure Reading by Exposing Students to Rich and Appealing Reading Material

The Iowa SEL Learning Standards were implemented because of the importance of meeting the developmental needs of the “whole child” (Iowa DE, 2020). The five Iowa SEL Competencies are the same for grades K-12, but supported with developmentally appropriate learning targets and indicators. In the ELA classroom, the researcher based reading instruction on both the Iowa Reading and SEL learning standards, and at the heart of the instruction was pleasure reading. The researcher also works in the school as a part-time TL and in the Pleasure Reading Workshop acted in the role of TL in addition to that of ELA teacher.

Using pleasure reading as the foundation for reading and SEL instruction was only possible with rich reading materials and student buy-in. The Teacher Librarian (TL) is an important ally for both. Several themes identified above through the evidence of student learning of SEL competencies through the Pleasure Reading Workshop also provide evidence for how a TL role influenced students’ pleasure reading as part of the SEL curriculum. In particular Themes 2, Pleasure Reading Workshop Facilitated Student Agency, and Theme 4, Students Connected Socially through Reading are represented throughout the following list of ten strategies that TLs use and that were used in this workshop to promote pleasure reading. The following ten strategies were beneficial in promoting meaningful books that appealed to the seventh graders and getting them to read. Sample student quotes and the study field notes below show evidence of the TL role through these ten TL strategies that connect to Themes 2 and 4:
1. Teacher led book talks and recommendations

2. Student choice of reading materials

3. Reading promotions (We did Drop Everything and Read)

4. Book Fairs

5. Time to browse in the library

6. Acquiring student requests for reading materials

7. Teacher modeling being a reader

8. Ample time to read

9. Student led book talks and recommendations

10. Book discussions, both large and small group

Notably the researcher’s field notes show attention to current and diverse book choices provided by the TL to these students. The ten books the TL booktalked were either recent publications or children’s classics: 1 from 2021, 2 from 2020, 3 from 2019, 1 from 2018, 2 from 2011 and 1 from 2004. Almost all were Iowa Teen Award (2022) winners. Some of the students credited teacher booktalks as motivating them to read a particular book or as a way they had improved as a reader, as evidenced by, “I have grown as a reader …. because I learned (from booktalks) about different genres and different authors and the types of books they write.” Another found a new favorite author, Nancy Farmer, after a TL recommendation, “I have found Nancy Farmer, probably my favorite author currently, but also Suzanne Collins. These two make extremely good books, and I think they deserve to be my new favorites.”
As both the TL and ELA teacher, I encouraged students to choose books that appealed to them and to not waste time on books they didn’t enjoy. I received this note from a student on her Written Work, “I love the way you do reader's theater (workshop) and allow us to be responsible and choose what we want to read.”

In addition to booktalks and recommendations, book fairs and time to browse in the library exposed students to appealing book choices, authors, and genres. It was also social; I noticed as students browsed, they talked about books. This student shared an example of a social connection made over a book at the spring book fair, “At the book fair, he said there is a new book by Alan Gratz and that’s my favorite author so I wanted to read it.” Students requested books from the fair and they were purchased for the library’s collection.

Providing class time to read and teacher modeling reading created a relaxing environment. By the start of this study, students had their reading materials ready, they settled in and began reading. This student explained his responsible use of class time, “I was prepared to read when coming into class. My books kept me interested and I was prepared to feel that same emotion and sit down right away and read.”

Peer recommendations and booktalks motivated many students to read a certain book. This student told of a book recommendation she received, (She) “told me to read Divergent and I loved that book.” Another student was motivated by a booktalk, (He) “gave a book talk that made me want to read Pee-Wee's Tale.”

Book discussions, especially small group ones, were a popular way for students to connect on books. Thirteen of the 14 students gave favorable feedback on small group
sessions; as explained by these two students, “I liked having a small group instead of the whole class. It was easier to discuss and learn about each book” and “I like being in small groups because I feel more confident and not as scared because there aren’t a whole bunch of people.” The one student who didn’t enjoy small group discussions didn’t elaborate on why he didn’t favor them, but just wrote, “I didn’t really like it that much, but it was fun to share my thoughts on the books.”
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the benefits pleasure reading had on students' understanding of social emotional learning and the Teacher Librarian’s (TL) foundational role for providing an environment for pleasure reading that fostered social emotional learning at the middle school level. The participants included one language arts class of 14 seventh graders at a private K-8 school located in the Midwest. Students were given ample class time to read, and their writing, discussions, and evaluations centered around social and emotional learning. Results in 6 themes showed that using pleasure reading as a base, teachers can satisfy a majority of the Iowa SEL Competencies (Iowa DE, 2020) and that the pleasure reading workshop indeed facilitated student SEL competencies for all 14 students at the expected developmental level. For example, for Theme 1 students demonstrated SEL Competency 1, Self-Awareness, with time to reflect on themselves as readers, students’ self-awareness increased which positively impacted SEL Competency two, Self-Management. Theme 2 was Pleasure Reading Workshop Facilitated Student Agency, and students exemplified SEL Competency 4 Relationship Skills by Theme 4, Students Made Social Connections through Reading. All themes are represented throughout the final list of ten strategies that TLs use and that were used in this workshop to promote pleasure reading.
Conclusions

Research question 1 asked, What are the benefits of pleasure reading on student understanding of social and emotional learning? Results showed that using pleasure reading as a base, teachers can satisfy a majority of the Iowa SEL Competencies (Iowa DE, 2020). This conclusion is based on five themes that emerged from this study; themes 1-5 correspond to one of the SEL competencies. Notably there was evidence from all 14 students under each of the five competencies as demonstrated through themes 1-5. This demonstrates that the pleasure reading workshop indeed facilitated student SEL competencies for all 14 students at the expected developmental level.

The first theme came from Iowa SEL Competency, Self-Awareness; theme 1 was *Self as a Reader Developed through Time to Reflect on Self as a Reader.* Knowing that teens found meaning about others and themselves through pleasure reading (Ivey & Johnston, 2013), students were given ample time to read and reflect on themselves as readers. This combination successfully resulted in meeting all of the Self-Awareness learning targets and helped foster theme 2.

The second theme resulted from Iowa SEL Competency, Self-Management; it was *Pleasure Reading Workshop Facilitated Agency.* My class structure and teaching style gave students more control over their reading; they chose their reading material, set individualized goals, monitored their progress, and reflected on their process. Students felt a sense of agency over their reading which provided a foundation that met three of five learning targets for Self-Management. I noticed as the school year progressed, so did their agency over their reading. Students seemed to put more thought into their book
choice. Some kept a list of books they wanted to read, while others looked forward to a new release. To them reading was much more enjoyable when they chose their reading material. Some students couldn’t wait for language arts class to tell me they finished their book and popped in, excited to share their news. I also noticed that students’ goals became more specific to meet their individual needs. For example, the first quarter goals almost all focused on quantity, number of books, pages, or minutes reading, but by the final quarter, they wanted to work on a specific reading strategy or to read a book that challenged them in some way or they wanted to expand themselves to try different genres or authors.

The other two learning targets under Self-Management, impulse control and stress management, were not met. Students received instruction, practiced, and discussed one impulse control strategy in which they looked at a character’s conflict in three ways: head, what is factually known; heart, the emotions felt; and conscience, the morals involved. Students did a great job understanding their characters’ problems, and the positive results that came from considering reason and morals before acting, but I did not perceive any change in their own impulse control. It didn’t transfer for my students. And, I did not instruct on the last learning target, stress management.

The third theme that surfaced was Text-to-Self Connections Increased Social Awareness; it fell under Iowa SEL Competency (Iowa DE, 2020), Social Awareness. Mar, et al. (2009) correlated engrossed reading of fiction with increased empathy and social support, a Social Awareness learning target (empathy) and indicator. (social support). To become more engrossed readers, students applied the text-to-self strategy; as students
made meaningful connections, I noticed their understanding of themselves, others, and the world deepened. This supported Ivey & Johnston’s (2013) findings that engaged reading was “an integral part of complex social practice” (p.272). Students met two of the three learning targets for Social Awareness; the target civic engagement was not met. Students discussed their characters’ societal roles and contributions, and social support systems, but from my perspective, they did not meet the target’s learning indicators.

The fourth theme emerged from the SEL competency Relationship Skills; it was *Students Connected Socially Through Reading*. All 14 students met the learning targets for this competency. Knowing the positive role reading communities played for teen readers in the Howard study (2010), I hoped to build a classroom reading community. Unfortunately, this did not happen. Instead, little communities of readers formed: a group of three males who were really into the Harry Potter series, two males that connected on dystopian books, four girls who read a couple different genres, but mostly romance, and two that were already best friends and pretty exclusive. Within their small communities, students recommended and accepted reading recommendations, discussed plots, cleared up any confusion, and built excitement for one another. Three students did not seem to join a community, but participated positively in class, and one of these three reported a social connection made outside of class over his favorite author.

The fifth theme falls under the SEL competency Responsible Decision Making; it is *Pleasure Reading Workshop Addresses Responsible Decision Making through Fiction*. First, using mainly fiction as a starting point created a safe and more comfortable environment for students. For instance, it was much easier for students to speak about
mistakes and consequences made by a fictional character than to discuss mistakes and consequences they have encountered. Second, class and small group discussions maintained a sense of reason and objectivity. It was simpler for me to facilitate disagreements over ethics since topics, even topics students felt strongly about, had a degree of anonymity to them. Third, even though discussions were based mainly on fictional people and plots, students made important connections to themselves, others, and the world.

Research question 2 asked, How can a Teacher Librarian influence students’ pleasure reading as part of the SEL curriculum? Results identified that an SEL curriculum with pleasure reading at its core required rich reading material and student buy-in, which resulted in the final theme, Encourage Pleasure Reading by Exposing Students to Rich and Appealing Reading Material. Reflecting the five prior themes, 10 strategies emerged beneficial in promoting meaningful books that appealed to the seventh graders and motivated them to read. This list supports Merga’s (2020) study that listed six components that led to a more social and integrative reading environment: 1) peer promotion and recommendations, 2) teacher and student-led book talks and discussions, 3) discussions on the benefits of pleasure reading, 4) talking with authors, 5) student recommendations supporting collection building, and 6) modeling being a reader. Assisting students in discovering engaging books, fostering a love for reading, and conveying the importance of reading are perfect ways for the TL to facilitate the classroom ELA teacher in pleasure reading workshop.
Future Recommendations for Practice

With limited instruction time and a full curriculum, educators need to utilize precious classroom time. This study shows that an SEL curriculum based on pleasure reading is possible, and is one way to meet a majority of the Iowa SEL Competencies (Iowa DE, 2020). Ideally, SEL instruction is cross curricular and through common planning and implementation, the Iowa SEL Competencies are intentionally met in all classrooms without an additional stand-alone SEL class and curriculum. The Iowa Department of Education and local AEAs have many free resources available to assist educators in this venture.

Recommendations for Future Research

To better understand the lasting results of this study, I recommend a similar study with an additional component that tracks the reading habits of the students over the following summer to answer the following:

1. Did students continue to read for enjoyment?
2. Did students continue to make text-to-self connections?
3. Did students continue to have social interactions about books?

Knowing the answers to these questions would be important in establishing a school wide SEL curriculum based on pleasure reading. A second recommendation is for future research into a cross curricular SEL curriculum embedded into the curriculums of each class, with the planning and implementation done by the teaching team, including the TL.
Further, it would be interesting to compare an embedded SEL curriculum to a standalone one using student application of the competencies as points of comparison.
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### APPENDIX A

**Participant Observation Field Notes Format**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iowa SEL Competencies &amp; Related “Targets and Indicators”</th>
<th>Observations &amp; informal conversations with students</th>
<th>Teacher role/behavior at time of the observation or informal conversation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-awareness</strong> Identifying Emotions, Accurate Self-perception, and Self-confidence (3 learning targets)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-management</strong> Impulse control, Stress management, Self-discipline &amp; self-motivation, Goal setting, Organizational skills (5 learning targets)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Awareness</strong> Perspective taking &amp; empathy, Appreciating diversity &amp; respect for others, Civic engagement (3 learning targets)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Skills</strong> Communication, Social engagement, Relationship building, Teamwork (4 learning targets)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Responsible Decision Making</strong> Identifying problems, Analyzing situations &amp; solving problems, Evaluating &amp; reflecting, Ethical responsibility (4 learning targets)</td>
<td></td>
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APPENDIX B

SEL Discussion and Reflection Prompts

[Extracted and Adapted from CASEL (2020) SEL Reflection Prompts]

Research Related Discussion Topics

1. Describe a time you felt the same way a story character felt.

2. Tell about a time your character’s emotions impacted their actions. Was there a better way to react?

3. Describe a time and situation your character needed help.

4. What is something your character is good at? Is this something you would like to get better at?

5. Where and when does your character feel safe? unsafe? Where and when do you feel most safe/unsafe?

6. How might a character make better use of available support to overcome obstacles? Who helps you bounce back from setbacks?

7. Write about a time you disagreed with a character’s actions. How would you handle the situation differently?

8. Does the character have a voice? When do you feel your voice is respected?
   a. EXTRA: Sometimes characters (and people) feel “invisible,” like they don’t have the right or power to influence or make a decision about something. Is that the way your character feels? The way you feel?

9. Tell about a time that a character’s opinion changed. What caused it to change?
10. How would you describe your book character’s personal identity? How is it similar or different from the identity of the other characters?

11. What are some qualities that you want in a friend? How would you describe a good friend?

12. What kinds of things do you think about when you are making a decision? Does the character in the book you are reading do these same things? How can focusing on assets rather than deficits affect decisions?

13. Think about a fictional character you admire. How did their choices impact the people and world around them?

14. Write about a positive decision your character made. What influenced this choice? Would you do anything differently?

15. Think about a scenario in the book you are reading. What are some things they could do in this situation? What might happen if they made each of these choices?

16. What are some ways that your character helps others in their family or community?

17. Who are some people who make a difference in your character’s life? How do they impact them?

18. Analyze an area of social injustice. How can young people help make a difference? What should institutions do (schools, city government, etc.) to improve the situation?
APPENDIX C

End of the Year Interview Questions

[based on Ivey & Johnston (2013) End of the Year Interview Questions]

1. Has your seventh grade language arts teacher done anything this semester that made you interested in reading a certain book? What was it?

2. Have you read something this semester that was so memorable that you keep thinking about it or you told someone else about it?

3. Have peers helped you decide to read certain books this semester? Who? What did they do or say that made you want to read?

4. Do you talk with anyone about the books you read? Who do you talk to, and what kinds of things do you talk about?

5. How have your relationships with your classmates changed this semester?

6. Have you started to read a book in school that you found confusing? What happened with that?

7. Tell me something about your reading in classes other than language arts (social studies, science, math, etc.) this semester. What has been interesting or challenging about those experiences? Has anything changed for you this semester?

8. How has reading at home changed this semester?

9. What will happen with your reading this summer?

10. Look over your beginning of the year survey. What did you learn as a reader this year?

11. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your reading?

12. Do you think you have changed as a person this semester? How so?
# APPENDIX D

## Alignment of Iowa SEL Competencies with Pleasure Reading Outcomes

Adapted from Howard (2016), Merga (2020), and Ivey & Johnston (2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iowa SEL Competencies &amp; Related “Targets and Indicators”</th>
<th>Defined outcomes that stem from Past Research</th>
<th>What it looks like as a student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-awareness</strong>&lt;br&gt;Identifying Emotions,&lt;br&gt;Accurate Self perception, and self-confidence (3)</td>
<td>Sense of self (Ivey &amp; Johnston, 2013, p. 262): “Shifts in students’ sense of themselves and the possibility for change”&lt;br&gt;Reassurance (Howard, 2013, p. 53): for many teens, pleasure reading can be reassuring, making them feel better about themselves and their own lives.</td>
<td>Changes in self-perception as readers--- “I’m a bookworm”, Changes in becoming a reader-- “I used to be slow at reading, but I’m kind of, like, in the middle,” Changes in behavior--- a student getting up early so he’d have time to read in the morning before school. A shift from a fixed view of “who I am” to an understanding of the possibility of change-- “I’m becoming someone different,” “I think I got smarter,” “I feel like I used to be a very social person, and I’m not a very academic person, but I can actually, like, have conversations about books now, which is kind of weird for me” affirming the sense of personal identity-- Through reading books and magazines, and by talking about reading with peers, the girls overcome their feelings of adolescent awkwardness and inadequacy--“It’s a book I just read a few days ago. It’s called <em>The Earth, My Butt and Other Big Round Things</em>. It was just really funny and the main character in the book was a bit like me, I thought. I could really identify with her and with her problems and what she did to solve them.” “I like funny books like the Georgia Nicolson books. They are really funny but she also does things like I...”</td>
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</table>
She likes boys and has trouble with her parents. I’m doing some of the same stuff as her and reading about her life is interesting. It makes my life seem more fun. It makes me think I’m not so bad, not so stupid as other people!”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Self-management</strong></th>
<th>Agency: a substantially stronger sense that they could have an effect on things:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impulse control,</td>
<td>Agency in reading (Ivey &amp; Johnston, 2013, p. 263),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stress management,</td>
<td>agency in life (Ivey &amp; Johnston, 2013, pp. 263-264),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-motivation,</td>
<td>Guidance and cautionary tales. (Howard, 2016, p. 52):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal setting,</td>
<td>learning about high risk behaviours through their pleasure reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational skills (5)</td>
<td>To relax. (Howard, 2016, p. 53): to relax and unwind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of initiative and control in aspects of reading--</td>
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<td>begging mom to take her to buy a book or go the library when it used to be the other way around,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“.I tried finding deeper reading,” Taking control of their reading: “I was flipping through the pages … and I wasn’t reading, but then I saw a part where I started to read it, and I was like ‘I’m going back to the beginning,’ and I started reading from the beginning. But usually I wouldn’t have done that. But that is when I completely got hooked on all of the books that I’ve read …When I read …., my whole perspective changed ‘cause before I read that book, the books I read were like completely the opposite of the way I read books now. ‘Cause usually it will get boring to me, and I will just read it because I don’t have anything else to read. But I’m changing now. It like I get something out of it (the book) every time I read it.” Writing sticky notes to keep track of multiple characters’ perspectives,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>To live differently and make positive life decisions--“Like when I read …., I’m not going to do that kind of stuff,”</td>
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|                     | “(the book)...showed me just what steroids can do….if I did that, I would be getting kicked off the team. ….I couldn’t play another high school sport for the rest of my life, or I couldn’t play any college
sport … it has real bad health effects on you, too, like your body”

“(the book) makes me think about how his environment was growing up. I mean, I lived it. … his words reminded me of my own self in a way, but it made me feel like I should be more thankful and take more responsibility and doing things that I think are right and trying to help other people out … I’m going to college to become ….. Or a social worker……I feel like I have a way in life of helping a lot of people,”

The ability to regulate their own emotional, academic, and social behavior and take responsibility for making good decisions-- “I like to read slowly so I can think about things,”

“The cool thing about reading …. I need to get something off my mind, I’ll just go read a book, and I’ll snap out of it … it calms you down,”

“Reading has really brought me out to be another person….I used to be all mean, … hateful….rude and disrespectful but I’m polite now, and I learned how to not be so rude and have manners.”

“Go Ask Alice, that was a very good book. It showed what can happen to you if you do drugs.”

A Million Little Pieces, it shows what can happen if you take drugs or if you have to go into rehab.

…Books that I read have given me ideas about what I don’t want to do. Most of the books I read are about drugs, I don’t know why, but books have shown me not to be an alcoholic. I don’t want to try drugs or anything. Books have kind of warned me off.”

“I read a book but I forget the name. It was about a girl whose father was an alcoholic. If you read that book
and your parent was an alcoholic, it
would teach you how to handle it.”
“I read at night usually because it
slows your mind down so you can
get to sleep. It helps me relax. At
night I like to read less interesting
books because that really makes me
tired. Boring books are good at
night.”
“I have to read before I go to bed.
I’m always hyper before bed and
reading calms me down.”

| Social Awareness                      | Social imagination (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, pp. 262-263): Ability to imagine what is going on in others’ minds and to imagine the logic of social interaction, Social agency (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, p. 263): The sense that the student can or has intentionally affected other through his or her actions or that he or she can arrange for others to affect their own behavior, Intellectual & moral stance--(Ivey & Johnston, 2013, p. 264): being more curious, being more interested in and open to other ways of thinking about things, and being more intentional as listeners, a stronger sense of intellectual competence Happiness (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, p. 264): evidence of an increase in aspects of happiness, Although there was happiness as in the pleasurable life (e.g., “fun,” “enjoy”), there was

|   | “(the book) makes you think about, pay attention to how people react, … how they’re feeling about stuff… you see people and don’t think they have any problems… you can just understand people better.” Relating to characters’ conflicts, for example “how bad that would feel to burn your own house down by accident and then get blamed for it” Responsible for getting someone to read a particular book--“I told him he should read it, and he’s reading it.” “You should really read Wish you were Dead. It’s by Todd Strasser, who wrote … and you got me to read that.” Students deliberately making changes in their peer relationships as a consequence of reading particular books, pursued further information about aspects of books they were reading “I think I’ve gotten more openminded because of the stuff I read…more open-minded and more willing to listen.” shifts related to a specific experience-- “was a hard book for me to process because it was about religion. I didn’t like it at first because it made me question my religion. But then the more I got into
a stronger sense that students had more meaningful and engaged lives.
World knowledge (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, p. 264-265):” increased knowledge of the world, self, and relationships.” Understanding the World (Howard, 2016, p. 50-51): better understanding of past history or current social issues.
Social Conscience and Empathy. (Howard, 2016, p. 51): social conscience and the ability to connect imaginatively with others.
Empowerment. (Howard, 2016, p. 51-52): reading empowered them to have strong beliefs and act on those beliefs.
it, the more I thought it was good for me to question it.”
Taking a different moral stance, particularly being slower to judge and being prepared to act to prevent inequities.
“She is actually just like furniture there. She watches her other two siblings getting abused, one sexually, the other physically. And in a way, I think she’d rather have that than not be treated in any way. At first I thought that’s kind of sick, but when you read the book, you kind of understand how she feels in a way. You really can’t judge a person and how they feel unless you’re in that same situation.”
engaged in personally meaningful ways with books and with others. Some students also admitted to having begun the year with a simmering anger because of their personal, economic, or family situation, but reading books in which plausible characters, with whom they could relate, have lives much harder than theirs, gave them a different perspective on their own lives.
changes in state of mind-- after reading Chasing Brooklyn … in which characters are dealing with grief and loss: “When I was younger, I lost my best friend. It was really hard for me, but books like that really take me back and help me remember her but without getting really upset.”
‘I’ve learned a lot from books, I guess, because you do get appreciation for what you do have and, like, for being thankful for the happiness and joy in your life. Some of those books, it’s crazy what’s in there..’”
“I think I got smarter [this year].
Just reading, I think it helps you to get more knowledge.”

“Like my friend went in the army, and I didn’t know how it was like over there until I read another book. It’s called [The] Army ..., I read that, and it really tells you about how they get ready and all that, and how they get trained and how long does it take.”

growing knowledge of social and personal matters-- “Like with bullying, I kind of know how to put a stop to it, or like when someone is going through a death, I know how to give them space or also help them out….It kind of helps me have an idea of what to do.”

“I’m reading The Diary of Anne Frank and I like it because it gives you a sense of history, of what went on before. I also like reading The Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul books. They’re a mix of everything, little stories and advice, and they give you a sense of other people’s opinions.”

“I read a book in grade 7 about the Holocaust. It was called Greater than Angels, I think. It was about this girl and her family and they all got split up and sent to concentration camps and at the end of the war, she was the only one left alive. It was very sad.”

“Number the Stars really made me like reading more because it’s a really good book. I loved the characters and I learned something about history.”

“I recently read the book Night by Elie Wiesel and I also read Parvana’s Journey. Night was about World War Two and he, the main character, was in a concentration camp. The other book is about a girl 14, the same age as me, who was
growing up in Afghanistan. Both books had really good morals and made me think about living in other times and places. I learned something about life from both those books.”

“I read a book a while ago called The Glass Castle and it’s about people who don’t have a lot of money and are struggling to survive and it made me think that I have stuff that I might just throw away that could be really important to someone else. It made me think of some things I just take for granted.”

“I don’t read for life lessons, but I read for background knowledge. I like reading science fiction, about different kinds of future societies. Sometimes these societies seem to be really different from today, like I just read a book in which the criminals are the good people, the heroes, and it made me think about the people we call heroes and criminals. What makes one person good and one person bad? I think reading science fiction really makes you think about your values because you read about societies where the values are very different. It can be as useful as reading history.”

“I read Can’t Get There from Here. It’s about homeless people and it made me think of homeless people differently. I’d never really thought about them before and this book made me think about why they became homeless and what their lives must be like. It really changed my ideas.”

Many teens were very sensitive to the role of reading in helping them to understand their own inner worlds of feeling and emotions and their personal reactions to the external world, making them more
compassionate and empathetic. “I think when kids read more they become more compassionate. I don’t know, I’ve just noticed that people who read are likely to be compassionate and kids that don’t read can be really uncompassionate. When you’re reading a book you often relate to a character.” “[Reading is] almost like a guide. Reading tells you what people can be like so if you’re talking to someone like that you know how to relate to them better. Reading helps you make connections with other people and people who read can do that better than people who don’t read at all.”

pleasure reading had led to greater empathy for the elderly, especially her own grandparents. “I read the book Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom and it was about an old guy who came down with some disease. He was a teacher and one of his students started spending time with him and they became friends. It made me think of my grandparents and how I should call them more often and spend more time with them and appreciate them more.”

helped understand the impact of behaviour on other people and try to control his tendency to be aggressive, especially to his younger brother-- “I’ve read stuff about bullies so now I think of that when I feel like pushing my brother around and I try not to do it.”

“ I think [reading is] really fun and interesting. I like reading biographies and learning about life in other times, that’s really interesting. It gives you a guideline to your life. I also love reading about people of other cultures and different things... I read a lot of
Holocaust books like *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Night*, *Number the Stars* just because I’m Jewish and I’m really interested in that history. I’ve read a lot of those books and I know that I’ll reread them in the future. I find it almost empowering to know about that history and to think about how you can change the world and how you can help. ... Sometimes I read a really good book I find it changes me and then a few months later I’ll read it again and I feel the same way again, it changes me again. It puts me back in that place.”

| Relationship Skills | Talking through and about books (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, p. 261-262): talk inspired by students’ experiences with books, both within and outside of school and with peers, teachers, and family members | Spontaneous conversations occurred in English class, often when small groups of students ended up reading the same book—”We have a lot of group discussion about books. Like I got this book, *Go Ask Alice*..., and I told [my teacher] about it….So, I read it, and she read, and because of me reading it, we got the whole class to read it. They wanted to borrow my copy and hers. And we’ve had, like, discussions of that, and we compared that book to, like, *Crank* ....I haven’t read *Crank* yet, but we compared it to different books like that, and it just got us into this discussion. And *Go Ask Alice*, we always seem to go back to that one, trying to compare.”

“The happens a lot in math…. I’ll be like, ‘Oh, Dustin, you should read this book,’ and I’ll tell him what it’s about. He’ll want to read it. He’ll do the same thing.”

“It’s a common thing at our lunch table to talk about the books we’re reading, ’cause we all take them to lunch, even though we don’t read them at lunch. It’s just, they come around everywhere with us...it

| Communication, Social engagement, Relationship building, teamwork (4) | Relationships (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, p. 262): Conversations inspired by reading, interactions with peers that only happened due to a book, new friendships, deepening of existing relationship |  |
doesn’t even seem like nerdy. It’s just what’s been going on. We talk about the characters… and how it’s different than other books we’ve read.”

Telling teachers, friends, and family members about books read—“They are so excited about what they’re reading, and they love what they’re reading. They sit and tell you everything. They don’t care whether you know the book or not. They don’t love the affirmation. They just want the avenue to talk.”

“I talk to my dad when he’s home, but he usually be at work all the time. I only see my dad in the morning and on weekends. I talk to him about Homeboyz ...and how it relate to my cousin.”

“I told my mom and my sister about … ’cause it had a lot do to with, like, gangs and them Latino Bloods and white people.”

Comparing books.

Book recommendations—“Students, they would come to me and be like, ‘Oh, girl, you need to read this.”

Talk around problem solving (a student needing to re-read a section after a conversation with a peer),

Talking about books extended beyond the school day—“I’ll call and talk about the book I’m reading.”

with friends from other schools—“sometimes my friends on the swim team”

interacting with peers whom they would not have otherwise—“This morning, this girl, she’s got the book called Scars [by C.A. Rainfield] that I love, and we just sat there talking like forever. We had so much to say about it.”

using shared knowledge about books to ease social tension—“It’s
like an icebreaker,”
New friendships—“We both read that, and we talked about how much we liked it, and now we’re really good friends.”
Deepening of existing relationships—bonding over a book, “One of my friends who did recommend, like, one book, we really weren’t that close before, but it turns out we both had an experience in that book, and we bonded over that.”
Relationships between teachers and students evolved. As one teacher explained, “They’re talking to me as if they’re readers and I’m a reader, so we’re on an equal playing field. It’s no longer teacher and student. We’re the same.”
Engagement opened up communication with family members—“Me and my mom have more things to talk about now. When she asks me about school, I can say, ‘I read a book,’ give her details about it.”
Increase in trust—“I don’t know how to put it, but it’s just that talk, you get to talk between each other, and that makes you feel you can trust that person more.”
At the beginning of the year, you’ve known everybody, but you’re not really friends with everybody. And, like, once we start doing this, and everybody starts speaking out, and, like, everybody’s having conversations with each other about it, it seems like you’re friends with everybody.

| Responsible Decision Making | Moral agency (Ivey & Johnston, 2013, p. 263): morally significant behavioral acts or intentions and the sense of | “I read a couple of books where people get bullied, and it changes my mind, ’cause in a couple of books I read, people commit suicide for it. And in Hate List [by Jennifer |
| & reflecting, Ethical Responsibility (4) | making a moral difference in the world | Brown, that book is really good, and it changes my mind about how people feel about things. And even, like, a little comment can change someone’s life. And, like, the other day, I saw people on Facebook picking on this one girl, like, saying nobody liked her because she was ugly and had no friends. And I kind of put a stop to it. I told them it was wrong and that people commit suicide for it all the time. So, it changed my way of seeing things. Normally I wouldn’t have said anything to stop. But now, if I see anything, I stop it.”

Note for me: (“Notice that this example includes a clear argument for a causal relationship between engaged reading, particularly the book Hate List, and a commitment to moral action. Such causal statements are discussed later in the article.”) |