A HANDBOOK OF SHARED READING ACTIVITIES

FOR LOWER ABILITY FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS

DESIGNED TO ENHANCE READING CONFIDENCE

MASTER'S PROJECT

Submitted to the School of Education,
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Master of Science in Education

by

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DEDICATION

To my mother, for her quiet bravery and gentle courage in the face of so many hardships.

To my father, for his imaginative "Gidler" stories and reading of "The Owl and the Pussycat" which heightened my love of literature.

To my fiance, Tony, for his love, support, and belief in my ability to succeed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Justification of the Problem.   The predominate characteristic of poor readers may well be their lack of self-esteem and confidence.   After placed in situations which continue to reinforce the image of themselves as poor readers they fail to make progress.   This lack of progress often generates a feeling of helplessness and reluctance on the part of the reader when confronted with reading activities.

Statement of the Problem.   Students reading below grade level have few opportunities to increase their self-confidence or change their own poor image of themselves as readers.   This handbook details a shared reading program with first grade reading students and their pairing with lower ability fourth grade readers.   The activities in this program increase self-confidence and better self-images through oral reading experiences, writing activities, and art activities.

Significance of the Problem.   This handbook was designed specifically for less able fourth grade readers who lack the confidence that good readers possess.   The handbook describes a   program   which   attempts   to   provide   positive   reading experiences to boost self-esteem and confidence.   This program

also provides frequent exposure to literature increasing fluency, reading rate, and word recognition.

A structure is provided for fourth grade teachers to implement a shared reading program with a first grade teacher. Specific areas to be addressed in the handbook are the benefits of a shared reading program, guidelines for preparing the fourth grade students, suggestions for getting started, and whole group activities integrating reading, writing, and art. The program requires a 30-60 minute shared reading activity every other week.

Research. The shared reading program is based on sound results of research. One of the outcomes of a shared reading program is the exposure to literature and the opportunity to read in meaningful situations. Limbrick, McNaughton, and Glynn (1985) through their research have identified the correlation between time spent actually reading and the improvement of reading achievement. Children need to read to learn to read. When students are in a classroom that makes time for reading books they internalize the value placed on the action. (Melvin, 1986)

The use of cross-age tutoring is widely researched. Nevi (1983) identifies one of the characteristics of cross-age tutoring as providing the tutor with a reason to learn in order to teach someone else. The tutor takes on the role of the teacher and displays confidence in his skills. Other

benefits of cross-age tutoring as described by Ellis and Preston, (1984) included gains in the affective domain. How a student perceives himself, degree of motivation to classwork, and attitude towards other classes were shown to be positively influenced.

Presently there is little research on a cross-age tutoring program specifically created for the improvement of the tutor's reading skills. However, one available pilot study is presented by Labbo and Teale, (1990). They describe a pairing of fifth grade readers with first grade students. The fifth graders were trained to include specific reading strategies. They had sufficient time to practice their story selection before reading it orally to the first graders. Labbo and Teale did identify gains in cognitive and affective domains. They advocate research in this specific area to document the gains students make in reading.

Although there is little research at this time which documents the results of a shared reading program many educators are advocating its use. Many of the current teacher publications in the last two years have suggested ideas for initiating a shared reading program. Among the articles are "Reader Pals" by Ayres and Wainess (1989) published in Instructor magazine. These authors describe a cross-age reading program that worked in their school. Unique to their program is the use of theme based activities for their pals to choose from. Wolfgang (1989), Coleman (1990), and

Thouvenin (1989), all in separate articles published in The Reading Teacher, advocate the use of pairing older students with younger students. They each give suggestions and activities to implement a successful program. The fact that so many teachers are endorsing the use of a shared reading program is convincing evidence that this is a successful and useful strategy to help less capable readers. Research should be done to support the success of those teachers utilizing a shared reading program.

Definition of Terms.

Shared Reading Program. A program pairing lower ability fourth grade students with first graders which involves the fourth graders reading orally to the first grader.

Orally Reading Books to the First Graders. The fourth grade student chooses a book, practices reading the book, and reads the story orally to their first grade partner.

Pre-reading Strategy. This strategy involves reading the title of the book and the author, studying the cover of the book, and skimming through the illustrations to generate an idea of what the book will be about.

During Reading Strategy. This strategy involves looking at

the illustrations while reading and stopping once in awhile to predict what may happen next in the story.

After Reading Strategy. This strategy involves discussing the story and forming an opinion about the book.

Positive Attitude Toward Reading. A positive attitude toward reading would be evaluated by using interest inventories which would reveal the student's feelings and thoughts about reading.

Positive Image of Self as a Reader. A positive image of self as reader would be characteristic of students who can, through questioning, talk or write about their abilities and involvement with reading in a positive way.

Assumptions and Limitations. The writer of this handbook makes the assumption that the fourth grade students are able to choose their own books to read to their first graders. There are four limitations of this handbook. First, it is designed for a group of lower ability fourth grade reading students who are paired with first grade students. Second, the fourth grade readers and first grade listeners are not scientifically selected. Third, the class size is not consistent during the duration of the program. Fourth, the fourth grader readers are paired with a variety of first

graders throughout the program.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Traditionally, less capable readers find themselves grouped according to their abilities and placed in classrooms with their peers of similar levels. Consequently, their image of themselves as a reader is mirrored by those struggling around them. There is no opportunity for poor readers to observe and model behaviors characteristic of successful readers as they are not in their reading class. Therefore, with few opportunities, the less capable readers fulfill their roles and continue to struggle. Parents and teachers, hoping to intervene and help their children and students become better readers, engage them in a surplus of workbook pages, repetition of phonics rules and memorization of vocabulary. All of which result in an increased dislike for reading and unfortunately, little progress in achievement.

Limbrick, McNaughton, and Glynn (1985 p. 939) state, "Children learn to read by reading." These researchers base their statement on research (see Rosenshine and Berliner, 1978) which supports that actual time students spend reading predicts progress. This implies that less capable readers need to spend more time reading to become better readers rather than completing skill related pencil and paper activities. Teachers need to provide experiences for students to have more opportunities to read. Melvin (1978) connects

student's impressions of the value placed on reading in their classroom to their success as readers. The students need to see that class time is generously devoted to reading books if they are to internalize that belief for themselves. Initiating a shared reading program in reading class allows time for students to read books and lets the students know the teacher values reading.

There is significant research that supports the positive effects of orally reading to children. Labbo and Teale, in their article, "Cross-age reading: A strategy for helping poor readers," cite the work of Feitelson, Kita, and Goldstein (1986) which reveals significant increases in listening comprehension, use of language, and decoding skills for children who are read to regularly. They gain more experience with text, which leads to further success with reading. If orally reading to children increases reading skills then would not reading books themselves provide a positive increase in skills as well? A shared reading program offers the opportunity for the fourth grade reader to have an increased exposure to reading in a meaningful way which will increase reading progress. The first grade listener will reap the benefits of being orally read to as suggested by Feitelson, Kita, and Goldstein (1986).

This shared reading program made up of a fourth grade reader and a first grade listener is similar to a peer tutoring program. The positive effects of pairing children

of cross-ages in a tutoring program is well documented. Nevi (1983) describes much research which shows the benefit of cross-age tutoring. Among the theories he describes is the Utility Theory which maintains that tutors themselves use knowledge because it has a purpose--to help someone. Nevi also describes the work of Thelen (1969) who found that children were hesitant to relearn primary skills until they knew that to be a tutor they were required to do so. Then they were willing to relearn. This research supports the pairing of an older child with a younger child and is the basis for the pairing of children in a shared reading program.

In addition to the quantitative academic gains tutors make as a result of a cross-age tutoring program, qualitative gains are described as well. They are equally as important, if not more important than the academic strides. Ellis and Preston (1984) summarize the documentation of cross-age tutoring (Dillner, 1972; Elliot, 1973; Robertson, 1971) by stating, "It generates academic and social growth, acceptance of responsibility, increased self-worth, and social understanding." Labbo and Teale (1990) describe the qualitative results of a cross-age reading program which are: 1) increased reader confidence when reading aloud, 2) the proud feeling associated with completing a book the first time, and 3) an increase in motivation in other school subjects by previously unmotivated students. Fredericks (1982) recounts research which supports the impact of

"affective concerns" such as the above on reading achievement. Positive experiences associated with reading actually lead to an increase in student progress. Fredericks suggests activities that go beyond the basal reader such as sharing stories with younger children because it allows students to not only show off their reading skills but also to share the joy of reading." Casanova (1986, p. 14) states, "Students who have experienced problems in learning to read are likely to be sympathetic to the efforts of their younger classmates."

It is clear that the research supports a program which would unite less capable readers with younger listeners. Both students will show growth in cognitive areas regarding reading, as well as an increase in positive attitudes toward reading. The shared reading program provides an abundance of exposure to literature to both groups of children involved. Students show growth in social skills as they nurture their relationship with their reading partners. Teachers benefit, too. Due to the increased motivation and bolstered self-esteems of the fourth grade reader these students begin looking forward to reading class and are more positive about becoming a good reader. Motivated students are less likely to act out inappropriately. The shared reading program allows the teacher to evaluate as an observer. This role of the observer is so vitally important to really getting a "fix" on just how the students are progressing. Nancy Atwell (1987) strongly advocates the use of observation as a tool to better

know students.

Currently, there is little research available on the results of a shared reading program. This supports the need for further documentation in this area. The results of two studies which are available on the subject are "Cross-age reading: a strategy for poor readers" by Labbo and Teale (1990) and "Enhancing beginning reading using wordless picture books in a cross-age tutoring program." (Ellis and Preston, 1984). Labbo and Teale based their study on research studies that showed gains by less capable adult readers who read and discussed their children's books and research which supported repeated oral reading and performance with gains in fluency and comprehension. Labbo and Teale hypothesized that if fifth grade students read orally often in a performance setting, the students would make gains toward effective reading. They crafted a program which prepared the fifth grade readers to read to the younger children. The fifth grade readers had much time practicing the reading of the story book before they read to the students. The results of their study do justify a cross-age reading program which would enhance less capable or unmotivated readers to improve their reading skills.

Ellis and Preston (1984) initiated a program which paired fifth graders and first graders to develop the language skills of the first graders. However, as a result of their program they describe the progress of fifth graders as well. The

authors wanted to enhance the writing skills through the stimulation of wordless picture books. The fifth grade tutors were trained in six sessions. These sessions modeled appropriate questioning techniques which required the tutor to be familiar with reading skills. As a result of the program the tutors familiarized themselves with skills characteristic of beginning readers and became more knowledgeable about literature.

Although there is little research available on the results of studies on a shared reading program there are many who advocate the use of such a program. (Segel, 1990; Wolfgang, 1989; Thouvenin, 1989; Fredericks, 1982; Labbo and Teale, 1990). The message is clear. Classroom teachers who are involved in the everyday search for new and meaningful strategies are suggesting a shared reading program because of the success they have had as a result of their experiences in their classrooms. The practical application of a shared reading program by classroom teachers is enough evidence that it is a worthwhile endeavor.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

This handbook is the result of a careful review of a wide variety of shared reading programs described in current literature. The writer of this handbook created a shared reading program which reflects the strengths of those shared reading programs. The handbook is broken down into three parts: Part I: Teacher Preparation, Part II: Student Preparation, and Part III: Whole Group Activities.

Teacher Preparation provides teachers with a framework for beginning a shared reading program. Student Preparation outlines the sequence of events which the fourth grade readers will progress through in order to develop confidence and ensure successful reading experiences. Whole Group Activities offers activities which involve literature, writing, and art. These activities are designed to enhance a book read by the teacher to the whole group of students.

CHAPTER IV

PART I: TEACHER PREPARATION

The shared reading program is successful with careful preplanning. Most of the work in implementing a program is done prior to the actual program and is vital to its success.

Step I: Choosing a Teaching Partner.

The first step in initiating a shared reading program is choosing a teacher and class to share the books. Many teachers today welcome the chance to interact with other teachers and work together to create unique learning experiences for students. The benefits of cross-age teaching for the younger students are numerous and are supported in the research. This shared reading program clearly is an asset for any teacher of younger children as it increases the child's exposure to literature, provides opportunities to increase vocabulary, allows for subtle knowledge of reading strategies to be introduced, and creates a friendship for the young student. What reading teacher could turn down a program so advantageous to her students?

Choose a teacher who is enthusiastic about a shared reading program and believes in the merits of such a program. It is important for the shared reading teacher of the younger students to not only understand the benefits for her students but to support and foster a situation which allows the fourth grade reader to benefit as well. This requires responsibility

to be given to the fourth grader and trust on the part of the teachers that the fourth graders can successfully manage. It is through the interactions of the fourth grade reader and the younger listener that they will both experience the use of reading strategies and literature which will increase their progress.

Seek another teacher at least two grade levels below the fourth grade readers to take part in the shared reading. It is important to choose a class whose ability level is below those of the fourth graders. The fourth graders must feel they are the experienced "teacher." The age gap also allows the fourth graders to read less difficult books with ease while still maintaining a high level of interest for the younger listener.

Step II: Time and Place.

This shared reading program is designed to start at the beginning of the school year and last until the end of the year. As the program is being implemented in the fall it is suggested that the children meet once a week for thirty minutes. When whole group activities are planned a minimum of sixty minutes should be allowed for the students to complete their activities. The weekly meetings are necessary at the beginning to provide continuity for both sets of students as they learn about each other and build friendships. As the year progresses the students may meet twice a month.

The location for the shared reading program should be large enough to accommodate both fourth grade readers and younger listeners. The location should provide a variety of cubby holes where reading partners can isolate themselves as they read. The shared reading program developed by this author took place in a library/computer room/media center which is one large carpeted resource room with book cases, hallways, tables, etc. The students had plenty of places to go where they could concentrate on their reading.

Other suggestions for locations:

- hallways
- auditorium
- cafeteria
- divide half of the partners to go to the fourth graders' classroom and the other half to go to the younger students' classroom.

The most important quality of the location for the shared reading is that it is a place where children can read side by side, comfortably, without having to sit rigidly in desks. The atmosphere contributes to the warm and enthusiastic feeling children have about reading with their reader partners.

Step III: Pairing Readers and Listeners.

Both teachers involved in the shared reading program need to carefully observe their reading students' personality and ability during the first few weeks of the school year. The teachers should have a good sense of who their students are before pairing them together. Completing a checklist on each

student is a helpful tool when meeting with the cooperating teacher to best pair students. (See Appendix) An important aspect of pairing students is ability level. For best results pair the more capable fourth grade readers with the more capable younger listeners. This prevents a situation where the younger student outshines the older student's reading ability. Remember the goal of the shared reading program is to boost the self-esteem of the older student by putting him in the role of teacher.

Generally speaking the older students are receptive to their reading partners regardless of their sex. Boys may be paired with a girl or boy and vice-versa. However, sometimes particular students may function best with a reading partner of the same sex. Particularly younger students who may need a positive role model or one similar to a sibling relationship. Again consider your students and their needs when pairing them together.

A final consideration of pairing students is how to best place those students who have difficulty with acceptable behavior. When pairing a younger student who has difficulty in this area with a fourth grader, tell the fourth grader of the problem and offer specific strategies for the fourth grader to use to deter inappropriate behavior. Choose a fourth grader who is sensitive to others and has a clear sense of the responsibilities. Place fourth grade readers who have behavior problems with a younger student who is in control of

himself and able to help keep the activity on track. The
shared reading program because of its strong emphasis on
student involvement and the level of interest on the part of
the students rarely encounters children who act out
inappropriately. In fact, students who act out in traditional
classroom settings appear comfortable in the less rigid
environment of the shared reading program.

PART II: STUDENT PREPARATION

Step I: Teaching Reading Strategies.

The first responsibility of the fourth grade teacher in
preparing the reading students is to convey to them the
importance of their involvement in the program.   The fourth
graders must see their mission as providing opportunities for
the younger students to become better readers.   They must see
a clear and meaningful purpose for their work and preparation.
Children glow with pride as they realize the importance of
their interactions and that teachers are including them in
such an endeavor.

The second responsibility of the fourth grade teacher is
to let the fourth graders know that there are specific
strategies which will be used which are characteristic of good
readers and that they will be trained in using them
efficiently.   Many of the fourth graders typically perceive
themselves as poor readers and often think that there is a

secret method to reading that only smarter readers know. It is important to let these fourth graders know you are going to give them specific things to do while they are reading which are typical of good readers. This lets the fourth grader relax as he knows he is going to be guided in this reading situation that most often is feared or dreaded.

Fourth grade readers need to be instructed to use pre-reading strategies, during reading strategies, and after reading strategies. Pre-reading strategies involve the following:

a. Reading the title of the book.

b. Looking at the cover of the book.

c. Predicting what the story is about.

d. Identifying the author.

Students need to get into the habit of approaching literature with a pre-reading strategy. It focuses the attention of the reader and increases comprehension. Fourth graders need to be told the benefits of this strategy so they can appreciate its impact on their younger listeners.

During reading strategies occur as the story begins and involve:

a. Looking at the illustrations for information.

b. Stopping and predicting what will happen next.

The fourth grade readers need to know the importance of illustrations for the reader. The illustrations clarify what people and places look like, create a particular mood, and can

sometimes make sense of a passage that was not easily understood. By stopping and predicting what will happen next the reader becomes involved in cause and effect, an important reading skill.

The after reading strategy involves the student more internally. Questions to be asked are:

a. How did the book make me feel?

b. Why did the author end the book in a particular way?

c. Would the ending be better any other way?

These questions involve higher level thinking and focus the reader to respond to the literature more fully. It also provides a sense of closure for the students.

The fourth grade teacher needs to model each of the three reading strategies daily during the preparation phase of the fourth grade readers. This modeling is essential for the students as they are incorporating these strategies in their own reading. At this time it is important for the fourth graders to have daily time to practice these techniques. They can read to another student in the class while the other student monitors the use of the strategies. The teacher should have a large selection (35-40) of books appropriate for the shared reading program. This allows for the fourth graders to have choice in their book selection and variety. A checklist of the strategies is helpful in monitoring the progress of the students as they are learning the strategies. (See Appendix).

Step II: Choosing Books

The fourth grade readers are responsible for selecting a book to read to their reading listeners. The teacher needs to lead discussions focused on the qualities of an appealing book for the younger reader. This can be done as the teacher models this daily in a discussion after reading. Students need to consider interest level, illustrations, and length when choosing a book. They need to know that younger children need illustrations as well as enjoy them. The younger student also may not be able to sit through a lengthy book and therefore a more appropriate length must be found. Fourth graders must also be aware of the positive impact humorous, nonsensical books have on younger children. Help the fourth graders throughout the year to select an appropriate book choice. The teacher needs to be available with suggestions and observations throughout the reading program for possible intervention when selecting books. The fourth grade readers will begin to recommend books to each other that they have found successful with their own reading partners. Also, make the school librarian aware of your scheduled time to choose a book so that he/she can share his/her knowledge of interesting, popular books for the reading listeners.

Step III: General Advice for the Fourth Grade Reader.

Less capable readers are very concerned with doing things the right way. Because reading is a difficult area for them they may need some reassurance. Here is a list of tips for fourth graders which will help alleviate their fears. Share these with the students throughout the school year.

1. Good readers do not always know how to pronounce every word on the page. If you are reading to your pal and you forget how to say a word, it is okay to pretend. That way you do not distract the listener from the story.

2. Good readers do not always know what every word means. Decide if a word is really important to the story. If it is, ask for help. If it is not important, do not worry about it.

3. Read the book three or four times to be sure you are completely comfortable with the book.

4. Practice reading your book to a younger brother or sister or even your stuffed animals. This will develop confidence.

5. Sit side by side with your pal so they can see the pictures and words. This helps them become better readers.

6. Reading with expression makes your voice interesting. Practice speaking like you think the characters would.

PART III: WHOLE GROUP ACTIVITIES

In addition to the shared reading between partners, other activities are offered. These activities promote writing skills, extend literature through art, and provide children with teacher modeling of oral reading skills. Many of the activities involve listening to a story read by the teacher and then working in small groups on the activity. Once in the groups, the fourth graders take on the role as "teachers" or "guides" in helping younger students to complete the project.

Guidelines for Whole Group Activities:

a. Prepare fourth graders ahead of time for their responsibility in the whole group project.

b. Plan at least one whole group activity per seven week time period.

c. Choose books based on seasons, holidays, current events, or topics that can be extended through writing and art.

d. Design activities which begin with the teacher sharing the book orally with the group as she models reading strategies.

e. Create activities that include dictating stories, writing poetry, drawing, etc. which will give children a chance to respond to the literature.

      f.   Practice the stories yourself often to insure your level of confidence and increase your

      .   ability to let the words flow.

      q.   Read the story twice to give children another chance to hear the book after it has been discussed.

The following pages contain lesson plans for suggested whole group activities.

Theme: Autumn

Book: Tattercoats by Bernadette Watts

Summary of book: Tattercoats is the story of a scarecrow. He is adorned with scarves and mittens by the farmer's children and beams with pride. As the cold weather approaches the children do not visit often.   Through the winter he becomes bedraggled and yearns for the children.   Finally, spring comes and the scarecrow is resurrected in the garden where he is in constant company of the beloved children.

Materials: Tattercoats by Bernadette Watts

glue, scissors, and pencil

straw

assorted scraps of fabric

For   each   student   the   following   construction paper:

4" x 4" orange - one piece

6" x 6" yellow - three pieces

4" x 4" red - three pieces

6" x 6" black - three pieces

Holiday Art Projects by Jerome C. Brown

Three Square Scarecrow, page 4

Procedure:

1. Assemble both readers and listeners and seat them on the floor in front of the teacher who will read.

2. Read Tattercoats by Bernadette Watts. Use before, during, and after reading strategies.

3. Focus discussion on how Tattercoats felt at different parts of the book.

4. Break children into 3 groups of reading and listening pairs.

5. Pass out materials to make scarecrows.

6. Lead the group in a step by step session in making the scarecrow. The fourth graders should be the helpers for the listeners.

7. Decorate scarecrows with assorted fabric and straw.

Note:

- The scarecrow pattern from Holiday Art Projects may be used or the teacher may use another scarecrow idea.

- Have all construction paper pre-cut before the activity. This is a great activity to involve fourth graders and build responsibility.

- Let the fourth graders make a sample scarecrow ahead of time to give them confidence.

Theme: Autumn/Halloween Spook

Book: The Ghost-Eye Tree by Bill Martin, Jr. and
         John Archambault

Summary of the book: Two young children are sent to fetch a
pail of milk at the end of town one dark, chilly autumn night.
They must pass the haunted ghost-eye tree on their journey.
The trip getting the milk is uneventful but the journey home
provides a scare for the children.

Materials: The Ghost-Eye Tree by Bill Martin, Jr. and
              John Archambault
              a floppy winter hat
              a candle and matches
              glue, scissors, crayons
              assorted tissue paper in fall colors
              black construction paper (9" x 12")
              1 piece of dark blue mural paper per 4 children
                 (12" x 40")
              white crayons or chalk

Procedure:

    1.   Assemble both readers and listeners around the
         teacher who will read. Have them sit on the floor
         close together.

    2.   Darken the room and light a candle to create an

eerie atmosphere.

3. Have the floppy hat on the reader's lap.

4. Read <u>The Ghost-Eye Tree</u> by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault. Put the hat on during the story and quickly jerk it off during the part when the young boy unexpectedly drops his hat.

5. Discuss the mood of the illustrations and experiences the children may have had on scary autumn nights.

6. Read the book one more time. Allow children to make the sounds of the ghost-eye tree.

7. Break students into groups of six each. Pass out one piece of mural paper per group. Pass out one piece of black construction paper per student.

8. Have students draw their version of a ghost-eye tree with white chalk or crayon on the black piece of construction paper.

9. Cut out the tree. The younger children need lots of help with this part.

10. Glue the ghost-eye trees onto the mural to create a wooded area.

11. Each student may use tiny bits of autumn colored construction paper wrapped around the end of a pencil eraser and glued onto the tree and background to create a fall scene.

12. White chalk or crayon may be used to color in the

moon and show the wind blowing.

13.   Display in the hallway with students' names.

Note: Students need examples of how to draw a ghost-eye tree
and how to cut it out.

Theme: Christmas

Book: Carl's Christmas by Alexandra Day

Summary of the book: In this wordless picture book a dog is left in charge of a small toddler while his parents go away. During the course of the evening the dog carries the toddler on his back through the town alive with the sights of Christmas and carries the toddler safely back to his home where they sleep soundly Christmas night.

Materials: Carl's Christmas by Alexandra Day
            writing journal or paper
            pencil

Procedure:

1. Assemble children on the rug seated before the teacher who will read. (If two copies of the book are available break the students into two groups to allow them a better chance to see the illustrations.)

2. Read Carl's Christmas by Alexandra Day. Model strategies for the students as the book is being read.

3. Stop often and discuss the storyline as there are no words. Give the children opportunities to retell the events.

4. Read the story a second time. Again retell the

storyline to clarify for all children.

5. Have reading pairs locate a quiet place to write.

6. The reading listener will retell the story of <u>Carl's</u> <u>Christmas</u> as the fourth grader writes down the words for the younger student.

7. If time allows the students may draw a scene from the story.

Note: - Remind fourth graders they will need to help the younger students with the dictation as well as their writing.

   - Remind fourth graders that if they cannot spell a word it is okay to guess.

Theme: Valentine's Day

Book: The Valentine Bears by Eve Bunting

Summary of the book: Mr. and Mrs. Bear always miss spending Valentine's Day together because they are hibernating. This year Mrs. Bear sets her alarm clock to wake up on Valentine's Day. She makes Mr. Bear his favorite food, chocolate covered ants, and writes a "beary" special Valentine for him.

Materials: The Valentine Bears by Eve Bunting

crayons, glue, pencil, markers, and scissors

1 piece white construction paper (9" x 12")

1 piece pink construction paper (9" x 12")

heart patterns

Procedure:

1. Assemble students on the floor around the teacher who is reading.

2. Read The Valentine Bears by Eve Bunting modeling reading strategies.

3. Discuss hibernation with the students.

4. After the story, read the valentines Mrs. Bear sent to Mr. Bear. Discuss how the valentines reflect what animals like to eat. Also, discuss the physical features of the bears described in the valentine.

5. Lead a discussion of other animals, what they eat, and their physical characteristics.

6. Show examples on a chalkboard or overhead projector of valentines other animals might send.

7. Break students down into their reading pairs.

8. Students will write a valentine as if they are a certain animal.

9. Trace the heart pattern on the top half of the pink construction paper. Cut out the heart without cutting the outside edge of the paper.

10. Glue the pink paper on top of the white construction paper.

11. In the white space draw a picture to go with the animal valentine and color.

12. Write the valentine underneath the heart on the pink sheet of paper.

13. Read and share valentines.

Theme: Easter

Book: Bunny Trouble by Hans Wilhelm

Summary of the book: Ralph is a young bunny who loves to play soccer.   As Easter approaches and all of the bunnies work frantically to prepare for Easter, Ralph is playing soccer. One day while practicing his soccer skills Ralph is caught by the farmer for Easter dinner. Through the help of his family and friends Ralph is let go and vows to spend less time playing soccer and more time painting Easter Eggs.

Materials: Bunny Trouble by Hans Wilhelm

          hard boiled eggs

          egg dye

          vinegar

          bowls for dye

          white crayons

          newspaper

          waxed paper

          masking tape

          Easter grass

          assorted Easter candy

          (Each student needs to make an Easter basket to
          decorate. There are many teacher activities with
          such directions or a simple clean milk carton from
          the cafeteria may be used.)

Theme: Easter

Procedure:

1. Assemble children to listen to the teacher reading aloud.

2. Read _Bunny Trouble_ by Hans Wilhelm using modeling strategies.

3. Break down students into reading pairs to make Easter baskets.

4. While students are making baskets organize groups of students to decorate Easter eggs with a white wax crayon and then dye the eggs.

5. After all the eggs and baskets are completed, place the eggs in the basket and add candy.

Note: - Hard boiled eggs should be room temperature to dye.

- Have parents volunteer to help children dye the eggs and carry them safely.

Theme: Last Day

Materials: cookies

· punch

Polaroid camera

film

glue

masking tape

white construction paper (8" x 12")

Procedure:

1. Pass out cookies and punch to children who are seated in a large circle. Provide time for interaction between children.

2. Ask the children to tell the part of the shared reading program that they liked best.

3. Take a Polaroid picture of each reading pair.

4. Students will fold construction paper in half and glue the picture on the front page of the paper.

5. Have the reader and the listener each write down their thoughts about their experience.

6. Decorate with crayons.

7. Allow the younger student to take the paper booklet home as a momento.

APPENDIX

CHAPTER V.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The writer organized a handbook for classroom teachers to implement a shared reading program within the school. The shared reading program is suggested for less capable fourth graders who exhibit low self-esteem and poor reading ability. The interaction between the fourth grader and the younger listener is helpful in fostering positive self-esteem and providing exposure to literature and reading strategies which both contribute to reading progress.

Current research supports the use of cross-age tutoring in elementary schools for the tutor and the tutee. Progress has been documented in fluency, vocabulary, oral reading ability, confidence, and self-esteem. Many educators are sharing the positive results of their shared reading programs in educational journals dedicated to providing the classroom teacher with ideas that work. Teachers are giving credence to the claims that a shared reading program works.

In conclusion, the writer has discovered the benefits of a shared reading program for her less capable fourth grade readers. They were eager to meet with their reading pals and formed friendships they maintained throughout the school year. The fourth graders developed their own criteria for selected books and began to use reading strategies in classes outside

reading. Students who exhibited little confidence in the classroom blossomed with confidence while reading with their pal. As an educator, the writer will continue to use the shared reading program to promote reading ability and self-confidence.

CHECKLIST FOR PAIRING STUDENTS

Students	Level of reading				Personality			Comments
	Very capable	Capable	Less capable		Very sociable	Sociable	Very shy	

CHECKLIST FOR READING STRATEGIES

STUDENTS	Prereading				During			After			
	Reads title	Identifies author	Predicts story		Looks at illustrations	Stops and predicts story events		How did the author make you feel?	Why did the author end the book a certain way?	What would your ending be?	

A STEP BY STEP CHECKLIST TO INITIATE A SHARED READING PROGRAM

Teacher Preparation to Initiate Program

_____ Select a teaching partner.

_____ Choose and reserve if necessary a shared reading program location.

_____ Finalize time for weekly get togethers.

_____ Observe students and complete checklist.

_____ Meet with shared reading teacher to pair readers and listeners.

Teacher Preparation to Prepare Students

_____ Select 35-40 picture books and display in the fourth grade classroom.

_____ Introduce shared reading program to fourth graders and stress their role as teacher.

_____ Model prereading, during reading, and after reading strategies on a daily basis.

_____ Provide opportunities to discuss guidelines for choosing appropriate books.

_____ Discuss the importance of reading side by side.

Student Preparation

_____ Read a variety of picture books in the classroom.

_____ Practice prereading, during reading, and after reading strategies.

_____ Develop a guideline for choosing a book for the reading listener.

Student/Teacher Involvement on a Weekly Basis

_____ The fourth grader chooses a book to read to his/her listener.

_____ The teacher provides opportunities for the fourth grader to practice reading the book.

_____ The fourth graders and reading listeners meet at the designated location.

_____ Reading pairs choose a quiet, comfortable place to read.

_____ Teachers walk around observing and listening, intervening if necessary.

_____ Once the reading pair has read the book the reading pairs may change. The fourth grader will read the same book to a new reading listener. Teachers will help matching new pairs.

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