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Improving Reading Acquisition in Elementary Boys

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IMPROVING READING ACQUISITION IN ELEMENTARY BOYS

A Project Report

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

Master Teacher

by

Rachel Ann Stork

July 2007

ABSTRACT

IMPROVING READING ACQUISITION IN ELEMENTARY BOYS

by

Rachel Ann Stork

July 2007

The purpose of this project was to develop a guide for teachers and parents to improve reading acquisition in elementary-aged boys. The project will summarize current research and a brochure gives practical solutions for education professionals and parents to help increase the interest and acquisition of elementary boys in reading. Current literature and research shows an alarming problem in elementary boys' reading acquisition. This project analyzes best practices, brain research, and parent involvement that lead to improved literacy acquisition in elementary-age boys.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

Although the reading acquisition of boys has been an education issue for some time, it has recently become more widely publicized. Research shows that boys' score significantly lower than girls on standardized testing in countries around the world (Knowles & Smith, 2005, p. xiii). Research also shows that boys read and enjoy reading less (Booth, 2002, p.22). Although boys' reading acquisition is a multifaceted problem, examining the classroom, home, and brain development will help us understand and improve reading acquisition in boys.

For educators, the development of practical strategies and solutions to improve boys' reading acquisition has been lacking. By synthesizing my research findings, a brochure with practical tips to promote boys' reading acquisition has been developed. In addition, a high-interest book list was compiled to provide educators and parents a variety of reading materials to share with elementary boys.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop a guide for educators and parents to improve reading acquisition in elementary school boys. Many factors have been identified as obstacles to boys' reading acquisition leading boys to fall behind in their reading acquisition and performance on standardized tests (OCEAD, 2003). This project details obstacles that boys encounter in reading acquisition and identifying practical solutions to these defined obstacles. Subsequently, a high-interest book list and a brochure were produced to generate interest in reading. The results of this project

summarize the problems associated with reading acquisition in boys and provide some practical solutions for educators and parents to assist boys in achieving higher levels of reading acquisition.

Significance

A growing body of research has emerged about boys' reading acquisition.

Elementary school boys appear to read and enjoy reading less than elementary school girls (Booth, 2002, p.22). Current research shows that boys typically score lower than girls in standardized testing. According to the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2001 report which administers tests in 35 countries, including the United States, Grade four girls performed better than boys in 34 of the 35 countries (Mullis, p.28-29). In the United States, on average, girls scored 18 points higher than boys on the combined literacy scale. Also, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2003 shows that girls are one-half of a proficiency level higher in reading than boys (p. 284). "Literacy scores from different continents are consistent in showing that boys are not performing as well as girls, and these scores have precipitated a new wave of concern regarding boys' reading habits (or lack thereof)" (Haupt, 2003, p.19).

In *Reading Don't Fix no Chevy's: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*, authors Michael W. Smith and Jeffrey D. Wilhelm state, "Boys take longer to learn to read than girls do, boys read less than girls do, girls tend to comprehend narrative texts and most expository texts significantly better than boys do, boys value reading as an activity less than girls do" (2002). According to a national survey conducted by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) in 2001, boys listed the following as their top obstacles to reading: boring/no fun 39.3 percent, no time/too busy 29.8 percent, like

other activities better 11.1 percent, can't get into the stories 7.7 percent, and I'm not good at it 4.3 percent (p.1). Research evidence shows a growing problem regarding reading acquisition in elementary school boys.

Definitions

Boys--young, elementary school-aged males, between the ages of 5 and 11(Scieszka, 2005).

Reading Acquisition--the ability to acquire basic reading skills (Smith, 2002).

Reading Literacy--the ability to understand, use, and reflect on written texts in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate effectively in society (PISA, 2000).

Standardized test--a test that is consistently applied to a variety of schools or institutions (Trelease, 2006).

Limitations

The three limitations to this project are the intended geographic area for implementation of the guide, the intended grade levels, and student assessment.

Regarding the geographic area of the intended implementation, this guide could be adapted for schools within more diverse socioeconomic areas; however, it was designed to address the needs of boys at Whittier Elementary School in Tacoma, WA. The intended grade levels for this guide are boys between kindergarten and fifth grade; however, this could be adapted for younger or older audiences, as necessary. The final limitation was student assessment. This project did not include an assessment of the effectiveness of the developed guide. The overall value of the guide has not been assessed.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

National and international standardized tests indicate a growing disparity between elementary boys' and girls' reading acquisition. According to the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2001 report which administers tests in 35 countries, grade four girls' average literacy scores were better than boys in 34 of the 35 countries (Mullis, p.28-29). In the United States, girls scored, on average, 18 points higher than boys on the combined literacy scale. In addition, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2003 shows girls' reading proficiency levels are one half of a proficiency level higher than boys (p. 284).

This literature review is focused on elementary boys' reading acquisition, the current practices related to boys' reading acquisition, and identification of strategies for the classroom and home. In addition, the review will look at recent brain research to strengthen reading acquisition in elementary boys.

Reading Acquisition of Elementary Boys in the Classroom

Today's classroom presents many challenges to improving boys' reading acquisition which can be strengthened with such practical strategies as using the arts, material choices, and technology. Sometimes, educators use these strategies in the classroom. Often, they are overlooked.

Extending our ideas of literacy will allow us objectively to see the issues facing boys' reading acquisition. To do so, we must first broaden our view of literacy. Graphic novels, magazines, comics, and non-traditional media provide alternative approaches to

engage young boy readers (Booth, 2002). Boys are interested in reading, but seem uninterested in publications acceptable under education's current narrow view of literacy.

“Wilhelm and Smith found that boys who were considered to be problem or highly reluctant readers in the classroom had very rich literate lives outside of schools, and used various forms of literacy to pursue their interests and goals.... In essence, none of the boys in Wilhelm and Smith's study rejected literacy. What they did almost universally reject was 'school literacy' (Hyatt, 2002, p.12). In the article, “Boys and Books,” Jane Mcfann states, “Teachers who allow boys to see the rich variety of forms that the written word can take may help to create more enthusiastic readers” (2004, p.20). Mcfann's and Wilhelm and Smith's research indicates the material boys are asked to read in the classroom is different from boys' reading choices outside the classroom.

Elementary boys' reading acquisition correlates to the material boys read.

Michael W. Smith and Jeffrey D. Wilhelm, in *Reading Don't Fix No Chevys: Literacy Lives of Young Men*, identified the following boys' choices of reading materials (2002, p. 11):

1. Boys are more inclined to read informational texts, magazines, and newspaper articles.
2. Boys are more inclined to read graphic novels and comic books.
3. Boys are more inclined to read magazine and newspaper articles.
4. Boys tend to resist reading stories about girls, whereas girls do not tend to resist reading stories about boys.
5. Boys are more enthusiastic about reading electronic texts than girls are.

6. Boys like to read about hobbies, sports, and things they might be interested in doing.
7. Boys like to collect things and tend to like to collect series of books.
8. Boys read less fiction than girls.
9. Boys tend to enjoy escapism and humor, and some boys are passionate about science fiction or fantasy.

Broadening our idea of literacy and choices of reading materials in the classroom will create an environment where boys enjoy reading. Jon Scieszka, who produced the website, "Guys Read" (<http://www.guysread.com>), agrees classrooms should expand their choices of reading materials. On his website, he wrote, "Let boys know that non-fiction reading is reading. Magazines, newspapers, websites, biographies, science books, comic books, graphic novels, are all reading material (2005)."

Offering a variety of reading materials will engage and invite young readers. When elementary boys see many and varied reading choices, they will be much more excited about reading and willing to strengthen their reading acquisition. As our idea of literacy broadens, we will create an environment for boys to succeed in the classroom. If we allow elementary boys to choose the materials they would like to read, then reading acquisition will improve because boys will become more interested in reading.

Teachers currently employ many strategies to improve elementary boys' reading acquisition. For example, teachers may make reading engaging, use the arts, and use technology. Barbara Braxton identified the following tips for teachers to make reading more fun and engaging (Braxton, 2003, p. 43):

1. Read aloud with expression, so students can hear how a capable and fluent reader sounds.
2. Have fun, by using your voice and body to bring the story alive.
3. Use visuals, such as illustrated texts, where appropriate, to help students construct meaning.
4. Provide props and link the texts you're reading to the real-world objects.
5. Remember the Web, using it to find texts that require students to think, analyze, and discuss.
6. Plan personal reading time for students, in regularly scheduled blocks of time every day.

Elementary boys appear to react positively to the use of the arts as a method of improving reading acquisition. For example, drama, dance, music, and the visual arts can help develop literacy skills. In "Me Read, No Way" Ontario Education states, "For boys, the arts provide a vehicle for making meaning visible, allowing them to "see" the story as it unfolds. Through the arts, boys can also express and explore emotion in a safe context. Both of these factors have been found to increase boys' understanding and enjoyment of the texts they read" (p. 22).

Much of the research on how the arts impact boys' reading acquisition supports using role-playing. Gurian states "role playing can be used in teaching most subjects. This provides movement that appeals to boys' brains...assuming the roles and acting as the characters might also allow students to experiment with new behaviors and topics in a "safe" way" (2003, p.110). Jeffery Wilhelm provides many examples of games and role-

playing that can support and enhance students understanding of stories, novels, and texts.

Some examples include the following: (Wilhelm, 1997, p.100-101)

1. Role-playing--Students take on the roles of characters in a text.
2. Dramatic play--Students use a situation from a text as a springboard for creating their own story or drama.
3. Snapshot drama--Students are asked to depict a moment from the text as a "freeze frame", particularly as a way of describing characters' expressions and gestures at the moment.
4. Newscast--Students produce a news broadcast based on characters and events in a text.

Michael Gurian, who wrote the *Boys and Girls Learn Differently: Action Guide for Teachers* says include storytelling, "Offer lots of storytelling and myth creation in the classroom to help the male brain develop its imaginative and verbal skills" (p. 110).

Technology provides a way to strengthen and support boys' reading acquisition in the classroom. Technology is a daily part of our lives and can motivate reading in elementary boys. In *Differently Literate: Boys and Girls and the Schooling of Literacy*, Elaine Millard states, "It is imperative that educators and parents be aware of the impact of the multimedia world, and understand the positive ways in which these new languages and cultures can be harnessed as adjuncts to book-based literacy" (1997, p. 46). Woolcott Research (2001 p. 13) supports using technology in the classroom in the following ways:

1. Ensure that the roles of print-based texts and electronic materials are regarded as complementary and of equal importance.
2. Use electronic media and attractive accessible websites to promote reading.

Technology can be a useful tool for initiating and improving elementary boys' reading acquisition.

Reading Acquisition of Elementary Boys at Home

The home is where boys start reading and where a foundation is created for reading acquisition. There are many ways to make the home more valuable to boys who are improving their reading acquisition. Michael Sullivan and Jeff Wilhelm of *Reading Don't Fix No Chevys* supply the following tips for families to encourage boys to read:

1. Take it easy. Becoming a reader has little to do with reading difficult books and everything to do with the amount of reading a boy does. So, let your boy choose books, even if they are below his reading level.
2. Let him choose. As much as possible, let your son choose the books he wants to read for pleasure and fight the impression that reading is a chore that is imposed on him.
3. Read with him. Reading is hard for many boys, but stories are appealing. Share the reading, so he only has to do half the work. If the reading is too hard but the story is too good, just read it to him.
4. Model good reading. Even when you are not reading with your son, make sure he sees you read. Men, especially, have been trained to read in isolation. Break the cycle! Read in front of boys, yours or anyone else's.

Role models bridge an important and necessary link between home and school. Specifically, male role models can significantly influence positive attitudes about reading in young boys. Positive male role models make a difference both at home and in the classroom.

Jan Greer, in her "The Literacy Post" column wrote, "Research states that males see reading as a feminine activity and therefore steer away from it. There is only one way to change this perception and that is for men both at home and in the community to read aloud to boys and to show that reading activity is of value" (McFann, 2004, p.21).

William G. Brozo (2002) found, "Most teen and preteen boys rarely see fathers or any adult men reading anything at all" (p. 97). John Scieszka (2003, p. 17) asks, "So how do we start motivating our boys to read? One obvious way is to get more men involved in teaching, more fathers actively reading with their boys, and adult men generally showing boys that reading is a male activity." When looking for role models, Lisa Von Drasek (2002, p. 72), a children's librarian says, "Dad, brothers, and reading-partner guys from upper grades can read with younger boys, suggest cool books and start guy book groups." Boys are influenced by their role models. Woolcott Research Party Ltd. found that the greatest influences on boys' reading were their family and friends. "Young people who read every day are more likely to have a father who reads at least sometimes, a mother who reads all the time, and siblings and friends who read. Thus for these young people, reading is part and parcel of their everyday social set – it is not an unusual activity, but is woven into the fabric of their lives" (2001, p. 26).

Brain Research and Reading Acquisition of Elementary Boys

Brain research has identified several influencing factors. Current brain research can help us understand boys, how reading acquisition occurs, and what we can do to strengthen and support boys who are learning to enjoy reading. Michael Gurian states the following biological tendencies identified from brain research:

1. The male brain, on average, relies more heavily than does the female on spatial mechanical stimulation and thus is inherently more stimulated by diagrams, pictures, and objects moving through space than by the monotony of words (2005, p. 46).
2. Boys tend to have more dopamine in their bloodstream which can increase impulsive risk behavior, and they process more blood flow in the cerebellum. These factors are believed to contribute to boys' tendency to learn less well...when sitting or being sedentary (2005, p. 47).
3. Boys, in general, pick up less what is orally going on around them, especially when it is said in words, and need more sensory-tactile experience than girls in order for their brains to engage in learning (2005, p. 47).
4. Girls tend to receive earlier and more advanced development of the Broca's and Wernicke's areas in the frontal and temporal lobes-these are the main language centers of the brain (2005, p.47).

In Anne Moir and David Jessel's *Brain Sex*, they argue, "The discipline for school is deeply unnatural to boys. His is a world of action, exploration, and things. But school tells him to sit quiet, listen, not fidget, and pay attention to ideas; everything, in fact, that his brain and body are telling him not to do" (p. 64). Michael Gurian, an educator and the author of *Boys and Girls Learn Differently! A Guide for Teachers and Parents* (Jossey-Bass, 2002) writes that boys' brains engage in less cross-hemisphere activity than girls'. Boys use only half of their brain at any given time. When boys read, they need an extra jolt of sound, color, motion, or some physical stimulation to initiate

communication between both halves of their brains. This supports why boys find appeal in sports, adventure stories, fantasies, and non-fiction. Boys tend to read material that is:

1. Filled with spatial-kinesthetic action-whether in thriller and suspense novels, science fiction, or sports biographies (p. 139).
2. Technical and mechanical in content, such as instructional manuals and business books (p. 139).
3. Graphic and visual, such as comic books and comic pages in newspapers (p. 139).

Michael Gurian states, "Boys seem to be more impulsive and undisciplined than girls. Reading and writing are hard for a lot of boys. More boys than girls are underachievers; many are unable to focus, are diagnosed as having learning disorders (p. 16). This research may have profound effects on boys' reading acquisition. Smith and Wilhelm found the following: (2005, p. 10)

1. Boys take longer to learn to read than girls do.
2. Girls tend to comprehend narrative texts and most expository texts significantly better than boys do.
3. Boys tend to be better at information retrieval and work-related literacy tasks than girls are.

Brain research is just beginning to shape our view of elementary boys' reading acquisition. This field will continue to influence our understanding of boys and reading.

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURES

Background

Reading acquisition in elementary boys has become an educational issue. In countries around the world, standardized tests show girls are outperforming boys in literacy (Knowles & Smith, 2005, p. xiii). Boys' reading acquisition is a multifaceted problem. By looking at the classroom, home, and brain development, reading acquisition in boys can be understood and improved.

The brochure provides a guide for educators and parents working with elementary boys. The brochure has tips from current research that will help guide educators and parents in working with elementary boys. The boy's booklist is another resource for elementary boys, parents, and educators to help select books that boys are interested in, connect with, and enjoy.

Procedures

Current research of primary and secondary sources provided the information necessary to create the brochure and booklist. Through observation of my students as a teacher-librarian, I have noticed how passionate children in the elementary grades, kindergarten through second grade, are about reading and how this interest begins to decline in third grade. I also have noticed that boys tend to check out fewer books and show less interest in titles in the library. This sparked my interest in raising boy's interest in books and reading acquisition.

Current research in elementary education shows boys are, on average, not as interested in reading as girls. Through further investigation, I began to see what a multi-

faceted problem boys' current reading acquisition is. The results of my research and studies related to boys' reading acquisition is seen in the following brochure and booklist.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT

This project was constructed to assist students, educators, and parents to meet the needs and challenges of reading acquisition for elementary boys. A brochure was produced compiling current research about boys and reading. This brochure summarizes best practices with practical solutions to assist parents and educators in helping boys enjoy and become better readers. The high-interest booklist compiles some titles to engage boys' interests and may provide a springboard of further interest in reading adventures. The booklist is best used from kindergarten through fifth grade as a guide and supplement to get boys more excited about reading. The brochure will not only help educators and parents understand boys' reading needs but gives them practical ideas and current books that will get boys excited about reading.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project was developed using current research supporting the idea that elementary boys are lagging behind girls in reading acquisition and standardized testing (Smith, 2001, p.1). Research was compiled, summarized, conclusions drawn, and a brochure for educators and parents was developed. The primary goal of the brochure is to help elementary boys improve their reading acquisition. The brochure lists practical strategies and current titles for educators and parents to access in helping boys improve their reading acquisition. Focusing on high-interest books and reading materials that elementary boys enjoy will provide an inducement to even the most reluctant readers.

Sources for this project included many educational research books, articles, and studies and my own classroom observations. The information supported my original observations that elementary boys were less interested in reading acquisition. In addition to the research, I developed a brochure that will help guide educators and parents in promoting improved reading acquisition and enjoyment. The brochure is designed to easily access educators to a ready resource of a variety of age-appropriate, age-interest books. The brochure will also be available to parents to enlighten their knowledge of appropriate age level material and to promote interaction with their child through reading. In addition, a booklist, made visually appealing, will be made available to students to peruse and to make informed book choices. Diverse titles will be featured in order to promote new interests and new explorations in reading for elementary boys. Updating the brochure and list would be a top-priority to engage students (and myself) searching out a rich diversity of titles. A further goal would be to expand future brochures to

include a variety of reading materials other than books, thus supporting my studies, research, and observations. The brochure could be updated and expanded, ultimately including student input—steps further in the goal of meeting the needs of elementary boys in order to enhance their reading acquisition and enjoyment.

Boys' reading acquisition is a complicated challenge. There are strategies that can improve boys' reading in the classroom and home. There are many practical strategies to help boys. One of the most important tenets to remember is "A good book for a boy is one he wants to read" (Maloney, 2002).

My recommendations are many and varied. I looked at the home, classroom, and brain research. In the classroom we must broaden our idea of literacy to include magazines, graphic novels, comics, websites, the backs of cereal boxes. We must let boys have a choice in reading materials. Teachers need to utilize the arts, technology, and a variety of reading materials to engage elementary boys and thus improve reading acquisition. Drama is a wonderful way to let students express themselves. "We need to develop drama units in which boys can express and reflect upon their ideas and feelings artistically, cooperatively and safely" (Booth, 2002, p. 73). Parents need to encourage children to read, allow choice, and interact with their children as part of reading. Parents should be reading with their children on a regular basis. Boys, in particular, can be particularly helped by the interest in reading of a male role model. An increase in male role models actively reading with boys brings a significant leap in reading acquisition. For example, a study in Modesto, California, "...showed that boys who were read to by their fathers scored significantly higher in reading achievement, and when fathers read recreationally their sons read more and scored higher than did boys whose fathers did

little or no recreational reading” (Trelease, 2006, p. xxiv). Brain research is also another area that evaluates a lot about boys’ reading acquisition. We know that boys often speak their first words later than girls and develop clear speech about a year and a half later (Booth, 2002, p.22). Brain research even helps us understand that boys need more graphic-spatial content to fully understand the content of a book especially when they are younger. This is why boys need books that are “filled with spatial-kinesthetic action-whether in thriller and suspense novels, science fiction, or sports biographies. Technical and mechanical in contents, such as instruction manuals and business books. Graphic and visual, such as comic books and comics pages in newspaper” (Gurian, 2005, p. 139). Further studies, specifically related to brain research can ultimately help educators and parents become better equipped to meet elementary boys’ reading acquisition needs.

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http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/pdfs/aboutus/publications/yar_report.pdf

BOYS BOOKLIST!

Picture Books

- I'm Dirty, I'm Mighty, and I Stink

Series by: Kate & Jim McMullan

- Lilliput 5357

By: Stefan Czernecki

- Traction Man is Here!

By: Mini Grey

Intermediate Books

- Super Fly Guy, Hi, Fly Guy, Shoo, Fly Guy!

Series by: Tedd Arnold

- Geronimo Stilton

Series by: Geronimo Stilton

- Ricky Ricotta

Series by: Dave Pilkey

Advanced Books

- Wolf Brother, Spirit Walker, Soul Eater

Series by: Michelle Paver

- The Lightning Thief, Sea of Monsters, The Titan's Curse

Series by: Rick Riordan

- Captain Underpants

Series by: Dav Pilkey

More books boys enjoy...

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What parents and educators can do!

- The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success is reading aloud to children.

(Anderson, 1985, p.23)

Get Men Involved!

“So how do we start motivating our boys to read? One obvious solution is to get more men involved in teaching, more fathers actively reading with their boys, and adult men generally showing boys that reading is a male activity.”

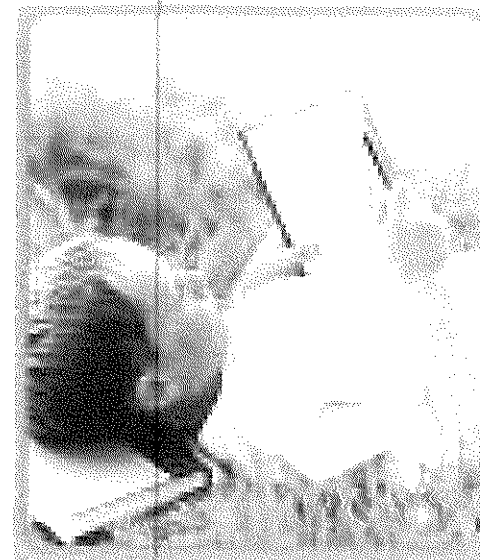
(Scieszka, 2003, p.17)

Make Reading Fun!

- **Take it easy:** Becoming a reader has little to do with reading difficult books and everything to do with the amount of reading a boy does. So let your boy choose books, even if they are below his reading level.
- **Let him choose:** As much as possible, let your son choose the books he wants to read for pleasure and fight the impression that reading is a chore that is imposed on him.
- **Read with him:** Reading is hard for many boys, but stories are appealing. Share the reading, so he only has to do half the work. If the reading is too hard but the story is too good, just read it to him.

(Smith & Wilhelm, 2002)

Boys Read!



**A guide to
improving boys'
reading skills**

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO BOYS?

Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2001 report which administers tests in thirty-five countries, grade 4 girls' average literacy scores were better than boys' in thirty-four of the thirty-five countries.

(Mullis, p.28-29)

Literacy Behaviors in Boys!

- Boys often speak their first words later than girls and develop clear speech about a year and a half later.
- Boys are two to five times more likely than girls to have reading disabilities.
- Boys are more likely than girls to be placed in remedial reading classes or to be held back a grade.
- More boys than girls label themselves "non-readers" (nearly 50 percent by high school.)

(Booth, 2002, p. 22)

WHAT DO BOYS READ?

1. Boys are more inclined to read informational texts, magazines, and newspaper articles.
2. Boys are more inclined to read graphic novels and comic books.
3. Boys are more inclined to read magazine articles and newspaper articles
4. Boys tend to resist reading stories about girls, whereas girls do not tend to resist reading stories about boys.
5. Boys are more enthusiastic about reading electronic texts than girls are.
6. Boys like to read about hobbies, sports, and activities that they might be interested in doing.
7. Boys like to collect and tend to like to collect series of books.
8. Boys read less fiction than girls do.
9. Boys tend to enjoy escapism and humor, and some boys are passionate about science-fiction and fantasy

(Smith & Wilhelm, 2002)

BROADENING OUR IDEA OF LITERACY!

"A good book for a boy is one he wants to read."

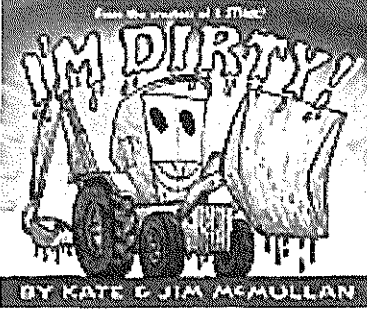
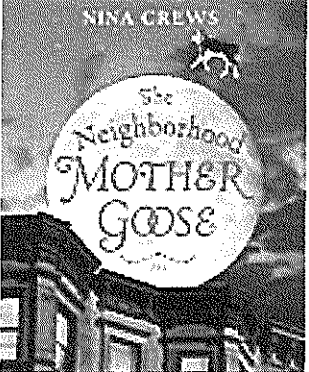

(Maloney, 2002)

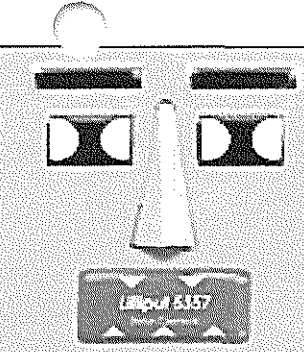
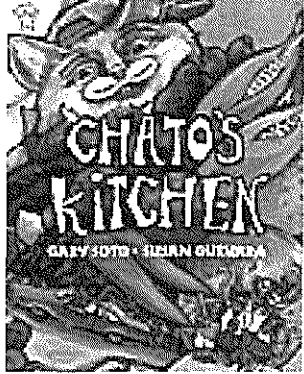

"Let boys know nonfiction reading is reading. Magazines, newspapers, websites, biographies, science books, comic books, graphic novels, are all reading material."


(Scieszka, 2005)

Boys Read!

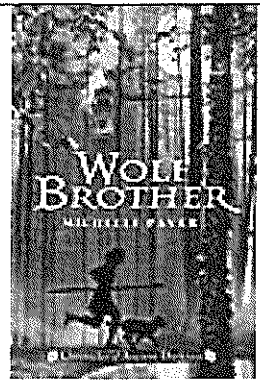
K-3

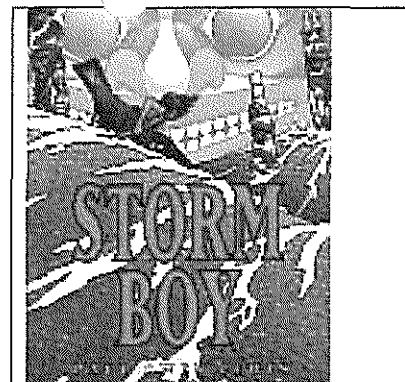
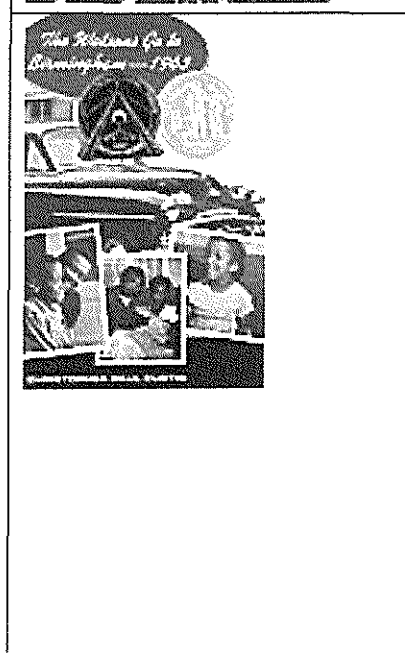
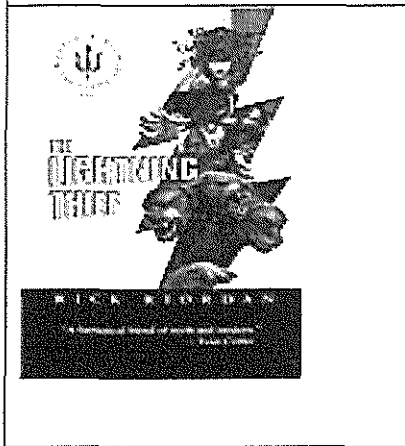
Cover	Title/Author	Synopsis	AR Level/Points
	<p>Series By: Kate and Jim McMullan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'm Dirty 2. I'm Mighty 3. I Stink 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "A busy backhoe loader describes all the items it hauls off a lot and all the fun it has getting dirty while doing so." (McMullan, 2002) 2. "A little tugboat shows how he can bring big ships into the harbor even though he is small." (McMullan, 2003) 3. "A big city garbage truck makes its rounds, consuming everything from apple cores and banana peels to leftover ziti with zucchini." (McMullan, 2004) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.4/.5 2. 1.5/.5 3. 1.6/.6
	<p>Illustrated By: Nina Crews</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The neighborhood Mother Goose 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "A collection of nursery rhymes, both familiar and lesser known, illustrated with photographs in a city setting." (Crews, 2004) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3.8/.5
	<p>Series By: Tedd Arnold</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Super Fly Guy 2. Hi, Fly Guy 3. Shoo, Fly Guy! 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "About a hungry fly and his search for his favorite food. It's something brown and oozy and lumpy and smelly. And delicious--if you happen to be a fly!" (Arnold, 2007) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.7/.5 2. 1.5/.5 3. 1.7/.5

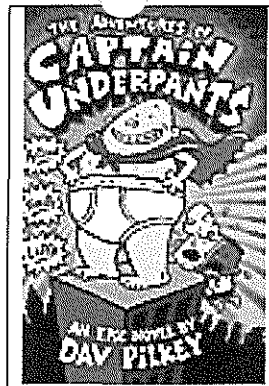
	<p>Book By: Stefan Czernecki Lilliput 5357</p>	<p>1. "Lilliput 5357, a friendly robot, blasts off into space to find a new place to play after bullies destroy his playground." (Czernecki, 2006)</p>	<p>1. 1.4/.5</p>
	<p>Books By: Gary Soto</p> <p>1. Chato's kitchen</p> <p>2. Chato and the party animals</p> <p>3. Chato goes cruisin'</p>	<p>1. "To get the "ratoncitos," little mice, who have moved into the barrio to come to his house, Chato the cat prepares all kinds of good food: fajitas, frijoles, salsa, enchiladas, and more." (Soto, 1997)</p> <p>2. "Chato decides to throw a "pachanga" for his friend Novio Boy, who has never had a birthday party." (Soto, 2000)</p> <p>3. "Chato and Novio win a cruise but are disappointed to find that everyone else on board is a dog, and things go from bad to worse when the dogs party themselves sick and it is up to the cats to find help." (Soto, 2005)</p>	<p>1. 3.6/.5</p> <p>2. 3.0/.5</p> <p>3. 2.8/.5</p>
	<p>Book By: Eric Kimmel</p> <p>1. Hershel and the Hanukkah goblins</p>	<p>1. "Relates how Hershel outwits the goblins that haunt the old synagogue and prevent the village people from celebrating Hanukkah." (Kimmel, 1989)</p>	<p>1. 3.0/.5</p>

	<p>Book By: Mini Grey Traction Man is here!</p>	<p>1. "Traction Man, a boy's courageous action figure, has a variety of adventures with Scrubbing Brush and other objects in the house." (Grey, 2005)</p>	<p>1. 3.6/5</p>
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4-5

Cover	Title/Author	Synopsis	AR Level/Points
	<p>Series by: Michelle Paver</p> <p>1. Wolf Brother</p> <p>2. Spirit Walker</p> <p>3. Soul Eater</p>	<p>1. "Twelve-year-old Tarak and his guide, a wolf cub, set out on a dangerous journey to fulfill an oath the boy made to his dying father--to travel to the Mountain of the World Spirit seeking a way to destroy a demon-possessed bear that threatens all the clans." (Paver, 2004)</p> <p>2. "When a deadly illness begins to afflict the clans, twelve-year-old Torak, with help from Renn and Wolf, embarks on a journey to find a cure." (Paver, 2006)</p> <p>3. "When his pack-brother, Wolf, is taken by the Soul-Eaters, Torak must brave the wilderness of the Far North and infiltrate their clan to bring him back." (Paver, 2007)</p>	<p>1. 4.5/8</p> <p>2. 4.8/10</p> <p>3. 4.8/9</p>

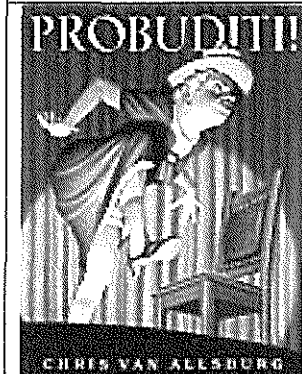
	<p>Book By: Paul Owen Lewis</p> <p>1. Storm boy</p>	<p>1. "Thrown from his canoe during an ocean storm, a young Native American boy is washed ashore under a strange sky near a village inhabited by very large people who make him very welcome."</p> <p>(Owen Lewis, 1997)</p>	<p>1. 3.8/5</p>
	<p>Books By: Christopher Paul Curtis</p> <p>1. The Watsons go to Birmingham--1963: a novel</p> <p>1. Bud, not Buddy</p>	<p>1. "The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African-American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963."</p> <p>(Curtis, 1995)</p> <p>2. "Ten-year-old Bud, a motherless boy living in Flint, Michigan, during the Great Depression, escapes a bad foster home and sets out in search of the man he believes to be his father--the renowned bandleader, H.E. Calloway of Grand Rapids."</p> <p>(Curtis, 1999)</p>	<p>1. 5/8</p> <p>2. 5/8</p>
	<p>Series By: Rick Riordan</p> <p>1. The Lightning Thief</p> <p>2. The Sea of Monsters</p> <p>3. The Titan's Curse</p>	<p>1. "Percy, expelled from six schools for being unable to control his temper, learns the truth from his mother that his father is the Greek god Poseidon, and is sent to Camp Half Blood where he is befriended by a satyr and the demigod daughter of Athena who join him in a journey to the Underworld to retrieve Zeus's lightning bolt and prevent a catastrophic war."</p> <p>(Riordan, 2005)</p>	<p>1. 4.7/13</p> <p>2. 4.6/9</p> <p>3. 4.2/10</p>



Series By: Dav Pilkey
1. Captain Underpants: An Epic Novel
2. The Adventures of Captain Underpants
3. Captain Underpants and the Attack of the Talking Toilets

1. "When George and Harold hypnotize their principal into thinking that he is the superhero Captain Underpants, he leads them to the lair of the nefarious Dr. Diaper, where they must defeat his evil robot henchmen."
(Pilkey, 1997)

1. 4.3/1



Book By: Chris Van Allsburg
1. Probuditi!

1. "On his birthday, Calvin and his friend Rodney see a magician perform, then copy him by hypnotizing Calvin's little sister, but the joke is on them when they are unable to snap her out of it."
(Van Allsburg, 2006)

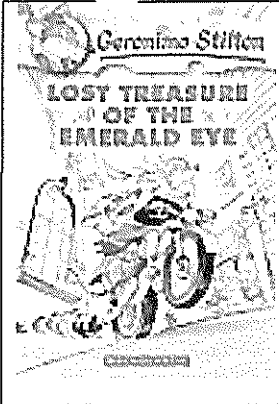
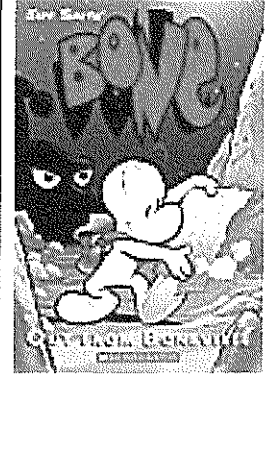
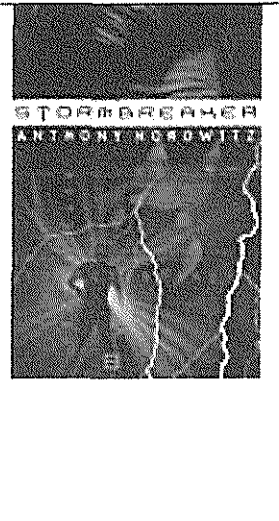
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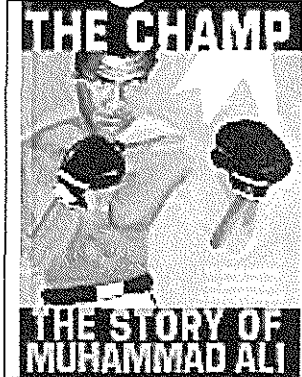
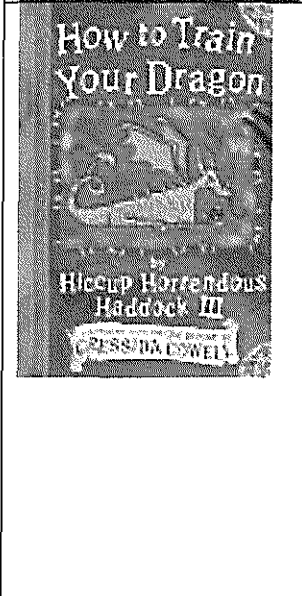


Poetry By: Adam Rex
1. Frankenstein makes a sandwich : and other stories you're sure to like, because they're all about monsters, and some of them are also about food, you like food, don't you? well, all right then

1. "Contains twenty humorous poems about the bad habits, anxieties, and other fears and foibles of monsters."
(Rex, 2006)

1. 4.0/.5

	<p>Series by: Geronimo Stilton</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lost Treasure of the Emerald Eye. 2. The Curse Of The Cheese Pyramid 3. Cat and Mouse in a Haunted House. 4. I'm too Fond of my Fur! 	<p>1. "Translated from the Italian "Geronimo Stilton." Newspaper editor and adventure author Geronimo Stilton--who is also a mouse--gets roped into his sister Thea's treasure hunt on a remote island after she discovers an intriguing old map." (Stilton, 2004)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3.7/1 2. 3.7/1 3. 3.4/1 4. 3.5/1
	<p>Series By: Jeff Smith</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bone. 1, Out from Boneville 2. Bone. 2, The great cow race 3. Bone. 3, Eyes of the storm 4. Bone. 4, The dragonslayer 5. Bone. 5, Rock Jaw, master of the Eastern border 	<p>1. "Fone Bone, Phoney Bone, and Smiley Bone are run out of their home, Boneville, and become separated in the wilds, but better fortune begins when the three cousins reunite at a farmstead in a deep forested valley, where Fone meets a young girl named Thorn." (Smith, 2005)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2.4/1 2. 2.4/1 3. 2.6/1 4. 2.6/1
	<p>Series By: Anthony Horowitz</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stormbreaker 2. Point Blank 3. Skelton Key 4. Eagle Strike 5. Scorpia 6. Ark Angel 	<p>1. "After the death of the uncle who had been his guardian, fourteen-year-old Alex Rider is coerced to continue his uncle's dangerous work for Britain's intelligence agency, MI6." philanthropist Damian Cray whose new video game venture hides sinister motives involving Air Force One, nuclear missiles, and the international drug trade." (Horowitz, 2000)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5.1/7 2. 4.8/8 3. 4.9/10 4. 5.1/10

	<p>Book By: Tonya Bolden</p> <p>1. The Champ : the story of Muhammad Ali</p>	<p>1. "A picture book biography of Muhammad Ali, tracing his life from his childhood in Kentucky to his lighting of the Olympic Torch at the 1996 games."</p> <p>(Bolden, 2004)</p>	<p>1. 5/5</p>
	<p>Series By: Cressida Cowell</p> <p>1. How to train your dragon by Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III</p> <p>2. How to speak dragonese / by Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III</p> <p>3. How to be a pirate / by Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III</p>	<p>1. " Chronicles the adventures and misadventures of Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third as he tries to pass the important initiation test of his Viking clan, the Tribe of the Hairy Hooligans, by catching and training a dragon."</p> <p>(Cowell, 2003)</p>	<p>1. 6.6/5</p> <p>2. 6.5/5</p> <p>3. 6.5/5</p>

*** Boys also enjoy non-fiction books on:**

Vehicles, sports, sports biographies, animals, science, experiments, Scary stories, dragons, dinosaurs, drawing books (items boys adore.)