TEACHERS' BELIEFS ON BEST PRACTICES

IN LITERACY INSTRUCTION

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

BY

ROSEMARY FUENTES, B. A, M.ED.

DENTON, TEXAS

DECEMBER 2008

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
DENTON, TEXAS

October 8, 2008

To the Dean of the Graduate School:

I am submitting here with a dissertation written by Rosemary Fuentes entitled "Teachers' Beliefs on Best Practices in Literacy Instruction." I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Child Development.

_____
Ron Fannin, Ph.D., Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

_____

_____
Department Chair

Accepted:

_____
Dean of the Graduate School

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my family and my sister Lydia Villamil. Thanks for all your support and patience through this process.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

ROSEMARY FUENTES

TEACHERS' BELIEFS ON BEST PRACTICES IN LITERACY INSTRUCTION

DECEMBER 2008

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teachers' belief types and best practices in literacy instruction. Teachers' beliefs and practices have a profound impact on the implementation of literacy instruction (DeFord, 1979; Haste & Burke, 1977; Nespor, 1987) and student reading outcomes (Richardson, Andres, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991). Online self-administered surveys were used to collect data from teachers. The sample included a total of 136 elementary teachers in this quantitative study. The researcher used simple random sampling to select elementary schools for this study. In addition, snowball sampling was used to target a larger population.

Two types of instruments were used in this study. The instruments included a Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) and two Instructional Practices Checklists. A total of three statistical tests: ANOVA, MANOVA, and Multiple Regression were conducted to find correlations. Results indicated there was a relationship between teachers' belief types and their literacy instruction. This study can be used to evaluate teachers' belief types and the implementation of literacy instruction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study addresses teachers' belief types concerning best practices in literacy instruction. Teachers' beliefs and perceptions on literacy instruction have a profound impact on students' language development, literacy development, and learning (Mills & Clyde, 1991; Richards, 2001). Studies support the notion that classroom instruction is based on teachers' beliefs (Burgess, Lundgren, Llyod, & Pianta, 2001; Nespor, 1987). Students' attitudes toward reading have been found to mirror their teachers' beliefs (Harste & Burke, 1977).

Teachers with higher levels of education and training in reading instruction are more likely to implement a variety of phonic instruction (Burgress, Lundgren, Llyod, & Pianta, 2001). Meaningful experiences, in the early childhood classrooms provide opportunities, which enhance language growth and academic achievement (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998). Teacher knowledge and training plays an essential role on children's literacy skills (Neuman, & Roskos, 1998). The key components in effective literacy instruction are a teacher's knowledge and expertise (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007). Successful literacy instruction is vital for all children (Allington, & Johnson, 2002).

Researchers strongly support the implementation of a comprehensive literacy instruction, application of best practices (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley,

2007; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). A significant amount of research (Barone & Morrow, 2003; Block & Pressley, 2002; Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2007; Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998) has been done on identifying best practices over the years. Rather than question whether teachers know what best practices are, examining their beliefs related to the understanding of best practices on literacy instruction is needed.

Statement of the Problem

The failure of children to learn to read is a major problem in the United States. Approximately 40% of children throughout the United States struggle with basic reading skills (Brynildssen, 2001). It is estimated that more than 70 % of African American children and 80% of Hispanic children read below their grade level. In addition, studies indicate 49% of fourth graders in California struggle with reading (Campbell, Donahue, Reese, & Phillips, 1994; Regalado, Goldenberg, & Appel, 2001). Reading has been found to be vital for student achievement and success (Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1999; Pikulski, 2000; Zemelman, Daniels, Hyde, 1998).

The present research focused on literacy instruction to accomplish the following objectives. First, the research addressed a gap in the literature regarding literacy instruction. Second, this study involved a large sample of second to fifth grade teachers. These grade levels have been previously identified as critical to a child's development of literacy (Grambrell, Morrow, &

2

Pressley, 2007; Zemelman, Daniels, Hyde, 1998). There is a lack of quantitative research on second and upper grade teachers in literacy instruction. Third, a better understanding of the association between teachers' beliefs and the implementation of best practices can help administrators evaluate the significance of professional development on literacy instruction.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teachers' belief types (opinions) on best practices in literacy instruction. This study was used to identify teachers' belief types on the implementation of best practices. Studies have indicated that teachers' beliefs and practices can have a profound impact on the implementation of literacy instruction (DeFord, 1979; Harste & Burke, 1977; Nespor, 1987) and student reading outcomes (Richardson, Andres, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991).

Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks were used to guide this study. The first conceptual framework was Bronfenbrenner's Bio-Ecological systems theory. Bronfenbrenner (1986; 1995) emphasized that children are influenced by multiple systems in their environment. A child's home (microsystem) and school (mesosystem) have a profound impact on children's behaviors. Teachers influence students directly and indirectly (Bronfenbrenner, 1995; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000). Both home and school environments are significant to a child's academic progress. Teachers' attitudes and perceptions pertaining to literacy

3

instruction have a profound impact on a child's attitude toward reading. Children who have a negative attitude toward reading are more likely to struggle with reading. In addition, they are more likely to drop out of school (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Teachers who have a positive attitude about reading motivate children to embrace reading. Teachers are critical role models for students. Effective literacy activities are crucial to a child's language and reading experiences. Children are influenced by early experiences with literacy in their home and school environments (Morrow, Tracey, Woo, & Pressley, 1999; Wharton-McDonald, Pressley, & Mistretta-Hampston, 1998).

A second conceptual framework used to guide this study was constructivist. This framework provides a direction and lens for the study. Constructivism originated from Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner's contributions on theories pertaining to cognitive and knowledge development (Fosnot, 1996). Constructivism is a philosophical perspective, which was derived during the 1800s by Immanuel Kant. He supported the notion that reality was constructed by an individual's perception. Three components essential to constructivism according to Kant are an individual's prior experiences, mental structures, and beliefs (Harris & Hodges, 1995). The major focus of constructivism is how an individual processes knowledge (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Teachers who support a constructivist approach of teaching believe children construct their learning from interacting with the environment. Individuals use their prior knowledge and experience to understand their environment

4

(Grambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; Piaget & Inhelder, 1969; Routman, 2000). Teachers in constructivist classrooms provide children with opportunities to think critically, participate in discussions, reflect, and reinvent their experiences (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998). In addition, they are given opportunities to explore, make choices, and express their ideas from various perspectives (Gould 1996; Routman, 2000; Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998). Students are also held accountable for their learning (Brook & Brooks, 1993). Teachers that embrace constructivism spend time modeling, demonstrating, and self-evaluating. Teachers also provide an appropriate, stimulating, and safe learning environment for students (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998).

Null Hypotheses

Hypothesis #1: There is no statistically significant difference between 2nd/3rd grade teachers and 4th/5th grade teachers' belief (opinions) types on literacy as measured by the Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS).

Hypothesis #2: There are no statistically significant differences in the instructional practices used by teachers, as measured by the Instructional Practices Check List based on the grade level taught by teachers (second and third or fourth and fifth).

Hypothesis #3: There are not statistically significant relationships among teachers' belief types and their age, gender, and teaching experiences.

5

Definition of Terms

To help clarify terms discussed throughout this study definitions are provided below.

Attitudes relates to "a subset of a group of constructs that name, define, and describe the structure and content of mental states that are thought to drive a person's actions" (Richardson, 1996, p. 102).

Authentic Literacy Activities pertains to literacy activities, which make learning meaningful and relevant for students (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007) such as engaging students in discussions, writing letters, journal writing, and participating in various projects (Dyson, 2003; Flint & Cappelo, 2003; Schultz, 2002; Teale & Gambrell, 2007).

Balanced Literacy Program integrates language arts, critical thinking in learning (Routman, 2000) provides children with ample opportunities to use oral language, make connections, and develop knowledge about language (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Hornsby, 2000; Pinnell & Fountas, 1998; Schulman, 2000).

Beliefs are defined as mental constructions based on experiences which guide behaviors (Sigel, 1985), judgments Pajares, 1992), and influence teaching practices (Clark & Vinger, 1978; DeFord, 1979; Gove, 1981).

Best Practices are effective teaching strategies and instructional activities identified by experts in reading and researchers used to support student achievement (Grambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; International Reading Association, 2002a, 2002b; Zemelman, Daniels, Hyde; 1998).

Child-Centered Classroom involves taking into consideration students' interests (Dewey, 1897) relating to reading materials, class assignments, and classroom instruction (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998).

Choral reading pertains to reading aloud in unison with a teacher from a text or book (Ganske, 2000).

Collaborative is an instructional approach used to help children succeed. Students work together in small groups to accomplish a task (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 1990).

Constructivist Teachers implement primarily an integrated curriculum. Such teachers emphasize the importance of students using prior knowledge to construct meaning (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1998; Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998).

Decoding involves having the ability to analyze spoken words or graphic symbols (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Democratic provides children with opportunities to make choices in selecting books, topics of discussion, and classroom activities (Dewey, 1897; Reed & Johnson, 2000).

Developmentally Appropriate Practices are guidelines developed by the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a professional organization that supports the quality of early childhood education (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992).

Eclectic Teachers use a combination of traditional and constructivist reading instruction (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1998).

Effective teachers have knowledge in their content area, incorporate a variety of literacy activities (Routman 2003), emphasize cognitive engagement, and help students to construct meaning (Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2002). In addition, effective teachers are able to demonstrate self-awareness, self-evaluation, and self-reflection (Fereshteh, 1996).

Experimental refers to giving students ample opportunities to apply active real life hands-on experiences (Dewey, 1897; Reed & Johnson, 2000) such as field trips, nature walks, and observing their environment (Ediger, 2002; Gutek, 1968).

Instructional Check List is an instrument used to measure teachers' literacy instructional practices (Mitchell, & Wile, 2002).

Literacy Development involves having knowledge of concepts about print, (Clay, 1975) words (Morris, 1981), and knowledge about stories, and books (Schickedanz, 2004).

Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) is an instrument used to measure teachers' beliefs on literacy learning and practices. This instrument categorizes teachers' beliefs into three types: traditional, eclectic, or constructivist (Lenski, Wham, & Giffey, 1998).

Oral Language Development involves the use of gesture and verbal expressions. Also, pertains to knowledge about vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and listening (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; Lenore, 1998).

Phonics an instructional approach to teaching reading and spelling which emphasis is placed on the association between sounds and letters (Bear, Ivernizzi, Templeton, & Johnson, 2004; Ganske, 2000).

Phonological awareness relates to being aware of the association between sounds and letters (Yopp, 1992).

Rich Print Environment consists of classrooms, which include a variety of materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, and word walls (Neuman & Roskos, 1998; 1990) that support language and literacy development (Dyson, 1982; Strickland & Morrow, 1989).

Scaffolding is support (guidance) provided by an adult, peer, or sibling to help children complete a task (Bruner, 1986; Graves & Graves, 1994; Vygotsky, 1978).

Traditional Teachers use traditional methods in a literacy program. These teachers implement basal reading instruction, the use of a textbook and primarily direct instruction (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1998).

Assumptions

1. Participants were truthful when responding to the self-report surveys employed.

2. Teachers' attitudes toward best practices influenced their belief types about the implementation of literacy instruction.

3. Scaffolding (adult support) techniques are generally accepted practices in helping children reach their potential to learn (Vygotsky, 1935, 1978).

Delimitations

The researcher recognizes the following delimitations for the study:

1. The sample included second through fifth grade certified teachers in Tarrant County.

2. The participants were from a single county, thus allowing for a common philosophical basis to influence the study.

3. This was a quantitative study.

Summary

There is a lack of research that addresses teachers' belief types on the implementation of best practices in literacy instruction. This study examined the association between teacher beliefs' and literacy instruction. This chapter addressed hypotheses, which were used to guide the study. Also, a definition of terms, the assumptions, and delimitations were presented.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Reading is a skill, which children need to succeed academically in schools. Individuals who are not reading by the time they are in third grade struggle academically. As a result, they are more likely to drop out of high school (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Individuals that are unable to read proficiently endure social embarrassment, lack self-confidence, and struggle with low self-esteem (Pikulski, 2000).

It is estimated that thousands of children each year from all social classes struggle with learning to read (Burns, Griffin, & Snow, 1998). There are two main reasons why children struggle with reading. One reason is some children are not exposed to reading in their home environment. The second reason children struggle with reading is due to inadequate classroom instruction (Duffy, 2003). Effective instruction and the implementation of teaching strategies have a profound impact on students' learning. Teachers need to be familiar with a variety of effective literacy practices, instructional interventions, and management techniques to help students in the reading process (Thomlinson, 1999). The purpose of this chapter is to define "best practices" in literacy education, and provide an overview of research concerning best practices in literacy instruction.

Also, a synopsis of teachers' beliefs on literacy instruction is presented. An overview of the historical approaches on reading instruction is first discussed.

Approaches to Reading Instruction

Basal Texts

Reading approaches pertaining to instruction have changed dramatically over the centuries. One of the earliest approaches on reading instruction consisted of using basal texts (Morrision & Mosser, 1993). Teachers have used basal texts since the 1940s. Basal reading approaches are oriented toward direct instruction. Basal materials, reading textbooks are used to teach a variety of reading skills. Throughout the years, basal texts vocabulary, short stories, and workbooks have been modified (Aukerman, 1981; Crawford & Shannon, 1994). Basal reading programs emphasize commercial texts; direct planned teacher instruction, and systematic development of skills (Goodman, 1984). This approach to reading is often based the bottom-up theory, which stresses building knowledge about sounds and gradually learning letters, words, and then sentence structure. In addition, it is considered a skill-based curriculum (McCallum, 1988). On the contrary, a literature-based program embraces learning through reading a variety of literature.

Literature Based

In the 1970s a literature-based program emerged. This program supports the notion that reading occurs through one's experiences with literature (Rosenblatt, 1976). A literature-based reading program is considered a top-down

approach (Gove, 1988) emphasis is placed on reading whole stories. This type of reading program is drawn from transactional theory. A transactional theory of reading emphasizes an individual's social context. Children are engaged and influenced by what they are reading (Rosenblatt, 1976). Implementing high quality children's literature with rich vocabulary is a key component in this type of reading program. Emphasis is placed on literature and student responses. Students read for entertainment, to gain knowledge, and to problem-solve. Literature-based programs include unplanned instruction, which can be direct or indirect (Goodman & Goodman, 1979). Other features of a literature-based program consist of literature groups, discussion groups, and paired reading (D'Alessandro, 1990). Similar to a literature-based reading program is whole language.

Whole Language

According to Frank Smith (1988), whole language "is the instructional philosophy that reflects most consistently the view that meaning and natural language are the basis for literacy learning" (p.301). This type of reading program incorporates either a transactional or interactive theory of reading. The interactive approach of reading suggests prior knowledge and decoding skills are used to make meaning of text (Rosenblatt, 1991). A Whole Language Program emphasizes integration of language arts, the use of authentic materials, sharing experiences, and purposeful learning. Literature-based reading and individualized reading are also components in a Whole Language Program

(Goodman, 1986, 1989). Other crucial features of Whole Language are child-centered teaching, critical thinking, language experience, and cooperative learning (Watson, 1989; Whitmore, & Goodman, 1992). By the 1990s, research on literacy instruction brought about concerns regarding the balancing of components in reading programs (Au, Carroll, & Scheu, 1997; Strickland, 1995).

Balanced Literacy

Strickland (1995) an activist who supported a balance in literacy instruction advocated for change. She questioned her concerns about existing literacy instruction. As a result, Strickland stressed the importance of incorporating both direct instruction and indirect instruction. Strickland feels that direct instruction is important when teaching phonics. In addition, indirect instruction involves participating in different reading and writing activities. Another name for a balance literacy instruction is eclecticism. This type of reading approach emphasizes the importance of phonic instruction and literature-based instruction. Small group activities and individual instruction are also components of a balanced literacy program (Au, Carroll, & Scheu, 1997; Strickland, 1995). In a balanced reading program, emphasis is placed on all aspects of reading and writing. In addition, teachers play a significant role in helping students become critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and self-evaluators (Routman, 2000). By the late 1990s, the term "balanced" was misused and misinterpreted. As a result, the term "balanced" was replaced by a comprehensive literacy instruction (Routman, 2000).

14

Comprehensive Literacy Program

According to Routman (2000), a literacy program consists of effective teaching, which is drawn from current research and practice. The teacher's professionalism and knowledge are crucial in providing "learners the balance skills, strategies, materials, and social and emotional support they need" (p.15). Components of a comprehensive literacy instruction also include providing demonstrations and participating in discussions. In 2000, the comprehensive literacy instruction was replaced by a new term known as evidence-based (research based) best practices (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007).

Best Practices

Research on literacy instruction has been used to identify a list of evidence based best practices. These types of literacy instructional practices support the academic success of children in reading (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; International Reading Association, 2002). These instructional practices include classrooms that foster motivation in literacy, make reading meaningful, and incorporate scaffold reading instruction. In addition, providing ample time for reading, implementing a variety of high quality literature, and building children's prior knowledge are also components of evidence based best practices (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007). A critical aspect of evidence based best practices is incorporating student-centered activities and student-experienced classrooms (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998).

Early Language and Literacy Instruction

Student-Experienced Classrooms

According to Dewey (1916), students learn from their experiences. Dewey supports student-centered and student-experienced classrooms. Examples of student-centered activities consist of role playing, participating in discourse, and engaging in social activities (Zeleman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998). Pestalozzi (Gutek, 1968) encourages teachers to use visual representations during literacy instruction. Teachers should incorporate class activities that involve drawing, writing, and singing (Ediger, 2002; Sniegoski, 1994). Studies indicate playing learning games and listening to stories are vital components in a kindergarten classroom. Children's oral language experiences such as singing songs and poems help them use language to learn (Adams 1990; Carroll, Snowling, Hulme, & Steven, 2003; Down, 1978).

Building prior knowledge and helping children make connections are important aspects in learning (Ediger, 2002). Literacy instruction should be based on a child's interest and sensory experiences (Sahakian & Sahakian, 1974). Children learn language and literacy by observing adults and peers (Locke, 1890). Greaney (1986) found a relationship between adult modeling literacy and children's language development. One technique used by parents and teachers to enhance language development and literacy skills is reading aloud.

Reading Aloud

Reading aloud provides children with acquisition of language and literacy. Reading aloud helps children develop listening skills (Ellis, 1997). Further, reading aloud enhances vocabulary development (McCauley & McCauley, 1992) and provides children with knowledge about books (Snow, 1983). This technique increases children's reading achievement scores and speaking skills (Wells, 1986). Children who are read to often gain an increase of comprehension skills and letter recognition (Silvern, 1985). Reading aloud provides children with a mental representation for thinking (Collins, 1999). Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, and Lowrance (2004) and Morrow (1979, 1985) found reading aloud helps children's fluency and recall. Reading aloud plays a vital role in the development of receptive and expressive language (Kies, Rodriguez, & Granto, 1983).

Expressive language consists of sharing information with peers. Receptive language relates to the comprehension of information (Ranweiler, 2004). Reading aloud promotes children's oral and written language (Peck, 1989). In addition, reading aloud increases listening skills, discussions (Krashen, 1993), stimulates interest in books, and introduces children to different sounds displayed in written language (Holdaway, 1979; Trelease, 1995).

Phonemic Awareness

Word play games, rhymes, and alliteration (repetition of initial letter sounds) help children develop phonological awareness (Ranweiler, 2004). These types of activities are useful in helping children distinguish initial sounds.

17

Phonemic awareness pertains to understanding the association between letters and sounds (Yopp, 1992). A variety of games should be implemented to help children develop phonemic awareness. Games that promote phonemic awareness include blending and segmenting words. In addition, children should have ample opportunities to make words, sort-rhyming words, spell words, isolate sounds, and pronounce words (Yopp, 1992). According to Hall and Moat (1999), rhyming is an essential indicator for "developing good skills that are prerequisite to learning to read" (p.173).

Montessori (1965) suggested children should have opportunities to touch and manipulate letters as they learn about phonemic awareness. Children develop phonemic awareness by being exposed to a language-rich environment. Children's books enhance children's language and learning.

Predictable Books and Oral Language

Heald-Taylor (1987) discussed the significance of teachers using predictable books when reading to children. Predictable books consist of repeated words, rhyme, and patterns. These types of books enable children to predict simple words, short phrases, and sentences. Predictable books also help enhance children's oral language and help them to articulate words. Oral language is a complex process, but critical for a child's development (Genishi, 1988; Heath, 1983). Children use oral language for various purposes (Halliday, 1975, 1978). Oral language development during the preschool years is significant

to later school success (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Different types of books during instruction can also be used to foster children's interest in literacy.

Trade Books

Children should be provided with high quality literature in a variety of genres (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007). The books used during reading aloud may include: picture books, alphabet books, informational books, chapter books, and poetry books. Picture books are children's books that include illustrations and information regarding a story (Farris & Fuhler, 1994). Alphabet books are used to expose children to the alphabetic system. Informal books are used to provide different types of information regarding a wide range of topics (science, math, or social studies). Chapter books provide longer stories written in a chapter format. Poetry books are books that consist of a collection of poems (Russell, 1994). There are different types of activities that teachers can implement to engage children in language and learning.

Choral Reading

Choral reading and Readers Theatre are two reading activities implemented in schools across the nation to help children develop reading fluency. Choral reading involves children reading aloud in unison (Graves & Graves, 1994; McCauley & McCauley, 1992). Choral reading helps children to articulate and appreciate language. In addition, choral reading encourages children to reread texts. Children maybe placed in groups and take turns reading

certain passages or stanzas in a poem (Russell, 1994; Trousdale & Harris, 1993).

Readers Theatre

According to Young and Vardell (1993), Readers Theatre is often used when reading poetry, narratives, or expository text. In this activity, children take turns reading aloud while emphasizing certain phrases. Hoyt (1992) noted children could also use drama to act out characters from a story. This activity makes learning meaningful for children. As a result, they are more motivated to learn. Motivation is a key factor in learning (Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie & Wigfield 2000). Morrow (1983) found that children are more motivated to read if parents and teachers read to them. Promoting positive attitudes toward reading is vital in a literacy program (Elley & Mangubal, 1983; Tabors, Snow, & Dickinson, 2001).

Reading Instruction

Scaffold Reading

Bruner (1986) coined the term scaffolding, which is used to describe support from an adult, peer, sibling, or parent in helping children to complete a task. Parents (Snow, 1972) serve as scaffolds when they model language, modify their speech, and ask children questions. Teachers (Graves & Graves, 1994) scaffold children's learning by providing information in small pieces, explaining concepts, or demonstrating a procedure. Graves and Graves (1994) discussed scaffold reading experiences that teachers implement in their curriculum to help students comprehend information. There are three phases in

the scaffold reading experiences. The phases include prereading activities, during reading activities, and postreading activities.

Prereading activities involve motivating students, activating prior knowledge (schema), and preteaching vocabulary. Morrow and Weinstein (1982) found that using props, felt boards, and puppets heighten children's interest in books. Ogle (1986) stresses graphic organizers (charts and diagrams) can be used to activate student's prior knowledge (schema) about a topic. In addition, graphic organizers help students organize information, encourage discussions, and think about different concepts. Other types of graphic organizers used in various grades include: story maps, sequence maps, concept maps, semantic maps, and venn diagrams. Graphic organizers are used for various purposes in different content areas (Graves & Graves, 1994). According to Ausubel (1960, 1968) graphic organizers are useful in providing a general overview of new information. In addition, graphic organizers help students make connections about information they are reading (Vacca, 1981).

During reading activities may involve reading a story aloud, silent reading, guided reading, or oral reading with peers (Graves & Graves, 1994). Snow (1983) states reading aloud provides children with acquisition of language and literacy. Ellis (1997) suggested reading aloud helps children develop listening skills and increase reading achievement (Wells, 1986).

Postreading activities provide students to think critically about information. In addition, students may synthesize information, reflect on the text, and engage

21

in various activities. Some activities, which occur during postreading include: small group discussions, answering questions, and large group discussions (Graves & Graves, 1994). Cooperative learning is emphasized in various reading activities. Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1990) defined cooperative learning as an instructional technique, which involves the use of students working together in small groups. Cooperative learning provides opportunities for students to achieve success, think critically, and foster interpersonal and language skills. In addition, cooperative learning can help students build interrelationships with their peers. Kagan (1992) stressed that cooperative learning engages students in discourse.

Components of Reading Instruction

There are critical components in a literacy program such as shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Routman, 2000). Shared reading is often informal and less structured. During shared reading, the teacher spends some time introducing text or a book. Each child has a copy of the text or book. Children are provided with opportunities to read along with their teacher. The teacher models reading fluency and expression. Children spend ample time in discussion, problem solving, and sharing personal experiences (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Routman, 2000). Guided reading is another type of reading teachers incorporate into their literacy instruction.

Guided Reading

Guided reading is more formal and structured than shared reading. During guided reading, teachers support (scaffold) children through the reading process. Teachers monitor children's reading behaviors. Some reading behaviors consist of learning about phonics, synatic functions, and proper grammar (Goodman, Watson, & Burke, 1987). Teachers select a text or book for the children to read. In addition, teachers help children decode and understand words (Clay, 1991; Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Wong, Groth, & O'Flahavan, 1994). They support students as they read by explaining concepts, vocabulary, and modeling (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Green & Harker, 1982). Guided reading provides teachers with opportunities to implement significant strategies (Holdaway, 1979). Independent reading is another aspect of a literacy program.

Independent reading involves children reading materials such as books, texts, newspapers, or magazines to read individually (Hornsby, Sukarna, & Parry, 1986; Rowe, 1987). Children can also read with a partner. Children read at a pace that is comfortable for them and utilize reading strategies (Clay 1991; Holdaway, 1979). Independent reading challenges the reader to use context clues to figure out unfamiliar words (Meek, 1988). Rereading books independently promotes reading fluency and self- confidence (Taylor, 1993).

Individual Journal Writing Activities

Teachers across the nation utilize journal writing activities in their literacy program. Some examples of journal writing activities include personal journals,

dialogue journals, and reading logs (Graham, Mac Arthur, & Fitzgerald, 2007; Graves & Graves, 1994; Routman, 2000). Children use personal journals to write about events in their lives. They are given opportunities to select topics and discuss their feelings in the journal entries. Some topics that children can write about include: their favorite poems, movies, magazines, or music. Children may also be given the option to write about current events, their weekend, or friends (Routman, 2000; Tompkins, 1998).

Dialogue journals are used for children to interact with peers or their teacher. This type of journal is considered an interactive journal (Routman, 2000). Prior to writing in dialogue journals, the teacher provides students with instructions about the format on their entries. Students are given time to write informally about their interest pertaining to different topics of their choice (Bode, 1989; Gambrell, 1985; Routman, 2000). In addition, they can discuss information regarding a book they are reading.

Reading logs are used to monitor and assess children's reading comprehension. In addition, reading logs are helpful in organizing children's thinking. Students write information about stories in their reading logs. They may discuss information about various characters, the story plot, or story elements (Hancock, 1992; Routman, 2000; Wollman-Bonilla, 1989). Journal writing activities (Graves & Graves, 1994) allow children to apply and synthesize information. Writing also gives children time to explore, create, and elaborate on their ideas. According to Gambrell, Morrow, and Pressley (2007), an individual's

24

context, the teacher's attitude, and commitment toward writing play a critical role during instruction.

Teacher Attitudes and Beliefs on Literacy Practices

Research on teachers' beliefs and practices emerged during the 1970s (Al-Arfajr, 2001). Research studies on teachers prior to this time period focused on the implementation of class activities, class assignments, lesson plans, and time management. In addition, research studies pertaining to teachers focused on student questioning, student understanding, praise (McDonald & Elias, 1976; Shulman, 1986; Zhihui, 1996) and teachers' knowledge (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Munby, 1982). By the late 1970s, research on the association between teachers' beliefs and reading instruction escalated.

Teachers' Beliefs and Theoretical Orientation

DeFord (1979) investigated the association between teachers' theoretical orientation and the impact on reading instruction. DeFord developed an instrument, the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile which identifies teachers' beliefs regarding phonic skills and whole language. DeFord examined two core areas of beliefs associated with reading instruction. First, DeFord (1979) investigated the correlation between teachers' beliefs and what they taught was significant in reading instruction. Second, DeFord (1979) explored the association between teachers' beliefs and their perceptions of how children learn to read. Results from the study indicated teacher's actions and judgments impacted their students. Children determined what is important in reading by their

teachers' implementation of instruction and class activities. Some studies have focused on how teachers are influenced by other individuals' ideology (Al-Arfaj, 2001; Morrison, Wilcox, Madrigal, & Mc Ewan, 1997).

Theoretical Orientation and Ideology

Morrison, Wilcox, Madrigal, and Mc Ewan (1997) and Al-Arfaj (2001) investigated the association between experienced teachers' theoretical orientations and how they are influenced by other individual's ideology. Two instruments were used to collect data: the Teachers Orientation Reading Profile and the Pupil Control Ideology Scale. Results indicated teachers who support whole language philosophy demonstrated a more humanistic style of teaching. Teachers who support phonics and skill instruction demonstrated a custodial style of teaching. Teachers' beliefs about content are associated with larger philosophical beliefs. However, teachers direct instructional practices are guided by their philosophical beliefs.

Teachers' Beliefs and Conceptual Frameworks

Gove (1981) examined the impact on teachers' conceptual framework in reading and instruction. Two instruments, the Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile and the Conceptual Framework of Reading Interview were used to collect data from sixty-six elementary (primary grades) teachers for this study. Results from the study indicated that teachers are influenced by their theoretical beliefs on reading. Teachers who supported the top down theory of reading incorporated a wider range of reading instruction. Teachers used authentic material such as

books and fun class activities. Teachers who supported the bottom up theory of reading used smaller units to teach phonics and reading skills during reading instruction.

Teachers' Beliefs and Reading Instruction

Putnam (1982) and Al-Arfaj (2001) investigated six teachers who taught kindergarten and had different views in regards to reading instruction. Half of the teachers believed in the top down approach to reading theory and the other three supported the bottom up theory of reading. Results from the study indicated teacher beliefs shape reading instruction and their management organization. Teachers' who supported the top up theory of reading implemented authentic materials in their reading curriculum. In addition, teachers incorporated a variety of activities such as class discussion, drama, and art projects. Teachers who supported the bottom up theory of reading incorporated quiz oriented activities, focused on readiness skills, and had a more structured classroom.

Teachers' Literacy Beliefs and Knowledge

Thomas and Barksdale-Ladd (1997) explored teachers' literacy beliefs, knowledge regarding preparation, experiences, and students understanding of literacy. One teacher supported whole language approach to teaching while the other one embraced skill-based instruction literacy instruction. Results indicated that the teacher who embraced whole language incorporated daily writing, used activities to activate students' background knowledge, and supported students' interest in reading. The teacher who implemented skill based instruction favored

worksheets and basal texts. Researchers also found that experience plays an essential role on teachers' beliefs. Students' beliefs about literacy reflected their teachers' beliefs. This study supports previous studies on teachers' beliefs and their orientation of practices.

Teachers' Beliefs and Practices

Richardson, Andres, Tidwell, and Lloyd (1991) investigated teachers' beliefs and their practices pertaining to reading comprehension. A total of thirty-nine upper elementary (4th-6th grade) teachers participated in this study. Researchers asked teachers' about their public and private beliefs on reading comprehension. Results indicated that the majority of teachers' (38 of the participants) demonstrated consistency in their approach to reading instruction. Teachers, who support the skill approach implemented sub-skill instruction, used a variety of word attack skills, and basal texts. Teachers' beliefs also influence student-reading outcomes.

Teachers' Beliefs and Reading Outcomes

Rupley and Logan (1984) investigated the correlation between teachers' beliefs regarding their knowledge of reading and making decisions on reading learning outcomes. One hundred elementary teachers participated in this study. Three different instruments were used to collect data: (a) the Knowledge Test of Reading for Elementary Teacher, (b) Proposition about Reading Instruction Inventory, and (c) a newly developed instrument to assess teacher's perceptions of learning outcomes. Results indicated teachers' beliefs impacted their decisions

28

on the significance of reading outcomes. Duffy and Anderson (1982) reported teachers' beliefs on instruction were influenced by several factors. Some of the factors include: an individual's grade, ability level, and parent income. Factors such as a school's mandated curriculum, peer pressure from coworkers, and school administration also play a role on teachers' practices.

Conclusions

Teachers' beliefs pertaining to instruction impact students learning directly and indirectly (Bronfrenbrenner, 1995). Effective learning instruction plays an essential role on student reading academic success (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; Routman, 2003). The implementation of best practices is strongly supported by experts in the field of reading and education (International Reading Association, 2002).

Summary

Best practices in literacy instruction have been identified as effective teaching strategies, which support student success (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998). Previous research supports the notion that teachers' beliefs impact their instruction (DeFord, 1979; Richardson, Andres, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991). Teachers' beliefs also impact decisions regarding literacy instruction and student outcomes (Rupley & Logan, 1984).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses how the study was conducted. Information regarding the participants, instruments, and procedures are provided. Other components discussed in this chapter include the Protection of Human Rights, the variables, data analysis, and results.

This was a quantitative online survey study. Online surveys are useful for collecting data from a large population (Babbie, 1990). The purpose of using surveys for this study was to generalize from a sample to a population (Creswell, 2003). Online surveys are more flexible to use when collecting data from a large population (Babbie, 1990; Nesbary, 2000).

Participants

The sample consisted of 136 teachers in Tarrant County. Males and females participated in this study. There were 11 males and 125 females. The participants' ages ranged from 22 years old to over 60 years old. This sample included a diverse population. The participants' annual income ranged from $43,000 to over $70,000 annually depending on their experiences and level of education. The participants teaching experiences varied from 1 to more than 30 years. The participants taught in different grades (second through fifth grade).

Instrumentation

Three instruments were used in this study. All the instruments were surveys: a Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) and two Instructional Practices Check Lists. The Instructional Practices Check Lists are for second and third grade teachers and fourth and fifth grade teachers. The first instrument discussed is the Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS). A self-report online survey, the Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) was used to categorize teachers' belief types into three groups: traditional, eclectic, or constructivist approaches of literacy practices (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1998). There are 30 items on the LOS self-report, 15 items are belief statements and the other 15 pertain to application of practice statements.

The LOS is a likert scale with questionnaire items containing response categories from strongly disagree to strongly agree. On some statements the number 1 on this survey indicates "strongly disagree" and the number 5 specifies "strongly agree." On other statements the number 1 indicates "never" and the number 5 specifies "always." All of the questions on this survey are close-ended (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1998). The sum score of 30 items is plotted on a line from 90 to 145. A score ranging from 90-110, indicates the person is more likely to be a traditional teacher. A score range from 110-125 indicates the person is more likely to be an eclectic teacher. A score range from 125-145 indicates a person is more likely to be a constructivist teacher.

31

A total score on the two subscales (beliefs and practices) distinguishes teacher beliefs and practices. A Belief score is plotted on a line from 45 to 72. A score closest to 51 indicates a person has beliefs similar to a traditional teacher. A score closest to 61 indicates a person has similar beliefs to an eclectic teacher. A score closest to 69 indicates a person has beliefs similar to constructivist teacher. A practice score is also plotted on a line from 45 to 72. A score closest to 51 indicates a person has beliefs similar to a traditional teacher. A score closest to 56 indicates a person has beliefs similar to an eclectic teacher. A score closest to 63 indicates a person has beliefs similar to a constructivist teacher.

Table 1

Interpretation of Total Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) Scores

---

LOS Total Score

   Scores range from 90-145

   Traditional Teacher - Scores range from 90-110

   Eclectic Teacher - Scores range from 110-125

   Constructivist Teacher - Scores range from 125-145

   Eclectic Teacher - Scores range from 110-125

Belief Score

   Scores range from 45-72

   Traditional Teacher – Scores closest to 51

   Eclectic Teacher – Scores closest to 61

   Constructivist Teacher - Scores closest to 69

Practice Score

   Scores range from 45-72

   Traditional Teacher – Scores closest to 51

   Eclectic Teacher – Scores closest to 56

   Constructivist Teacher - Scores closest to 63

Instructional Practices Check Lists

There are two Instructional Practices Check Lists used in this study. One Instructional Practices Check List is for teachers who teach second and third grade students. The other one is for teachers who teach fourth and fifth grade students. Each checklist contains six subscales. The subscales include: communication, comprehension, literature, oral fluency, writing, and spelling.

Both of the checklists are self-report surveys. The checklists are used to measure teachers' literacy instructional practices.

The Instructional Practices Check Lists are likert scale with questionnaire items containing response categories. The responses consist of: 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=frequently, 6=always, or 9=don't know (not applicable). The number 1 on the Check Lists indicates a teacher had never uses the strategy or activity throughout the year. The number 2 indicates the teacher rarely (no more than once per month) uses a strategy. The number 3 indicates the teacher sometimes (two or three times a month) uses a strategy. The number 4 indicates the teacher often (about once a week) uses a strategy. The number 5 states the teacher frequently (two to three times a week) uses the strategy. The number 6 specifies the teacher almost always (almost everyday) uses the strategy. The number 9 specifies the teacher doesn't know or the item is not applicable.

Procedures

The researcher used simple random sampling to select elementary schools for this study in a large district. In simple random sampling, the researcher placed names of twenty-five elementary schools from a school district in Fort Worth in a container. Then the researcher randomly selected names from elementary schools from the container. All second through fifth teachers from the chosen elementary schools, which were drawn, were asked to participate in this study. The researcher delivered recruitment letters to all of the schools chosen to

participate in the Fort Worth Independent School District. The letters were placed in all of the second, third, fourth, and fifth grade teachers' school mailboxes.

Early in the process of collecting date, there were not enough participants using simple random sampling from a single district. As a result, the researcher used snowballing, a nonprobability sampling to target a larger population within Tarrant County. An e-mail regarding this study was sent to teachers throughout Tarrant County informing them about this research. Teachers were asked to forward the e-mail to their coworkers who taught any of the following grades: second, third, fourth, and fifth.

Once the study was approved from the IRB, the researcher sent a recruitment letter and e-mails to participants (teachers) at different elementary schools within Tarrant County. The letter and e-mail discussed the purpose of this study, dates to access the online surveys, and information regarding an incentive to enter a drawing. The online surveys were posted on a PsychData web site for approximately three months. Online surveys, self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data from participants.

When participants accessed the researcher's web site, they read a consent form explaining the research study. Prior to completing the online surveys (questionnaires), participants read a statement indicating their informed consent to participate in the study. In addition, participants' were asked to read and follow directions stated on the online surveys (questionnaires).

After completing the online surveys, participants were directed to another web site to enter an incentive drawing. Participants were asked to enter their name, e-mail address, and telephone number if they would like to be included in a drawing. The survey informed participants that this contact information was given only for the purposes of the incentive drawing. After the completion of the study, participants' contact information was permanently deleted from the database.

Protection of Human Rights

The Internal Review Board ensured the participants' protection for full disclosure, confidentiality, and anonymity. The researcher required participants to read a consent form explaining the study, confidentiality, and their rights. The participants were also aware that this study was voluntary. The researcher stored data collected from this study in a secure site that was accessible with a password. The researcher safeguarded the confidentiality and anonymity of the data.

Variables

The independent variables were the grade levels teachers teach (second through fifth) on two statistical tests (ANOVA and MANOVA). On the Multiple Regression statistical test the independent variables were age, gender, and experiences. The dependent variables were the teachers' belief types and their literacy instructional practices.

Data Analysis

On the Instructional Practices Check Lists a two way ANOVA on grades (2 levels) by teachers' belief types (3 levels) on literacy learning of total instructional practices scores were conducted. A two way MANOVA on grade by teachers' literacy instructions practices on the six subscales were conducted. A Pearson's product was conducted to explore the potentional on confounding and covariate variables. The following statistical tests: ANOVA, MANOVA, and Chi-square were conducted to find differences. A multiple regression was also conducted to predict instructional practices from teacher belief types. After data was collected, the researcher used a computer program SPSS to analyze results from this study. The researcher included tables to present data results.

Table 2

Summary of Hypotheses and Variables

Hypothesis #1: There is no statistically significant difference between $2^{nd}/3^{rd}$ grade teachers and $4^{th}/5^{th}$ grade teachers' belief (opinions) types on literacy learning as measured by the Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS).

Grade Levels (IV)	Teachers' Belief Types (Opinions) (DV)
$2^{nd}/3^{rd}$ grade teachers	Traditional, eclectic, or constructivist
$4^{th}/5^{th}$ grade teachers	Traditional, eclectic, or constructivist

Hypothesis #2: There is no statistically significant differences in the instructional practices used by teachers, as measured by the Instructional Practices Check List based on the grade level taught by teachers (second and third or fourth and fifth).

Grade Levels (IV)	Literacy Instructional Practices (DV) Subscales
$2^{nd}/3^{rd}$ grade teachers	Communication, Comprehension, Literature, Oral Fluency, Writing, Spelling
$4^{th}/5^{th}$ grade teachers	Communication, Comprehension, Literature, Oral Fluency, Writing, Spelling

Hypothesis #3: There are not statistically significant relationships among teachers' belief types and their age, gender, and teaching experiences.

IVs	DV
Age	Teacher Beliefs (Opinions)
Gender	Teacher Beliefs (Opinions)
Experience	Teacher Beliefs (Opinions)

Summary

This was a quantitative study. Online self-administered surveys were used to collect data for this study. Participants were asked to identify their belief types and literacy instruction practices. The researcher calculated the mean scores from the Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) and the Instructional Practices Check Lists for four grade levels. The sample included a total of 136 teachers in Tarrant County.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter discusses the descriptive and statistical analysis from this study. First, a descriptive analysis is presented. This section discusses information regarding the sample and variables. Then results pertaining to the null hypotheses are discussed. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

Descriptive Data

The sample consisted of 136 teachers from Tarrant County. Males and females participated in this study (Table 3). The participants' age ranged from 22 years old to over 60 years old (Table 4). The sample included a diverse population: Hispanics (23.5%), African Americans (8.1%), Caucasians (61.8%), and Asian (2.2%). Some of the participants (4.4%) nationality was classified as other. The participants were well educated. All of the participants had a bachelor's degree or higher. The education levels consisted of bachelor's (74.3%), masters' degree (24.3%), and to doctorate degrees (1.5%). The majority of the participants were married (71.3%). The marital status also included participants who were single (19.9%), divorced (6.6%), and separated (2.2%). The participants' income ranged from $44, 500 to over $70,000 annually. The majority of the participants (45.6%) had an income between $44,500 to $50,000

annually. The teaching experience for participants ranged from one year to more than 30 years (Table 5). This study included participants who taught in 1 of 4 different grades (Table 6).

Table 3

Gender Reported by Participants

Gender	N	%
Male	11	8
Female	125	92

Table 4

Age Reported by Participants

Age Categories	N	%
18-24 years old	5	3.7
25-29 years old	24	17.6
30-39 years old	40	29.4
40-49 years old	40	29.4
50-59 years old	23	16.9
60+ years old	4	2.9

Table 5

Teaching Experiences Reported by Participants

Teaching Experiences	N	%
0-5	39	28.7
6-10	38	27.9
11-15	22	16.2
16-20	14	10.3
21-25	14	10.3
26-30	5	3.7
30+	4	2.9

Table 6

Grade Level Taught by Participants

Grade Levels	N	%
2nd	34	25.0
3rd	45	33.1
4th	29	21.3
5th	28	20.6

A total of three online surveys, instruments (one Literacy Orientation Survey and two Instructional Check Lists) were used to collect data. In addition, an online demographic questionnaire survey was used to collect demographic

characteristics from the participants. Scores for the first instrument, Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) are discussed in Tables 7-8. The LOS contained a total of 30 items. Fifteen of the items on the LOS were belief statements and the other 15 items were practice statements. Data from one of the participants is missing on the LOS scores. This missing data indicates that a participant did not complete all of the questions derive from the LOS scores.

Table 7

Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) Scores

	Mean	Standard deviation	Sample size
LOS Belief Score	52.40	41.95	135
LOS Practice Score	58.15	7.33	131
Total LOS Scores	108.83	13.23	135

Table 8

LOS Belief Type and Total Score Reported by Participants

LOS Belief Type	N	%
Traditional Belief	105	77.2
Eclectic Beliefs	30	22.1
Missing	1	.7
LOS Practice Type	N	%
Traditional Practice	24	17.6
Eclectic Practice	47	34,6
Constructivist Practice	60	44.1
Missing	5	3.7
LOS Total Score	N	%
Traditional Practice	69	50.7
Eclectic Practice	59	43.4
Constructivist Practice	7	5.1
Missing	1	.7

Note: No participants reported constructivist beliefs.

Hypothesis 1

The first null hypothesis for this study stated there is no statistical

significant difference between second/third grade teachers and fourth/fifth grade

teachers' beliefs (opinions) types on literacy learning as measured by the Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS). The independent variable for this hypothesis was grade level the teachers taught with two levels (second/third grade and fourth/fifth grade). The dependent variable was the teachers' beliefs (opinions) types with three levels (traditional, eclectic, or constructivist).

Before conducting a one-way ANOVA to investigate if there was a statistical difference between grade taught and LOS scores, an intercorrelation between all three LOS scores was completed. A correlation matrix revealed a significant relationship between the three LOS scale scores. The highest significant correlation was between the practice score and total score, $r(129) = .888$, $p<.01$. The lowest significant correlation was between the belief score and total score, $r(133)= .382$, $p<.01$. These results signify that all three scales are inter-related. The interrelationship indicates the instrument is valid. Teachers' belief types are correlated with their instructional practices. A teacher with a traditional belief type also scores a traditional practice type on the LOS.

Table 9

Intercorrelations Between Subscales for the LOS

Subscales	1	2	3
Participants (n=136)			
1. Beliefs Score	—	156	.382*
2. Practice Score		—	.888*
3. Total Scores			—

* p<.01 (2-tailed)

     A one-way ANOVA was conducted to see if there was a significant difference between second/third grade teachers and fourth/fifth grade teachers on their LOS beliefs scores. The one-way ANOVA was significant, F (1,33)=22.89, p<.001. The 78 participants that taught second and third grade had an average LOS belief score of 53.77 (SD=3.97). The 57 participants that taught fourth and fifth grade had an average LOS belief score of 50.53 (SD=3.78) (Table 10). To summarize these results, the lower grade teachers scored significantly higher than the upper grade teachers. Based on the analysis performed, hypothesis one was rejected. The grade taught by the respondents did seem to make significant difference in their attitudes as measured by the LOS.

Table 10

LOS Beliefs Score by Grades Taught

Grades Taught	N	Mean
2nd/3rd	78	53.77
4th/5th	57	50.53

To further investigate the significance between the second/third and fourth/fifth grades in regards to their LOS belief scores, a chi-square test was conducted. Based on the participants belief score, an LOS belief type (traditional, eclectic, or constructivist) was assigned to each score. A chi-square test of independence will differentiate the significant association between grade taught (second/third and fourth/third grade) and their LOS belief type.

The chi-square test demonstrated a significant association between grade level taught and LOS belief type, X^2 (1, N=135) = 10.33, p=.001. The frequencies demonstrated that 53 (68%) of second and third grade teachers had an LOS traditional belief type compared to 52 (91%) of fourth and fifth grade teachers also had a traditional belief type. A higher percentage of the upper grade teachers are categorized with LOS traditional belief types compared to the lower grade teachers.

The frequencies demonstrated that 25 (32%) of second and third grade teachers had an LOS eclectic belief type compared to 5 (9%) of fourth and fifth

grade teachers. A higher percentage of the lower grade teachers are categorized with LOS eclectic belief types compared to the upper grade teachers.

Hypothesis 2

The second null hypothesis for this study stated there are no statistical significant differences in the instructional practices used by teachers, as measured by the Instructional Practices Check List based on the grade level taught by teachers (second/third or fourth/fifth). The independent variables for this hypothesis were grades the teachers taught. The dependent variables were the six subscales on the Literacy Instructional Check Lists.

An intercorrelation between the Instructional Practice (IP) subscales was completed prior to conducting a MANOVA test to investigate if there was a statistical difference between grades taught and the six subscales. A correlation matrix revealed a significant relationship between the all of the IP subscales. The highest significant correlation was between the comprehension subscale score and the literature subscale score, $r(125) = .694$, p<.01. The lowest significant correlation was between the oral subscale score and the communication subscale score, $r(124) = .182$, p<.05. Overall, all the subscales were significantly inter-related. The interrelationship between subscales indicates the instrument is valid. All of the subscales are associated with reading objectives, which are critical components in a literacy curriculum.

Table 11

Intercorrelations Between IP Subscales Score

Subscales	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Oral	—	.182*	.442**	.431**	.302**	.420**
2. Communication		—	.550**	.461**	.512**	.302**
3. Comprehension			—	.694**	.626**	.409**
4. Literature				—	.629**	.509**
5. Writing					—	.483**
6. Spelling						—

* $p < .05$ (two-tailed) , ** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

A MANOVA test was conducted to investigate if there was a statistical difference between grades taught and all six IP subscales. A Hotelling's Trace MANOVA revealed a significant finding, $F_{(6,119)} = 1193.20$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .984$. To further investigate the significant differences, six one-way ANOVAs were derived from the MANOVA analysis. Results from the one-way ANOVA for the IP oral scores demonstrated a significant differences, $F_{(1,13.32)} = 10.29$, $p = .002$. Based on this result the second hypothesis was rejected. The independent variable of grade taught did seem to relate a significant difference in the instructional practices employed in the classroom.

Results from the one-way ANOVA for the IP communication scores demonstrated significant differences, $F_{(1, 3.33)} = 4.49$, $p = .036$. When observing

the mean differences for the IP oral scores, the second and third grade teachers scored higher (M=5.05, SD=1.08) than the fourth and fifth grade teachers (M=4.40, SD=1.21). When observing the mean differences for the IP communication scores, the second and third grade teachers scored lower (M=4.20, SD=.95) than the fourth and fifth grade teachers (M=4.53, SD=.73).

<div align="center">Hypothesis 3</div>

The last null hypothesis for this study stated there are no statistically significant relationships among teachers' belief types and their age, gender, and teaching experience. The independent variables for this hypothesis were age, gender, and teaching experience. The dependent variables were the teachers' LOS belief (opinions) scores.

A standard approach regression assessed if age, gender, and years of teaching experience were significant predictor of LOS Belief scores. This approach includes all the predictors into the regression calculation at one time, thus giving an assessment of which variables would be the best predictors of the criterion (LOS Belief scores). Because all the predictor variables are categorical, the variables were dummy coded in order to enter them into the regression equation. The regression demonstrated the model was not significant, $F_{(4, 127)}$ = .290, *ns*. These results imply that age, gender, and years of teaching experience cannot predict an LOS Belief score. Based on this analysis, hypothesis three could not be rejected it appeared that the variables of age,

gender, and teaching experience had no significant impact on the teachers

opinions as measured by the LOS.

Table 12

Summary of Standard Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting LOS Belief Scores

	Model 1			Model 2		
Variable	*B*	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Gender	-.734	1.34	-.048	-.768	1.351	-.050
Age 29 or less	-.954	1.15	-.093	-1.03	1.778	-.100
Age 30-39	-.896	1.06	-.098	-.407	1.454	-.044
Age 40-49	-.571	1.06	-.062	-.288	1.187	-.031
Yrs Taught 0-5 yrs				.010	1.576	.001
Yrs Taught 6-10yrs				-.829	1.295	-.089
Yrs Taught 11-15yrs				-.868	1.325	-.077
R^2	.009			.016		
F for change in						
R^2 .297						

To follow-up with the previous regression, a forward approach regression

was conducted that included the three variables previously used along with

ethnicity (coded as being Caucasian or not being Caucasian), marital status,

income level, and grade level taught. The forward approach assessed and

entered one variable at a time, so it evaluated each predictor. All these variables

are also categorical so dummy coding was also conducted with these variables

before entering them in the regression equation. Dummy coding are variables

used to represent membership in two groups. The value of each variable is

either a 0 or 1. A "0" indicates the variable is not in a group. However, a "1" indicates the variable is in the group (O'Grady & Medoff, 1988; Cohen, 1968). Dummy coding was used to investigate the association between ethnicity and the LOS since the three variables (age, gender, and experience) in the third hypothesis had no significant impact on the LOS.

The regression demonstrated that Model 1 was statistically significant, F (6, 121) = 2.45, $p<.05$. Model 1 included the following variables: marital status, gender, age, and ethnicity. Ethnicity was the only variable statistically significant in this model. Being Caucasian was a significant predictor t (134) = -3.63, $p<.01$ of the criterion variable (LOS Belief Scores). The significant predictor accounts for 10% of the total variance of the LOS Belief Scores. Model 2 added the following variables: years of teaching experience, income levels, and grade level taught (coded as teaching fourth/fifth grade or not teaching fourth/fifth grade). Along with ethnicity, teaching fourth and fifth grade were significant variables in this model. Being Caucasian was a significant predictor t (134) = -3.18, $p<.01$ of the criterion variable (LOS Belief Scores). Grade taught was also a significant predictor t (134) = -4.52, $p<.01$ of the criterion variable. The significant predictors account for 26% of the total variance of the LOS Belief Scores. The grade taught variables added 16% of variance accounted for in Model 2 that was not accounted for by the variable of being Caucasian alone in Model 1.

Table 13

Summary of Standard Regression Analysis for Additional Variables Predicting LOS Belief Scores

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	*SE B*	β	*B*	*SE B*	β
Gender	.396	1.353	.026	.212	1.279	.014
Age 29 or less	-1.142	1.114	-.111	-.819	1.595	-.079
Age 30-39	-.943	1.021	-.103	-.056	1.325	-.006
Age 40-49	-.350	1.022	-.038	-.180	1.081	-.020
Ethnicity	-2.685	.739	-.313**	-2.318	.728	-.270**
Marital Status	-.296	.834	-.032	.249	.818	.027
Yrs Taught 0-5 yrs				.217	1.445	.023
Yrs Taught 6-10yrs				-.291	1.180	-.031
Yrs Taught 11-15yrs				.059	1.233	.005
Income $44,500-50,000				-.787	.819	-.094
Income $51,000-57,000				1.348	1.047	.127
Grade Taught				-3.145	.696	-.372**
R^2	.103*			.264**		
F for change in R^2 3.34						

*p<.05, **p<.01.

Note. Teachers teaching lower grade levels and not being Caucasian were predictive of constructivist belief type.

Summary

There were a total of 136 participants in this study. The sample consisted of Hispanics, African Americans, Caucasians, Asians, and other nationalities. The participants were well educated and had an annual income over $44,500. Descriptive statistics regarding the participants and findings for this study were presented. All three of the hypotheses were tested. Two of the hypotheses were accepted. Results from hypothesis one indicated that there was a significant

difference between grades teacher taught and their LOS beliefs scores. Results from hypothesis 2 indicated there was a significant difference in the grades teachers taught and their instructional practices. Results from hypothesis 3 indicated there was not a significant relationship between teachers' age, gender, and years of teaching experience, and their LOS Belief score. Three types of statistical tests were conducted: ANOVA, MANOVA, and Multiple Regression.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This research examined the association between teachers' beliefs and best practices in literacy instruction. A total of 136 teachers participated in this study. A quantitative method, employing online surveys was used to collect and interpret data. A summary of the major findings is discussed first. An explanation of the conclusions based on the findings from this research is drawn. Limitations, implications, and recommendations for future research are also presented.

Discussion of Findings

Results from the analysis of the first hypothesis revealed there was a significant correlation between the grades teachers' taught, X^2 (1, N=135) = 10.33, p=.001 and their LOS scores. The results seem to indicate that teachers are implementing more traditional practices involving teacher-directed instruction rather than a constructivist approach, child-centered approach. Such a constructivist approach is considered a more holistic approach to instructing children. The findings of the present research indicate teachers are moving back to more traditional, teacher-directed practices. This shift is likely due to the emphasis on district and state mandated testing in the public schools.

Standardized testing is mandatory in most states across the nation (Stake, 1999). Much pressure is placed on teachers to increase students' test scores. Students test scores influence promotion or retention (Holmes, 2000).

Students at a young age are pressured to perform well in various content areas. Accountability and test scores are a top priority in schools today (Elkind, 2001). The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 has increased the pressure on teacher accountability and student outcomes. Schools with consistent low-test scores are monitored by the state and can lose their staff. Additionally, low performing schools are highlighted in the local media. Because of this many teachers are compelled to incorporate more direct teaching in their classrooms.

Prior to the mid 1980s', many teachers were trained in theories associated with behaviorism. Such theories emphasize using drill and practice techniques to teach children concepts. In addition, behaviorists' support the implementation of memorization of knowledge and facts. In behaviorist classrooms teachers mainly lecture, demonstrate examples, and model while students listen (Block & Anderson, 1975; Keller & Sherman, 1974; Skinner, 1958). Teachers are considered the primary source of knowledge (Cohen, 1988). Teachers employing a behaviorism lens believe learning is transmitted from one individual to another. Also, teachers view children as "blank slates." Therefore, it is the teachers' responsibility to transmit (pour) knowledge onto students (Fosnot, 1996).

Findings from this study contradict previous studies that some teachers are implementing best practices in literacy instruction (Grambrell, Morrow, &

Pressley, 2007; Routman, 2000). Studies on literacy instruction emphasize and support constructivist approach to teaching. However, teachers today are moving back toward traditional teaching methods (teacher-directed approaches). Teachers with a constructivist lens provide children with opportunities to think critically, engage in discussions, and share their experiences. Children are given opportunities to explore, make choices, and express their ideas (Routman, 2000; Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1998).

Results from the analysis of the second hypothesis revealed there was a significant correlation between grades teachers taught and all six of the subscales, $F (6,119)= 1193.20$, $p< .01$, $\eta^2=.984$. This correlation is due to the fact that teachers are required to teach reading objectives aligned with the state standards in a literacy (language arts/reading) curriculum. The reading objectives for the lower grades are similar to the ones for the upper grades. One major difference is students in the upper grades are required to understand and complete assignments pertaining to literacy instruction that are more in-depth and complex.

Findings from the present study support previous research on the association between teachers' beliefs and the implementation of instruction (Duffy & Anderson, 1982; Richardson, Andres, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991; Rupley & Logan, 1984). Putnam (1982) and Al-Arfaj (2001) reported that teacher beliefs shape instruction. Duffy and Anderson (1982) found teachers' beliefs on instruction

were influenced by factors such as an individual's grade, ability level, and a district's mandated curriculum.

Results from the Instructional Practice Checklists (IP) mean scores revealed there was a significant correlation between the IP oral scores, IP communication scores, and grade teachers taught. The IP oral scores for second and third grade teachers was M= 5.05, SD=1.08 and for fourth and fifth grade teachers was M=4.40, SD=1.21. The IP communication scores for second and third grade teachers was M=4.20, SD-.95 and for fourth and fifth grade teachers was M=4.53, SD=.73. The results indicated that second and third grade teachers provide students with more time to practice oral activities, which involve repeated readings, phrasing, and expression with familiar text. Some oral activities include reading aloud, paraphrasing stories, paired reading, and vocabulary learning games. Students in younger grades also spend more time participating in guided reading (Fountas, & Pinnell, 1996). During guided reading teachers scaffold students in the reading process (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996; Graves & Graves, 1994). Teachers monitor students as they read orally, ask students questions, check for comprehension as needed. In addition, teachers teach students multiple strategies for figuring out unfamiliar words, understanding text, responding to text, and self- monitoring (Routman, 2000).

In contrast, fourth and fifth grade teachers spend more time on activities aligned with communication on the Instructional Practices Check List (instrument). Communication involves participating in oral presentations and

58

summarizing text to increase understanding. Students work more independently to illustrate their in-depth understanding of reading materials. Activities and assignments in the upper grades are more complex and challenging. Students may give mini presentations on a novel or poem they read. In addition, students may be asked to incorporate technology (the internet or Power Point) in a presentation to illustrate their understanding of content in their textbooks, basal series, or other literature.

These results support previous studies on the importance of implementing oral language experiences in lower grades to help students use language to learn and articulate language (Adams 1990; Carroll, Snowling, Hulme, & Steven, 2003; Down, 1978). Fountas and Pinnell (1996) stated, "oral language is the foundation of the primary curriculum" (p. 21). In the primary grades (kindergarten to third) students should be given ample opportunities to "explore concepts and construct meaning" (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, p.21).

Results from the analysis of the third hypothesis revealed there was not a correlation between teachers' age, gender, experience, and teachers' beliefs. However, an individual's ethnicity was significantly correlated with the LOS belief scores. The sample in this study was well diverse: African Americans (8%), Hispanics (23.5%), Asians (2.2%), and Caucasians (61.8). Perhaps, intercultural development played a role on the results associated with ethnicity. Ethnic development and racial identity development are associated with intercultural development (Cross, 1992; Spring, 2000). According to Bellah, Madsen,

Sullivian, Swidler, and Tipton (1985) ethnicity pertains to an individual's beliefs, behavior patterns, and language similarities among a group of people. Racial identity relates to one's sense of belonging and identifying with group of people (Tatum, 2003). Ethnicity development and racial identity are also related to culture. Coon (2000) defined culture as transmitted behavior patterns, which include beliefs, customs, values, and perception.

According to Cross (1991) and Spring (2000) individual's progress through several stages of intercultural development. The progress may take several years depending on the individual's experiences and maturity. The first stage (pre-encounter) is considered as having low racial consciousness. Individuals tend to absorb beliefs and values from the dominant culture. This includes stereotypes in regards to various cultures. The second stage (encounter) individuals are able to evaluate and acknowledge the role of racism. In the third stage (immersion-emersion) individuals rediscover their traditional culture. As a result, they adopt traditions from their own culture. In the fourth stage (immersion) individuals are totally immerged in their culture. Therefore, they join organizations, which support their ethnic groups. The last stage consists of internalization, which individual's accept the dominant culture while maintaining their ethnic culture. An individual's experiences and maturation play a critical role on how individuals progress from one level to the next (Cross, 1991; Spring, 2000).

Findings from this study contradict previous studies, which support that teachers' beliefs are influenced by their experiences. It appears other external factors such as content, student population, school administration, and state standards influence teachers' beliefs (Duffy, 1985; Duffy & Anderson, 1982; Lampert, 1985). Perhaps this contradiction is due to the instrumentation used in previous studies to collect data on teachers' beliefs. There are a variety of instruments used to measure teachers' beliefs. However, most instruments do not categorize teachers' beliefs into various categories such as the Literacy Orientation Survey, which was used in this study.

Another aspect to consider is how previous studies define teachers' beliefs. Fenstermacher (1978) defined beliefs as a statement, which is considered as being truthful (factual). Clark and Peterson (1986) defined teachers' beliefs as a valid reality guided by an individual's decisions, planning, and actions. Rokeach (1968) defined beliefs as inferences based on observations by an individual's judgment. According to Harvey (1986) beliefs are representations of one's reality based on validity or trustworthiness. On the contrary, Pajares (1992) and other researchers (Shavelson & Stern, 1986; Sigel, 1985) defined teachers' beliefs as teachers' cognitive (models) abilities used to make decisions.

Conclusions

Conclusions from this study are stated below:

1. Teachers who teach in the upper grades (fourth and fifth) are more likely to have a traditional belief type (primarily teacher directed instruction). Results from this study indicate elementary teachers are moving back toward traditional teaching, teacher directed instruction. One main reason for this shift is due to the pressure of teacher accountability and standardized testing.

2. Teachers who teach in the lower grades (second and third) are more likely to have an eclectic belief type (a combination of traditional and constructivists approaches to teaching). Teachers who teach in below the second grade are not as pressured by the state on test scores because children are not required to take standardized tests. As a result, teachers have more flexibility to incorporate learning activities that are not teacher driven.

3. Teachers who teach in the lower grades (second and third) provide students with more opportunities to practice oral reading, paraphrasing, and expression. Results from this study reported that second and third grade teachers provide students with more time to practice oral activities. This study supports the implementation of learning activities that promote oral language in the primary grades (Adams 1990; Down, 1978; Heath, 1983). Reading activities such as reading aloud, shared reading, and

guided reading provide opportunities for adults to model language. These types of activities also increase students' vocabulary, linguistic repertoire, and the application of reading strategies (Green & Harker, 1982; Holdaway, 1979; Routman, 2000).

4. Ethnicity and grade level plays a vital role on a teacher's belief type (traditional, eclectic, or constructivist). Findings from this study indicate an individual's ethnicity and the grade level teacher's teach are relevant factors, which influence beliefs on literacy instruction. Ethnicity was the only variable statistically significant among the demographic characteristics. Being Caucasian was a significant predictor t= -3.63, p<.01 of the criterion variable (LOS Belief Scores). The grade teachers taught was also a significant predictor (t= -4.52, p<.01) of the criterion variable. Perhaps, teachers can reevaluate how their ethnicity and culture are influencing their belief type.

Limitations

The results of this study may be limited in several ways:

1. The study consisted of self-reported questionnaires that were answered using a computer online.

2. The respondents only included elementary teachers who taught second to fifth grades in Tarranty County.

3. The number of teaching experience was not equally distributed. More than 50% (56.6%) of the teachers that participated in this study had less than 10 years of teaching experience.

4. All of the participants had a bachelor's degree or higher in this study.

5. The Instructional Checklists for second and third grades or fourth and fifth grades did not include information on validity or reliability.

Implications

Implications drawn from this research are as follows:

1. Teachers who teach at the elementary level (second to fifth) may use this study to evaluate how their belief types (traditional, eclectic, or constructivist) influence the implementation of their literacy instruction. Being aware of the association between belief types and literacy instruction can help teachers modify their beliefs and literacy instruction. This awareness may also influence teachers to monitor and reflect on their instruction.

2. Teachers may use this data to analyze the association between grades taught and their belief types. Findings from this research can be used to gain insight on the correlation between grades taught and belief types. Teachers who teach in the upper grades (third, fourth, and fifth) may not realize they are changing to more traditional practices. Therefore, they may continue to apply teacher directed instruction rather than child-center, a constructivist approach.

3. Teachers may consider using this study to critique their literacy (reading/language arts) curriculum. There are several reading objectives in a literacy curriculum, which teachers are required to teach. Results from this study may be used to analyze which reading objectives in different grade levels are being taught or ignored. These results may help teachers reconstruct their literacy curriculum. This research may also be used to evaluate the implementation of best practices in literacy instruction.

4. Elementary teachers may use these findings to gain insight on the association between ethnicity and grade level taught. In this study, ethnicity was a critical factor on teachers' beliefs. Teachers may not be aware of the relevance between ethnicity and grade level taught. Ethnicity pertains to having similar beliefs, behavior patterns, and language as a population. Ethnicity is associated with one's culture identity (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985). Culture is "socially transmitted behavior patterns (Coon, 2000), values, and beliefs. Teachers may also use this study to analyze how their customs, values, and beliefs associated with their culture impact instruction.

5. School administrators (principals) may use these findings to gain understanding of the different teaching methods being used in different grade levels. Also, administrators may use these findings to evaluate the literacy instruction in various grade levels.

6. Reading specialist may use this study to assist teachers in implementing best practices at the upper grade levels. Also, reading specialist may help students at various grade levels implement various strategies during reading.

Recommendations

Future research is recommended on literacy instruction for teachers who teach in middle and high schools. In addition, future research is recommended for older (above elementary) students' literacy instruction. There is a lack of research on both teachers and students beyond the elementary grade levels.

Qualitative and quantitative methods can be used on the field of literacy instruction to focus on:

1. A study on the association between teacher's ethnicity and literacy instruction.
2. A longitudinal study on the implementation of research-based approaches in literacy instruction at the elementary level.
3. Techniques effective teachers use to help students succeed in reading.
4. Intervention techniques teachers use to assist struggling readers.
5. Reading programs utilized in various schools in different counties.
6. A longitudinal study on students who are bilingual or English as second language learners that struggle with reading.
7. The relationship between student self-concept and reading achievement.
8. The association between school stress and reading achievement.

REFERENCES

Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read. Thinking and learning about print.* Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Al-Arfaj, A. (2001). *Philosophical beliefs and instructional practices of two effective literacy teachers: A qualitative case study.* Unpublished dissertation, University of Akron, Ohio.

Allington, R. L., & Johnston, P. H. (2002). *Reading to Learn: Lesson from exemplary fourth grade classroom.* New York: Guilford Press.

Aronson, E., Blaney, N., Stephan, C., Sikes, J., & Snapp, M. (1978). *The jigsaw classroom.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Atwell, N. (1987). *In the middle: Writing, reading, and learning with adolescents.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Au, H. K., Carroll, H., J., & Scheu, A. J. (1997). *Balanced literacy instruction: A teacher's resource book.* Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Aukerman, C. R. (1981). *The basal reader approach to reading.* New York: John Wiley.

Ausubel, D. P. (1968). *Educational psychology: A cognitive view.* New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Ausubel, D. P. (1960). The use of advance organizers in the learning and
retention of meaningful verbal material. *Journal of Educational
Psychology, 51,* 267-272.

Babbie, E. (1990). *Survey research methods* (2nd ed.). Belmont. CA: Wadsworth.

Barone, M. D., & Morrow, M. L. (Eds.). (2003). *Literacy and young children:
Research-based practices.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Bear, D. R., Ivernizzi, M., Templeton, S., & Johnston, F. (2004). *Words their way:
Word study for phonics, vocabulary and spelling instruction.* Englewood
Cliffs, NJ: Merrill/Prentices-Hall.

Beattie, M. (1995). New prospects for teacher education: Narrative ways of
knowing teaching and learning. *Educational Research, 37*(1), 53-70.

Bellah, R. N., Madsen, W. M., Sullivan, A., Swidler, & S. M. Tipton. (1985).
Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life. New
York: Harper and Row.

Bissex, G. (1980). *GNYS at work: A child learns to write and read.* Cambridge,
MA: Harvard University Press.

Blair, L. (2001). Reading across the region: Topics in early reading coherence.
(ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 458 553)

Block, C. C., & Pressley, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Comprehension instruction:
Research-based best practices.* New York: Guilford.

Block, J. H, & Anderson, L. W. (1975). *Mastery learning in classroom instruction.*
New York: Macmillian.

Bode, B. A. (1989). Dialogue journal writing. *The Reading Teacher, 42,* 568-571.

Braun, S. J., & Edwards, E. P. (1972). *History and theory of childhood education.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Bredekamp, S., & Rosegrant, T. (1992). *Reaching potentials: Appropriate curriculum and assessment for young children.* Washington, DC: National Association of the Education of Young Children.

Brewer, J. A. (1998). Literacy development of young children in a multilingual setting. In R. Campbell (Ed.). *Facilitating preschool literacy* (pp.119-130). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1995). The bio-ecological model from a life course perspective: Reflections of a participant observer. In P. Moen, G. H. Elder, Jr., & K. Luscher (Eds.), *Examining lives in context* (pp. 599-618). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Evans, G. W. (2000). Developmental science in the 21st century: Emerging theoretical models, research designs, and empirical findings, *Social Development, 9,* 115-125.

Brooks, J. G., & Brooks, M. G. (1993). *The case for constructivist classrooms.* Alexandra, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brynildssen, A. (2001). *Highlight of reading research in the labs and centers of the U.S. Department of Education.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 459425).

Burgess, K. A., Lundgren, K. A., Lloyd, J W., Pianta, R. C. (2001). *Preschool teacher' self-reported beliefs and practices about literacy instruction. (CIERA Report).* Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 452513)

Burns, S., Griffin, P., & Snow, C. (1999). *Starting out right: A guide to promoting children's reading success.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Cambourne, B. (1988). *The whole story: Natural learning and the acquisition of literacy in the classroom.* Auckland, New Zealand: Ashton Scholastic.

Campbell, J. R., Donahue, L. P., Reese, M. C., & Phillips, W. G. (1996). *NAEP 1994 Reading report card for the nation and the states.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 388962)

Cantoni-Harvey, G. (1987). *Content-area language instruction: Approaches and strategies.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Carroll, J. M., Snowing, M. J., Hulme, C., & Steveson, J. (2003). The development of phonological awareness in preschool children. *Developmental Psychology, 39*(5), 913-923.

Cattell, R. (2003). *Children's language: Consensus and controversy.* New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Cazden, C. B. (1988). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Chhanda, I. (1999). *The relationships among early childhood educators' beliefs, knowledge bases, and practices related to early literacy.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 440403)

Clay, M. (1975). *What did I write?* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Clay, M. (1979). *Reading: The patterning of complex behaviour.* Auckland, New Zealand: Heinemann.

Clay, M. (1991). *Becoming literate: The construction of inner.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Clark, C. M., & Peterson, P. L. (1986). Teachers thought process. In Wittrock, M, C. (Ed.). *Handbook on research on teaching.* New York: MacMillian (pp.255-296).

Clark, C. M., & Vinger, R. L. (1978). *Research on teacher thinking* (Research Series No. 12). East Lansing: Michigan State University, Institute on Teaching.

Cohen, D. K. (1988). Teachers practice: Plus change...(Issue paper 11-103), East Lansing: Theory of learning. In C. T. Fosnot (Ed.). *Constructivism: Theory, perspectives, and practice* (pp.8-33). New York: Teachers College Press.

Cohen, J. (1968). Multiple regression as a general data analytic system. *Psychological Bulletin, 70,* 426-443.

Collins, F. (1999). The use of traditional storytelling in education to the learning of literacy skills. *Early Child Development and Care, 152,* 77-108.

Coon, C. (2000). *Culture wars in the global village: A diploma's perspective.* New York: Prometheus

Crawford, S., & Patrick, S. (1994). I don't think these companies have much respect for teachers: Looking at teachers' manuals. In S. Patrick, & K. Goodman, (Eds.), *Basal readers: A second look* (pp. 1-18). Katonah, NY: Richard C. Owen.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cross, W. E. (1991). *Shades of black: Diversity in African American identity.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

D'Alessandro, D. M. (1990). Accommodating emotionally handicapped children through a literature-based reading program. *The Reading Teacher, 44,* 288-293.

Daniels, H. (1994). *Literature circles: Voice and choice in the student-centered classroom.* New York: Stenhouse.

DeFord, D. (1985). Validating the construct of theoretical orientation in reading. *Reading Research Quarterly, 20,* 351-367.

DeFord, D. (1979). *A validation of an instrument to determine a teacher's theoretical orientation to reading instruction.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democratic and education*. New York: McMillan.

Dewey, J. (1897). My pedagogic creed. *The School Journal, 3*, 77-80.

Dickinson, D., Cote, L., & Smith, M. (1993). Learning vocabulary in preschool. Social and discourse contexts affecting vocabulary growth. In C. Daute (Ed.), *The development of literacy through interaction.* (pp. 67-78). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Downs, B. R. (1978). *Friedrich Froebel*. Boston: Twayne.

Duffy, G. (2003). *Explaining reading: A resource for teaching concepts, skills, and strategies.* New York: Guilford Press.

Duffy, G. (1983). Context variables in reading teacher effectiveness. In J. Niles & L. Harris (Eds). *Searches for meaning in reading/language processing and instruction.* Thirty-second Yearbook of the National Reading Conference (pp.289-294). Rochester, NY: National Reading Conference.

Duffy, G., & Anderson, L. (1982). *Conception of reading project: Final report.* East Lansing, Michigan State University, Institute for Research on Teaching. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 218583)

Dyson, A. H. (2003). *The brothers and sisters learn to write: Popular illiteracies in childhood and school cultures.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Dyson, A. H. (1983). The role of oral language in early writing process. *Research in Teaching of English, 7*, 1-30.

Dyson, A. H. (1982a). Reading, writing, and language: Young children solve the written language puzzle. *Language Arts, 59*, 829-839.

Dyson, A. H. (1982b). The emergence of visible language: Interrelationships between drawing and early. *Visible Language, 16,* 360-381.

Ediger, M. (2002). *Important historical events in reading instruction.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 468661)

Eeds, M., & Wells, D. (1989). Grand conversations: An exploration of meaning construction in literature study groups. *Research in the Teaching of English, 23,* 4-29.

Elbaz, F. (1983). Research on teacher knowledge: Evolution of a discourse. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 23*(1), 1-19.

Elkind, D. (2001). *The hurried child: Growing up too soon* (3rd ed.). Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.

Ellis, B. F. (1997). Why tell stories? *Storytelling Magazine, 9,* 21-23.

Elman. L. J., Bates, A. E., Johnson, H. M., Karmibff-Smith, A., Parisi, D., & Plunkett, K. (1997). *Rethinking innateness: A connectionist perspective on development.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Ervin-Tripp, S., & Mitchell-Kerman, C. (1988). *Child discourse.* New York: Academic Press.

Farris, P. J., & Fuhler, J. C. (1994). Developing social studies concepts through picture books. *The Reading Teacher, 47*(5), 380-387.

Fenstermacher, G. D. (1978). A philosophical consideration of recent research on teacher effectiveness. In L. S. Schulman (Ed.) *Review of research in education.* Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock.

Fereshteh, H. (1996). The nature of teaching, effective instruction, and roles to play: A social foundation perspective. *Contemporary Education, 68*(1), 73-75.

Flint, A. S., & Cappello, M. (2003). Negotiating voice and identity in classroom writing events. *National Reading Conference Yearbook, 52,* 181-193.

Fosnot, C. T. (1996). Constructivism: A psychological theory of learning. In C. T. Fosnot (Ed.). *Constructivism: Theory, perspectives, and practice* (pp. 8-33). New York: Teachers College Press.

Fountas, C. I., & Pinnell, G. (1999). *Matching books to readers: Using leveled books in guided reading, K –3.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fountas, C. I., & Pinnell, G. (1996). *Guided reading: Good first teaching for all children.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Froebel, F. (1954). Autobiography. In R. Ulich (Ed., E. Michaelis & K. Moore, Trans.). *Three thousand years of education wisdom: Selections from great document* (pp. 523-576). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Original work published 1890)

Galda, L., & Cullinan, B. (1991). Literature for literacy: What research says about the benefits of using trade books in the classroom. In J. Flood, Jensen, D, Lapp, & J. Squire (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching English language arts* (pp. 529-535). New York: McMillan.

Gambrell, L. B. (1996). Motivating contexts for literacy learning. In L. Baker, P. Afflerbach, & D. Reinking (Eds.), *Developing engaged readers in school and home communities*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Gambrell, L. B. (1985). Dialogue journals: Reading-writing interaction. *The Reading Teacher, 38,* 512-515.

Gambrell, L. B., Morrow, M. L., & Pressley, M. (Eds.). (2007). *Best practices in literacy instruction* (3rd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

Ganske, K. (2000). *Word journeys: Assessment-guided phonics, speaking, and vocabulary instruction.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Genishi, C. (1988). Children's language: Learning words from experience. *Young Children, 44,* 16-23. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 301 361)

Giacobbe, M. E. (1981). Who says children can't write the first week? In R. D. Walshe (Ed.), *Donald Graves in Australia*, New South Wales, Australia: Primary English Teaching Association.

Goodman, K. (1989). Whole language research: Foundations and development. *The Elementary Journal, 90*(2), 207-221.

Goodman, M. Y., Watson, J. D., & Burke, L. C. (1987). *Reading miscue inventory: Alternative procedures.* New York: Richard C. Owen.

Goodman, K. (1986). *What's whole in whole language?* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Goodman, Y. (1984). The development of initial literacy. In H. Goelman, A.

   Oberg, & F. Smith (Eds.), *Awakening to literacy* (pp. 122-130*).*

   Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Goodman, Y. (1980). *The roots of literacy.* Keynote address to the Claremont

   Reading Conference. Claremont, CA.

Goodman, K., & Goodman, Y. M. (1979). Learning to read is natural. In L.

   Resnick, & P. Weaver (Eds.), *Theory and practice of early reading* (vol.1;

   pp. 137-154). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Gould, J. (1996). A constructivist perspective on teaching and learning in the

   language arts. In C. T. Fosnot (Ed.). *Constructivism: Theory, perspective,*

   and practice (pp. 92-102). New York: Teachers College Press.

Gove, M. K. (1981). The influence of teachers' conceptual framework of reading

   on instructional practices and decision making. Unpublished dissertation,

   Kent State University, Kent, OH.

Graham, S., Mac Arthur, A. C., & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.) (2007). *Best practices in*

   writing instruction. New York: The Guilford Press.

Graves, D., & Hansen, J. (1983). The author's chair. *Language Arts, 60,* 176-

   183.

Graves, M., & Graves, B. (1994). *Scaffolding reading experiences: Designs for*

   student success. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Greaney, V. (1986). Parental influences on reading. *The Reading Teacher, 39,*

   813-818.

Green, D., & Harker, O. J. (1982). Reading to children: A communicative process. In J. A. Langer & M. T. Smith-Burke (Eds.), *In reader meets author/bridging the gap: A psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspective*, (196-221). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Gutek,L. G. (1968). *Pestalozzi and education*. New York: Random House.

Guthrie, J. T., & Wigfield, A. (2000), Engagement in motivation in reading. In M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.). *Handbook of reading research*, (Vol. 3; pp.403-422). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Hall, S. L., & Moats, L. C. (1999). *Straight talk about reading: How parents can make a difference during the early years*. Chicago: Contemporary Books.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Explorations in the functions of language*. London: Edward Arnold.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1961). Categories of the theory of grammar. *Word, 17,* 241-292.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). *Learning how to mean: Explorations in the development of language*. London: Edward Arnold.

Hancock, M. R. (1993). Exploring and extending personal response through literature journals. *The Reading Teacher, 46,* 466-474.

Harris, T. L., & Hodges, R. E. (1995). *The literacy dictionary: The vocabulary of reading and writing*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Harste, J. C., & Burke, C. L. (1977). A new hypothesis for reading teacher

 research: Both teaching and learning of reading theoretically based. In P.

 D. Pearson (Ed.). *Reading: Theory, research, and practice* (Twenty-sixth

 Yearbook of the National Reading Conference; pp.32-40). Rochester, NY:

 National Reading Conference.

Harste, J. E., Woodward, V. A., & Burke, L. C. (1984). *Language stories and*

 literacy lessons. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Heald-Taylor, G. (1987). How to use predictable books for K-2 language arts

 instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 40,* 656-661.

Heath, B. S. (1983). *Ways with words: Language. Life, and work in communities*

 and classrooms. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hill, P. S. (1942). *Kindergarten.* Wheaton, MD: Association for Childhood

 Education International. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED

 346995)

Holdaway, D. (1979). *The foundations of literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Holmes, C. T. (2006). Low test score plus high retention rates equal more

 dropouts. *Kappa Delta Pi Record, 42*(2), 56-58.

Hornsby, D. (2000). *A closer look at guided reading.* Armadale, Australia:

 Eleanor Curtain.

Hornsby, D., Sukarna, D., & Parry, J. (1986). *Read on: A conference approach to*

 reading. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Hoyt, L. (1992). Many ways of knowing: Using drama, oral interactions, and the

    visual arts to enhance reading comprehension. *The Reading Teacher, 45,*

    580-584.

International Reading Association. (2002a). *Evidence-based reading instruction:*

    Putting the National Reading Panel report into practice. Newark, DE:

    Author.

International Reading Association. (2002b). *What is evidence-based instruction?*

    (Position Statement). Newark, DE: Author.

International Reading Association. (1999). *Using multiple methods of beginning*

    reading instruction. Newark, DE: Author.

International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English.

    (1996). *Standards for the English language arts.* Urbana, IL, and Newark,

    DE: Author.

Isbell, R., Sobol, J., Lindauer, L., & Lowrance, A. (2004). The effects of

    storytelling and story reading on the oral language complexity and story

    comprehension of young children. *Early Childhood Education Journal. 32,*

    157-164.

Jackson, P. (1968). *Life in classrooms.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Johnson, D. T., & Louis, R. D. (1987). *Literacy through literature.* Portsmouth,

    NH: Heinemann.

Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Holuber, E. J. (1990). *Circles of learning:*

    Cooperation in the classroom (3rd ed.). Edina, MN: Interaction Book.

Kagan, D. M. (1992). Implications of research on teacher belief. *Educational Psychologist, 27,* 65-90.

Kagan, S. (1992). *Cooperative learning.* San Juan Capistrano, CA: Resources for Teachers.

Keller, E. S., & Sherman, J. G. (1974). *The plan handbook.* Park, CA: Benjamin.

Kies, D., Rodriguez, I., & Granato, F. V. (1993). Oral language development through storytelling: An approach to emergent literacy. *Reading Improvement, 30,* 43-47.

Kirkland, D. L., & Patterson, J. (2005). Developing oral language in primary classrooms. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 32,* 391-395.

Krashen, S. (1993). *The power of reading: Insight from the research.* Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.

Lampert, M. (1985). How do teachers manage to teach? Perspectives on problems in practice. *Harvard Educational Review, 55,* 178-194.

Langer, J. A. (1992). Rethinking literature instruction. In J. A. Langer (Ed.). *Literature instruction: A focus on student response* (pp.35-53). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Leahey, H. T., & Harris, J. R. (2001). *Learning and cognition* (5th ed.). Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Lenore, S. (1998). *Review of literature: Oral language.* Historical Research Summary #1. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 471007)

Lenski, S. D., Wham, M. A., & Griffey, D. C. (1998). Literacy orientation survey: A survey to clarify teachers' beliefs and practices. *Reading Research and Instruction, 43,* 217-236.

Locke, J. (1890). Some thought on education. *Three thousand years of education wisdom: Selections from great document* (pp. 355-383). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Maxson, S. P. (1996). *The influence of teachers' beliefs on literacy development for at-risk first grade students.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 392780)

McCallum, D. R. (1988). Don't throw the basals out with the bath water. *The Reading Teacher, 42*(3), 204-208.

McCauley, J. K., & McCauley, D. S. (1992). Using choral reading to promote language learning for ESL students. *The Reading Teacher, 45,* 526-533.

McCutcheon, C. (2006). Cognitive factors in the development of children's writing. In C. A. Mac Arthur, S. Graham, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.). *Handbook of writing research* (pp.115-150). New York: Guildford.

McDonald, F., & Eias, P. (1976). *The effects of teaching performance on pupil learning: Beginning teacher evaluation study: Phase II, final report, Vol. I.* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

McGee, L. M. (1992). Focus on research: Exploring the literature-based reading revolution. *Language Arts, 69*(7), 529-537.

McGee, L. M., Charlesworth, R., Cheek, M. C., & Cheek, E. H. (1982).

Metalinguistic knowledge: Another look at beginning reading. *Childhood Education, 59,* 123-127.

Meek, M. (1988). *How texts teach what readers learn.* Gloucestershire, England: The Thimble Press.

Meijer, P. C., Verloop, N., Beijaard, D. (1999). Exploring teachers' practical knowledge about teaching reading comprehension. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 15,* 59-84.

Mills, H., & Clyde, J. A. (1991). Children's success as readers and writers: It's the teacher's beliefs that make the difference. *Young Children, 46(2),* 54-51.

Montessorri, M. (1965). *Spontaneous activity in education.* New York: Schocken.

Morgan, N. D. (2001). Intermediate grade teachers' understanding and knowledge about informal books. Unpublished dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus.

Morris, R. D. (1981). Concept of word: A developmental phenomenon in the beginning reading and writing process. *Language Arts, 58,* 659-668.

Morrison, J., & Mosser, L. A. (1993). *Whole language and traditional reading instruction: A comparison of views and techniques.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 365963).

Morrison, T. G., Wilcox, B., Madrigal, J. L., & Mc Ewan, B. (1997). Development of teachers' theoretical orientation toward reading and pupil control ideology. *Reading Research and Instruction, 36(2),* 141-156.

Morrow, M. L. (1985). Reading and retelling stories. Strategies for emergent readers. *The Reading Teacher, 38,* 870-875.

Morrow, M. L. (1983). Home and school correlates of early interest in literature. *Journal of Educational Research, 76,* 221-230.

Morrow, L. M. (1979). Exciting children about literature through creative storytelling techniques. *Language Arts, 56,* 236-243.

Morrow, M. L., Tracey, H. D., Woo, F. D., & Pressley, M. (1999). Characteristics of exemplary first-grade literacy instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 52*(5), 462-475.

Morrow, M. L., & Weinstein, C. S. (1982). Increasing children's use of literature through program and physical design changes. *Elementary School Journal, 83,* 131-137.

Munby, H. (1982). The place of teachers' beliefs in research on teacher thinking and decision making, an alternative methodology. *Instructional Science, 11,* 201-225.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction* (NIH Publication No. 00-4769). Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office.

Nesbary, D. K. (2000). *Survey research and the World Wide Web.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Nespor, J. (1987). The role of teacher beliefs in the practice of teaching. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 19,* 317-328.

Neuman, S. B., & Roskos, K. (1998). *Children achieving: Best practices in early literacy.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Neuman, S. B., & Roskos, K. (1990). Play, print and purpose: Enriching play environments for literacy development. *The Reading Teacher, 44,* 214-221.

O'Grady, E. K., & Medoff, R. D. (1988). Categorical variables in multiple regression: Some cautions. *Multivariate Behavioral Research, 23*(2) 243-260.

Ogle, D. M. (1986). KWL: A teacher model that develops active reading of expository text. *The Reading Teacher, 39,* 564-570.

Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers beliefs and educational research: Clearing up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research, 62*(3), 307-332.

Pappas, C. C., & Brown, E. (1987). Learning to read by reading: Learning how to extend the functional potential of language. *Research in the Teaching of English, 21,* 160-184.

Parker, D. (1997). *Jamie: A literacy story.* York, ME: Stenhouse.

Peck, J. (1989). Using storytelling to promote language and literacy development. *The Reading Teacher, 43*(2), 138-141.

Piaget, J. (1963). *The origins of intelligence in children.* New York: Norton. (Original work published in 1952)

Piaget. J, & Inhelder, B. (1969a).Intellectual operations and their development. In P. Fraisse & J. Piaget (Eds.). *Experimental psychology: Its scope and method* (Vol. VII, Intelligence). London: Routledge. (Original work published in 1963)

Pinnell, G., S., & Fountas, C. I. (1998). *Word matters.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Pinnell, G. S., & Mc Carrier, A. (1994). Interactive writing: A transition tool for assisting children in learning to read and write. In E. Heibert & B. Taylor (Eds.), *Getting reading right from the start: Effective early literacy interventions* (pp.149-170). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Pikulski, J. J. ((2000). *From phonemic awareness to fluency: Effective decoding instruction in a research-based reading program.* (J. J. Pikulski, S. Templeton, & D. J. Chard [Eds.]). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Putnam, L. (1982). A description study of two philosophical different approaches to reading readiness as they were used in six inner city kindergartens. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 220 808)

Ranweiler, W. L. (2004). *Preschool readers and writers: Early literacy strategies for teachers.* Ypsilanti, MI: High Scope Press.

Reed, F. R., & Johnson, W. T. (2000). *Philosophical documents in education* (2nd ed.). New York: Addison-Wesley Longman.

Regalado, M., Goldenberg, C., & Appel, E. (2001). Building community systems for young children: Reading and early literacy. In N. Halfon, E. Shulman, & M. Hochstein (Eds.), *Building community systems for young children.* Los Angeles: UCLA Center for Healthier Children. Families and Communities.

Richards, J. C. (2001). *What do teachers and their students think and know about reading? An exploratory study.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED464043)

Richardson, V. (1996). The role of attitudes and beliefs in learning to teach. In J. Sikula (Ed.). *Handbook of research on teacher education* (2nd ed.). (pp.109-119). New York: Mc Millian.

Richardson, V., Andres, P., Tidwell, D., & Llyod, C. (1991). The relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in reading comprehension instruction. *American Educational Research Journal, 28*(3), 559-586.

Rosenblatt, L. (1995). *Literature as exploration* (5th ed.). New York: The Modern Language Association of America.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literacy work.* Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1976). *Literature as Exploration.* New York: Noble & Noble.

Routman, R. (2003). *Reading essentials.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Routman, R. (2000). *Conversations: Strategies for teaching, learning, and evaluating.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Routman. R. (1991). *Invitations: Changing as teachers and learners K-12*.

   Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Rowe, D. W. (1987), Literacy learning as an intertextual process. *National*

   Reading Conference Yearbook, 36, 101-112.

Rupley, W. H., & Logan, J. W. (1984). Elementary teachers' beliefs about reading

   and knowledge of reading content: Relationships to decisions about

   reading outcomes. *Reading Psychology, 6,* 145-156.

Russell, D. L. (1994). *Literature for children: A short introduction*. New York:

   Longman.

Sadoski, M., Norton, D. E., Rodrequez, M., Nichols, W. D., & Gerla, J. P. (1998).

   Preservice and inservice teachers' knowledge of literacy concepts and

   literacy analysis. *Reading Psychology, 19,* 267-286.

Sahakian, L. M., & Sahakian, S. W. (1974). *Rousseau as educator*. New York:

   Twayne.

Scharer, P. L., Freeman, B. E., Lehman, A. B., & Allen, G. V. (1992). *Literacy*

   and literature in elementary classrooms: Teachers' beliefs and practices.

   (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 353 541)

Schickedanz, J. (2004). Content standards for preschool literacy: A summary of

   guidelines from 15 states. The *Reading Teacher, 58,* 45-47.

Schulman, B. M. (2000). *Guided reading: Making it work*. New York: Scholastic.

Schultz, K. (2002). Looking across space and time: Reconceptualizing literacy learning in and out of school. *Research in the Teaching of English, 36,* 356-390.

Shaw, P. A. (1991). A selected review of research on whole language. *Journal of the Wisconsin State Reading Association, 35,* 3-17.

Shulman, L. S. (1986b). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Research, 15,* 4-14.

Siegler, R. S. (1996). *Emerging minds: The process of change in children's thinking.* New York: Oxford University.

Sigel, I. E. (1985). A conceptual analysis of beliefs. In. E. Sigel (Ed.). *Parental belief systems* (pp. 345-371). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawerence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Silvern, S. (1985). Parent involvement and reading achievement: A review of research and implications for practice. *Childhood Education, 62,* 44-50.

Skinner, B. F. (1958). Teaching machines. *Science, 128,*137-158.

Slavin, R. E. (1987). *Cooperative learning* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: National Education Association.

Slavin, R. E. (1983). *An introduction to cooperative learning.* New York: Longman.

Smith, F. (1988). *Understanding reading* (4th ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Sniegoski, S. J. (1994). *Froebel and early childhood education in America.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 385386)

Snow, C. E. (1983). Literacy and language: Relationships during the preschool years. *Harvard Educational Review, 53*(2), 165-187.

Snow, C. E. (1972). Mother's speech to children learning language. *Child Development, 43,* 549-565.

Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P. (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Spring, J. (2000). *The intersection of cultures: Multicultural education in the United States and the global economy.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Stahl, S., & Miller, P. D. (1989). Whole language and language experiences for beginning reading: A quantitative research synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 59,* 87-116.

Stake, R. (1999). The goods on American education. *Phi Delta Kappan, 80*(9), 668-672.

Stern, P. & Shavelson, R. (1983). Reading teachers' judgment, plans, and decision making. *The Reading Teacher, 37,* 280-286.

Stojic, M. (2002). *Hello world.* New York: Scholastic.

Strickland, D. (1994-1995). Reinventing our literacy programs: Books, basics, and balance. *The Reading Teacher, 48,* 294-306.

Strickland, D. S., & Morrow, L. M. (Eds.). (1989). *Emerging Literacy: Young children learn to read and write*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Tabors, P. O., Snow, C. E., & Dickinson, D. K. (2001). Homes and schools together: Supporting language and literacy development. In D. K. Dickinson & P. O. Tabors (Eds.). *Beginning literacy with language. Young children learning at home and school* (pp. 313-334). Baltimore: Brookes Publishing.

Tatum, D. B. (2003). *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?: And other conversations about race*. New York: Basic Books.

Taylor, D. (1993). *From the child's point of view*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Taylor, B. M., Pearson, P. D., Clark, K., & Walpole, S. (2002). Effective schools and accomplished teachers: Lessons about primary-grade reading instruction in low-income schools. In B. M. Taylor & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Teaching reading: Effective schools, accomplished teachers* (pp.3-72). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Teale, W. H., & Gambrell, B. L. (2007). Raising urban students' literacy achievement by engaging in authentic, challenging work. *Reading Teacher, 60,* 728-739.

Tomkinson, C. A. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision Curriculum Development.

Tompkins, G. E. (2004). *Teaching writing: Balancing process and product.* Upper

Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Tompkins, G. E. (1998). *Language Arts: Content and teaching strategies* (4th

ed.). Los Angeles: Prentice Hall.

Trelease, J. (1995). *The new read-aloud handbook* (4th ed.). New York: Penguin.

Trousdale, A., & Harris, V. (1993). Missing links in literacy response: Group

interpretation of literature. *Children's Literature in Education, 24,* 195-207.

Vacca, T. R. (1981). *Content area reading.* Boston; Little Brown.

Vygotsky, L. (1962,1986). *Thought and language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

(Original work published in 1934)

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher mental*

processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University. (Original work published

in 1930-1935)

Watson, D. J. (1989). Defining and describing whole language. *The Elementary*

School Journal, 90(2), 129-141.

Watson, D. J., Burke, C. L., & Harste, J. C. (1989). *Whole language: Inquiring*

voices. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Wells, G. (1986). *The meaning makers: Children using language and using*

language to learn. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Wharton-McDonald, R., Pressley, M., & Mistretta-Hampston, J. (1998). Literacy

instruction in first-grade classrooms: Teacher characteristics and student

achievement. *The Elementary School Journal, 99*(2), 101-128.

Whitmore, K. F., & Goodman, Y. M. (1992). Inside the whole language classroom. *The School Administrator, 49*(5), 20-26.

Wollman-Bonilla, J. E. (1989). Reading journals: Invitations to participate in literature. *The Reading Teacher, 43,* 112-120.

Wong, S. D., Groth, L. A., & O' Flahaven, D. J. (1994). *Characterizing teacher-student interactions in Reading Recovery lessons.* National Reading Research Center Report No. 17. National Reading Research Project of the Universities of Georgia and Maryland.

Yopp, H. K. (1992). Developing phonemic awareness in young children. *The Reading Teacher, 45,* 696-703.

Young, T. A., & Vardell, S. (1993). Weaving Readers Theatre and nonfiction into the curriculum. *The Reading Teacher, 46,* 396-406.

Zancanella, D. (1991). Teachers reading/readers teaching: Five teachers' personal approaches to literature and their teaching of literature. *Research in the Teaching of English, 25*(1), 5-32.

Zemelman, S., Harvey, D., & Hyde, A. (1998). *Best practice: New standards for teaching and learning in America's schools* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Zhihui, F. (1996). A review of the research on beliefs and practices. *Educational Research, 38*(1), 47-65.

APPENDIX A

Participant Consent Form

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title: Teachers' Beliefs on Best Practices in Literacy Instruction

Investigator: Rosemary Fuentes, M. Ed. ....

Advisor: Ron Fannin, Ph.D. ....

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

You are being asked to participate in a research study for Rosemary Fuentes' dissertation at Texas Woman's University. The purpose of this research is to investigate the association between teachers' belief types and practices on literacy instruction. The study will identify teachers' beliefs on the implementation of best practices.

Research Procedures

For this study, the investigator will conduct online questionnaires for teachers who teach second through fifth grade. The questionnaires will be posted online at Psycdata.com approximately on March 14-June 2, 2008. After completing all the questionnaires, participants will be directed to another survey to enter their name, e-mail address, and telephone number if they would like to be included in a drawing. This contact information is given only for the purpose of the incentive drawing. After the completion of the study, the participants' contact information will be permanently deleted from the database. Your maximum total time commitment in the study is a total of 40 minutes.

Potential Risks

There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all downloading and Internet transactions. The nature of any information requested via online in this study, however, will not be identifiable. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. After the completion of the study, the participants' contact information will be permanently deleted from the database.

Participation and Benefits

Your involvement in this study is completely voluntary, and you may discontinue your participation in the study at any time without penalty. The only direct benefit to you is that at the completion of the study a summary of the results will be mailed to you upon request.

Questions Regarding the Study

If you have any questions regarding this study, you may contact the researchers: Rosemary Fuentes at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or Ron Fannin at (940) 898-2682. If you have questions in relation to your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at (940) 898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu. You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form.

*If you would like to receive a summary of the results from this study, please contact Rosemary Fuentes at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or Ron Fannin at (940) 898-2682.

APPENDIX B

Research Demographic Survey

"Your completed questionnaire constitutes your informed consent to act as a participant in this research."

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE: TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

1. How old are you?
☐ 18-24, ☐ 25-29, ☐ 30-39, ☐ 40-49, ☐ 50-59, ☐ 60 or above

2. What is your gender?
☐ Male, ☐ Female

3. How do you categorize your race?
☐ Hispanic, ☐ African American, ☐ Anglo/White, ☐ Asian American
Other: _____

4. What is the highest degree you have completed?
☐ Bachelor's, ☐ Master's ☐ Doctorate

5. What is your marital status?
☐ Single, ☐ Married, ☐ Separated, ☐ Divorced, ☐ Widow

6. What is your current income?
☐ 44,500-50,000, ☐ 51,000-57,000, ☐ 58,000-64,000, ☐ 65,000-70,000

7. How many years have you been teaching?
☐ 0-5, ☐ 6-10, ☐ 11-15, ☐ 16-20, ☐ 21-25, ☐ 26-30, ☐ 30 +

8. What grade do you teach?
☐ 2nd ☐3rd ☐4th ☐5th

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Letter

Fort Worth Independent School District

March 13, 2008

Dear Teachers,

This letter is to request your participation in a research study for my dissertation in Child Development at Texas Woman's University. The purpose of the research is to investigate the association between teachers' belief types on best practices in literacy instruction.

Three online questionnaires will be used to collect data for this study. All the instruments are self-administered questionnaires: the Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS), an Instructional Practices Check List for 2nd /3rd grade teachers, and a 4th /5th grade Instructional Practices Check List for teachers. The questions pertain to your belief types and practices in literacy instruction. Your maximum total time commitment in the study is approximately 40 minutes.

Would you be willing to assist in this research study on teachers' belief types and practices? If so you will be asked to access a Psychdata.com approximately on March 14-June 2, 2008. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact me at xxx-xxx-xxxx, xxx-xxx-xxxx, or via e-mail at rfountains@hotmail.com.

Participants are being asked to enter their name, e-mail address, and telephone number if they would like to be included in a drawing. Your contact information is given only for the purpose of the incentive drawing.

There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, and Internet transactions. The nature of any information requested via online in this study, however, will not be identifiable. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. After the completion of the study, the participants' contact information will be permanently deleted from the database.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Fuentes, M. Ed.
Texas Woman's University
Denton, Texas

APPENDIX D

Email Script to Potential Participants

Email Script to Potential Participants

Teachers,

I am Rosemary Fuentes, a doctoral student in the College of Professional Education at Texas Woman's University. As a part of my dissertation, I am conducting a study on teachers' beliefs and practices. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between teachers' belief types on best practices in literacy instruction. I would like to enlist your help for my study.

Three online questionnaires will be used to collect data for this study. All the instruments are self-administered questionnaires: the Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS), an Instructional Practices Check List for $2^{nd}/3^{rd}$ grade teachers, and a Instructional Practices Check List for $4^{th}/5^{th}$ grade teachers. The questions pertain to your belief types and practices in literacy instruction. Your maximum total time commitment in the study is approximately 40 minutes.

Would you be willing to assist in this research study on teachers' belief types and practices? If so you will be asked to access a database, Psychdata.com approximately on March 14-June 2, 2008. If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact me at xxx-xxx-xxxx, xxx-xxx-xxxx, or via e-mail at rfountains@hotmail.com.

Participants are asked to enter their name, e-mail address, and telephone number if they would like to be included in a drawing. Your contact information is given only for the purpose of the incentive drawing.

There is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email, downloading, and Internet transactions. The nature of any information requested via online in this study, however, will not be identifiable. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. After the completion of the study, the participants' contact information will be permanently deleted from the database.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Fuentes, M. Ed.
Texas Woman's University
Denton, Texas

APPENDIX E

Literacy Orientation Survey

"Your completed questionnaire constitutes your informed consent to act as a participant in this research."

Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS)

Directions: Read the following statements, and choose a response that indicates your feelings or behaviors regarding literacy and literacy instruction.

1. The purpose of reading instruction is to teach children to recognize words and to pronounce them correctly.

Strongly
Disagree
                                                                                Strongly
                                                                                Agree

1................2................3................4................5

2. When students read text, I ask them questions such as "What does it mean"?

Never
                                                                                Always

1................2................3................4................5

3. Reading and writing are unrelated processes.

Strongly
Disagree
                                                                                Strongly
                                                                                Agree

1................2................3................4................5

4. When planning instruction, I take into account the needs of children by including activities that meet their social, emotional, physical, and affective needs.

Never
                                                                                Always

1................2................3................4................5

5. Students should be treated as individual learners rather than as a group.

Strongly
Disagree
                                                                                Strongly
                                                                                Agree

1................2................3................4................5

6. I schedule time every day for self-selected reading and writing activities.

Never
                                                                                Always

1................2................3................4................5

7. Students should use "fix-up strategies" such as rereading when text meaning is unclear.

Strongly
Disagree
                                                                                Strongly
                                                                                Agree

1................2................3................4................5

8. Teachers should read aloud to students on a daily basis.

Strongly   Strongly

Disagree   Agree

1...............2..........................3......................4...........................5

9. I encourage my students to monitor their comprehension as they read.

Never   Always

1...............2.....................3......................4..........................5

10. I use a variety of prereading strategies with my students.

Never   Always

1...............2.....................3......................4.........................5

11. It is not necessary for students to write text on a daily basis.

Strongly   Strongly

Disagree   Agree

1...............2......................3......................4...........................5

12. Students should be encouraged to sound out all unknown words.

Strongly   Strongly

Disagree   Agree

1...............2......................3......................4...........................5

13. The purpose of reading is to understand print.

Strongly   Strongly

Disagree   Agree

1...............2......................3......................4...........................5

14. I hold parent workshops or send newsletters with ideas about how parents can help their children with school.

Never   Always

1...............2.....................3......................4.........................5

15. I organize my classroom so that my students have an opportunity to write in at least one subject every day.

Never   Always

1...............2.....................3......................4.........................5

16. I ask the parents of my students to share their time, knowledge, and expertise in my classroom.

Never   Always

1.................2.................3.................4.................5

17. Writers in my classroom generally move through the processes of prewriting, drafting, and revising.

Never   Always

1.................2.................3.................4.................5

18. In my class, I organize reading, writing-speaking, and listening around key concepts.

Never   Always

1.................2.................3.................4.................5

19. Reading instruction should always be delivered to the whole class at the same time.

Strongly   Strongly
Disagree   Agree

1.................2.................3.................4.................5

20. I teach using themes or integrated units.

Never   Always

1.................2.................3.................4.................5

21. Grouping for reading instruction should always be based on ability.

Strongly   Strongly
Disagree   Agree

1.................2.................3.................4.................5

22. Subjects should be integrated across the curriculum.

Strongly   Strongly
Disagree   Agree

1.................2.................3.................4.................5

23. I use a variety of grouping patterns to teach reading such as skill groups, interest groups, whole group, and individual.

Never   Always

1.................2.................3.................4.................5

24. Students need to write for a variety of purposes.

Strongly
Disagree
Strongly
Agree

1……………2………………..3…………………….4…………………………5

25. I take advantage of opportunities to learn about teaching by attending professional conferences and/or graduate classes and by reading professional journals.

Never
Always

1……………2………………..3…………………….4…………………………5

26. Parents attitudes toward literacy affect my students' progress.

Strongly
Disagree
Strongly
Agree

1……………2………………..3…………………….4…………………………5

27. The major purpose of reading assessment is to determine a student's placement in the basal reader.

Strongly
Disagree
Strongly
Agree

1……………2………………..3…………………….4…………………………5

28. I assess student's reading progress primarily by teacher-made and/or book tests.

Never
Always

1……………2………………..3…………………….4…………………………5

29. Parental reading habits affect their children's attitudes toward reading.

Strongly
Disagree
Strongly
Agree

1……………2………………..3…………………….4…………………………5

30. At the end of each day, I reflect on the effectiveness of my instructional decisions.

Never
Always

1……………2………………..3…………………….4…………………………5

APPENDIX F

Instructional Practices Check List for 2nd / 3rd Grade

"Your completed questionnaire constitutes your informed consent to act as a participant in this research."

Instructional Practices Check List for 2nd/3rd Grade

Please choose the number that corresponds most closely with the amount of time you spend doing each activity or strategy listed below (circle one number). If there are any literacy instructional practices not included below that are very important to your teaching, please include them in the "other" section at the bottom.

1=Never (have not used the strategy or activity this year)
2=Rarely (no more than once per month)
3=Sometimes (about once per week)
4=Often (about once per week)
5=Frequently (about two or three times per week)
6=Almost always (almost every day)
9=Don't Know or N/A

As a teacher I ...

Communication	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Have students orally summarize the text they are reading to increase understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students make short oral presentations	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Comprehension	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Read aloud from a piece of literature that is above students' instructional reading level.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students retell, summarize, and paraphrase text that is read or heard.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students make predictions about text.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use information from illustrations, diagrams, glossaries, indexes or graphs to assist in comprehension of text.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

110

Have students identify cause and effect relationships in texts.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students relate text to personal experiences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use information from a source to answer a question or discuss a topic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students read and compare two or more texts about a topic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students extend ideas presented in text with their own opinions, conclusions, and judgments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Literature	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Discuss similarities and differences between two genres.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Discuss literary devices, such as rhyme, figurative language or dialogue.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students identify elements of literature, such as character, plot, and setting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students examine the point of view of the writer and how it impacts the literature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students identify between fact and opinion in texts.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students examine reasons for a character's actions and basic motivation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students compare similar stories from 2 or more geo-cultural groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Provide opportunities for students to identify recurring themes across literary works.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Oral Fluency	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Have students perform repeated readings to practice phrasing and expression with familiar text.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Writing	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Model prewriting activities appropriate to the task (e.g. mapping, webbing, brainstorming)	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Model how to research and write on a topic using resource.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use learning logs or journals to record information or organize ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Demonstrate organizing ideas into beginning, middle, and endings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students write narrative pieces based on personal experience.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students write in persuasive mode to present opinion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Conference with individual students about their writing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students revise writing based on input from peers or adults.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students edit writing to correct punctuation, grammar, and spelling of frequently used words.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use a word-processing program to create a draft and do some revision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use varied sentence structure and word	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Writing	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
choice to improve the text they are writing.							
Have students use resources when they edit their writing (i.e. dictionaries, word banks)	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students evaluate their own writing based on the State Scoring Guide.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Spelling	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Model how to use knowledge of phonics or word patterns to improve spelling when writing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Use word lists for spelling activities from a variety of sources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students do word sorts, word games, or word hunts in text.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Update the individual records of student progress toward correctly spelling a list of frequently written words.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Other: (Specify any practices that are important to you and are not included in above sections)	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Comments...

APPENDIX G

Instructional Practices Check List for 4th / 5th Grade

"Your completed questionnaire constitutes your informed consent to act as a participant in this research."

Instructional Practices Check List for 4th/5th Grade

Please choose the number that corresponds most closely with the amount of time you spend doing each activity or strategy listed below (circle one number).

1=Never (have not used the strategy or activity this year)
2=Rarely (no more than once per month)
3=Sometimes (about once per week)
4=Often (about once per week)
5=Frequently (about two or three times per week)
6=Almost always (almost every day)
9=Don't Know or N/A

As a teacher I…

Communication	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Have students orally paraphrase or summarize the text they are reading to increase understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students make short oral presentations	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Comprehension	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Read aloud from a piece of literature that is above students' instructional reading level.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students restate, paraphrase, and summarize what us is read or heard.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students analyze information in the text to make predictions and inferences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use information from illustrations, glossaries, indexes, graphs, or diagrams to assist in comprehension of text.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students identify	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Comprehension	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
relationships, images, patterns or symbols, and draw conclusions about their meaning in the text.							
Have students relate text they are reading to personal experiences, to other texts or to the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use information from two or more sources to answer a question or express knowledge on a topic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students analyze how the author's writing style and craft (i.e. word choice and literary devices, such as rhyme, figurative language or dialogue) contribute to the text.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students read and compare three or more texts on an issue, topic or genre.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students extend ideas presented in text with their own opinions, conclusions, and judgments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Literature	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Discuss similarities and differences between three or more genres.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students make inferences and draw conclusions about how the development of character and setting contributes to the overall impact of the selection.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students examine the point of view of the writer and how it impacts the literature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students identify between	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

imaginative or realistic plot in texts.							
Have students compare and contrast similar stories from several geo-cultural groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students identify and analyze similar themes in various literary works.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Oral Fluency	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Have students perform repeated readings to practice phrasing and expression with familiar text.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Writing	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Model prewriting activities appropriate to the task (e.g. mapping, webbing, brainstorming)	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students research and write on a topic using two or more resources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use learning logs or journals to record information or organize ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Model how to organize text (introduction, body, conclusion) with the use of clear sequencing and transitional words.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Model how to engage a reader through specific methods, such as establishing a context and creating a persona.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students write narrative pieces, with character, plot setting and dialogue.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students write in the persuasive mode to present a	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

point of view or evaluation that is supported with references to text authors, media or personal knowledge.							
Conference with individual students about their writing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students receive input from their peers about their writing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students revise writing based on input from peers or adults.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students edit writing to correct punctuation, grammar, spelling, and paragraphing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use a word processing program to revise work to create a draft or final piece.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use varied sentence structure and word choice to improve the text they are writing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students use resources when they edit their writing (i.e. dictionaries, word banks)	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students evaluate their own writing based on the State Scoring Guide.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Spelling	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
Model how to use knowledge of phonics or word patterns to improve spelling when writing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Use word lists for spelling activities from a variety of sources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Have students do word sorts, word games, or word hunts in text.	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
Update the individual records of student progress toward	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

correctly spelling a list of frequently written words.							

Other: (Specify any practices that are important to you and are not included in above sections)	Never	Rare	Some	Often	Freq	Alw	DK
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
	1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Comments…