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A FAMILY LITERACY APPROACH

IN A SECOND GRADE CLASSROOM

By

Katie R. Coder

A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Literacy Education

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

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Primary Advisor: Karen Moroz
Secondary Advisor: Paula Seaman
Peer Reviewer: Julie Landau

To my husband Robert for your continuous support and encouragement. To my sister Kelly, for being my personal cheerleader. To my committee members for all of your guidance and insights to help me complete this project. Most importantly, to my wonderful students and families, without you, none of my research would have been possible.

"The way schools care about children is reflected in the way schools care about the children's families"

-Epstein and Colleagues (2002)

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Literacy learning is a complex process that takes a child numerous years to master. As the child progresses through each grade level, the teacher provides a literacy-rich environment with scaffolded instruction to help the child reach grade level standards. Each child learns at a different rate and some components of literacy are more challenging to master for some. Throughout the child's schooling, parents are also trying to support their child's learning at home, but what happens when their child is struggling, and the parents are unsure of how to help? This thought led me to ask my research question, *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?*

I want to work with students and parents to help them gain a common language around reading strategies that can be used in the classroom and at home. By creating this partnership between parents, teachers, and students I hope to make literacy a priority outside of school. In addition, it will give parents more support, which could increase students' reading growth. As a teacher of second grade, I think this is an important year to focus on helping students establish good habits for using reading strategies as they prepare for third grade since third grade focuses more on reading to learn and less on learning to read.

In this chapter I will share my journey that led me to ask my research question and explain how my interest developed in family literacy. I will also provide background

on how my past teaching experience has influenced my decision to pursue my research question.

Childhood

Some of my earliest childhood memories are centered on books and reading. I never realized how lucky I was as a child to grow up in a home where my parents would read aloud to us until I became a teacher and saw that this was not the case for all children. One of my favorite rituals was bed time stories. This was the special time in our day when my younger sisters and I would cuddle up next to our mom as she read aloud from a book that we would take turns picking out for our nightly reading. Books were powerful, captivating transporters to unknown worlds that led to hours of entertainment and enjoyment. I found my first literacy mentors in my parents who valued reading and creativity, whether it was reading from library books, newspapers, or even cereal boxes, it was part of our everyday life.

I knew from a young age that reading was something important, something to be cherished, and not to be taken for granted because we always had access to a wide variety of books. Our playroom housed a large bookshelf full of hand me down books from older cousins, books that we picked out from our scavenging at summer garage sales or trips to the local thrift store. Reading was given a priority in my childhood which instilled a love of learning that I still carry with me today. I still remember the magical day when I learned about the power of a library card at the young age of five when I could finally write my name on the back of the shiny, hard plastic card that let me browse thousands of books and bring the brightly illustrated books home to enjoy. I learned that words were a

dynamic tool that were a key to fueling my passion and drive for always wanting to know more.

My Education

This thirst for knowledge led me to pursue my undergraduate degree at Gustavus Adolphus College in elementary education. I felt called to begin my career in teaching because it involves acquiring new knowledge, reading and a chance to become someone else's literacy mentor. Early on in my education program, I found another literacy mentor in my Education Professor, Jill Pots. She was passionate about teaching and she knew the importance of providing students with literacy rich learning environments. I remember marveling at her vast collection of children books the first time I met with her for office hours. Jill was an encyclopedia of knowledge when it came to children's books and literacy education. Every class with her would begin the same: she would read aloud to us from a children's book. It was so easy to be transported back to childhood and was an important reminder to us future educators about the importance of sharing high quality literature to our students and reading aloud to them. My undergraduate program laid the foundation of my education background and helped me to form my teaching principles which would guide me in my future teaching positions.

Teaching

My teaching career has been joyfully full of change. I am currently in my sixth year of teaching and I have never taught in the same school or state for more than two years. This is due to the transient lifestyle of a military spouse. My husband Robert joined the Navy shortly before we were married which has led to numerous adventures that we would never have had without the influence of the Navy on our lives. This has

also given me the opportunity to experience life as a teacher in three states and grade levels. I take all of these unique experiences as an opportunity to learn as much as I can about how each state approaches educating its unique population of students and how they find different ways to meet the needs of their student population. Every state that I have taught in, from Minnesota, to Florida, to Washington, has given me a small piece of the puzzle that has led me to my research question and the desire for me to not only share my passion for literacy with my students, but to branch out and find a way to communicate this with parents as well.

My first two years as I teacher, I found myself teaching in the same snowy state that I was born and raised in and will always call home, Minnesota. I worked in an urban school where I taught third grade to a class of students who were primarily English Language Learners. As I was navigating the world of education, I struggled to find ways to communicate with my students' parents whose primary language was not English. I relied heavily for guidance from my educational assistant, Adam and his ability to translate and to help me communicate with my students' parents. During this time my main form of communication was individual conversations with families that involved having Adam help translate and the conversations revolved around what we were learning and the child's progress. Through these conversations, I learned that the parents and I had the same goals for their children: to help them learn and receive the best education possible. The families offered insight into their child's interests and shared their struggles with helping their children with homework at home. In order to support our families who felt unprepared to help their children when they struggled with their homework, the school offered after school hours when teachers and educational assistants

stayed after the school day to offer tutoring. Through my first two years of teaching I observed how much families wanted to be a part of their child's learning and education, even when they didn't always know how or have the tools to support their child's learning. I was able to see how one school addressed the needs of families by providing translators and additional support for homework help.

1, 206 miles later, I found myself teaching in the sunshine state of Florida. For the next two years of my teaching career, I taught third and fourth grade in a rural school district. As I began forming relationships with teachers and parents in my new community I reflected on my previous experiences and the importance of having conversations with families about what their child was learning. Although all of my students' families spoke English, I still felt that my interactions with parents were limited because of the infrequency of informal conversations and the short amount of time we had together at conferences. Conferences provided a limited amount of time to discuss with parents their child's current progress, to review test scores, and to offer suggestions for what could be worked on at home. Conferencing with parents only twice a year did not allow enough time to explain, model, and guide parents on specific strategies to use at home to help further develop their child's literacy development. There always seemed to be a gap between what I knew and what parents knew to help their child succeed and never enough time to fully explain the disconnect. It left me wondering if there was a better way to support families and their children's literacy development.

Even with the feeling of not having enough time to work more closely with my student's families to explain and teach specific learning strategies, the school did offer numerous school-wide after school events to help connect families with their teachers and

classroom learning. For example, the school hosted a Spooktacular Night of Learning and Celebrations from Around the World. The Spooktacular Night of Learning was an evening event hosted by the Parent Teacher Association and teachers had grade level booths set up and decorated around a fall theme. Each grade level team created booths that had age appropriate activities centered on science, math, reading, writing, and art. Teachers led educational activities, free food was provided, and families had fun learning together. It was through these after school events that I first saw the power of students sharing in an educational task with their parents. Whether it was the student explaining a math concept that they learned in a certain way or a parent assisting a child with creating a list of adjectives to describe the "mummy parts" at a booth, it seemed that the parents and students enjoyed working together on a common learning goal. I remember thinking to myself: what if learning was like this all the time for students and parents? This moment was a memory that surfaced again when I was participating in a course in my master's program called Literacy Leadership and Coaching.

As I was participating in my Literacy Leadership and Coaching course, I had adjusted to my cross country move to Washington State where I was teaching second grade in a large suburban school district. During my coursework in the class Literacy Leadership and Coaching, I first learned about the idea of family literacy through our course text, *Reading Specialists and Literacy Coaches in the Real World* (Vogt & Shearer, 2011). In this course I was learning about how to take on leadership roles within a school community in order to promote literacy instruction and how to be a literacy advocate. It was in the last chapter of our course text that I first read the term, "family literacy" (Vogt & Shearer, 2011, p. 257). I was immediately intrigued because I knew

what both of the words meant separately, but I had never heard of this type of program before. I reread the three pages devoted to this new idea over and over, while I slowly pondered about how this might look in my classroom and my new school community. I remember thinking to myself this would be really interesting to learn more about family literacy programs and to try using this approach in my own second grade classroom. The idea of getting parents more involved by explicitly teaching the parents the reading strategies we were already learning about and using in my second grade class seemed like it could only benefit students learning and create a stronger parent teacher partnership. I was excited by the potential of incorporating a family literacy program and began to think about how I could use this with my students' families.

During my first year teaching second grade in my Washington school I had implemented literacy stations based on the *Daily 5 Fostering Literacy Independence in the Elementary Grades (*Boushey & Moser, 2014) book, which included read to self, listen to reading, read to someone, word work, and work on writing. I structured my literacy block around the research conducted by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser (2014) who recommended teaching short, explicit strategy lessons throughout a reading block that was structured around a literacy station model. This allowed me to meet with students in small group or to have one on one conferences that were guided by individual reading goals. Throughout the year, I used *The CAFE Book Engaging All Students in Daily Literacy Assessment & Instruction* (Boushey & Moser, 2009) to help guide me in teaching explicit reading strategies that aligned to our daily learning goals. I found through modeling reading strategies that my students were able to discuss which strategies they were using during the reading process and gave our classroom a common

language to use while learning together. It was exciting and motivating to see the reading strategies that I was explicitly teaching become second nature to my students. I observed them using strategies independently such as stopping to check for understanding, making predictions and confirming predictions with the text, and identifying main idea and details (Boushey & Moser, 2009).

I remember my student Megan, who struggled with reading comprehension and who was receiving additional support from the Learning Assistance Program. She began to slowly make progress as she learned how to articulate the strategies she was using that helped her understand the text. I vividly recall her excitedly raising her hand to share out during a read-aloud about how she made a connection from our class read aloud book, *We Planted a Tree* (Muldrow, 2016) to a non-fiction article we read about soil earlier during the week. Megan was proud of using her reading strategy and her classmates could easily join in on the conversation because they were also comfortable using and talking about this strategy. It was through my students' learning and their self-empowerment of being able to put into words the reading strategy that helped them to comprehend a text, improve their accuracy or fluency and expand their vocabulary that I decided to pursue my research topic for the Capstone project.

As I begin my journey into researching my question that is centered on using a family literacy approach in my classroom, I am excited to see what happens when I establish a partnership in learning with my students and their families while using some of the explicit strategies I learned from *The CAFÉ Book* (Boushey & Moser, 2009). The potential for students to improve their reading skills by sharing in a common language

with their parents that allows them to verbalize the strategy they are using is the foundation to my research question.

Summary

My pursuit to answer the question, *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?* will not only help me to improve parent-teacher relationships but will offer insight into how a family literacy approach can affect one classroom. The results of this question could influence how we structure our school literacy programs and could help bridge the gap in knowledge that seems to exist from the reading strategies teachers use in the classroom to what parents are trying to do alone at home.

In chapter two I will discuss the term "family literacy" and present a review of research already conducted around my topic of interest to help guide my research and evaluate the most effective way to implement a family literacy approach. Chapter three will focus on my research methodology and the demographics of my current class of second grade students and their families. In chapters four and five I will analyze my results and present my research findings. Throughout these chapters, I seek to effectively answer the question, *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?*

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

In chapter one, I reflected on how my own experiences with teaching made me question if the relationships I was forming with parents and my communication methods were enough to help families support their child's literacy development. As a teacher, I know that literacy is a complex learning process that is unique to each learner and that builds on previous year's skills and strategies. Establishing individual literacy goals for my students and teaching them explicit strategies to reach their goals using a framework established by the *Daily 5 (*Boushey & Moser, 2014) and *The CAFÉ* (Boushey & Moser, 2009) helped my students describe what was helping them to be successful readers. This made me wonder what would happen if I communicated these teaching methods with the families of my students so they would be able to practice and use a common language for strategies used at home. This led me to pursue my essential question for my capstone, *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?*

Therefore, in this chapter I will define the term of family literacy, categorize the different program approaches that one can use, and analyze previous research conducted in this field. In addition to this, I will synthesize the essential information for creating a parent teacher partnership, key elements for developing a family literacy program, and how to extend literacy connections to a child's home setting. Throughout these sections,

the reader will develop an understanding of the concept of family literacy, where the research has been focused, and the need for future research.

Defining Family Literacy

Family literacy is a relatively new term that was created by Denny Taylor in 1983 while she was conducting her own research on how parents influence their child's learning of literacy skills (Crawford and Zygourius-Coe, 2006). Taylor observed six families over the course of three years to learn how families influence the development of their child's literacy. It was through her ethnographic research that she first created the term "family literacy". Through her research Taylor (1983) found that, "…the interplay of the individual biographies and educative style of parents becomes the dominant factor in shaping the literate experience of the children within the home" (p.23). Since the publication of her ethnography, *Family Literacy Young Children Learning to Read and Write* (Taylor, 1983), numerous researchers have conducted their own studies around the topic of family literacy. Since then there have been multiple definitions that have formed based on the creation of her term. Researchers disagree on which version of the term should be used, but in general the term is either used as a program/curriculum or as a concept to express how families read and write at home together (Paratore, 2005). Although the definition can change slightly based on the term and the program approach, researchers do agree on an overall goal of family literacy. Crawford and Zygouris-Coe (2006) state, "One common goal of family literacy initiatives is to create a seamless weave between home and school. Thus, activities that extend between these two constituencies hold a lot of potential for teachers in the primary grades" (p. 265). Family literacy could help teachers and schools develop deeper understanding of literacy and

therefore improve the overall education of all students, while involving families in the learning process.

Family literacy stems from the belief that families are a child's first teacher (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009). Therefore, if teachers build a partnership with families and support their child's literacy development, there is the potential to increase the child's reading growth and success. Hannon defined family literacy programs as, "programmes to teach literacy that acknowledge and make use of learner's family relationships and engagement in family literacy practices" (as cited in van Steensel, et al., 2011, p.70). This is the definition that will be used throughout this paper because researchers who oppose a prescriptive definition believe that family literacy is a fluid term that focuses on using a variety of practices for literacy learning that allows for differentiation based on individual school climates and the cultures of the families that they are building a partnership with (Crawford and Zygouris-Coe, 2006). Hanon's definition of family literacy also helps to avoid a family literacy program that operates as a "deficit model" because it focuses on honoring parent's knowledge (Taylor, 1993). A "deficit perspective" implies, "… parents are blamed for the conditions in which they live with their children" (Taylor, 1993, p. 551). In order to avoid the negative connotations associated with a deficit model, it is essential for creators of a family literacy program to develop relationships with families they work with, make connections to their lives, and seek out the knowledge of the families, while allowing opportunities for open communication (Taylor, 1993).

Family Literacy Approaches. Family literacy programs can be broken down into three separate categories based on the program's overall goals and approaches:

intergenerational programs, parent involvement programs, and studies (Morrow & Neuman, 1995). In an intergenerational program, there are two main goals to be met by using this approach. This first goal is to support parents as they develop their own literacy skills, and the second goal is to encourage family literacy practices at home (Paratore, 2005). This approach is typically used with families who are learning English and for children in preschool or younger. A glimpse into an intergenerational program would typically involve a daily, two hour long learning session where adults and children are separated into their own groups. The children are led by a teacher that uses developmentally appropriate literacy activities and circle time. The adults also work with a separate teacher focusing on completing reading logs and then working through a short lesson that helps parents develop their own literacy skills. The adults end the day's lesson by the teacher reviewing ways that parents can support their children's literacy learning at home (Paratore, 2005). "The ILP [Intergenerational Literacy Project] consistently achieves rates of attendance and retention that exceed those of traditional adult basic education and, in many cases, of other family literacy programs, indicating that daily instructional practices are effective in maintaining parents' motivation to advance their own and their children's literacy knowledge" (Paratore, 2005, p.395-396). The constraints to this approach are limited research that definitively proves if it improves literacy knowledge, obtaining long-term funding, and it serves only a limited demographic.

In a parent involvement program, the focus is solely on helping parents to learn strategies or ways to help their child through a wide range of literacy activities that is developed based on the specific school hosting the program (Morrow & Neuman, 1995).

Parent Involvement programs typically are created to encourage pre-established school goals (Morrow, Paratore, Gaber, Harrison, & Tracey, 1993). This type of approach shares important information about curriculum, literacy strategies, and school goals with parents as a way to support learning at home (Morrow, et al., 1993). Wilkins and Terlitsky (2015) found that, "Sessions attended by both families and their children are the most effective delivery style for family literacy programs. Attending sessions together gives families the opportunity to interact with their children while being observed by a teacher who can provide immediate feedback" (p.28). The constraints to this approach are again limited research that definitively proves if it improves literacy knowledge, recruiting families to participate, and it also assumes a certain level of literacy understanding of the parents involved in the program.

The final category of approaches is studies. Studies focus on making observations and descriptions in detail on how families interact with literacy during their daily lives (Morrow, et al., 1993). Studies also, "… investigate the uses of literacy in families from different cultural backgrounds, to help us learn to design culturally sensitive programs" (Morrow & Neuman, 1995, p. 550). The main difference of the study approach compared to the intergenerational approach and the parent involvement approach is that a study does not need to be connected with school goals (Morrow, et al., 1993). Studies are also more reflective approaches to family literacy for educators because it allows educators to see culturally diverse ways that families interact with literacy outside of the school setting which can help them build partnerships with families (Morrow, et al., 1993). In addition to this, it could also help teachers improve their classroom instruction by knowing how families interact with text in their day to day lives (Morrow, et al., 1993).

Since all three of the family literacy approaches are so broad and serve a wide range of demographics, there are gaps in research that have been conducted. In addition to this, most of the evidence for family literacy programs improving reading are inconclusive. In the next section, I will examine several studies that have been conducted and analyze their program approaches to better understand what a successful family literacy program looks like and how the research influences current beliefs on the effectiveness of a family literacy approach to literacy learning.

Previous Research Conducted

The first research study focused on the importance of developing an open line of parent-teacher communication when learning about home literacy environments (HLE). Burgess explains, "HLE is not a unitary construct. It is a construct that represents interrelated factors, such as attitudes towards literacy, resources, and family activities, and may differentially influence different aspects of literacy development" (as cited in Katzir, Lesaux, & Kim, 2009, p.264). Falk-Ross, Beilfuss, and Orem, (2010) conducted research using a qualitative approach that had preservice teachers, who are college students enrolled in a program to become a teacher, interview a parent from their practicum class to learn about the family's home literacy environment. It also allowed parents to give their opinions about the reading program and ideas that they had to improve it. The researchers also collected reflections of the interview process from the preservice teachers to analyze for themes. The researchers used the following questions for their interview process (Falk-Ross, Beilfuss, & Orem, 2010):

1. Do you read with your child at home? How often? What types of materials (e.g., books, magazines, etc.)?

2. How important do you think learning to read is for your child?

3. How do you feel about the parent involvement activities in teaching that your child brings home? How much do you feel is appropriate?

4. What kind of classroom activities/projects does your child have to support reading development?

5. What do you think future teachers should know from a parent's perspective about how they could be effective teachers of reading and writing?

6. What role do you think technology should play in reading and writing instruction?

7. Do you have any opinions about how reading can be best taught/learned? (p. 24-25)

The interview questions allowed for reliable data to be collected when there were numerous people conducting the survey. Through their study they were able to help preservice teachers become less hesitant to reach out and communicate with families (Falk-Ross, Beilfuss, & Orem, 2010). It also reaffirmed the need for teacher programs to include explicit instruction on how preservice teachers can create open lines of communication to families in their future classrooms. Overall, the parent interviews provided positive feedback of their child's school reading program and parents offered suggestions on how to improve the program, for example teachers assigning less

homework (Falk-Ross, Beilfuss, & Orem, 2010). The researchers made an interesting observation based on the parent interviews that if the child was being successful in school, the parents were more likely to share positive thoughts about the school's reading program and the teacher's communication to families with the interviewers (Falk-Ross, Beilfuss, & Orem, 2010). Falk-Ross, Beilfuss, and Orem found, "It appears that some parents may be (or perceive themselves to be) marginalized by factors of diversity, school phobias, or socioeconomic status. Schools need to make explicit the opportunities to connect with parents" (2010, p. 29). This piece of information shows that schools developing family literacy programs need to consider how to involve and welcome parents that may be marginalized. Additionally, educators need to work on developing their communication with parents so that way they are sharing positive feedback, and not only communicating with families about negative behavior or academic hardships.

The implications of this study on family literacy programs show that it is essential to build a trusting relationship between parents and teachers to help parents feel welcomed and connected to the school. The interview process in this research highlights the importance of seeking out parent insight and feedback to help guide teachers instruction and to better understand the individual needs of the children in their class. Parents can offer teachers wisdom about their child's interests and literacy habits when they are asked to share the information (Blasi & Hill-Clark, 2005). Bredekamp and Copple found that, "When families and educators communicate and work cooperatively, they make positive contributions to children's literacy development and help young children acquire reading habits at home" (as cited in Blasi & Hill-Clark, 2005, p.47). This

evidence points towards the need for educators to improve on their parent communication to further help grow student's literacy understanding.

The following study gives an example of one approach to creating a family literacy program using a parent involvement program. DeBruin-Parecki (2009) conducted an eight week long mixed method study that examined using a family literacy program to teach families about interactive reading because research has shown that, "…the incorporation of specific behaviors during joint book reading can promote future academic success for children as they enter school" (as cited in DeBruin-Parecki, 2009, p.386). Each week when families met, the researcher focused on teaching one of the eight interactive reading skills identified through research as behaviors that improve interactive reading. The behaviors are listed as follows, "Maintaining physical proximity, sustaining interest, holding the book and turning the pages, sharing the book by displaying a sense of audience, posing and responding to questions, pointing to the pictures and words, relating the books content to personal experiences, soliciting and pausing to answer questions, using visual cues, prediction, retelling, and elaborating on ideas" (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009, p.387). The weekly lessons began by providing advice to parents, and then parents were given a sheet of paper with the advice recorded on it for them to reference at home. Then the family members were engaged in a group reading of a book and were asked to complete an activity that connected to the story. Families had time to practice the skill modeled with another book followed by a writing or drawing activity. Finally, families were introduced to the take home book, the strategy they were to practice at home and an extension activity with the supplies provided (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009).

During the family-child time to practice a book, the researcher observed the parent-child interactions and collected qualitative and quantitative data using the observational instrument called, "The Adult/Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI)" (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009, p.387). This process involved the researcher observing how the parent and child selected a book and the behaviors shown during the interactive reading process. After this, the researcher discussed their observations with the parent referencing the observation tool to offer feedback. Once the families left, the researcher returned to their notes and scored the observed behaviors (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009). Over the course of the eight week program, the 22 families that were observed showed significant improvement in all areas of the ACIRI for both parents and children (DeBruin-Parecki, 2009). The implications of this study suggest that over a brief period of time, using focused strategy instruction, teachers can help parents and children make improvements that will aid in building reading comprehension when families learn strategies for improving interactive reading. Part of the program's success was the creators had specific skills that they taught and reinforced to families each week.

The final study shows how further research is needed to study how home literacy environments affect students self-concept when it comes to reading. Katzir, Lesaux, and Kim (2009) conducted research on the role of reading self-concept and home literacy practices in fourth grade reading comprehension. Their study focused on an intermediate grade, and their findings add to the research that has already been conducted on using a family literacy approach. Their research was centered on fourth grade students that did not have a learning disability or a designation of being an English Language Learner. The researchers collected data through a student survey that measured reading self-concept, a

parent survey that measured home literacy practices for both the adults and students, and finally data collected from a reading comprehension test (The Gray Scale Reading Test) (Katzir, Lesaux, & Kim, 2009). Based on their results, "…none of the five composites of family literacy practices [child's literacy practices, family literacy teaching & help, frequency of child library visit, family literacy practices, and home literacy environment] were significantly associated with reading comprehension skills" (Katzir, Lesaux, & Kim, 2009, p.268). Although their research showed no significant association of family literacy on comprehension in fourth grade students, the authors concluded that more research is needed on, "…the relationship we identified between reading self-concept and child and family literacy practices, which may exert an indirect influence on reading comprehension" (Katzir, Lesaux, & Kim, 2009, p.272).

Parent-Teacher Communication

The most important feature of a family literacy program is creating an open line of communication between parents and teachers. It is essential that there is open communication in family literacy programs because many times families are left with the impression that, "…schools strongly emphasize how parents can learn from schools, but give little attention to how schools might learn from parents" (Morrow, et al., 1993). It is important to consider ways to involve families in communicating their needs and understanding of their children with the teachers.

Crawford and Zygouris-Coe (2006) recommended hosting meetings to share important school information at a variety of times to encourage numerous families to attend and to send home class newsletters that share information about what is being

learned in class as well as highlighting student samples of work to allow for effective communication. Wilkins and Terlitsky (2015) offer several suggestions to help teachers build parent-teacher relationships at the beginning of the school year and strategies for maintaining these relationships. One of their recommendations is to begin the school year by calling or sending letters home to introduce yourself as their new teacher. They also strongly encourage teachers to clearly explain the curriculum that will be used, classroom and homework expectations, and how parents can support learning at home. Additionally, teachers should encourage families to become involved at school, explain why parent involvement is important, and how the family's time will be appreciated. Finally, Wilkins and Terlitsky (2015) are proponents of using regular communication throughout the school year to further develop parent-teacher relationships. Teachers should communicate about classroom learning, activities, progress reports, and information through conferences, newsletters, class websites, and open houses. These strategies, when applied can help teacher's foster strong parent-teacher relationships that supports students learning.

Enz (2003), explains that, "As educators, we must help parents understand the crucial role they play in helping their children become successful readers, and we must build parents' knowledge of how to support literacy development" (p.54). Once teachers have taken the time to develop and establish parent-teacher relationships, they can begin developing a family literacy program that uses an approach that best serves the needs of the families they are working with.

Developing a Family Literacy Program

DeBruin-Parecki (2009) explains that there are three main components one should consider before creating a family literacy program. “First, it is imperative to settle on which skills should be the focus of the program, which means establishing clear research-based objectives. Second, and equally important, is determining how these skills will be accurately measured to assure careful tracking of expected outcomes. This is how to make the program culturally relevant for participants of varied backgrounds. Third, is recruiting and retaining families in the program who are in need of these skills” (p.385). Once family literacy program creators determine the skills or strategies that will be taught and how the program will track participant’s progress, the main focus then is on encouraging families to become involved in this type of program. By laying a strong foundation at the beginning of the school year and taking the time to build parent-teacher partnerships, it will make families feel more welcome when they are approached about participating in a family literacy program.

Furthermore, teachers can help parents become more involved in a literacy program is by encouraging them to come and observe a literacy lesson or a reading small group, encourage parents to volunteer in the classroom and assist with literacy activities, provide parents with community resources, and promote parents going to the library or taking part in other learning opportunities such as museums (Wilkins & Terlitsky, 2015). “The National Parent Teacher Association (NPTA) (2007), reported that 30 years of research has documented the positive connection between parent involvement and student success and the potential of parent involvement to be the most transformational type of educational reform” (Zyguris-Coe, 2007, p.61). The research supports the need for

teachers to invest in building parent-teacher relationships in order to encourage more family involvement. One way teachers can help parents get more involved with their child's learning is to recommended books they can read together.

Introducing families to high quality children's literature can help them locate books that engage their child and can support their participation in the reading process with their child, such as the book series called, *You Read to Me, I'll Read to you* written by Hoberman (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006). According to the National Center for Family Literacy, the more books that are available at home, the more likely a student is to read at a proficient level (Zygouris-Coe, 2007). Throughout this partnership of developing a family literacy program there is one important message that families can learn together. "When families engage with their children, they send a message: Books are important and reading is important, but the child is even more important!" (Wilkins & Terlitsky, 2015, p.29). Supporting families to find literacy resources, to encourage the love of learning, and to spend quality time together reading, not only helps improve a child's literacy, but helps parents create a better understanding of how their child learns.

Making School to Home Learning Connections

Allowing students to bring classroom library books home promotes reading at home with family members. McGee and Richgels found that, " to help parents fulfill their role as partners in literacy programs, it is vital for teachers to work with these families to offer easy access to books and guidance on how to use them" (as cited in Enz, 2003, p.58). One way to implement this approach is by guiding students to select a book that is a good-fit for their current reading level before taking it home with them. Crawford and

Zygouris-Coe (2006) explain that some teachers use the organizational system called the "book-in-a-bag", which uses a reusable plastic bag to store the students' self-selected book to take home and share with their families. In addition to the book, some teachers include a tip sheet on ideas about how parents can read aloud with their child (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006). Enz (2003) found that, " …the most effective way parents can help children learn to make connections between the spoken and written word is through storybook reading" (p.55). By encouraging families to read aloud together and providing them access to books can help improve student engagement with text and improve literacy skills.

Another take home book program that teachers can create is called, "literacy learning kits" where book sets around a topic the student is learning about is sent home and includes books at three different levels such as, one a student can read independently, with help, and be read to by an adult (Crawford & Zygouris, 2006). The way that "literacy learning kits" are different from the "book-in-a-bag" program is that the learning kits also contain several other important materials to help parents interact with their child "…such as parent letters, response journals, puppets, and writing and drawing tools" (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2006, p.265). Teachers can help parents learn how to select books that interest their child and that the child has background information on to help those better make connections to the text. After this teachers can help parents learn how to discuss what they are reading with their child and how to help build up reading stamina (Wilkins & Terlitsky, 2015).

Alternatively, some teachers may consider using Barillas's framework for a literacy homework program that engages parents and students in learning. Barillas

(2000), a teacher and a researcher, developed a literacy homework program that focuses on parents as partners in their child's writing and school work that allows parents to become active participants in their child's classroom and learning regardless of what language they spoke. Her program idea was inspired by a conference she attended where Alma Flór Ada was the presenter who spoke about how homework assignments should be created by thinking about how parents can participate and how they would be completed (Barillas, 2000, p.302). This led Barillas to implement a literacy homework program that sent home three to four writing assignments over the course of the school year. "The purpose of the assignments was to engage and motivate parents in meaningful literacy activities that they could share with their children" (Barillas, 2000, p. 302). Barillas carefully chose writing topics that had relevance to family's lives and allowed for personal connections to be made. Some examples of the writing topics she assigned were giving advice from parent to child and child to parent, an "I Am" poem, and a response to an article that students read in class and shared with their families (Barillas, 2000, p.303-305). Students and families were required to share their writing with each other, and students would help explain the assignment to parents. Barillas also made herself available to parent questions about the assignments that allowed for parents to successfully participate in the assignment, overall 75% parents completed the literacy homework (Barillas, 2000, p.303). To continue building a literacy relationship with families through the homework, she also published student and parent work with permission. Barillas hosted an author's event every time she published student and parent work at school to celebrate and share the writing with each other (Barillas, 2000, p.307). This allowed students and parents to experience hearing each other's written work and

learning more about each other's families. The celebration also honored the time and effort of the parent participants, while also encouraging them to continue being active participants in the assignments with their children.

In conclusion, over the three years that Barillas implemented her literacy homework as a way to build up parent relationships and strengthen students literacy skills she found two advantages of her program. "The first has been to encourage reading, writing, and discussion about school assignments at home. Second, because parents' experiences and knowledge are valued and recognized in the classroom, bonds of respect and appreciation for their culture, language, and identity are affirmed through this celebration of literacy" (Barillas, 2000, p.308). Barillas' program design could be incorporated into a family literacy approach and could help parents to become active participants in their child's homework. This could also lead to parents and teachers forming a better understanding of homework expectations, when teachers consider how the homework assignment will not only enrich students understanding, but also allow parents to actively participate in their child's learning.

Assessing Programs

The challenge with assessing a family literacy approach is there are three very broad approaches: intergenerational, parent involvement, and studies. Each of these approaches can be further adapted to meet the goals of the schools, participants, and the communities that they are serving. Family literacy programs need to develop multiple measures to assess the effectiveness of the program using formative and summative assessments. As with any type of evaluation system, it needs to be a continuing process

that focuses on the family literacy programs goals and should use a variety of data to measure effectiveness (Padak & Baycich, 2003).

Researchers Padak and Baycich (2003) outline several steps a program can take to successfully evaluate the effectiveness of the program. First of all, they recommended starting with establishing the family literacy programs goals. From there, it helps to take time to describe what these goals would look like if they were met by the participants and what evidence would show their understanding or achievement of the goals. After this, program developers need to design multiple ways to collect evidence that proves the goals are being met. Some suggestions would be surveys, interviews, and observations, journals, reading logs, standardized assessments or portfolios. Finally, program developers need to determine a time frame for gathering, administering, and analyzing the data collected. The purpose for assessing a program is to examine the program's effectiveness, identify areas of deficiencies, and to ensure that the program is meeting its intended goals. The evaluation process can also be a learning tool for educators and can allow for an easy exchange of information about different types of family literacy programs and their effectiveness (Padak & Baycich, 2003).

Portfolios can be another form of assessment that can be used in place of more traditional standardized tests to measure participant's growth in family literacy programs. The benefit of using a portfolio for assessment is that it can be less stressful to the participants involved and it also allows families to take ownership of their learning (Hoffman, 1995). Similarly, Padak and Baycich, (2003) found that, "using alternative assessments in addition to standardized measures can give a better overall picture of participants' progress" (p.256).

There are three types of portfolio options to choose from that offer a range of expectations for creating them. One type is called a “moving van portfolio” because participants choose items to showcase their learning in a seemingly randomized way because they can include anything that they value (Hoffman, 1995, p. 594). A second type of portfolio is referred to as “reflective portfolios” because participants organize their selections in order of completion but also include a written rationale to explain why they chose that piece to be included in their portfolio (Hoffman, 1995). Finally, the third choice of portfolio is “goal-based”, which uses predetermined goals for participants to meet and include work that proves they have met their learning goal (Hoffman, 1995).

Based on Hoffman’s research, the findings suggest that the following list of ideas could be considered by families to be put in their portfolio to track progress, “Written drafts in progress, final drafts, written work done by parents and children together, anecdotal records, instructor observations, checklists, inventories, book pages parents and children are reading together at home, children’s drawings of a character from a story read by parents, and photographs of parents and children working on a project together… are all possibilities for a family portfolio (Grace &Shores, 1992; Popp, 1992; Valeri-Gold et al., 1991)” (1995, p.595). In conjunction with using a family portfolio for an assessment component, conferences should also be scheduled at regular intervals to share their portfolios and to have conversations about the families ongoing learning (Hoffman, 1995). One of the main reasons that family portfolios can work as an alternative form of assessment for family literacy programs is because, “[t]he family portfolio shows changes in the interactions within families” (Hoffman, 1995, p.596).

Furthermore, portfolios can become a keepsake to families that have participated in programs and reminders of the strategies they learned.

Conclusion

In chapter two, I defined the term of family literacy, categorized the different program approaches that one can use, and analyzed previous research conducted in this field. In addition to this, I synthesized essential information for creating a parent teacher partnership, identified key elements for developing a family literacy program, and gave examples of how to extend literacy connections to a child's home setting. Through this literature review, I summarized the current research on family literacy programs in order to guide me research to answer the question, *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?*

In chapter three I will provide the methodology to seek out the answer to my research question as well as provide the demographics of my current class of second grade students and their families. The data collection process and sources will also be explained. Finally, in chapters four and five I will analyze my results and present my research findings.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction

My desire to learn more about building literacy partnerships with my students and their families led me to learn about family literacy programs. I wanted to find a viable way to support families and their children's learning by sharing the reading comprehension strategies with families that I was already using in the classroom in hopes of improving reading comprehension. In chapter two I explained several research studies that have already been conducted around the topic of family literacy. All of these studies had similar findings: more research needs to be done before teachers can make a significant conclusion about whether a family literacy approach helps to improve reading comprehension. It is because of this that I have designed a research methodology of my own to help me answer the question, *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?*

In this chapter, I will explain my research paradigm and evidence to support this approach. Furthermore, I will provide information about the setting, the participants that were involved in my study, and the family literacy model used. Finally, I will explain my data collection process, the procedure for conducting my study, and how ethics have been considered before beginning my research.

Research Paradigm

The research paradigm used for this study was mixed methods, which combines quantitative and qualitative data to analyze my research question. I chose the mixed

methods approach to give my research more depth, because if I only used a quantitative approach, my study would be very limited based on the number of participants from my convenience sample. According to Creswell (2014), the convenience sample is the sample that he least recommends using because participants are chosen based on their access and convenience. As a classroom teacher, students are assigned to me at the beginning of the year, so my participants were all going to come from my classroom population and were dependent on parents' willingness to participate. The small sample size for my research question has been a common theme that I have found through the literature review process and is a factor in determining validity of the studies previously conducted. Knowing that the other studies have also had a small sample size, I predicted that my small size would limit the impact of my findings, but could be a platform for a wider and more extensive research project in the future.

Using only a quantitative method would also have limited the view on the effects of a family literacy approach to second grade reading comprehension. I liked aspects of the qualitative research process because they seemed to align with the philosophy behind family literacy, which is building a partnership between parent, teachers, and the community. It also gave more insights into using a family literacy approach by encouraging participants to share their opinions and insights through written response surveys. My research is considered a quasi-experiment because my participants were not randomly assigned. I compared the data I collected from my participants in my second grade class that used a family literacy approach to three other second grade classrooms that did not use this approach. This comparison of data points helped me to determine if

the increase in reading comprehension was a direct effect of using a family literacy approach.

Setting

The research study took place in a public elementary school for first through fifth grade. The school serves approximately 613 students, with males representing 54% of the student population and females representing 46%. The public elementary school ethnic demographics for the student population are as follows: 64.9% Caucasian, 10.2% two or more races, 9.2% Asian, 7.6% Hispanic/Latino, 6.4% Black/African American, 1.2% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and 0.3% American Indian/Alaskan Native. Approximately 8.2 % of the student population receives special education services. In addition to this, the school serves a small portion of English Language Learners (ELL) which is only 2.6% of the student population.

The elementary school is located in a military community so the student population is transient. At the start of my research study in October, my second grade class enrollment was 26 students. Of these students 46% were males and 54% were females. After winter break I had three students move, one of which was a participant in my study. When the study concluded in the month of March my second grade class enrollment was 23 students. Of these students 41% were males and 59% were females.

Participants

The participants of this study were second grade students from my class and their families that volunteered to be a part of my research. Of my 26 students, 10 families volunteered to participate. Of the student participants, 4 were male and 6 were female. None of my student participants were identified as English Language Learners and none

of my student participants were receiving special education services. Of the parent participants, 1 was male and 9 were female.

Family Literacy Model

Based on the setting, the overall school population, and the participants, I felt that a parent involvement family literacy model would be the most appropriate to adopt because it focuses on using a variety of literacy activities to help parents learn reading strategies to support their child's learning (Morrow & Neuman, 1995). Typically this approach is also developed based on the individual school's goals that is hosting the program. Since I am implementing a parent involvement model in only my classroom, I based the goals of my family literacy program on improving reading comprehension by explicitly teaching and modeling reading strategies to families. I modeled my parent involvement family literacy program based on the research study conducted by DeBruin-Parecki (2009), who conducted an eight week long mixed method study that examined using a family literacy program to teach families about interactive reading. The difference between DeBruin-Parecki (2009) and my parent involvement family literacy program are that DeBruin-Parecki's (2009) study focused on recording and observing interactive reading behaviors between parent and child, whereas my study focuses on comprehension strategy instruction and implementation of the strategies by the families. The parent involvement model used by DeBruin-Parecki (2009) has a clear format for implementing a family literacy program that I modeled my study after that will be further explained in the procedure section.

The two other family literacy program approaches that I could have chosen were the intergenerational approach and the studies approach. An intergenerational approach

would not fit the needs of my demographic because this type of family literacy program focuses on language acquisition for all of the participants and reading support English Language Learners. Since none of my students were identified as ELL this would not be a beneficial approach to use to increase reading comprehension. The second approach that I did not choose to use is studies because this focuses more on observing how families interact with each other and literacy to inform the educator on ways to make literacy learning more accessible to all cultures. Whereas my focus was on explicit comprehension strategy instruction and not on how to create more culturally sensitive literacy programs.

Data Collection

In this section, I will describe several data collection techniques that were used over the course of the research study. The data was intended to be collected over eight bi-monthly meetings, however based on feedback from family participants, research was concluded after the seventh meeting.

Data collection technique 1: pre and posttest. The first form of data collection that I used is a computer based reading test called *i.Ready* that is used district-wide in the area the study was conducted. Students take the test three times a year to monitor their progress in reading comprehension. Students took their pre assessment within the first two weeks of starting the school year and the second round of testing took place after winter break in the month of January. The second test was used as a posttest for the purposes of this study. I compared and contrasted student's pre and post test scores to determine what reading growth was made. I compared my class's data that used a family literacy approach to three other second grade class's pre and post data that did not use a

family literacy approach. I also used the comprehension pre-test data to determine which comprehension strategies I should focus on teaching during the bi-monthly family literacy meetings.

Data collection technique 2: parent survey. The second form of data that I used was a parent survey. The parent survey was administered at the beginning of the year after parents had given consent to participate in the study. The survey was broken down into three sub sections to gain information about parent and students home literacy environment and their literacy practices. The survey was adapted from the research conducted by Katzir, Lesaux, and Kim, (2009). The survey was given out again at the end of the study to compare home literacy environments before a family literacy approach was used and after. The survey can be located in Appendix A.

Data collection technique 3: literacy meeting survey I gave parents and students a short survey to complete together after participating in a family literacy meeting. The survey used the Likert Scale to provide me with anonymous feedback on how they felt about the learning session (Appendix B). I used this information to guide my instruction and adjust to meet the needs of my families.

Data collection technique 4: home literacy connection kits. In addition to the bi-monthly family literacy nights, I sent home a literacy connection kit. It contained thematic text sets and was at differing levels of difficulty. It also included literacy activities for families to complete together. The data that was collected from this was from student participants and the literacy activities that they complete with their families in their journals. (Included in Appendix C)

Procedure

I spent the first month of the school year building parent-teacher partnerships by hosting a meet the teacher day, curriculum night, used weekly newsletters to communicate in addition to phone calls, emails, informal conversations, and conferences. I began my research on family literacy program in October by analyzing the pretest data from my participants reading comprehension test. I analyzed the data to see what areas needed the most attention in regards to comprehension. The reading pretest data was used to determine the eight reading comprehension strategies that I would be focusing on teaching throughout the seven bi-monthly family literacy meetings.

After the students had taken their reading comprehension pretest, I sent home the parent survey to collect data on home literacy environments. The survey was sent home as a paper copy for parents to complete and return to school. Once the surveys were collected the family literacy nights began.

Family literacy meetings happened twice a month from October 25th, 2016 through March 9th, 2017. Family literacy meetings followed the same plan each week. We would begin by introducing ourselves and then I would instruct parents and students on the week's comprehension strategy focus. I would model how they could use this strategy while reading with their child. Then their child would model how they have used that strategy in class before. Parents and children would have time to practice the strategy using their child's classroom book box. We would then meet back together as a group to share about the experience. The evening would conclude with a brief explanation of the home literacy connection kit, a review of practicing this week's strategy, and time to fill out the family literacy meeting surveys.

At the end of the seven bi-monthly literacy nights, students took their reading posttest and parents also completed the home literacy environment survey again. The results were analyzed and then compared to other second grade classrooms that were not using a family literacy approach.

Ethics

In order to protect the participants in the study, I followed the procedures established by the Hamline School of Education Human Subjects Committee. These procedures required that I submit my proposal to the Hamline University Institutional Review Board. After completing my Capstone proposal meeting, I submitted my Human Subjects Committee Form. Upon receiving approval, I informed my principal of my research and received letters of approval for my project. I then continued by gaining permission from my participants to be a part of my study (Appendix D). To protect the privacy of my parent and student participants I have changed all of the names for my study.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained my decision for selecting a mixed-methods approach. In addition to this I described the setting and participants of my study to better understand the demographics and how it could apply to similar settings. Finally, I explained the data collecting techniques and procedure for my research. In chapter four, I will analyze and explain my findings. A discussion will follow that described my recommendations from my findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Introduction

As the 2016-2017 school year commenced, I had finished my literature review on family literacy and was preparing to start the research with my new group of second grade students to help me answer the question, *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?* Based on the literature review, one key to success for creating a family literacy program is establishing partnerships with the families that would be participating. Because of this information, I decided to implement the family literacy program in October in order to have the first month and a half of the school year to build partnerships with my new second grade families through Meet-the-Teacher Day, informal conversations, and parent-teacher conferences.

I began my research project by communicating with all 26 second grade families at parent teacher conferences about my Capstone research. I shared with them my philosophy of creating learning partnerships with them and my commitment to improving their child's reading comprehension through the creation of a family literacy program. I gave the families a copy of a letter explaining the research process, attached with the permission forms (Appendix D) and a pre-assessment survey on home literacy practices. I had ten families agree to participate in the family literacy program. Based on an email survey about what time and day of the week would work best for families, I chose to host two different session times to accommodate the participants' schedules. We would meet bi-monthly for a total of seven family literacy meetings. The participants would have the

option of meeting on Tuesday after school from 4:00-4:40 p.m. or on Thursday before school from 7:50 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. To ensure that each meeting would follow the same format, I created a lesson plan that I would follow as closely as possible to ensure that both sessions would receive the same learning experience (Appendix E).

Home Literacy Environment Pre-Assessment

During the literature review process, I learned that a home literacy environment can play a large role in a student's comprehension development. Since the amount of time a child spends reading at home can influence their reading comprehension progress, I thought that it was important to have the participants complete a home literacy environment survey. The purpose of the survey was to collect information about the frequency a child is helped with literacy activities at home and to ascertain information on family members' own literacy practices. Also on the survey were questions about access to books and frequency of time spent reading and writing. Finally, I also included a Likert scale to determine how the parents perceived their child's enjoyment of reading and writing (Appendix A).

The home literacy environment survey served two purposes for my research study. First, it provided insights into the family's home practices, with the hopes that the implementation of a family literacy program would strengthen or increase the frequency of literacy interactions at home. Secondly, it provided me with an understanding of the level of support the students were given at home in regards to their literacy learning. Based on the survey that eight out of ten participants completed, I found that all of my families were comfortable working with their child at home. This was evident from the data on the parent support questions, in which families reported one to two days or more

of support. This information can been seen in the frequency table below that shows the specific questions families responded to about literacy help at home.

Table 1

Literacy Help at Home Frequency Table					
Frequency	Everyday	5-6 days/week	3-4 days/week	1-2 days/week	Never
How frequently does a member of the family read either newspapers, magazines, books, or e-books with the child?	3	4	0	1	0
How frequently does a member of the family work on writing with the child?	0	0	5	3	0
How frequently does a member of the family teach the child how to read words?	2	2	4	0	0
How frequently does the child interact with books at home alone?	2	4	0	2	0
How frequently does the child ask a family member to read to them?	3	1	3	1	0
How frequently does a family member take the child to the public library?	0	0	0	4	1

I was pleasantly surprised to find that 7 out of 8 families that responded to the survey reported reading with their child 5 or more days a week. This showed that most of the participants already had some type of reading routine in place and it would hopefully be positively influenced with participating in the family literacy program by giving parents and students specific comprehension strategies to implement as they read together.

The area of literacy support that was lowest was in the area of writing. Five out of eight reporting participants indicated that they worked on writing with their child 3-4

days a week, which is less frequent than working on reading together. Three out of eight participants reported that they worked on writing only 1-2 days per week. This information led me to include at least one writing activity with every home literacy connection kit that I created in hopes of building parents' confidence and skills to support their child's writing development at home. The frequency of library trips also showed that 4 out of 5 responses that were given indicated that families visited the library at least once a week. This information demonstrated that families were willing to use free resources in order to give their child access to books.

In the home literacy environment survey families were asked to estimate the total number of parent/adult books that they have at home. Based on the participants' responses, the average number of parent/adult books at the beginning of my research study was 305 books. The average estimated number of children's books that participants have at home was 187. This information allowed me to determine that all of the participants in the family literacy program had access to reading material at home which would support more opportunities to read and practice comprehension strategies compared to families that have less access to books at home.

Parents were also asked to estimate the amount of time in minutes that their child read independently in the course of a week. The average amount of independent reading time was 227.5 minutes. The average estimated amount of time a family member spent reading to the child each week was 107.5 minutes. To put students reading minutes on the survey into perspective, in the district that this study took place in, the expected amount of daily reading for literacy homework for a second grade student is 20 minutes a night during the school week. Therefore, the average second grader in this district should be

reading at least 100 minutes per week if they are completing their daily reading assignment. The student participants in this study were already averaging more independent reading time with 227.5 minutes compared to the minimum requirement for a second grade student. This led me to conclude that the student participants in the family literacy program already had strong reading habits established at home and most likely were not reluctant readers. At the start of this research process, I had assumed the student participants would most likely be reluctant readers or struggling readers that parents were looking for more support on how to help their child. These notions were unfounded based on the information from the pre-assessment of the home literacy environment survey.

In addition to learning about my student participants home literacy environments, the survey also supplied information on how the parent participants interact with literacy at home. The survey questions and frequency of parent participants' responses can be seen in the frequency table below.

Table 2

Family Members Home Literacy Practices Frequency Table

Frequency	Everyday	5-6 days/week	3-4 Days/week	1-2 Days/week	Never
How frequently do family members read newspapers, magazines, books, or e-books?	5	0	3	0	0
How frequently do family members use writing at home for notes, lists, messages, and or e-mails?	6	2	0	0	0
How frequently do family members use writing at home for letters, cards, journals, stories, or poems?	1	4	1	1	1

How frequently do family members orally share jokes, rhymes, or songs with the child?	1	4	2	1	0

The survey responses on the parent participants' frequency of reading indicated that eight of the ten responding participants read at least 3-4 days per week or more. This information led me to conclude that the student participants had strong literacy role models in the home that help emphasize the importance of reading outside of the classroom learning space. The frequency of writing for parent participants depended greatly on the task or purpose for writing. I thought it was interesting that writing frequency for the parent participants was also less than reading frequency at home, just like student participants. Again this information influenced my decision to incorporate a written component to the family literacy connection kits that families would be working with.

Reading Comprehension Pre-Assessment

Before I began my family literacy meetings, I wanted to get a baseline for the student participants' level of reading comprehension. For my reading comprehension pre-assessment I used the district's online testing system, *i.Ready*, for the pre-assessment because all students take a comprehensive reading assessment three times a year. The assessment is broken down into the following reading domains: phonological awareness, phonics, high-frequency words, vocabulary, and comprehension literature and comprehension informational text. All of the areas are combined to produce a scale score. The testing system also gives each individual reading domain a placement level based on how the student did in one particular domain along with a scale score. The levels are

associated with grade band achievement so a level one would be performing at a first grade level, in the second grade band it is broken down to early 2, mid 2 and late 2, and the levels continue on for level 3, 4, and so forth. The table below shows the scale scores for each grade level.

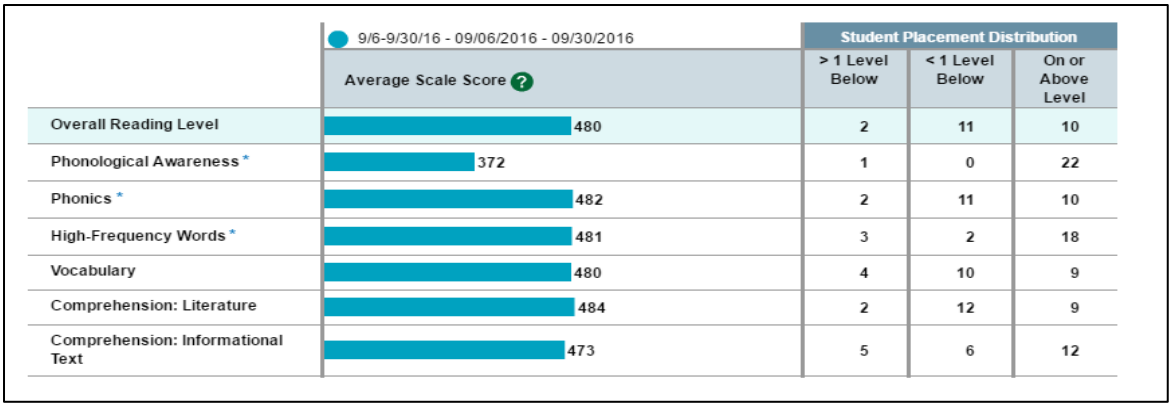
Table 3

Scale Scores for Each Grade Level

On Level Ranges	Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Early	362-395	434-457	489-512	511-544	557-578	581-608
Mid	396-423	458-479	513-536	545-560	579-602	609-629
Late	424-479	480-536	537-560	561-602	603-629	630-640

Since this research is focused only on the domain of reading comprehension, I used the level information and score for literature and informational text to determine how a family literacy approach affects second grade reading comprehension. In addition to this I analyzed the class average scale score to better understand where all students in the four second grade classes were performing at in the months of September and January. I also referred to class averages as a scale score to compare my participants to three other second grade classes that were not using a family literacy approach. I used the students' September *i.Ready* comprehension scores as my baseline for reading comprehension and compared it to the students' January comprehension scores.

In Figure 1 below, you see a breakdown of how my whole second grade class performed on their September reading assessment. I had three students move mid-year, so although I began the year with 26 students, the data in the chart is including the 23 students that remained throughout the school year.



	9/6-9/30/16 - 09/06/2016 - 09/30/2016	Student Placement Distribution		
	Average Scale Score	> 1 Level Below	< 1 Level Below	On or Above Level
Overall Reading Level	480	2	11	10
Phonological Awareness *	372	1	0	22
Phonics *	482	2	11	10
High-Frequency Words *	481	3	2	18
Vocabulary	480	4	10	9
Comprehension: Literature	484	2	12	9
Comprehension: Informational Text	473	5	6	12

Figure 1: My classes September pre-test scores

For my students' overall reading level, which factors in all six domains, my class average scale score was 480, which equates to a late first grade reading level. Based on this information, I had two students at the beginning of the year that were reading at more than one level below grade level, eleven students who were reading at one level below grade level, and ten students that were on or above grade level.

To better understand what the average second grade student's overall reading level was at in the month of September, I compared my class' overall reading level to my three second grade teammates overall reading level. In Teammate A's classroom, the class average for the overall reading level was a scale score of 472 which equates to reading at a mid-year first grade level. In Teammate B's classroom, the class average for the overall reading level was a scale score of 466 which equates to a reading at a mid-year first grade level. In Teammate C's classroom, the class average for the overall reading level was a scale score of 470 which equates to reading at a mid-year first grade level. My class average scale score was 480 which equates to reading at a late first grade level. Out of all of the classrooms included in this study, my students were the only ones that performed at a late first grade reading level as compared to three other second grade

classrooms. The overall reading level will again be examined later in this chapter to compare post test data.

Looking only at the area of comprehension for literature in just my classroom, I had two students who were comprehending literature at more than one level below second grade, twelve students who were comprehending literature at less than one level below second grade, and nine students who were comprehending literature on or above level. Informational comprehension had surprisingly more students on or above level with twelve students, six students were comprehending informational text at less than one grade level below, and five students were comprehending informational text at more than one grade level below.

To summarize, thirteen of my students began the year with their overall reading level below grade level and ten students on or above grade level. All the families in my classroom were given their students *i.Ready* reading scores at parent teacher conferences, two weeks prior to the start of the family literacy program. Based on this data, I made the prediction that most of my family participants would be from the group of students that were reading below grade level because they were the ones that would need the most support and coaching to close the gap.

In reality, five of my student participants were reading on or above second grade level in the area of literature comprehension. Four of these student participants were female and one student participant was male. Compared to the other four participants who were comprehending literature texts at one grade level below, three were male and one was female. In the area of informational text, my participants overall performed at a lower level than with literature. Five of my participants were comprehending

informational text one grade level below. Of those 5 participants, three were male and two were female. Four participants were comprehending informational text at an early second grade level, three of which were female and one male. I had one female participant who was comprehending informational text at level 3. Based on the students' *i.Ready* reading data, I decided to include at least one non-fiction text in the take home family literacy connection kits for participants to have more exposure to informational text.

Based on my participants' individual comprehension data, none of my participants began the program performing at more than one level below grade level in the area of comprehension. The students in my second grade class that needed the most additional support because they were more than one level below grade level comprehension did not choose to participate in the family literacy program.

Home Literacy Environment Post-Assessment

At the onset of my family literacy program, I gave participants a home literacy environment survey in order to better understand the level of literacy support students had at home. In addition to this, I was also trying to gain insights in the families' home practices, with the hope of having the outcome of strengthening or increasing the frequency of literacy interactions at home. Based on the post-assessment that all participants completed, I found that the frequency of a family member reading to a child stayed rather consistent with all nine participants responding with a frequency of 3-4 days per week or greater.

The information comparing pre and post survey responses can been seen in the frequency table below, showing the specific questions families responded to about literacy help at home.

Table 4

Literacy Help at Home Frequency Table Pre Compared to Post						
Frequency		Everyday	5-6 days/week	3-4 days/week	1-2 days/week	Never
How frequently does a member of the family read either newspapers, magazines, books, or e-books with the child?	Pre	3	4	0	1	0
	Post	**2**	**6**	**1**	**0**	**0**
How frequently does a member of the family work on writing with the child?	Pre	0	0	5	3	0
	Post	**0**	**0**	**7**	**2**	**0**
How frequently does a member of the family teach the child how to read words?	Pre	2	2	4	0	0
	Post	**4**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**1**
How frequently does the child interact with books at home alone?	Pre	2	4	0	2	0
	Post	**3**	**2**	**3**	**1**	**0**
How frequently does the child ask a family member to read to them?	Pre	3	1	3	1	0
	Post	**3**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**1**
How frequently does a family member take the child to the public library?	Pre	0	0	0	4	1
	Post	**0**	**0**	**1**	**4**	**2**

One area in the survey that decreased in frequency was the need for parents to teach their child how to read words. The pre survey showed that 8 parents taught their child how to read words with a frequency of 3-4 days per week or greater. On the post survey two of the nine parent responses indicated that they taught their child how to read words with a frequency of less than 1-2 days per week. This decrease in frequency would

lead me to conclude that the children are increasing their decoding skills and need less parent support to determine new words. The pre survey showed that three out of eight participants reported that they worked on writing only 1-2 days per week. This information led me to include at least one writing activity with every home literacy connection kit that I created in hopes of building parents' confidence and skills to support their child's writing development at home. Based on the post survey data, including writing activities in the literacy connection kits was not enough to increase the frequency of writing support at home. This led me to believe that parents may need more information on how to help support their child's writing development at home than can be provided from a writing activity within the literacy connection kits.

Overall, my hypothesis at the beginning of the research process about the family literacy program increasing the frequency of home literacy practices was unfounded because there was little to no change from the pre to the post survey, indicating that family practices remained the same throughout the study.

Parents were also asked to estimate the amount of time in minutes that their child read independently in the course of a week. In the pre survey the average estimated amount of independent reading time in one week was 227.5 compared to the post survey estimate of 192.7 minutes of independent reading time in one week. This shows a decrease in the estimated independent reading minutes of 34.8 minutes. Although, there is a reported decrease in independent reading time in the post survey, this is still higher than the 100 minutes an average second grader in this district is expected to be reading. Another possible reason for the decrease could be that parents initially reported that their child was reading more, however the family literacy program may have made parents

more aware of how much time their child actually spends reading, rather than just an estimate.

When comparing the pre and post survey estimate of the amount of time a family member spent reading to the child over the course of a week, an interesting story begins to unfold. In the pre survey the average estimated amount of time a family member spent reading to the child each week was 107.5 minutes. In the post survey the average estimated amount of time a family member spent reading to the child each week was 148.3 minutes, which is an increase of 41.3 minutes from the pre to the post survey. I concluded that students' individual reading time decreased from pre to post survey because families were spending more time reading together. The family literacy program may have influenced this change in behavior through the families' use of the literacy connection kits.

In addition to learning about the student participants' home literacy environments, the post survey also helped me to draw conclusions about any changes that may have formed on how the parent participants interact with literacy at home. The survey questions and frequency of parent participant's responses comparing the pre survey and post survey responses can be found in the frequency table below.

Table 5

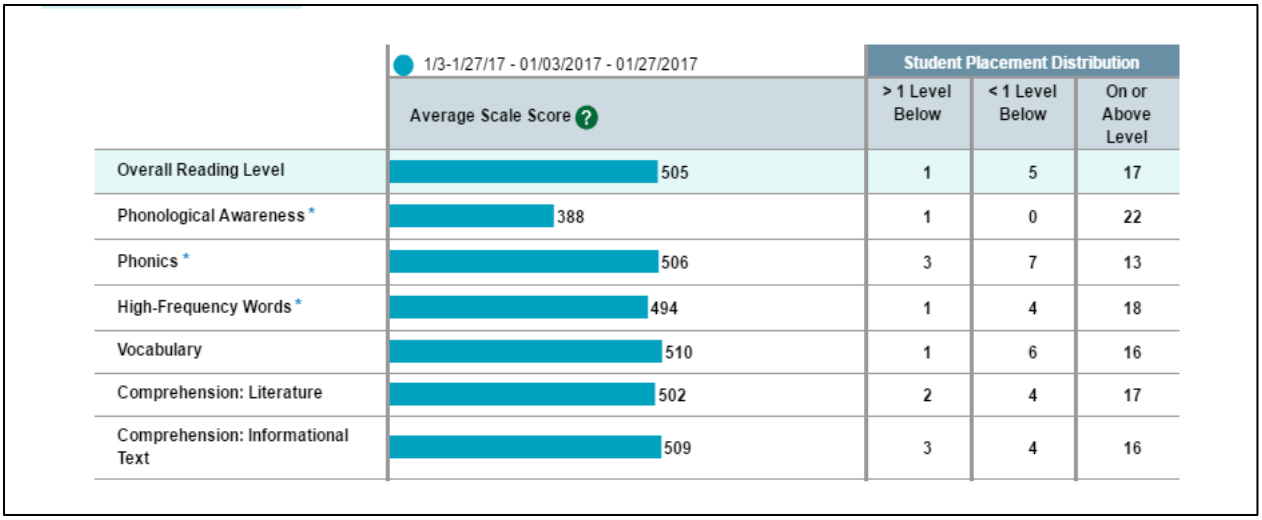
Family Members Home Literacy Practices Frequency Table Pre and Post Comparison						
Frequency		Everyday	5-6 days/week	3-4 Days/week	1-2 Days/week	Never
How frequently do family members read newspapers, magazines, books, or e-books?	Pre	5	0	3	0	0
	Post	**5**	**2**	**2**	**0**	**0**

How frequently do family members use writing at home for notes, lists, messages, and or e-mails?	Pre	6	2	0	0	0
	Post	**5**	**3**	**1**	**0**	**0**
How frequently do family members use writing at home for letters, cards, journals, stories, or poems?	Pre	1	4	1	1	1
	Post	**0**	**1**	**5**	**3**	**0**
How frequently do family members orally share jokes, rhymes, or songs with the child?	Pre	1	4	2	1	0
	Post	**4**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**0**

Reading Comprehension Post-Assessment

To review, my class average scale score was 480 which equates to a late first grade reading level. Based on this information, I had two students at the beginning of the year that were reading at more than one level below grade level, eleven students who were reading at one level below grade level, and ten students that were on or above.

In Figure 2 below, you see a breakdown of how my whole second grade class performed on their January reading assessment. I had three students move mid-year, so although I began the year with 26 students, the data in the chart is including the 23 students that remained throughout the school year.



	1/3-1/27/17 - 01/03/2017 - 01/27/2017	Student Placement Distribution		
	Average Scale Score	> 1 Level Below	< 1 Level Below	On or Above Level
Overall Reading Level	505	1	5	17
Phonological Awareness *	388	1	0	22
Phonics *	506	3	7	13
High-Frequency Words *	494	1	4	18
Vocabulary	510	1	6	16
Comprehension: Literature	502	2	4	17
Comprehension: Informational Text	509	3	4	16

Figure 2: January *i.Ready* reading assessment data for my class

For my students' overall reading level, my class average scale score was 505 which equates to an early second grade reading level. Based on this information, I had one student at the middle of the year that was reading at more than one level below grade level, five students who were reading at one level below grade level, and seventeen students that were on or above. In summary, my class' average overall reading scale score increased from September to January. In addition to this, in September I had thirteen students whose overall reading scale score indicated that they were a year or more behind reading grade level compared to the January assessment where only six students overall reading scale score showed they were a year or more behind reading grade level.

Now that we have a picture of how my second grade class grew in their overall reading scale scores from September to January, I will further examine the effects of my research by comparing scores of the nine student participants in the family literacy program to the fourteen students who did not participate in the family literacy program.

My analysis of data is broken down in the figure below. Group 1.00 contains the student participants in my family literacy program. Group .00 are the rest of my fourteen second grade students that were in my class during the whole duration of this study and who did not participate in the family literacy program.

Table 6

Family Literacy Student Participants Compared to Student Non-Participants in My Second Grade Classroom

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Overall Scale Score Pretest	1.00	9	499.4444	37.12516	12.37505
	.00	14	467.7857	48.93823	13.07929
Overall Scale Score Posttest	1.00	9	518.0000	35.47534	11.82511
	.00	14	498.7857	40.51624	10.82842
Comprehension Literature Pretest	1.00	9	508.2222	58.07060	19.35687
	.00	14	468.3571	57.72695	15.42818
Comprehension Literature Posttest	1.00	9	509.7778	40.65642	13.55214
	.00	14	497.3571	51.91947	13.87606
Comprehension Informational Text Pretest	1.00	9	491.5556	35.42990	11.80997
	.00	14	461.1429	66.70585	17.82789
Comprehension Informational Text Posttest	1.00	9	520.8889	49.24542	16.41514
	.00	14	501.6429	60.91559	16.28038
Overall Scale Score Difference	1.00	9	18.5556	14.52680	4.84227
	.00	14	31.0000	23.64155	6.31847
Literature Difference	1.00	9	1.5556	39.04840	13.01613
	.00	14	29.0000	41.88813	11.19507
Informational Text Difference	1.00	9	29.3333	21.10687	7.03562
	.00	14	40.5000	73.52106	19.64933

When comparing my family literacy student participants' overall scale score the mean of their pretest was 499.444 compared to mean of 467.786 that the fourteen students not participating in the family literacy program scored on their pretest. This

shows that my participants were already reading at a higher overall level. When we compare the overall posttest scale score, we again see that the participants mean was 518.000 compared to the mean of 498.786 from the 14 non-participants. Based on simply comparing the mean scale score of the pre and posttest, it would appear the students who participated in the family literacy program made more overall gains than students who did not participate, but this is not the case. If we dig deeper into the data by examining the difference in the mean of the overall scale score it shows that the mean difference from the overall scale score pre to post test for my student participants was 18.556 compared to my non participants of 31.000. The overall scale score has been used in this paper to give an overview of a second grade reader as a whole, but to answer my research question *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?* We need to examine the *i.Ready* data that only measures comprehension scores in the area of literature and informational text, which were the types of reading strategies I targeted for the family literacy program.

When comparing the difference in mean score in the area of comprehension literaure using the *i.Ready* pre and post test data for this domain, my particpants' mean difference from pre to post was only 1.556 compared to my non-participants whose mean pre and post test difference was 29.000. On seeing this data, a reader might conlcude that my family literacy program was actually detrimental to my student participants. What the mean doesn't properly represent are the large factor the outliers play in such a small sample size. After my students took the post test, I had one student participant drop from a scale score in comprehension literature of 449 to 427. This decrease in score can also be seen in the area of comprehension informational text, with the student dropping from

the pretest score of 429 to 412. As a teacher and as a school district, we use these benchmark assessments to not only guide our reading instruction, but to also identify students who need more support to be successful readers. After the January *i.Ready* assessment one of my student participants was idenitfied as a struggling reader who needed more support through our districts' Learning Assistance Program (LAP). My participant who received LAP reading support, which uses a pull out model during the school day using the Leveled Literacy Intervention Curriculum, was later found to not be making progress with this aditional support. This student particpant was referred for the special education program at the end of my study.

A second outlier is another student participant who began the year with a very high *i.Ready* comprehension literature pretest score of 608 compared to the class average of 484 in this domain. On the second reading assessment in January the student participants' score dropped drastically to 548 due to several factors such as test anxiety, lack of stamina while testing, and the basic principle that when a student begins the year with such a high score, it is harder to see growth in their test scores. Because my sample size was so small with only nine students particpating in the family literacy program, having two student scores that drastically decreased from the pre to post test, impacted my data more than if I would have had a larger sample size. The results led to the conclusion that the sample size was too small in order to demonstrate the affects of the family literacy program on the participants reading comprehension growth. There is a need for further study with a larger participant sample to determine if a family literacy program is an effective model to use to increase second grade students' reading comprehension growth.

Another way that I analyzed my students' reading comprehension growth data was by comparing the students in my research study to all second grade students' reading comprehension data at my school. Group 1.00 contains the student participants in my family literacy program. Group .00 are all of the other second grade students from my second grade class and my three teammate's classes. This data can be seen in the table below.

Table 7

Second Grade Family Literacy Participants Compared to all Second Grade Non-Participating Students

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Overall Scale Score Pretest	1.00	9	499.4444	37.12516	12.37505
	.00	83	469.1084	42.56502	4.67212
Overall Scale Score Posttest	1.00	9	518.0000	35.47534	11.82511
	.00	83	493.2410	42.55687	4.67122
Comprehension Literature Pretest	1.00	9	508.2222	58.07060	19.35687
	.00	83	468.0723	55.53702	6.09598
Comprehension Literature Posttest	1.00	9	509.7778	40.65642	13.55214
	.00	83	497.8434	54.41002	5.97228
Comprehension Informational Text Pretest	1.00	9	491.5556	35.42990	11.80997
	.00	83	463.4940	57.92034	6.35758
Comprehension Informational Text Posttest	1.00	9	520.8889	49.24542	16.41514
	.00	83	492.3373	57.76219	6.34022
Overall Difference	1.00	9	18.5556	14.52680	4.84227
	.00	83	24.1325	26.47584	2.90610
Literature Difference	1.00	9	1.5556	39.04840	13.01613
	.00	83	29.7711	45.17536	4.95864
Informational Text Difference	1.00	9	29.3333	21.10687	7.03562
	.00	83	28.8434	58.81170	6.45542

Again, we see a similar situation unfold when comparing pre and post test data in the domain of comprehension literature based on the mean of my nine participants compared to the mean of the remaining non participating students in my class, in addition to the rest of the second grade study from three other classes. When comparing the mean of comprehension literature posttest, my nine particpants had a mean score of 509.778 compared to all second grade non-participants' mean of 497.843. When examining the difference in mean in the domain of literature, we see a much different picture. The mean of the literature difference for my particpants was very small at 1.556 compared to the mean of all second grade non-participants at 29.771. We see much the same when comparing the difference of the domain on informational text with student participants' mean difference of 29.333 compared to all second grade non-participants mean difference of 28.843. Although the mean difference in the domain of informational text is much closer compared to literature comprehension, with the student participants showing a slighlty higher mean than non-participants, the data is still not statistically significant. again as previously stated, this is due to the small sample size of nine student partipants.

The quantitative data shows that my research on using a family literacy approach to improve second graders reading growth had no effect based on the small sample size and the inability to regulate outlier scores. The conclusion based on the quantitative data is that further study is needed to statistically conclude whether a family literacy approach does improve second grading reading comprehension. However, if we examine the qualitative data from my research study, we see a picture of how participants reacted to the family literacy program and how I as a teacher used the family literacy meetings to build parent-teacher relationships.

Family Literacy Meetings

Meeting One The first family literacy meeting focused on two comprehension strategies that would help parents understand the importance of selecting books that the child was interested in and could read independently. Furthermore, parents were also introduced to the comprehension strategy called check for understanding, which could be applied to either fiction or nonfiction text. I modeled and coached families on how to help their child select good-fit books and how to check for understanding as students read (Appendix E). In the before school session three family participants attended the meeting. The after school session had six family participants attend the meeting. The total attendance for the first meeting was nine out of ten families'. The figure below shows the average response to the good-fit book strategy survey based on a five point Likert scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.

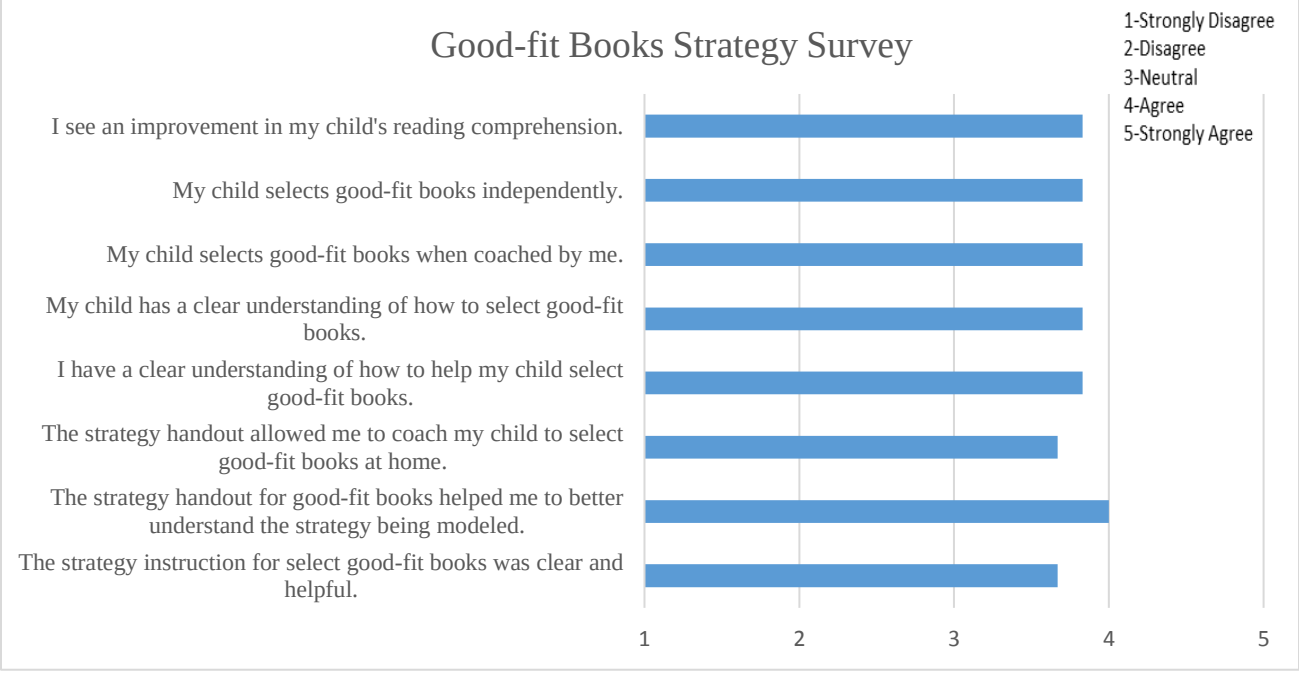


Figure 3: Good-Fit Books Strategy Survey

Based on the survey responses, my participants agreed that the strategy handout for good-fit books helped them to better understand how I modeled implementing this strategy with their child. Additionally, I used this survey data to help guide my instruction of the next meeting and determined that I needed to review and reteach how to select good-fit books so my families could have a stronger understanding on how to use this strategy. Parents seemed genuinely interested in how to apply this strategy and a parent participant shared with the group about how they could see themselves using this strategy when looking for books at the library or at a bookstore. The students have learned this strategy prior to the meeting and have applied it to selecting their own good-fit books. The challenge with this strategy though, is students' self-perception about their reading skills. I have noticed that even if a student used the strategy and finds that the words are too hard, if it is a book that really interests them they still may select it. This is a great teaching moment for students and parents alike, because then the book that is a bit too hard for independent reading, could become a great read aloud for the child.

The check for understanding strategy is an easy tool for parents and students to use together to quickly retell who a story is about and what is happening in the story. The response on the parent survey for the check for understanding strategy showed me that my participants clearly understood how to use the strategy and that I was able to coach them well enough for them to be able to use this strategy with their child independently (Appendix F).

Meeting two The second family literacy meeting focused on the comprehensions strategy called predict what will happen and use the text to confirm. In the before school session three family participants attended the meeting. The after school

session had seven family participants attend the meeting. The total attendance for the second meeting was ten out of ten families participated. This was the only meeting where I had 100% of participants attend. The parent feedback from this meeting's survey indicated that parent participants had a clear understanding of how to use this strategy and found the instruction to be helpful (Appendix F). I also observed that the student participants were able to quickly understand how to make predictions as we finished reading from *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Students would animatedly share their predictions with their parents at the read aloud stopping points. Students seemed to rely mostly on the pictures to help them confirm or adjust the prediction they made.

Meeting 3 This family literacy meeting focused on the comprehension strategy called ask questions throughout the reading process. In the before school session two family participants attended the meeting. The after school session had four family participants attend. The total attendance for the third meeting was six out of ten families'. At this point in the research study the format of the reading process strategy survey changed. The reason for this was to ask more specific questions focused on the instruction of the reading strategy in order to be able to adjust my coaching and lesson plans. In addition to this, as the family participants and I got to know each other more, communication lines opened up and parents were more willing to share about their experience with the family literacy program through informal conversations with them before or after a literacy meeting. Because of this, I included a section for families to write down comments on the survey. The comments from this week's meeting included some feedback on the family literacy connection kits that they would take home with them to practice the comprehension strategy. One family participant wrote, "My child

and I are enjoying the literacy class very much. The kits we take home with us have been full of fun." As the researcher, it was very eye opening to see how much enjoyment families were getting from having time together in the classroom to read and bond over books. Another family participant wrote that, "All of the packets [parent handouts] were useful and beneficial. My child really enjoyed playing all the games." This helped me to see that my parents found the strategy handouts at the meeting helpful for guiding their reading at home with their child. This is something that I will continue to use as a resource for all of my families next school year.

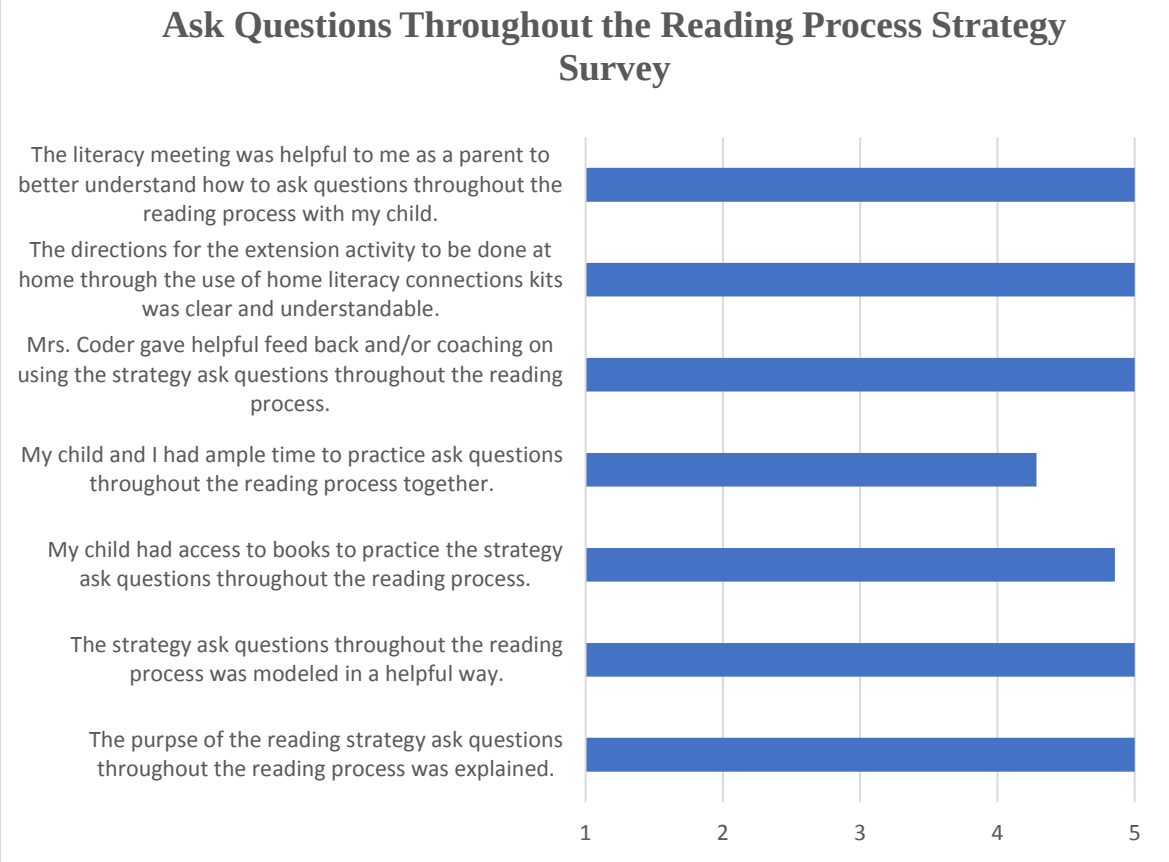


Figure 6

In Figure 6, parents gave strong positive responses to the coaching and instruction that I provided on the strategy ask questions throughout the reading process. I believe part of this has to do with the book selection for this meeting. I noticed at the last meeting that *Jack and the Beanstalk* was not holding all of the participant's attention and this may be in part because we read it over two meeting periods. For this literacy meeting, I intentionally chose a book that was funny and left the reader wondering. I even had parent participants laughing out loud during the time when I model the strategy with a read aloud.

Meeting Four This family literacy meeting focused on the comprehension strategy called use text features. It is important to note that a participant moved during this time period so the remainder of the meetings will be out of nine participating families. In the before school session two family participants attended the meeting. The after school session had four family participants attend the meeting. The total attendance for the fourth meeting was six out of nine families'. Because this comprehension strategy lesson was more involved than the other strategy lessons based on the amount of text features families were learning about, the meetings ran over time and surveys were not distributed for this reading strategy.

Students and their parents read from a Scholastic News article at this meeting in order to focus their attention on the different text features that readers need to be aware of. Students and their parents were able to write on the text to record what they learned from the text feature. Students were interested by this strategy and were searching their book boxes for non-fiction text to practice with. One student participant proudly shared the glossary from a book they were reading. Another parent participant shared that

they had forgotten how many different types of text features there are to be aware of while reading.

Meeting five This family literacy meeting focused on the comprehension strategy called make a picture or mental image. In the before school session four family participants attended the meeting. The after school session had three family participants attend the meeting. The total attendance for the fourth meeting was seven out of nine families'. Based on the parents' responses to the strategy survey, all of the participants rated all of their survey responses for the strategy instruction this week as strongly agree (Appendix F). During this meeting students and families had a fun time playing around with descriptive language in order to be able to describe the picture they were making in their head about the read aloud. One participant shared that this was their favorite comprehension strategy. Another participant wrote in the comment section of their survey form that, "My child and I had a lot of fun together practicing this strategy." I think part of the excitement at the meeting with this strategy was the ability to incorporate art and have students and parents draw out what they were visualizing happening in the story. Students and parents were smiling as they were drawing and sharing about the reasons why they added certain details to their pictures. I was able to determine that families had a clear understanding of how to use this strategy and were able to apply it to their independent practice with the home literacy connections kits because of all the drawings that student's made to practice the strategy.

Meeting Six. This family literacy meeting focused on the strategy called recognize literary elements. In the before school session two family participants attended the meeting. The after school session had three family participants attend the meeting.

The total attendance for the sixth meeting was six out of nine families'. During this meeting parents were able to see the connection we make in class between the reading strategy recognize literary elements and writing. As we looked for the beginning, middle, and end of a story, students were able to explain to their parents how we use this same story mapping idea and apply it to our writing of narratives. Students and parents were entertained at the start of the meeting when several students volunteered to read some of the writing they have been working on with the home literacy connection kits. Several poems and informational pieces of writing were shared, and parents commented about the creativity and knowledge that students were showing in their writing. The survey data showcases how parents were better able to understand how to use the strategy recognize literary elements based on all of the participants responding with a strongly agree on the Likert Scale (Appendix F).

Meeting Seven. At this family literacy meeting we reviewed all of the comprehension strategies that we have learned throughout the program and celebrated the participants for their effort and time. In the before school session three family participants attended the meeting. The after school session had four family participants attend the meeting. The total attendance for the meeting was seven out of nine families'. One parent participant shared that, "My child and I have thoroughly enjoyed this class. It has given us several tools to work with now and long into the future." Another parent participant shared that, "Having my child participate with me in understanding the strategies was extremely helpful. We both went home with a purpose. Loved it!" A third parent participant shared, "The program was very helpful to our family and we have learned how to apply these strategies to our everyday reading." From our last family literacy

meeting, I found through conversations with families about their experience how much they enjoyed the program.

Through the course of the seven family literacy meetings, I was able to connect with my participants through our informal conversations before and after meetings. This created open lines of communication which made parents and students more willing to share and participate during the literacy meetings. Even though the number of participants in the program was small, I believe one benefit of the small group is that parents, students, and I were able to get to know one another easier than if it was with a larger group. The literacy meetings also helped to foster a sense of community and support for one another's learning.

Furthermore, families were able to spend time together reading and talking about what they were learning in school. Because the parent participants were coming to the classroom bi-monthly, they were able to see first-hand examples of students learning captured on chart paper throughout the classroom. This led to the parent participants asking more detailed questions about what we were currently learning and they would get excited when a strategy they were learning in the family literacy meeting was the same as what we were focusing on in the classroom that week.

Summary

Implementing a family literacy program allowed me to create parent-teacher partnerships and gain insights into the participating students' home literacy environments. When I began the research process, I was determined to answer the question *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading comprehension growth in a second grade classroom?* Based on the research conducted I

have concluded that the sample size was too small in order to demonstrate the effects of a family literacy approach on students' reading comprehension growth. I believe that there is value in pursuing this topic in a larger study because based on the qualitative data families enjoyed having a sense of purpose when reading together. In addition to this, the pre and post home literacy environment survey data found an increase in the average number of minutes a parent read with a child during the week. In chapter five, I will describe the limitations, implications, and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

Introduction

At the start of my Capstone project, I felt that I needed to grow in the area of parent-teacher communication. Reflecting on my past teaching experiences, I had previously felt that my interactions with parents were limited because of the infrequency of informal conversations and the short amount of time we had together at conferences. I wanted to share my passion for literacy with my students, but to also extend this and find a way to communicate my literacy passion with the parents that I worked with. My passion for literacy and the need to build up parent-teacher communication led to my Capstone question, *How does a family literacy approach affect second grader's reading comprehension?*

Through my research, I discovered how important it was to get to know my students' families better. It wasn't always easy for me to break the ice, but by slowly sharing about each other's lives, it led me to create connections to my families and it built up a sense of community. This sense of community was not only built between myself and the parents, but also between the families in my class. I think that this is especially important based on the transient military population that our school district serves and to help families make connections in the school community.

In this chapter I will share the implications of my research for teachers and school policies. In addition to this, I will review the limitations of my study in order to improve future research conducted on this topic. Finally, I will share my

recommendations for future studies and future projects to be created and implemented in at the school I teach in and beyond.

Implications

The family literacy program that I implemented with my second grade families helped me as a teacher be able to better communicate with my students' parents. It helped me to grow as a teacher because I had to learn how to approach parents and build a relationship with them. At the first few family literacy meetings, I felt slightly uncomfortable as I was making small talk with families, but the more time I spent visiting with families before and after the literacy meetings, the more natural and relaxed the conversations became. This experience helped me to improve my communication methods with all of my second grade families and it allowed me to make deeper connections with my parents and students.

One implication of my study was that as parent-teacher relationships were fostered, this made parent's feel more open about sharing what their child may be struggling with at home. In addition to this, parents were more receptive when I approached them for advice on how to help their child because they knew that I strongly believed in the idea of family as a child's first teacher (Debruin-Parecki, 2009). This showed families that I respected and valued their opinions. Blasi and Hill-Clark (2005) found that parents can offer teachers insight about their child's interest and literacy habits when they are asked to share the information. The important concept from their research is that teachers have to ask. In individual classrooms where open communication with families is part of the culture, it is easier for teachers to reach out and consult with parents on matters of academic, social, and emotional growth or needs. Additionally, educators

need to work on developing their communication with parents so that way they are sharing positive feedback with families and not only communicating about negative behavior or academic hardships.

There are several ways that individual teachers can work on improving parent-teacher communication by implementing a few techniques throughout the school year. One important step at the start of the school year is to call or send a welcome email to incoming families. It is also a good idea to host parent meetings to share important information with families, especially taking the time to explain about the curriculum students will be using, homework, and classroom expectations. In addition to this, sending home weekly class newsletters keeps parents connected with what students are learning and also provides opportunities to showcase individual students work. Furthermore, encourage families to become involved at school through volunteering or participating in after school events. Enz (2003), explains that, "as educators, we must help parents understand the crucial role they play in helping their children become successful readers, and we must build parent's knowledge of how to support literacy development" (p.54). This can be done at the same time as you are fostering parent-teacher relationships by inviting families to come into the classroom to observe a literacy lesson. The teacher can also have parent volunteers in the classroom help with literacy activities. All of these ideas will help individual teachers increase their parent-teacher communication.

Creating an open line of communication between parents and teachers is one of the most important features of a family literacy program is. It is essential that there is open communication because many families are left with the impression that,"…schools

strongly emphasize how parents can learn from schools, but give little attention to how schools might learn from parents" (Morrow, et al., 1993). One major implication from my family literacy study is that when teachers establish parent-teacher relationships, we are able to communicate more clearly and effectively, while showing parents how important their voice and insights are into their child's education. One idea on how schools can give more attention to how they might learn from parents would be to ask for parent volunteers to become part of a curriculum adoption committee to gain a parent's perspective. Another implication of my research would be the need to examine how other schools focus their energy on programs or strategies that give parents more opportunities to share their knowledge to help influence current or future school policies.

Falk-Ross, Beilfuss, and Orem found, "It appears that some parents may be (or perceive themselves to be) marginalized by factors of diversity, school phobias, or socioeconomic status. Schools need to make explicit the opportunities to connect with parents" (2010, p.29). Providing after school learning activities where parents and students can both engage together will help families feel more connected to the school. I observed first hand through my family literacy program the engagement between parent and child when working together on a common purpose. Further research may be needed to investigate n more depth what other components are needed beside parent-teacher communication to foster a school culture that explicitly focuses on making connections with parents. A large part of this is creating a school culture that welcomes parents and actively seeks out parent connections. This comes back to the important role of communication for not only implementing a family literacy program, but for creating a connected school culture.

Limitations

One limitation for this research was the small sample size used. In addition to this, the sample was also a convenience sample which means participants were chosen based on their access. In order to improve on the research that I have conducted, the family literacy program needs a larger sample size that is not from a convenience sample. I would also recommend using multiple control and variable groups to generate more data for comparison. Based on the previous research conducted around the topic of family literacy and the three different approaches: intergenerational approach, family literacy approach, and studies, it is challenging to make a comparison of programs because all have a slightly different focus and serve a wide range of demographics. This leads to having gaps in the research that has previously been conducted. Part of the challenge with creating future studies is that family literacy programs are flexible in nature in order to best meet the needs of the population it is serving. This makes it challenging to compare the effectiveness of programs conducted because they are typically different from each other. Based on this, a longitudinal study on each program approach would need to be conducted in similar settings in order to accurately compare.

Another limitation to the research was the number of participants who completed the home literacy environment survey. The intention at the onset of this research was to send the home literacy environment survey home to all second grade students in order to compare study participants home literacy environment to the non-participants. At parent-teacher conferences in the month of October, my coworkers explained the research that I was going to conduct on a family literacy program and asked their families to complete

the home literacy environment survey and the permission form. I only received five pre survey's back and this was not a large enough sample size to compare my participants' survey to. In order to get a larger response from parents a digital survey may be more appropriate instead of sending home a paper copy. Using a digital survey form could help get more parent responses.

An area of my research that didn't align as well as I had originally planned was with the data collection method for the pre and post reading assessment. The pre-assessment occurred immediately following the start of the school year in September, which provided me with valuable data on my students' areas of strengths and weakness. The limitation comes from the post-assessment data. My studied concluded in the beginning of March which fell between our mid-year testing window in the month of January and the end of the year testing window in the month of June. Because of the time constraints with my Capstone project, I chose to use the mid-year *i.Ready* reading test as my post-assessment data. This decision also caused the results to not give a full view of the students learning because they were tested in January and the family literacy program continued on for two more months.

I am curious to see what the analysis of my students' end of year data will show after the completion of my Capstone project and if it will have any impact on my research question. I would strongly recommend in future studies aligning the pre and post comprehension assessment closely with the start and end dates of a family literacy program for more accurate results.

The families that chose to participate in my family literacy program were typically readers that already had a strong foundation. Another limitation to my study is

that it did not reach the students that were reading below grade level and their families. More research needs to be conducted on how to entice families to participate in the program. It would also be interesting to see if there is a correlation between socioeconomic status and students who are reading below grade level. This information could be collected by using a home literacy environment survey. If there is a correlation, families may be more willing to participate if the district provided an incentive like a meal, schools supplies, books, etc. in addition to the family literacy program.

Recommendations for future study

As seen in the literature review section, there have been several studies conducted based on the topic of family literacy programs. The issue with this is there are three different models that programs can be developed with and each study had a slightly different goal to achieve. The studies that were reviewed before conducting my own research all came to the same conclusion that more research needs to be done. Based on my own experience with researching the topic of family literacy programs with the goal of improving reading comprehension, I would recommend a much larger study to be developed and implemented across a district and for at least five years. This would allow for a much larger sample size and more accurate results. I also think that if this approach is implemented across an entire district it will help the study move away from simply using a convenience sample. The district could encourage families to participate by providing a meal. A meal would also allow time for families to connect with one another and with the teachers leading the family literacy program.

The school that I teach at is building on pre-established after school events like a bingo night, winter festival, and a STEM night, and they are slowly working towards

adding in more content related after school events for families to participate in. A large part of that is finding a way to draw families in to coming to these events by providing a meal. As a literacy advocate and researcher, next year I will be sharing the finding of my research with the staff. My main focus will be to model and share what I have learned about the power of parent communication and how we as a staff can improve in this area in order to develop a more welcoming school community and to encourage parent involvement. In addition to this, I may be leading a workshop on how other teachers can create and implement their own family literacy kits that they can use with their students and parents. This is supported by my findings in my literature review section. Crawford and Zygouis-Coe (2006) state, "One common goal of family literacy initiatives is to create a seamless weave between home and school. Thus, activities that extend between the two constituencies hold a lot of potential for teachers in the primary grades" (p. 265). The workshop I may be leading next year would focus on the use of home literacy connection kits from my research in order to extend classroom learning activities into the child's home environment.

In my own classroom next year, I will still be focusing on implementing a family literacy approach, but I am going to adapt the way I did it from my research. Next year, I am going to host a monthly family literacy meeting that will take place later in the evening and will last a longer amount of time than in my study. The reason behind this is that I would like to provide a sit-down meal for my families to help develop connections and relationships, but also encourage parent involvement. I will host the literacy meeting in a similar manner as I did in my lesson plans, except I will model several strategies per meeting. In addition to this, I will add in activities and information from our other content

areas like science, math, and social studies to help families see how reading is connected to all content areas. I will continue to build parent-teacher relationships using the information that I learned about in my literature review section.

Conclusion

Through my research I worked with students and parents to help them gain a common language around reading strategies that can be used in the classroom and at home. At the start of my research the intention was to give parents more support with literacy strategies in hopes that it would increase the student's reading growth. My Capstone was centered on the question: *How does using a family literacy approach affect students' reading growth in a second grade classroom?* The family literacy model taught me how to be an effective communicator and to how to establish positive parent-teacher relationships, although, my data did not support my hypothesis of a family literacy approach improving reading comprehension.

I believe there is a need for more research to be conducted in the field of family literacy. Based on my observations of student and parent interactions during the literacy meetings, there is value in having a time to learn together. When parents take the time to read with their child, they are not only encouraging reading habits and the use of comprehension strategies, but they are sending a message to their child that they are important. This same message of importance can be conveyed through the implementation of a family literacy program in order to acknowledge the important role of the parent as the child's first teacher. Schools that base their culture on this belief, will be able to better communicate with families by establishing school norms for parent

teacher communication, while also sending the message to all of the families that they are important.

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Appendix A

Home Literacy Environment Pre and Post Parent Survey

HOME LITERACY ENVIRONMENT SURVEY

Directions: Please mark with an 'X' the box corresponding to the frequency of use at home regarding the following statements.

Statement	Everyday	5-6 Days/ Week	3-4 Days/ Week	1-2 Days/ Week	Never
Literacy Help at Home					
How frequently does a member of the family read either newspapers, magazines, books, or e-books with the child?					
How frequently does a member of the family work on writing with the child?					
How frequently does a member of the family teach the child how to read words?					
How frequently does the child interact with books at home alone?					
How frequently does the child ask a family member to read to them?					
How frequently does a family member take the child to the public library?					
Family Members Literacy Practices					
How frequently do family members read newspapers, magazines, books, or e-books?					
How frequently do family members use writing at home for notes, lists, messages, and/or e-mails?					
How frequently do family members use writing at home for letters, cards, journals, stories, or poems?					

How Frequently do family members orally share jokes, rhymes, or songs with the child?					
	Always	**Often**	**Occasionally**	**Rarely**	**Never**
How frequently does a member of the family assist the child with their reading homework?					
How frequently does the child use reading comprehension strategies while reading?					
On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being very much and 1 being not at all…					
…how much does the child like to read?	5	4	3	2	1
…how much does the child like to write?	5	4	3	2	1
Estimate and write in the total number for each question below.					
*Estimate the total number of parent/adult books you have at home. _____ *Estimate the total number of children's books you have at home. _____ *Estimate the amount of time that your child reads independently at home each week. _____ *Estimate the amount of time that a member of the family reads to the child each week._____.					

Appendix B

Family Literacy Meeting Strategy Survey's

Family Literacy Meeting One Surveys

Good-fit books strategy survey

Anonymous Family Literacy Meeting Survey

Directions: Please circle the number that reflects your feelings about the following statements. Note that "5" represents Strongly Agree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Instruction					
I see an improvement in my child's reading comprehension.	5	4	3	2	1
My child selects good-fit books independently.	5	4	3	2	1
My child selects good-fit books when coached by me.	5	4	3	2	1
My child has a clear understanding of how to select a good-fit books.	5	4	3	2	1
I have a clear understanding of how to help my child select good-fit books.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy handout allowed me to coach my child to select good-fit books at home.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy handout for good-fit books helped me to better understand the strategy being modeled.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy instruction for select a good-fit book was clear and helpful.	5	4	3	2	1

Check for understanding strategy survey

Anonymous Family Literacy Meeting Survey

Directions: Please circle the number that reflects your feelings about the following statements. Note that "5" represents Strongly Agree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Instruction					
I see an improvement in my child's reading comprehension.	5	4	3	2	1
My child checks for understanding independently.	5	4	3	2	1
My child checks for understanding when coached by me.	5	4	3	2	1
My child has a clear understanding of how to check for understanding as they read.	5	4	3	2	1
I have a clear understanding of how to help my child check for understanding as they read.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy handout allowed me to coach my child to check for understanding at home.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy handout for check for understanding helped me to better understand the strategy being modeled.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy instruction for check for understanding was clear and helpful.	5	4	3	2	1

Family Literacy Meeting Two Survey

Make a prediction and use the text to confirm strategy survey

Anonymous Family Literacy Meeting Survey

Directions: Please circle the number that reflects your feelings about the following statements. Note that "5" represents Strongly Agree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Instruction					
I see an improvement in my child's reading comprehension.	5	4	3	2	1
My child makes a prediction independently.	5	4	3	2	1
My child makes a prediction when coached by me.	5	4	3	2	1
My child has a clear understanding of how to make a prediction as they read.	5	4	3	2	1
I have a clear understanding of how to help my child make a prediction as they read.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy handout allowed me to coach my child to make a prediction at home.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy handout for make a prediction helped me to better understand the strategy being modeled.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy instruction for make a prediction was clear and helpful.	5	4	3	2	1

Family Literacy Meeting Three Survey

Ask questions throughout the reading process strategy survey

Anonymous Family Literacy Meeting Survey

Directions: Please circle the number that reflects your feelings about the following statements. Note that "5" represents Strongly Agree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Instruction					
The literacy meeting was helpful to me as a parent to better understand how to ask questions throughout the reading process with my child.	5	4	3	2	1
The directions for the extension activity to be done at home through the use of home literacy connection kits was clear and understandable.	5	4	3	2	1
Mrs. Coder gave helpful feedback/coaching on using the strategy ask questions throughout the reading process.	5	4	3	2	1
My child and I had ample time to practice ask questions throughout the reading process together.	5	4	3	2	1
My child and I had access to books to practice the strategy ask questions throughout the reading process.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy ask questions throughout the reading process was modeled in a helpful way.	5	4	3	2	1
The purpose of the strategy ask questions throughout the reading process was explained.	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

Family Literacy Meeting Five Survey

Make a picture or mental image strategy survey

Anonymous Family Literacy Meeting Survey

Directions: Please circle the number that reflects your feelings about the following statements. Note that "5" represents Strongly Agree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Instruction					
The literacy meeting was helpful to me as a parent to better understand how to use the strategy make a picture or mental image with my child.	5	4	3	2	1
The directions for the extension activity to be done at home through the use of home literacy connection kits was clear and understandable.	5	4	3	2	1
Mrs. Coder gave helpful feedback/coaching on using the strategy make a picture or mental image.	5	4	3	2	1
My child and I had ample time to practice make a picture or mental image together.	5	4	3	2	1
My child and I had access to books to practice the strategy make a picture or mental image.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy make a picture or mental image was modeled in a helpful way.	5	4	3	2	1
The purpose of the reading strategy called make a picture or mental image was explained.	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

Family Literacy Meeting Six Survey

Recognize literary elements strategy survey

Anonymous Family Literacy Meeting Survey

Directions: Please circle the number that reflects your feelings about the following statements. Note that "5" represents Strongly Agree.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Instruction					
The literacy meeting was helpful to me as a parent to better understand how to use the strategy recognize literary elements with my child.	5	4	3	2	1
The directions for the extension activity to be done at home through the use of home literacy connection kits was clear and understandable.	5	4	3	2	1
Mrs. Coder gave helpful feedback/coaching on using the strategy recognize literary elements.	5	4	3	2	1
My child and I had ample time to practice using the reading comprehension strategy recognize literary elements together.	5	4	3	2	1
My child and I had access to books to practice the strategy recognize literary elements together.	5	4	3	2	1
The strategy recognize literary elements was modeled in a helpful way.	5	4	3	2	1
The purpose of the strategy called recognize literary elements was explained clearly.	5	4	3	2	1
Comments:					

Appendix C

Home Literacy Connection Kits

Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Cinderella

This kit includes...

Books
1. *Cinders A Chicken Cinderella* by Jan Brett (Library book) 2. *Fairy Tales for Little Folks* by Will Mosses (Library book) 3. *Cinderelephant* by Emma Dodd (Library book) 4. *The Turkey Girl* Retold by Penny Pollock (Library book) 5. *The Irish Cinderlad* by Shirley Climo (Library book) 6. *Abadeha The Philippine Cinderella* by Myrna de la Paz 7. *Adelita A mexican Cinderella Story* by Tomie dePaolo 8. *Jouanah A Hmong Cinderella* By Jewell Coburn

Activities
Compare and Contrast two of the Cinderella books. Copy the Venn diagram into your notebook. Record what was the same in both of the stories and what was different.
Write your own version of the Cinderella tale.

Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Bugs

This kit includes...

Books
1. *Ladybugs* by Debbie and Brendan Gallagher (Library book) 2. *Violet Mackerel's Natural Habitat* by Anna Branford (Library book) 3. *Ladybugs* by Gail Gibbons (Library book) 4. *The Ant and the Grasshopper* Retold by Amy Lowry Poole (Library book) 5. *Insectlopedia* by Douglas Florian (Library book) 6. *Bugs* by Nancy Parker 7. *The Ladybug and Other Insects* by Gallimard Jeunesse 8. *Are you a ladybug?* By Judy Allen and Tudor Humphries

Activities
Insect figurines -Use to retell stories, classify bugs, or sort based on characteristics
Potato Stamp Ladybugs -Instructions are included inside the folder. Materials provided are colored pencils, red paint, sponge brush, and white card stock. -Material needed: potato
Select one or two of your favorite writing starters after you finished reading most of the books. • Write a poem about a bug (silly, fiction, nonfiction, etc.) • Write to explain about bugs using facts that you learned through your reading to support your ideas. • Write a narrative where a bug is your main character.

Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Space

This kit includes...

Books
1. *Comets, Stars, The Moon, And Mars* by Douglas Florian 2. *Stanley in Space* by Jeff Brown 3. *The Magic School Bus Blasts into Space* by Kristin Earhart 4. *Pluto The Dwarf Planet* by Greg Roza 5. *Planets* by Gail Tuchman 6. *Book of Planets* by Catherine Hughes 7. *The Magic School Bus Lost in the Solar System* by Joanna Cole 8. *A Math Journey Through Space* by Anne Rooney (Library Book)

Activities
Space Flashcards
<u>Planet Chalk Drawing:</u> Materials included are black construction paper and chalk. Use the chalk and paper to draw your favorite planet or planets. Write about your planet drawings.
Select from one or two of the following writing starters and record your ideas in your notebook: • If you could visit any planet, which would it be and why? • Pretend you are an astronaut in space, write and describe what you see. • Write a poem about space or about an astronaut.

Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Rainforest

This kit includes...

Books
1. *Rainforest Friends* by Shawn Aswad 2. *Life-size Rainforest* by Anita Ganeri (Library Book) 3. *Rain forest Secrets* by Arthur Dorros 4. *DK Eye Wonder: Rain Forest* 5. *We're Roaming in the Rainforest an Amazon Adventure* by Laurie Krebs and Anne Wilson (Library Book) 6. *Where's My Mom?* By Julia Donaldson 7. Race The Wild Rain Forest Relay by Kristin Earhart

Activities
<u>Rainforest playset:</u> Use the rainforest figurines for imaginative play, sort and classify the animals, use them to retell stories, etc.
<u>Craft Challenge:</u> Using the paper plates (supplied), construction paper (supplied), and any other found materials at home, create a Rainforest animal.
Choose from the following ideas to write about in your notebook: • Tell about your favorite animal found in the Rainforest and include at least three reasons why it is your favorite. • Create a poem, song, or riddle about the Rainforest. • Write a narrative about the Rainforest. • Write steps explaining how to make your Rainforest animal craft.

Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Sharks

This kit includes...

Books
1. *Sharks* by Anne Schreiber 2. *Super Sharks* by Laaren Brown 3. *Great White Shark* by Deborah Nuzzolo 4. *Nugget and Fang* by Michael Slack 5. *Clark The Shark* by Bruce Hale 6. *Tiger Shark* by Deborah Nuzzolo 7. *Flip & Fin Super Sharks to the Rescue!* By Timothy Gil (Library Book) 8. *The Magic School Bus The Great Shark Escape* by Jennifer Johnston 9. *Shark School* by Davy Ocean

Activities
<u>Play Shark Aquarium: The more, less or greater game.</u> Materials included: Directions, two plastic sandwich containers, multicolored pebbles (to be used as the sharks), and a di.
Shark Science Activity Materials Included: Two plastic “sharks”, tub, and directions. Record your observations in your notebook.
Choose from the following ideas to write about in your notebook: • Tell about your favorite type of shark and include at least three reasons why it is your favorite. • Create a poem, song, or riddle about sharks. • Write a narrative about where the main character is a shark. • Give your opinion about do you think sharks are dangerous? Why or why not?

Home Literacy Connection Kit

Theme: Dinosaurs

This kit includes...

Books
1. *The Usborne Book of Dinosaurs* 2. *How Do Dinosaurs Say Good Night?* by Jane Yolen & Mark Teague 3. *Dinosaurs* by Kathleen Zoehfeld (Library Book) 4. *Fly Guy Presents: Dinosaurs* by Ted Arnold (Library Book) 5. *Dino Riddles* by Katy Hall and Lisa Eisenberg (Library Book) 6. *The Magic School Bus: In the Time of the Dinosaurs* by Joanna Cole 7. *Mad Scientist Academy: The Dinosaur Disaster* By Matthew McElligott 8. A*re the Dinosaurs Dead, Dad?* By Julie Middleton (Library Book) 9. *Dinosaurs Before Dark* by Mary Pope Osborne

Activities
Dinosaur Flash Cards
Dinosaur Measurement
<u>Dinosaur Playset:</u> Use the dinosaur figurines for imaginative play, classify the dinosaurs and record in notebook, sort dinosaurs, use them to retell stories, etc.
Choose from the following ideas to write about in your notebook: • In your opinion, what is the best type of dinosaur and why? • Write a narrative story where your main character is a dinosaur. • Write a poems about the different types of dinosaurs. • Write your own dinosaur jokes and/or riddles.

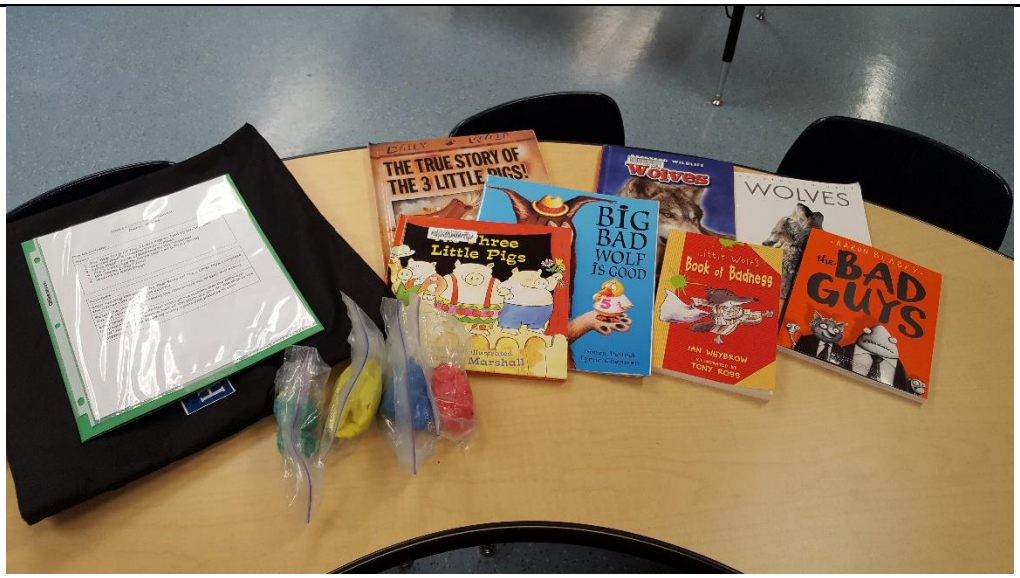
Home Literacy Connection Kit

Theme: Wolves

This kit includes...

Books
1. *The True Story Of The 3 Little Pigs* As Told by Jon Scieszka 2. *Big Bad Wolf is Good* by Simon Puttock 3. *Little Wolf's Book of Badness* by Ian Whybrow 4. *The 3 Little Pigs by James Marshall* (Library Book) 5. *Wolves* by Emily Green 6. *Wolves* by Katie Riggs

Activities
After reading the book, *The True Story Of The 3 Little Pigs*, complete whose side are you on activity.
Retell the stories by creating the characters out of clay and acting out the stories.
After reading the nonfiction texts about wolves and the different fairy tale versions, whose side of the story are you on, the pigs or the wolf? Record your ideas by using words and pictures in your notebook.



Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Butterflies

This kit includes...

Books
1. *See How They Grow: Butterfly* (Library Book) 2. *From Caterpillar to Butterfly* by Deborah Heiligman 3. *Explore My World Butterflies* by Marfe Ferguson Delano (Library Book) 4. *Butterflies* by Darlene Freeman 5. *Butterflies in the Garden* by Carol Lerner (Library Book) 6. *Waiting for Wings* by Lois Ehlret (Library Book) 7. *Becoming Butterflies* by Anne Rockwell (Library Book)

Activities
Bugs and Butterflies Matching Game
Fact Collector: Record information about each stage of the butterfly's life cycle. Copy the fact collector located on the backside of this sheet into your notebook to help you organize your notes or create your own organizer in your notebook.
Paper Plate Diagram: Using your fact sheet, create a diagram of the butterfly's life cycle using drawings and labels.
Science: Chromatography Butterflies (See directions in the kit). Have your child record their observations in their notebook using words and drawings.
Choose one of the following ideas to write about in your notebook: • Write a poem describing what you learned about butterflies. • Write a story where the main character is a butterfly. • Write to explain about butterflies and their life cycle.

Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Lion

This kit includes...

Books
1. *Lions at Lunchtime* by Mary Pope Osborne 2. *Disguises and Surprises* by Claire Llewellyn 3. *Predators* by Steve Parker 4. *The Lion Inside* by Rachel Bright 5. *The Lion and The Mouse* by Jerry Pinkney (Library book) 6. *Lion VS. Rabbit* by Alex Latimer (Library book) 7. *Go, Cub!* by Susan Neuman (Library book) 8. *Lions* by Jennifer Zeiger (Library book)

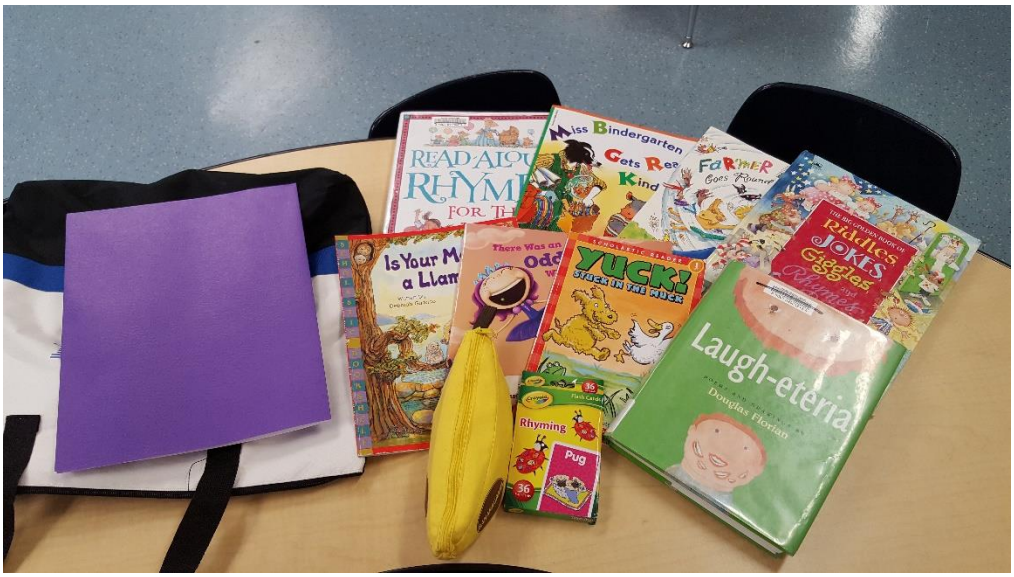
Activities
Match the Fact Game
Food Chain Card Game
What Animal Am I? Card Game
Select one or two of your favorite writing starters after you finished reading most of the books. • Write a poem about a lion (silly, fiction, nonfiction, etc.) • Write to explain about lions using facts that you learned through your reading to support your ideas. • Write a narrative where a lion is your main character.

Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Poetry

This kit includes...

Books
1. *Laugh-eteria* by Douglas Florian 2. *The Golden Book of Riddles, Jokes, Giggles, and Rhymes Selected* by Linda Willimas Aber 3. *Is Your Mama a llama?* by Deborah Guarino 4. *There was an Odd Princess Who Swallowed a Pea* by Jennifer Ward 5. *Read-Aloud Rhymes For The Very Young* by Jack Prelutsky 6. *Farmer Brown Goes Round and Round* by Teri Sloat 7. *Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten* by Joseph Slate 8. *Yuck! Stuck in the Muck* by Corrine Demas

Activities
Rhyming Cards
Bananagrams-Play the game, use the letter tiles to build rhyming words, or write a poem with the letter tiles.
Create your own poems in your notebook

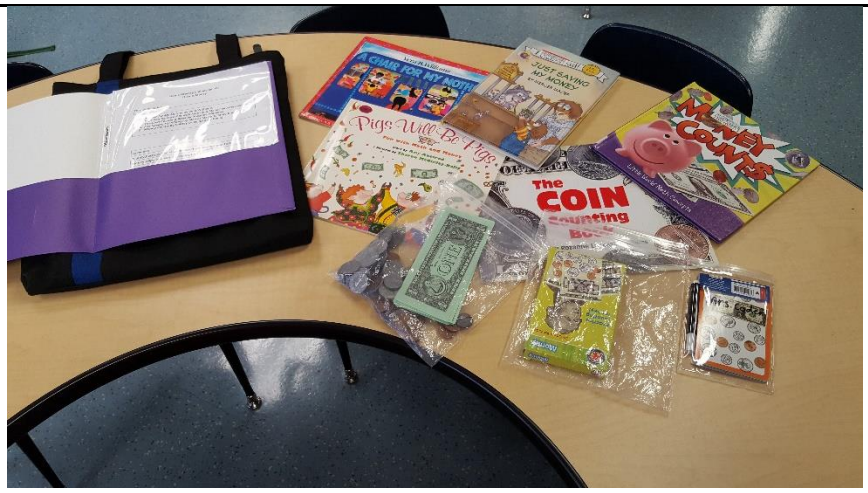


Home Literacy Connection Kit
Theme: Money

This kit includes...

Books
1. *A Chair for My Mother* by Vera Williams 2. *Pigs Will Be Pigs: Fun with Math and Money* by Amy Axelrod 3. *The Coin Counting Book* by Rozanne Williams 4. *Just Saving My Money* by Mercer Mayer (Library Book) 5. *Money Counts* by Shirley Duke (Library Book)

Activities
<u>Money Flash Cards:</u> Money addition practice and facts
Money Wipe and Write Practice Cards
Money Math Manipulatives (Practice identifying coins, counting out money, and making change)
<u>Shopping Trip:</u> Give students store sale ads. Tell them they have a certain amount of pretend money and let them go shopping! Have them draw and write about what they were able to purchase, how much money they spent, and how much change they had left in their notebook.



Appendix D

Participant Letter and Consent Forms

October 9, 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am your child's second grade teacher and a graduate student working on an advanced degree in education at Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota. As part of my graduate work, I plan to conduct research in my classroom from October 25, 2016-March 9, 2017. The purpose of this letter is to ask your permission for participation. This research will be synthesized into my capstone which is a paper that I will submit to complete my degree. My capstone will be public scholarship. The abstract and final product will be catalogued in **Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons**, a searchable electronic repository and that it may be published or used in other ways. I acknowledge that research and writing are dynamic activities that may shift focus as they occur.

I want to study how a family literacy approach can impact students reading comprehension. I will do this by hosting bi-monthly family literacy meetings for a total of eight sessions. Each session be approximately 30-45 minutes in length. The family literacy meetings will consist of an introduction of a reading comprehension strategy that I will model and then parents and students will have time to practice the strategy together. As parents and students practice, I will offer feedback and coaching on the strategy use. To conclude the family literacy meeting I will explain the extension activity to be done at home through the use of home literacy connection kits that will reinforce the reading comprehension strategies that were practiced. I will be collecting data through several different ways throughout the course of my research which includes a parent survey, observations, family literacy meeting survey, and home literacy connection kits.

There is little to no risk for you to participate. All results will be confidential and anonymous. I will not record information about individual participants, such as their names, nor report any identifying information or characteristics in the capstone. Participation is voluntary and you may decide at any time and without negative consequences that information about yourself will not be included in the capstone.

I have received approval of my study from the School of Education at Hamline University and from the principal, Ms. Seaman.

If you agree to participate, keep this page. Fill out the duplicate agreement to participate on page two and return it to me no later than October 12, 2016. If you have any questions, please email or call me at school.

Sincerely,

Katie Coder

Informed Consent to participate in family Literacy Research
Keep this full page for your records

I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct in which you will be hosting family literacy meetings. I understand that you will be collecting data a parent survey, observations, family literacy meeting survey, and home literacy connection kits. I understand there is little to no risk involved for me, that my confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw from the project at any time.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Participant Copy

Informed Consent to participate in family Literacy Research

Return this portion to Mrs. Katie Coder

I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct in which you will be hosting family literacy meetings. I understand that you will be collecting data a parent survey, observations, family literacy meeting survey, and home literacy connection kits. I understand there is little to no risk involved for me, that my confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw from the project at any time.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Researcher Copy

October 9, 2016

Dear Parent of Guardian,

I am your child's second grade teacher and a graduate student working on an advanced degree in education at Hamline University, St. Paul, Minnesota. As part of my graduate work, I plan to conduct research in my classroom from October 25, 2016- March 9, 2017. The purpose of this letter is to ask your permission for your child to take part in my research. This research will be synthesized into my Capstone which is a paper that I will submit to complete my degree. My capstone will be public scholarship. The abstract and final product will be catalogued in **Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons**, a searchable electronic repository and that it may be published or used in other ways. I acknowledge that research and writing are dynamic activities that may shift focus as they occur.

I want to study how a family literacy approach can impact students reading comprehension. I will do this by hosting bi-monthly family literacy meetings for a total of eight sessions. Each session be approximately 30-45 minutes in length. The family literacy meetings will consist of an introduction of a reading comprehension strategy that I will model and then parents and students will have time to practice the strategy together. As parents and students practice, I will offer feedback and coaching on the strategy use. To conclude the family literacy meeting I will explain the extension activity to be done at home through the use of home literacy connection kits that will reinforce the reading comprehension strategies that were practiced. I will be collecting data through several different ways throughout the course of my research which includes reading comprehension data from *i.Ready*, a parent survey, observations, family literacy meeting survey, and home literacy connection kits.

There is little to no risk for your child to participate. All results will be confidential and anonymous. I will not record information about individual students, such as their names, nor report any identifying information or characteristics in the capstone. Participation is voluntary and you may decide at any time and without negative consequences that information about your child will not be included in the capstone.

I have received approval of my study from the School of Education at Hamline University and from the principal, Ms. Seaman.

If you agree that your child may participate, keep this page. Fill out the duplicate agreement to participate on page two and return it to me no later than October 12, 2016. If you have any questions, please email or call me at school.

Sincerely,

Katie Coder

Informed Consent to participate in family Literacy Research
Keep this full page for your records

I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct in which you will be hosting family literacy meetings. I understand that you will be collecting data through reading comprehension data from i.Ready, a parent survey, observations, family literacy meeting survey, and home literacy connection kits. I understand there is little to no risk involved for my child, that his/her confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw or my child may withdraw from the project at any time.

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Participant Copy

Informed Consent to participate in family Literacy Research

Return this portion to Mrs. Katie Coder

I have received your letter about the study you plan to conduct in which you will be hosting family literacy meetings. I understand that you will be collecting data through reading comprehension data from i.Ready, a parent survey, observations, family literacy meeting survey, and home literacy connection kits. I understand there is little to no risk involved for my child, that his/her confidentiality will be protected, and that I may withdraw or my child may withdraw from the project at any time.

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Researcher Copy

Appendix E

Family Literacy Lesson Plans

Meeting One Lesson Plan

Strategy Focus: Good Fit Books

Check for Understanding

Welcome Participants

-Thank Families for their time

-Go around and introduce names

Book Box/Classroom Explanations

-Explain to families how I use the Daily 5 structure in the classroom and how each student has a book box that they fill with self-selected books.

-Refer to the posted chart in the classroom Titled, "IPICK", an acronym for explaining how to help students select books that are just right for them or what we call, good-fit books. The purpose for using the acronym to help student's self-select books is that we want them to be able to have the tools to select books that they are interested in and can make sure they can read no matter where they are at.

Example of the chart:
I Choose
Purpose for reading
Interest
Comprehension
Know the words

-Model how to select a good-fit book from a model book box using the acronym. First and most importantly the I stands for, I chose a book. Remind parents about the power of choice and student motivation. P is the purpose for reading, to learn, to enjoy, etc. The second I stands for interest, does this book interest me? C I can comprehend the text. K I know most of the words. When your child uses "IPICK" to help guide their book selection, we practice in class turning to a random page in the book, holding up five fingers and reading the page. Every word I don't know or aren't sure about put a finger down. Three or more fingers down and the book is probably not a good-fit book for us yet.

-Ask students to get their book boxes and share how they use the good-fit books strategy in class. While students are getting their book boxes out, pass out and have parents read the strategy handout that I got from the *DailyCafe* Website that I subscribe to and has resources from the Daily 5 authors.

-Time for students and families to work together. During this time I make my way around the pairs and coach the families.

Check for understanding

-After families have had time to work together on determining if a book is a good-fit book or not, bring the group back together for a modeled read aloud.

-Explain to participants that I am going to model a comprehension strategy called check for understanding. This strategy helps readers retell about who the character is and what is happening in the story.

-Listen as I read from, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, watching for how I stop to check for understanding.

-Model 2-3 times, then ask students to turn and check for understanding 2 times with their family member.

-Book mark the story and finish next meeting

-Give families time to practice check for understanding with books from student's book boxes. Check in with each pair and offer coaching or guidance on strategy use.

Home Literacy Connection Kits

-Share with the families the general format of the home literacy connection kits (Folder that contains a list of books, materials, and activities). Pass out notebooks for students to use as they complete activities in the home literacy kits.

-Give an overview of the literacy kit topics and have students select a topic they are interested in.

-Have families read through the kit's directions before leaving to see if they have any questions.

-Survey

Meeting Two Lesson Plan

Strategy Focus: Predict What Will Happen and Use the Text to Confirm

Welcome Participants

-Thank Families for their time

-Go around and introduce names

Sharing Time/Strategy Review

-Ask if any parent's would like to share out about how last week's strategies, check for understanding and select god-fit books went with their literacy connection kit.

-Ask if any students would like to share out about what they learned from their connection kits, a writing activity from a kit, a craft, or how they used last week's strategy.

-Last week strategy review. Briefly review choosing a good-fit book. Refer to the posted chart in the classroom Titled, "IPICK

Example of the chart:
I Choose
Purpose for reading
Interest
Comprehension
Know the words

-Ask if there are any questions about how to use this strategy.

-Continue reading from Jack and the Beanstalk. Go back and reread the last few pages to help us remember where we were at in the story. Review the strategy check for understanding by asking students to retell who is the story about and what is happening.

Predict What Will Happen and Use the Text to Confirm

-Explain to participants that I am going to model a comprehension strategy called predict what will happen and use the text to confirm. This strategy helps readers think about what is already happening in the story and to use this information with clues from the pictures to make a prediction or a guess about what will happen next. We want the students to take the strategy one step further by monitoring their thinking as they continue to read by either confirming their prediction; yes my prediction came true or adjusting what they predicted based on new information.

-Listen as I read from, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, watch for how I predict what will happen and use the text to confirm

-Model 2-3 times, then ask students to make a prediction with their parents. Have students share out their predictions and listen to see if they can confirm their prediction or need to adjust it as we keep reading. Discuss what students had to do. Repeat.

-Give families time to practice make a prediction and use the text to confirm with books from student's book boxes. Check in with each pair and offer coaching or guidance on strategy use.

Home Literacy Connection Kits

-Review with the families the general format of the home literacy connection kits (Folder that contains a list of books, materials, and activities). Pass back students' notebooks to use as they complete activities in the home literacy kits.

-Have students select a literacy kit topic they are interested in.

-Have families read through the kit's directions before leaving to see if they have any questions.

-Survey

Meeting Three Lesson Plan

Strategy Focus: Ask Questions throughout the Reading Process

Welcome Participants

-Thank Families for their time

-Go around and introduce names

Sharing Time/Strategy Review

-Ask if any parent's would like to share out about how last week's strategy, predict what will happen and use the text to confirm went with their literacy connection kit.

-Ask if any students would like to share out about what they learned from their connection kits, a writing activity from a kit, a craft, or how they used last week's strategy.

-Last week strategy review. Briefly review how to use the strategy predict what will happen and use the text to confirm.

-Ask if there are any questions about how to use this strategy.

Ask Questions throughout the Reading Process

-Explain to participants that I am going to model a comprehension strategy called ask questions throughout the reading process. This is a great strategy for young readers to use because they are naturally curious and already ask a lot of questions. By asking questions while we read, we are thinking deeply about the text. Sometimes when we ask a question, the story or text may not answer the question we had and that is alright. That just means we might have to read another book about the topic or find another source to help us find the answer to the question. Part of the strategy is not only asking questions, but being on the lookout for the answers to the questions you have asked.

-Listen as I read from, *The Three Little Pigs and the Somewhat Bad Wolf,* by Mark Teague watch for how I can predict what will happen and use the text to confirm like we did last time. Also watch for how I ask questions and look for my answers as I read

-Model last week's strategy 1-2 times, then ask students to make a prediction with their parents. Have students share out their predictions and listen to see if they can confirm their prediction or need to adjust it as we keep reading.

-Model asking questions aloud and verbalize if and when I find the answer.

-Tel students that if a question pops in their head while I am reading that they want to share, give me a thumbs up and I will pause the reading.

-Give families time to practice ask questions throughout the reading process with books from student's book boxes. Check in with each pair and offer coaching or guidance on strategy use.

Home Literacy Connection Kits

-Review with the families the general format of the home literacy connection kits (Folder that contains a list of books, materials, and activities). Pass back students' notebooks to use as they complete activities in the home literacy kits.

-Have students select a literacy kit topic they are interested in.

-Have families read through the kit's directions before leaving to see if they have any questions.

-Survey

Meeting Four Lesson Plan

Strategy Focus: Use Text Features

Welcome Participants

-Thank Families for their time

-Go around and introduce names

Sharing Time/Strategy Review

-Ask if any parent's would like to share out about how last week's strategy, ask questions throughout the reading process, went with their literacy connection kit.

-Ask if any students would like to share out about what they learned from their connection kits, a writing activity from a kit, a craft, or how they used last week's strategy.

-Last week strategy review. Briefly review how to use the strategy ask questions throughout the reading process.

-Ask if there are any questions about how to use this strategy.

Use Text Features

-Explain to participants that I am going to model a comprehension strategy called use text features. This is a great strategy for young readers to use text features. Explain to parents that this will help their child better be able to understand nonfiction texts and be able to determine the difference between fiction and nonfiction.

-Tell families that we are going to watch a short *Brainpop Jr. Video* that is going to give us some specific examples of text features and how to use them to understand a text. At the end of the video be ready to share out about the text features you learned about.

-Record text features and how they are used on a chart:

Glossary, Index, Table of Contents, bold words, pictures, picture captions, diagrams, and headings.

-Using a large, laminated Scholastic News Article, model for students and families how locating and reading/using your text features first, helps you to start building your comprehension around the topic you are reading about. I notice that the heading says firefighters in communities that makes me think about the communities that we have learned about in social studies. Who can help me remember the different community types? Looking closely at the pictures can help me figure out what the author wants me to focus on and the captions give me more information. The bold words, show that this is a vocabulary word that can

usually be found in a glossary. As we look for different text features and read them, use the whiteboard marker to circle and label the feature. Now that we have read our text features what do we know about this article so far? Now we are ready to read the article.

- Have families repeat using text features like I just modeled using a different issue of scholastic news and pens to annotate their thinking.

-Come back together and share what they learned.

-Pass out the strategy sheet to parents to read over and discuss how they can apply this strategy while reading nonfiction text with their child when they can't write on the text.

-Give families time to practice use text features with books from student's book boxes. Check in with each pair and offer coaching or guidance on strategy use.

Home Literacy Connection Kits

-Review with the families the general format of the home literacy connection kits (Folder that contains a list of books, materials, and activities). Pass back students' notebooks to use as they complete activities in the home literacy kits.

-Have students select a literacy kit topic they are interested in.

-Have families read through the kit's directions before leaving to see if they have any questions.

Meeting Five Lesson Plan

Strategy Focus: Make a Picture or Mental Image

Welcome Participants

-Thank Families for their time

-Go around and introduce names

Sharing Time/Strategy Review

-Ask if any parent's would like to share out about how last week's strategy, use text features, went with their literacy connection kit.

-Ask if any students would like to share out about what they learned from their connection kits, a writing activity from a kit, a craft, or how they used last week's strategy.

-Last week strategy review. Briefly review how to use the strategy use text features.

-Ask if there are any questions about how to use this strategy.

Make a Picture or Mental Image

-Explain to participants that I am going to model a comprehension strategy called make a picture or mental image. This is a wonderful strategy to use when reading a chapter book without pictures or even when you read aloud to your child and don't show the pictures right away.

-To make a picture or mental image in your head you need to think about what is happening in the story or poem. As a reader, you need to listen for the clues that the writer gives you though their description to help you make a movie in your head.

-Model the strategy by reading from the poetry book, *Giant Children* by Brod Bagert and the poem titled heart stopper. Encourage students and parents to close their eyes, listen to the descriptive words, and to create a mental image.

-Share the image they made with a family member.

-Another way to use this strategy is if you are reading aloud to your child, have them draw or sketch what they are picturing in their head. Let's try the make a picture strategy as I read aloud from the children's book called, *The Incredible Book Eating Boy*, by Oliver Jeffers. Remember to think about the description and

what is happening in the story as you make a picture. (Note: As I read the story aloud, I did not show the illustrations)

-At the end of the story have students share their drawings and talk about what they included in their picture and why.

-Give families time to practice make a picture or mental image from student's book boxes. Check in with each pair and offer coaching or guidance on strategy use.

Home Literacy Connection Kits

-Review with the families the general format of the home literacy connection kits (Folder that contains a list of books, materials, and activities). Pass back students' notebooks to use as they complete activities in the home literacy kits.

-Have students select a literacy kit topic they are interested in.

-Have families read through the kit's directions before leaving to see if they have any questions.

-survey

Meeting Six Lesson Plan

Strategy Focus: Recognize Literary Elements

Welcome Participants

-Thank Families for their time

-Go around and introduce names

Sharing Time/Strategy Review

-Ask if any parent's would like to share out about how last week's strategy, make a picture or mental image, went with their literacy connection kit.

-Ask if any students would like to share out about what they learned from their connection kits, a writing activity from a kit, a craft, or how they used last week's strategy.

-Last week strategy review. Briefly review how to use the strategy make a picture or mental image.

-Ask if there are any questions about how to use this strategy.

Recognize Literary Elements

-Explain to participants that I am going to model a comprehension strategy called recognize literary elements. This strategy is only for fiction text because it helps readers pay attention to the typical story elements

-Create a chart together that lists the literary elements to refer back to as families listen to the read aloud.

-setting (where and when)

-characters

-plot (beginning, middle, end)

-problem

-solution

-theme (lesson learned)

-Explain that when we are able to identify these separate elements and put them together, we are better able to comprehend what we are reading.

-Today I am going to share the story with you called *Giraffes Can't Dance* by Giles Andreae.

-As I read I want to listen closely and look at the illustrations to figure out -setting (where and when, characters, plot (beginning, middle, end), problem, solution,

and theme (lesson learned). Pause at the pre-marked spots in the text to discuss each literary element.

-After modeling, pass out the parent sheet, while parents read over the sheet have students select a fiction text that they can practice the strategy with while reading to their parent.

-Give families time to practice use text features with books from student's book boxes. Check in with each pair and offer coaching or guidance on strategy use.

Home Literacy Connection Kits

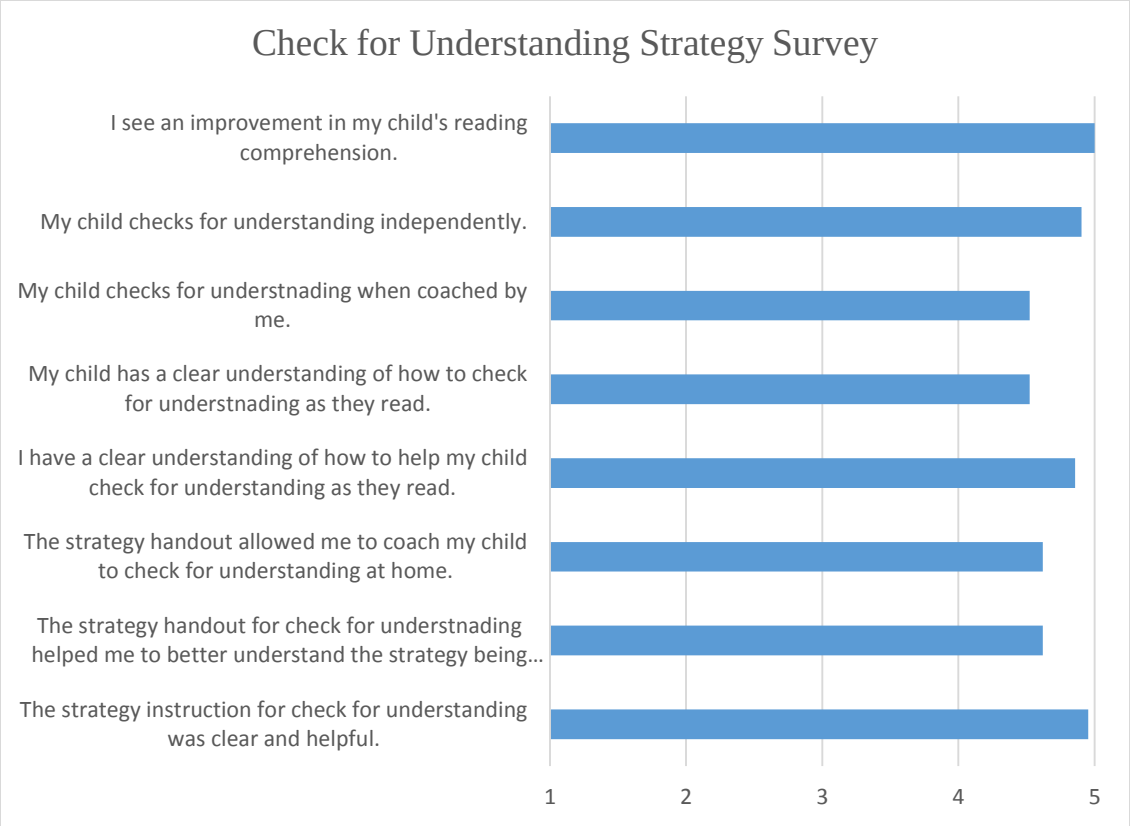
-Review with the families the general format of the home literacy connection kits (Folder that contains a list of books, materials, and activities). Pass back students' notebooks to use as they complete activities in the home literacy kits.

-Have students select a literacy kit topic they are interested in.

-Have families read through the kit's directions before leaving to see if they have any questions.

Appendix F

Family Literacy Meeting Survey Responses


Check for Understanding Strategy Survey
I see an improvement in my child's reading comprehension.
My child checks for understanding independently.
My child checks for understnading when coached by me.
My child has a clear understanding of how to check for understnading as they read.
I have a clear understanding of how to help my child check for understanding as they read.
The strategy handout allowed me to coach my child to check for understanding at home.
The strategy handout for check for understnading helped me to better understand the strategy being...
The strategy instruction for check for understanding was clear and helpful.
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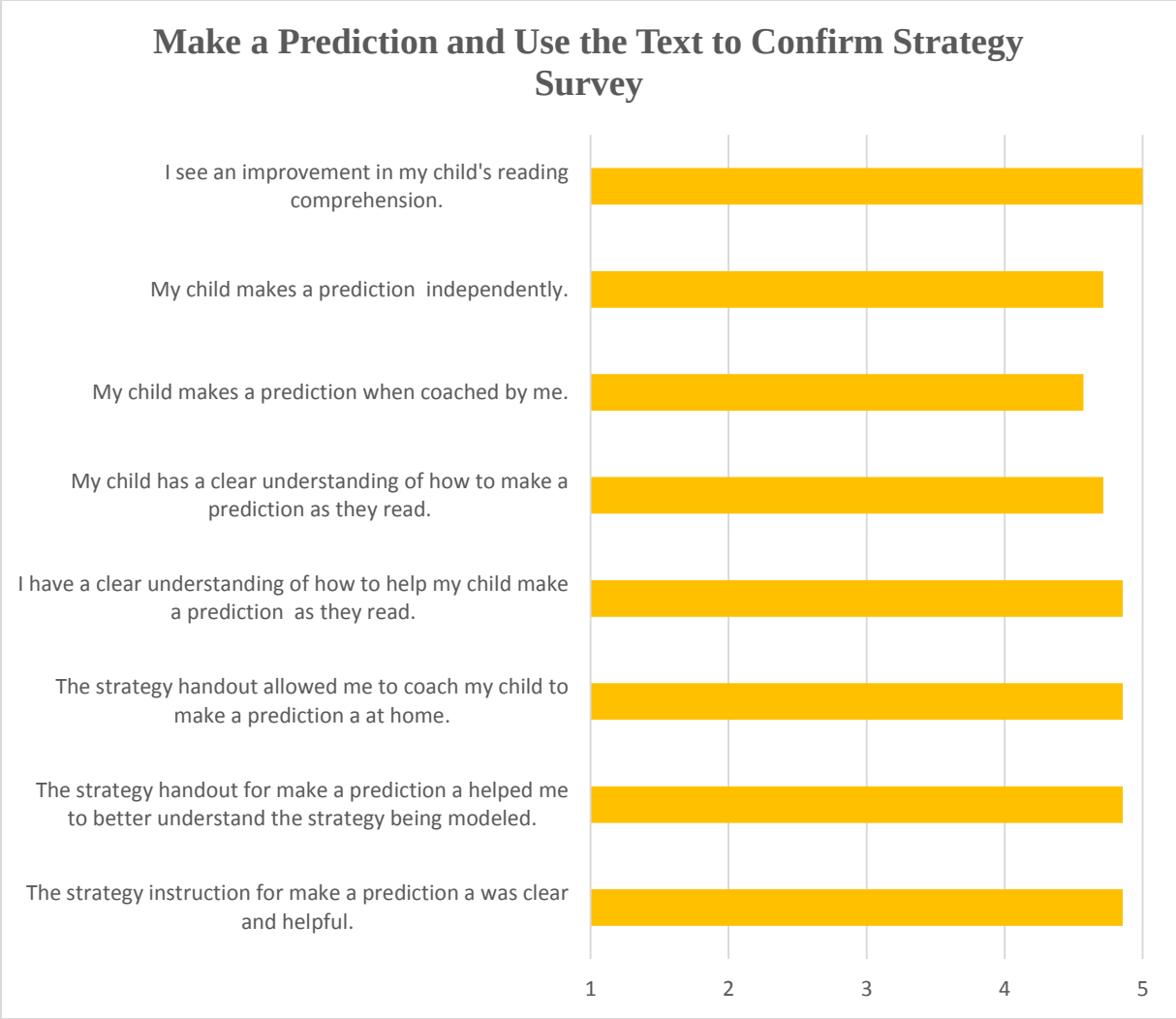
Make a Prediction and Use the Text to Confirm Strategy Survey
I see an improvement in my child's reading comprehension.
My child makes a prediction independently.
My child makes a prediction when coached by me.
My child has a clear understanding of how to make a prediction as they read.
I have a clear understanding of how to help my child make a prediction as they read.
The strategy handout allowed me to coach my child to make a prediction a at home.
The strategy handout for make a prediction a helped me to better understand the strategy being modeled.
The strategy instruction for make a prediction a was clear and helpful.
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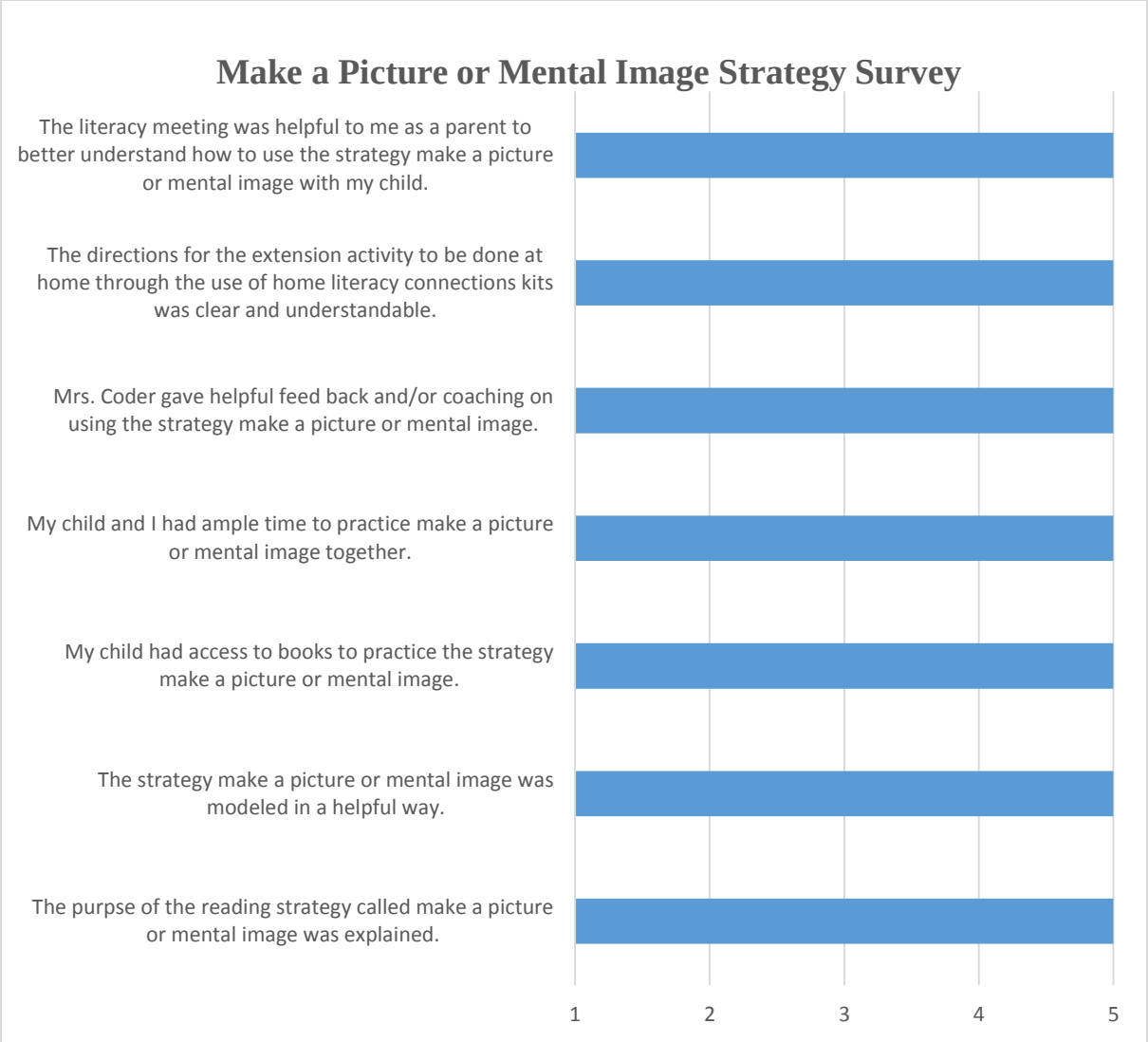
Make a Picture or Mental Image Strategy Survey
The literacy meeting was helpful to me as a parent to better understand how to use the strategy make a picture or mental image with my child.
The directions for the extension activity to be done at home through the use of home literacy connections kits was clear and understandable.
Mrs. Coder gave helpful feed back and/or coaching on using the strategy make a picture or mental image.
My child and I had ample time to practice make a picture or mental image together.
My child had access to books to practice the strategy make a picture or mental image.
The strategy make a picture or mental image was modeled in a helpful way.
The purpse of the reading strategy called make a picture or mental image was explained.
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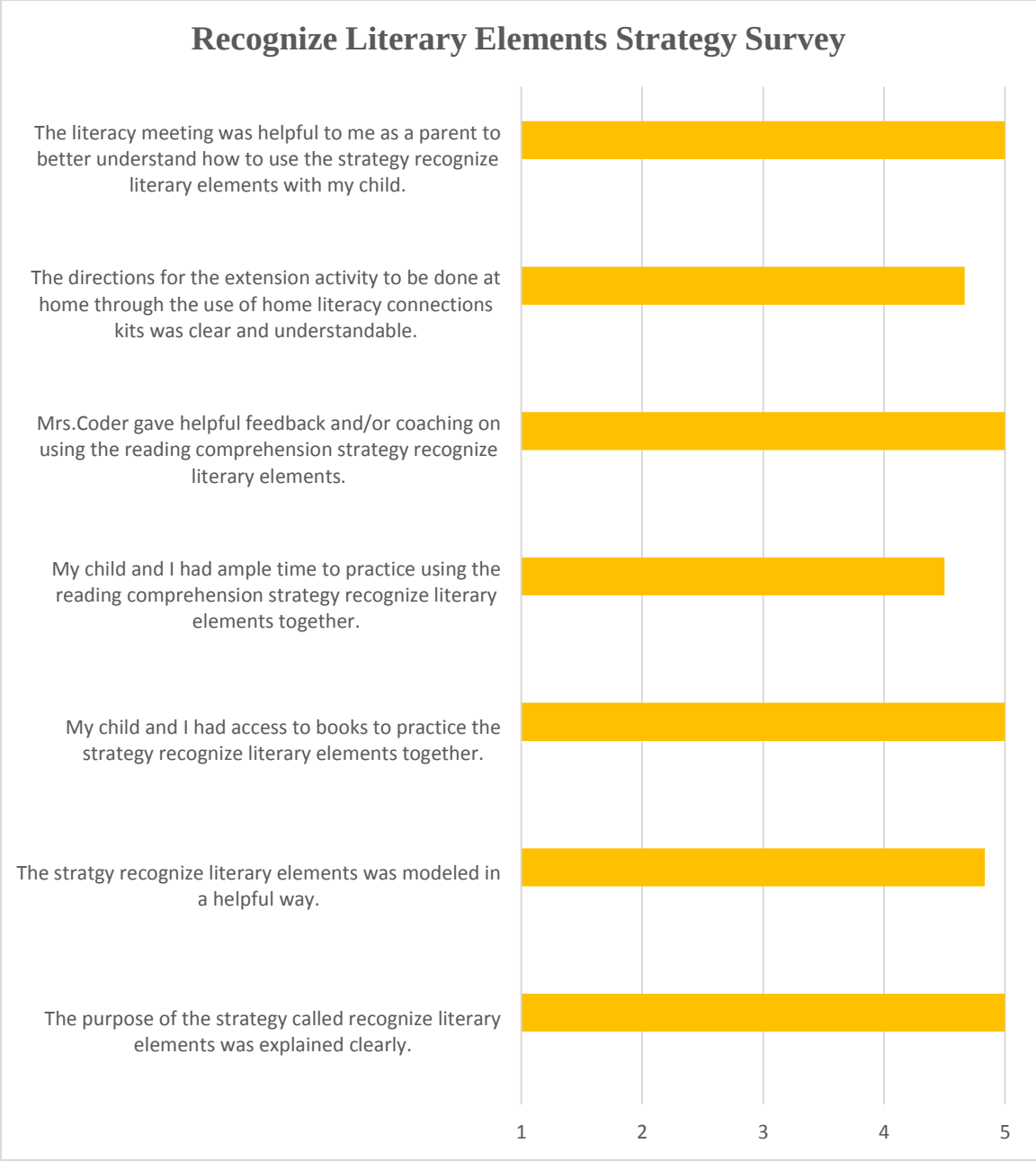
Recognize Literary Elements Strategy Survey
The literacy meeting was helpful to me as a parent to better understand how to use the strategy recognize literary elements with my child.
The directions for the extension activity to be done at home through the use of home literacy connections kits was clear and understandable.
Mrs.Coder gave helpful feedback and/or coaching on using the reading comprehension strategy recognize literary elements.
My child and I had ample time to practice using the reading comprehension strategy recognize literary elements together.
My child and I had access to books to practice the strategy recognize literary elements together.
The stratgy recognize literary elements was modeled in a helpful way.
The purpose of the strategy called recognize literary elements was explained clearly.
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